

Summer Splash

Engage in a refreshing and fun creative play experience with your early learner! This summer-inspired sensory bin activity uses water and repurposed or recycled objects to promote exploration and play with your toddler.



AGE: 1+ (with adult support and supervision)

TIMEFRAME: 30 minutes

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

- Shallow storage bin
- Food coloring (optional)
- Liquid soap for bubbles (optional)
- Tools for scooping, pouring + mixing (e.g. spoons, cups, funnels, scrub brushes, etc.)
- Summer-themed objects for open-ended play (e.g. faux plants/flowers, fruits, beach toys, etc.)



Watch the video tutorial at https://youtu.be/ayHXh4Wan_g

1

Prep Space + Collect Materials: Find a safe place for water play (indoors or outdoors) and place your sensory bin(s) on or near the ground so that little ones can reach them. Protect surfaces, as needed. Also, when working with water, supervision is recommended at all times. Find tools for scooping, pouring and mixing water such as spoons, cups, funnels and scrub brushes. Then collect summer-themed sensory objects that can be used for open-ended play.



2

Fill Your Sensory Bin: Pour water into your bin. Add just enough water (about halfway) for your child to scoop and pour the water and to have objects float within it. Then add a small amount of food coloring or paint for added color exploration (optional). Mix the water and food coloring with your child, and observe and talk about its transformation.



3

Add Summer Objects: One by one, place your summer-themed objects into the sensory bin. Observe what happens when each object is added and talk about it with your child.



4

Water Play Fun! After you have added all the objects, invite your child to use the different tools (cups, spoons, funnels, etc.) for water play exploration. Encourage them to scoop, fill and pour the water using their tools. This is a great experience to promote open-ended play and explore water in a new way!



TIPS

- Add a light scent to your water using fruits or gentle essential oils.
- Use recycled objects (water bottles, gutted lemons, etc.) in your sensory bin experience.
- Use toys that are safe for water play – plastic dishes and tools, rubber animals, etc.
- Add soap and a brush and encourage your child to wash and care for their objects.
- Keep it dry. Use dry cereal, rice or beans as an alternative to water in your sensory bin.
- Consider the variations you can make to your bin and create one for each season!

TODDLER TO TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN LEARNING CONNECTIONS

Sensory bin experiences are full of exploration and discovery and weave together a wide array of learning opportunities into one activity! Bin play can support fine-motor skills, imaginative play, empathy building, language development and more. You can incorporate counting, color recognition and problem solving through the objects you select and talk about it with your child during the play experience.

RECOMMENDED READING:

- *We Are Water Protectors* by Carole Lindstrom
- *The Rainbow Fish* by Marcus Pfister
- *Fruits in Suits* by Jared Chapman

PRESCHOOL LEARNING FOUNDATIONS (SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND VISUAL ARTS)

Age 48 Months

- Enjoy learning and are confident in their abilities to make new discoveries; although may not persist at solving difficult problems.
- Demonstrate basic role-play skills with imagination and creativity.

Age 60 Months

- Take greater initiative in making new discoveries, identifying new solutions and persisting in trying to figure things out.
- Demonstrate extended role-play skills with increased imagination and creativity.

HOW WAS IT?

Thank you for taking part in this activity! Do you have any suggestions or questions you'd like to share with us at the Museum? Email education@thinkplaycreate.org.

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