

SINK OR FLOAT?

DISCOVERY PLAY ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR YOUNG CHILD

Every child is different, and these are only suggested adaptations and activities. Do what works best for encouraging your child's independent exploration during this suggested play activity. Consult your pediatrician, physical therapist (PT), and/or occupational therapist (OT) first.



STEM Concept(s): Force & Motion, Structure & Properties of Materials, Engineering: Investigation, Volume, Classification & Data Analysis

Help your child **make predictions** by testing the density and buoyancy of objects at bathtime or provide a sensory bin with some water. Through fun-filled observations and experiments, your child will learn that buoyant objects float, and dense objects sink.

DO NOT leave children unsupervised during bath time or while playing with water. Children can drown in 1 inch of water.

STEM IDEAS/WORDS

- Sink
- Float
- Dense/Density
- Buoyant/Buoyancy
- Water

MATERIALS

- Large clear bucket or container
- Various waterproof items (e.g., toy boats, rocks, ball, rubber duck, leaves)

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

- *Which objects do you think will sink? Float? What do you think about [specific object] Can you make it sink? Float?*
- *Why do you think some objects float and some sink? Is there any way you can make something to help the [object] float?*
- *If we needed to make a boat, what materials should we use? How did you know that?*



SINK OR FLOAT? ADAPTATIONS

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ENVIRONMENT

- Use modified or flexible seating
- Place items on an anti-slip mat or in a container or tray within reach
- Introduce objects one at a time to help the child stay focused

MATERIALS

- Have child's assistive technology ready and available, including augmentative & alternative communication (AAC) device
- Use items that are easier to grasp and manipulate
- For children with physical disabilities with fine motor/grasping needs, consider using tools/assistive devices (e.g., grabber, reacher)

INSTRUCTION

- Use a variety of methods of communication (e.g., sign language, gestures) to meaningfully engage children
- Use pictures and/or icons to signal next steps (see following card for an example; you want to laminate or cover with tape or contact paper to protect them from water)
- Provide hand-over-hand or hand-under-hand assistance while testing
- Model and demonstrate how to interact with objects



Follow your child's lead and interests. Enthusiastically ask your child questions about what they are doing and what they like.



Answer your child's questions. If you do not know the answer, work together with your child to discover the answer.



Encourage your child to participate in the activity as much as possible. Praise your child's efforts and successes.



SINK OR FLOAT? ADAPTATIONS

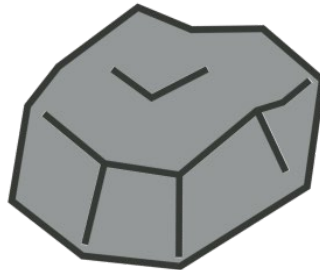
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VISUAL CUES: USE TO SIGNAL NEXT STEPS



Rubber duck



Rock



Ball



Leaf



Water



Boat



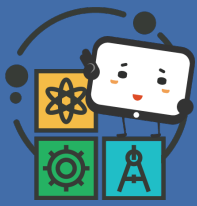
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ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY IDEAS

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- Check out these great books about boats:
 - *Boat Book* by Gail Gibbons
 - *Who Sank the Boat?* by Pamela Allen
 - *Alphabet Boats* by Samantha R Vamos
- Check out these great books about water:
 - *Hey, Water!* by Antoinette Portis
 - *Follow the Water from Brook to Ocean* by Arthur Dorros
 - *Water. Exploring the Elements* by Simone Akasha Nofel

