

A Demonstration on Density and Boyancy at SciTech Hands-On Museum

Description

Sink or Swim teaches the principles of density and buoyancy through guided experimentation. Aimed at an 8-11 year old age group this activity takes a highly interactive approach. Children predict what will happen when different types/sets of objects are placed in a tank of water, carry out the experiment, then discuss with the facilitator (a) what happened, (b) their prediction and (c) the explanation. Following this, the children use what they have learned to make objects that float sink and objects that sink float. The strength of the activity comes from the directed but still open-ended nature of the experimentation and from the ability to directly address preconceptions.



Sink or Swim is highly flexible and can function as a demonstration, “directed play”, or both. It needs a low level of supervision by nearby volunteers or museum staff because of the open tanks of water. The exhibit is designed to be easily transportable, able to be set up in school classroom, in the classroom area of SciTech, or potentially on the floor of Sci-Tech near the other water exhibits on a low table