



Long Activity
Ages 0–6
30–60 minutes

Sensory Excavation Activity

Description

Kids will excavate items. There are various options for this activity.

Recommendation: For younger children, a caregiver must do the activity with them due to possible choking hazards

Read-aloud Story

Read a story related to excavation or related to the materials that are being excavated to connect to the activity (nature, dinosaurs if using plastic dinosaurs, etc)

Number of Participants

For any number of participants

Space Considerations

An indoor space where participants can be seated to do an activity

Competencies

- Development of fine motor skills
- Eye-hand coordination
- Following directions
- Problem solving
- Spatial relationships

Materials

Excavation Material Options

- Fallen pieces of nature (e.g. flowers, leaves, twigs, small stones or pebbles)
- Dried flower petals, plastic flowers or plant clippings
- Pipe cleaners
- Pompoms

- Buttons
- Wooden beads
- Small pieces of string
- Small toys (e.g. plastic animals)
- Small seashells or rocks
- Lego pieces
- Bells or other small objects that make noise

Excavation materials and tools

- Water for ice cube tray
- Ice cube tray
- Salt
- Dishes or containers
- Medium containers or tubs for sand
- Sand
- Small shovels or spoons
- A large bin for newspaper balls
- Newspaper balls
- Plastic Easter eggs or gacha balls

Gacha ball



Preparation

Ice Cube Excavation

- One day or more before the program, put various items in ice cube trays and freeze them
 - Recommendations
 - Use items that would be easy to excavate
 - The same items can be used for all of the ice cubes or you can vary the items

- Size of item should match the ice cube mold – even if item sticks out of the cube, it is better than it being so small that it takes a long time to excavate



Sandbox Excavation

- Put various items inside tub(s) filled with sand



Newspaper Bin Excavation

- Put various items inside small containers like plastic Easter eggs, gacha containers or just wrapped inside newspaper



- Create newspaper balls for a newspaper bin

Implementation

Ice Cube Excavation

1. Distribute an ice cube to each participant on a dish or in a container
2. Participants can rub their hands together and then pick up the ice cube and try to melt it with their body heat
3. They can use a bit of salt (optional)



Sand Box Excavation

1. Distribute a sandbox with hidden items and a spoon or shovel to each participant OR have participants line up in front of one or several containers with each child excavating an item
2. Participants can use their hands, a spoon or a shovel to dig up an object



Newspaper Bin Excavation

1. Have participants line up in front of one or several bins of newspaper balls and take turns trying to find an item



Accessibility Considerations

- Provide tools to assist participants in excavating items
 - Sand tool options – small shovels, spoons
 - Ice cubes tool options – salt

- Add bells or other objects that make noise into the containers of sand or crumpled newspaper balls so that kids will hear the noises as they look for items

Book Suggestions

Expedition Backyard: Exploring Nature from Country to City by Rosemary Mosco and Binglin Hu

The Fossil Whisperer: How Wendy Sloboda Discovered a Dinosaur by Helaine Becker and Sandra Dumais

Mii maanda ezhi-gkendmaanh / This Is How I Know by Brittany Luby and Joshua Mangeshig Pawis-Steckley

The Deepest Dig by Mark David Smith and Lily Snowden-Fine

Download Links

[Sensory Activity Instructions \(.docx\)](#)

Images

