

Play

Learning from the elements

Exploring water

Children build positive dispositions and approaches to learning as they explore different materials and equipment. Playing with water promotes curiosity, investigations and problem-solving.

Exploring water allows children to investigate scientific and mathematical ideas, processes and language. Children learn about volume, explore concepts such as full and empty, and learn about the properties of materials (e.g. water can be poured).

Supporting your child's learning

Introduce new language

- Use words such as wash, drip, splash, sprinkle, gurgle, trickle, pour, flow, froth, foam, bubble, gush, soak, fill, empty, rise, fall, freeze, mist, evaporate, absorb, dissolve, wet, warm, hot, cold, icy, freezing, dripping and damp.

Encourage experimentation

- Talk about different ways to explore water. Water can be splashed, trickled, poured, sprinkled, stirred, beaten, paddled in, run through, painted with and used for simple science experiments (e.g. floating and sinking, solid and liquid).

Pose questions to extend your child's thinking

- *Do you think that will float? Sink? Why?*
- *Is that full? Empty?*
- *What will happen if you ... ?*
- *How does it feel?*



Ideas for water play

- Provide different containers for playing with water (e.g. buckets, cups, spoons, sponges and funnels).
- Provide a variety of objects for exploring floating and sinking.
- Use squeeze bottles to find out how far you can squirt water.
- Provide a variety of materials and explore which ones absorb water (e.g. sponges, sand, sawdust).
- Add substances to change the properties of water (e.g. detergent, oil, food colouring).

Exploring sand

Playing with sand helps children learn about shape, weight or capacity as they fill containers with sand and investigate materials (e.g. changes to the sand when water is added).

Supporting your child's learning

Introduce new language

- Describe and label — use words such as pour, trickle, sift, scoop, heap, dig, shovel, slide, mound, bury, tunnel, pat, mould, squeeze, flatten, damp
- Mathematical language — two cups, heavy, light, more, less, same, equal
- Scientific language — absorb, flow, solid, liquid, wet, dry, coarse, fine

Encourage experimentation

- Sand can be shovelled, scooped, poured, trickled, sifted, patted, moulded, poked, piled, smoothed, flattened, jumped in, tunnelled through, drawn in and decorated.

Pose questions to extend your child's thinking

- *What could you do to stop the water from soaking into the sand?*
- *How could you stop the sandcastle from falling down?*
- *Does this bucket feel heavier than that one?*
- *What do you think is making the sand warm today?*
- *Is the sand heavier or lighter when you add water?*



Ideas for sand play

- Encourage children to estimate how many cups of sand will fill a saucepan and then ask them to find out if they were right.
- Experiment to find out how much water makes the sand damp, wet or sloppy.
- Add a sheet of plastic to hold water for dams or rivers.
- Find out what happens when you pour water into a hole in the sand.



For further information, visit www.qld.gov.au/kindy

Disclaimer: the information in this resource sheet is offered as a guide only, and should not be treated as an exhaustive statement on the subject.