Splash Into Summer

Science Explorers: Water Table Exploration

Science Category:

Matter and Energy

Activity Goal:

Students explore the concepts of sinking, floating, and cause-and-effect relationships through a play-based science exploration activity.

Embedded Skill Targets:

Curricular Area	Learning Spectrum	
	Increased support needs	**Extended learning**
Social Communication and Play Skills	Sharing Turn-taking Imitating actions in play Following one-step directions in play	Imitating multiple-step actions in play Following two-step play directions Commenting with one or two words Answering questions

Materials:

Provided:

- "My turn" and "finished" cards

Needed:

- Large transparent plastic bins (2) or water/sensory table (1)
- Small container
- Water
- Various sizes of bowls and/or cups
- Measuring cups or scoops
- Items that float: small plastic toys, foam shapes, rubber ball, plastic bottles with tops, plastic straws, toy boats, sponges, etc.
- Items that sink: golf balls, marbles, rocks (large and small), metal toy cars, etc.

Preparation:

1. Print, laminate, and cut out the "my turn" and "finished" cards (1 set per student).
2. Create a science exploration bin:
   a. Fill the first bin with lukewarm water.
   b. Add bowls, cups, and measuring cups or scoops.
3. Organize and place items that float and items that sink in the second bin.
4. Place the two bins next to each other on a large table.

   Note: This activity might create a mess. Use a clearly designated area that is easy to clean. Consider placing a tarp or towels on the floor.
5. Prepare an alternate activity for students to do while they wait for their turn.

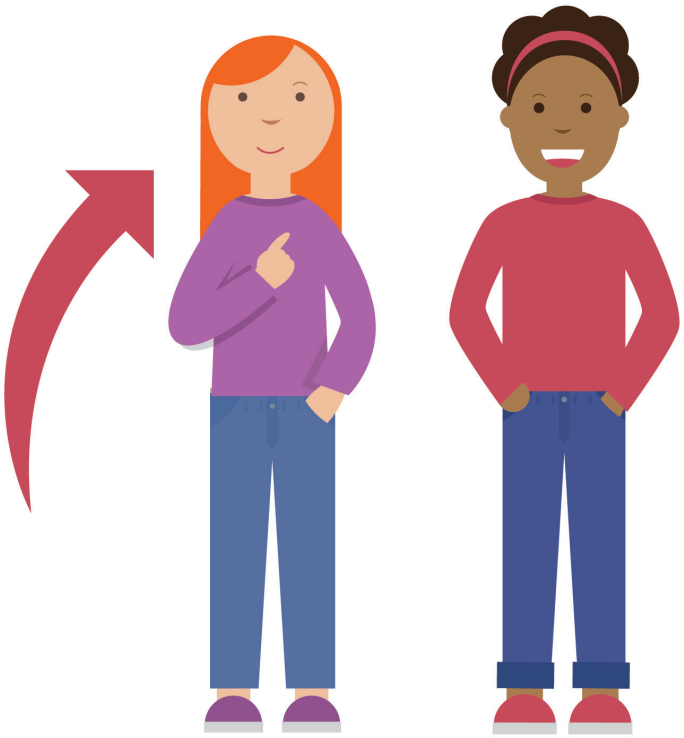
Helpful Learning Tool

- Review the Learning Differentiation Guide to individualize this lesson for each student's learning level.

Instructions:

1. Divide the class into small groups of 2–3 students.
2. Hand the first group of students the "my turn" card, and transition them to the science exploration table. Have the students put their "my turn" card in a small container, and set the timer for 5–10 minutes.
3. While the first group works at the table, have the other groups engage in an alternate activity.
4. Meanwhile, encourage students at the science exploration table to engage in cause-and-effect exploration and observation:
   - Model simple actions such as placing items that sink and float in the water, adding rocks or marbles to floating items, scooping small items, etc.
   - Encourage students to imitate your actions.
   - Give simple one-step directions such as, "Put the car in the water" or "Put the rock on the boat."
   - Comment on your own actions, and encourage students to make comments as well.
   - Comment on the items that float and the items that sink. Point out when adding an item causes a previously floating item to sink. Encourage students to comment as well.
5. Once the timer goes off, hand the students at the activity area the "finished" card, and have them transition to the alternate activity.
6. Transition the next small group of students from the alternate activity to the science exploration table.
7. Repeat Steps 2–6 with each group of students.

My turn



Finished