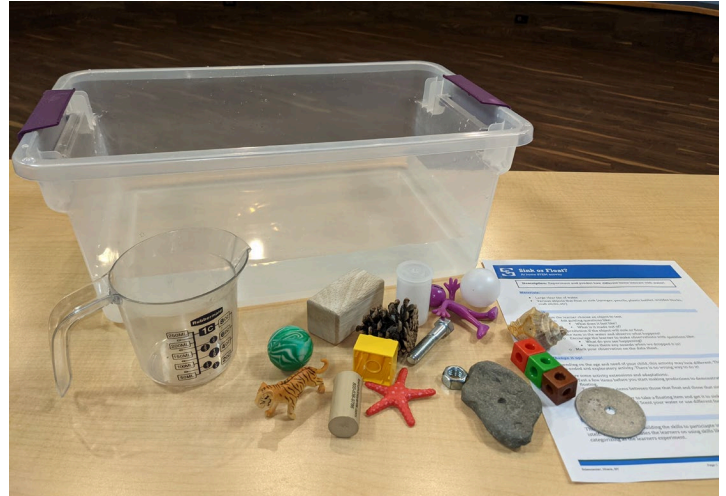# Sciencenter At-Home: Sink or Float?

How do you predict these things will interact with water?

In this activity, learners will make predictions and experiment with different objects to see if they sink or float.

Materials:

- Large clear bin of water
- Various objects that float or sink like:
  - sponges
  - pencils
  - plastic bottles
  - wooden blocks
  - corks
  - washers
  - nuts and bolts
  - small plastic toys
  - craft sticks
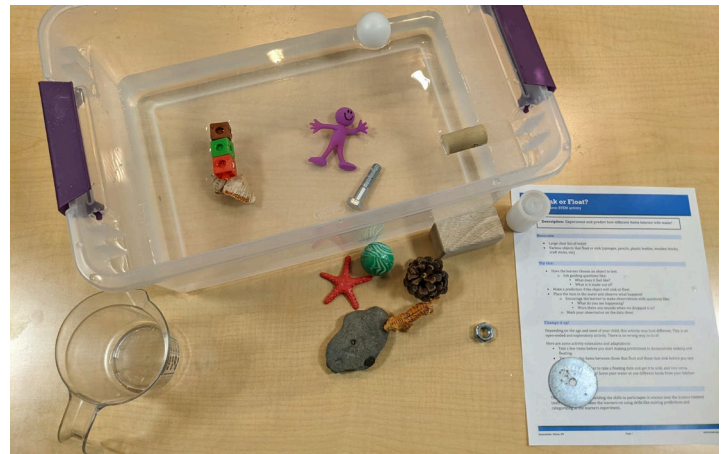 - and any other items around the house

Try this:

Have your child choose an object to test. Guide your learner with questions like:

- What does it feel like?
- What is it made out of?

Make a prediction if the object will sink or float. Then, place the item in the water and observe what happens! Encourage your child to make observations with questions like:

- What do you see happening?
- Were there any sounds when we dropped it in?
- What happens if you push down an item that floats?

Mark your observation on the data sheet on the last page.

Change it up!

Depending on the age and need of your child, this activity may look different. This is an open-ended and exploratory activity. There is no wrong way to do it!

Here are some activity extensions and adaptations:
- Test a few items before you start making predictions to demonstrate sinking and floating.
- Try sorting the items between those that float and those that sink before you test them.
- Challenge the learner to make a floating item sink, and vice versa.
- Activate other senses! Scent your water or use different foods from your kitchen before you eat them.

Science process skills

This activity focuses on building the skills to participate in science rather than the science content. This activity encouragers learners to use skills like making predictions and categorizing as they explore bouyancy.

Making predictions is making educated guesses about certain outcomes. They're built around our own observations and past experiences, so predictions are not just guesses! When guiding children through this activity, remind them of previous experiences with the materials to help them make predictions.

Sorting and grouping objects is a way of organizing our thinking. When we categorize, we separate and put things together to understand how they relate to each other. This may look like ranking items or splitting them into groups. This helps children recognize patterns and number sets, and reinforces math skills. When guiding children through this activity, encourage them to find similarities (shape, weight, material) between the items that float.

This activity exists in many versions. This adaptation was inspired by Predictions: Sink and Float from the Collaborative for Early Science Learning copyright 2021, Sciencecenter, Ithaca NY.
Retrieved from: http://www.sciencenter.org/perch/resources/predictions-early-head-start-activities.pdf

Float	
Sink	