

See What Sinks or Floats

Primary Objectives

11d. Shows curiosity and motivation

Why It's Important

Your child will learn more about everyday objects by including them in experiments that challenge her thinking skills. Conducting a basic test to determine one attribute of an object will allow your child to practice predicting outcomes, comparing objects, and classifying objects.

Materials

Smock; small objects (e.g., rocks, paper clips, beanbags, seashells); dishwashing tub or other large container

What You Do

1. Fill the dishpan halfway with water. Place the objects on a small table next to the water.
2. Invite your child to play at the table. Help her put on her smock.
3. Explain that you want to find out which objects sink and which objects float in the water. Talk about things she has seen sink or float: *You have a toy boat that floats in the bathtub. What else do you play with in the tub? What sinks to the bottom when you put it in your bath?*
4. Invite your child to pick up an object and drop it in the water. Ask her to determine whether it sinks or floats.
5. Encourage her to choose an object and make a prediction before dropping it in the water: *I see that the small pinecone is floating in the water. What do you think the leaf will do?*
6. When she is finished, ask her to collect all of the floating objects and then all of the sinking objects and sort them into separate piles on the table.