K–5 · INVESTIGATION

Floating and Sinking Investigation

Name / chosen name: _____

Work with an adult. Predict before testing; observations describe what actually happened.

Materials

A shallow tray of water, towel, large cork, large wooden block and large metal spoon.

Instructions

1. Predict whether each object will float or sink.
2. Place one object gently into shallow water. Observe without pushing it.
3. Remove it and test the next object. Record each result.
4. Compare your results with your predictions.

1. My prediction

Observation

Safety: An adult supervises water use. Keep water shallow, wipe spills and keep it away from electricity. Use large objects; do not put anything in mouths.

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Record and explain

1. What happened?

2. Was it different from my prediction?

3. What did I change or keep the same?

Scientific explanation: An object floats when the water can provide enough upward force to support its weight. Material, shape and trapped air affect what happens; heavy objects do not always sink.

1. One further question

2. How I could test it safely with an adult

Background source: https://www.amnh.org/learn-teach/resources-for-learning/hall-of-ocean-life/cartesian-diver