

Water Classroom Activities: Ideas for Your Curriculum

Children learn best by doing. There are lots of ways you can add lessons about water to your daily routines and curriculum. Here are some ideas to help children understand the importance of water for their health and in their daily lives.

Literacy

Vocabulary Builders:

- Clear
- Damp
- Drink
- Drop
- Flow
- Freeze
- Gulp
- Moisture
- Soak
- Swallow
- Wet
- Drench
- Thirsty
- Quench
- Healthy
- Refreshing

Bonus:

Try teaching vocabulary words in different languages, for example,
 Water / Agua / 水 (Shu)
 Blue / Azul / 蓝色 (Lán sè)

Art Activity – Water Drop Sun Catchers

In this craft, children peel and sharpen crayons, which is a great way for kids to develop their fine motor skills. View the tutorial at: www.pre-kpages.com/raindrop-suncatchers-fine-motor-art

Materials:

- Blue crayons
- Pencil or crayon sharpener
- Waxed paper
- Iron (for adult use only)
- Scissors

- 1) Peel the paper cover off blue crayons. You can choose to have the blue crayons already gathered and peeled for the children, or you can allow children to pick their favorite shades of blue to use.
- 2) Sharpen crayons over a sheet of waxed paper and spread out the shavings. You can choose to use smaller, individual pieces for each child.
- 3) Cut another sheet of waxed paper equal in size to place on top of the shavings. Use an iron on the lowest setting to iron directly on top of the waxed paper and melt the crayon shavings. It only takes a quick swipe of the iron to do this.
- 4) Draw raindrop shapes on the paper and cut them out.
- 5) Use a hole puncher and embroidery floss to string them up in windows for display.



Music

Teach children the song “Drink More Water”. View the fun music video called *Drink More Water* by Andy Z at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrWquDo7TzE.



Books:

- *Potter the Otter* from First 5 California, comes with more activities!
- *Why Should I Save Water?* by Jen Green and illustrated by Mike Gordon
- *Bear Loves Water* by Ellen Weiss
- *I Am Water* by Jean Marzollo

Early STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)

Science Learning Experiences

- Talk to children about the different forms of water. Ice is frozen water. Water that we drink is liquid. Steam is also a form of water. Children may see steam when they take a hot bath. Ask children where they have seen each form of water.
- Teach children about the water cycle and drought in California.
- Plant a garden and allow children to water the plants. Collect “brown water” throughout the day from washing fruits and vegetables, flushing faucets, or straining pasta to use for watering.
- Show children how important water is to plants. Just a day without water can cause the leaves to wilt. The good news is that water can perk up a plant immediately if it hasn’t been dry too long. Water is as necessary to our bodies as a plant!

Math Learning Experiences

- Help children learn measuring skills using measuring spoons and measuring cups.
- Measure the temperature of water using a thermometer. Try comparing the temperature of water that has been chilled to water at room temperature.



Technology Activity

When you hear the word technology, you might think of computers and smartphones, but in the preschool curriculum, technology refers to using tools and simple machines while developing fine and gross motor skills. For example, children can use child sized pitchers and cups to practice pouring. Engage families in skill building by sharing your activities: say “Today the children poured their own drink at snack and lunch.” Then, encourage families to practice pouring at home too.



Four R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rot) Activities

- Reduce: Use refillable water bottles or cups instead of disposable bottles or cups.
- Reuse: If you do use plastic bottles or cups, reuse them to create fun crafts and activities. Here are some ideas for emptied plastic bottles: <http://notedlist.com/plastic-bottle-recycling-projects/>
- Recycle: Set up classroom recycling bins for sorting. Teach children how to recycle plastic bottles or cups. Enhance math skills such as classification (same or different), comparison (shape and size), and characteristics and patterns.
- Rot (or compost): If you're using paper cups for drinking water, no need to send them to the landfill – children love composting! Teach children about how paper cups turn into soil through decomposition.