Splish splash: It's fun with water

Classroom water play activities

The sun is out, the days are long, and the last thing children want is to be indoors. Why not introduce some waterplay to get students outdoors and into the sunshine? The summer weather is the perfect excuse to bring lessons and play out-of-doors and the kids will love it! Here are some simple water activities that you can incorporate into your daily schedule. They can be assembled indoors or outdoors, but with the warmer weather that Term 1 brings, why not head outdoors? That way if things get a little messy (which they are bound to with water involved), the students can learn, have fun and cool off at the same time! Activities will need to be well planned and supervised, and it may be a good idea to send a letter out to parents asking for a spare set of clothes that can be kept in the classroom for those times when the students have too much fun!

Fill glass jars, bottles or drinking glasses with different levels of water. Use a spoon, pencil or something similar to create melodies by tapping the glasses. How do the different water levels affect the sound produced?

Sing an assortment of water songs, like 'Rain, rain, go away', 'Row your boat', 'Splish splash' etc. Make up movements and actions to go along with the songs.

Cut sponges to resemble fish and other sea creatures. Allow students to play with them in water. What happens when they get wet?

Bubble fun. Add food colouring to bubble mixture. Blow bubbles and have students 'catch' them on paper to make bubble art.

Make a lake with shaving cream and blue paint. Draw fish, cut them out and have them 'swimming' in the lake.

Give students different sized sponges and separate containers. Fill the sponges with water and get students to count out how many squeezes it takes to fill the container. Which sponge fills the container with the fewest squeezes?

Use the fixed spray of a hose to play 'liquid limbo'. Try not to get wet!

Fill up water balloons and draw faces on them. See how long students can take care of their 'water babies'. (Good for younger children.)

Provide an old set of scales and an assortment of containers. Students then try to balance the containers by filling them with water.

Fill a large bottle with water. Add blue food colouring, then fill the rest of the bottle with oil. Create waves by moving the bottle backwards and forwards.

Have a water day! Have the students bring a towel and spare change of clothes and set up outside activities such as sprinklers and water tubs. You can even create your own water slide from heavy duty plastic!

Water bowling – Assemble ten 2 L bottles and fill them with water. Add different food colouring to each. Fasten lids tightly. Assemble in a triangle. Students can roll a soccer (or similar size) ball and see how many bottles they can knock over. For older students, assign a score to each coloured bottle; e.g. red = 2, green = 3 etc. Have them keep score of the bottles they knock over.

Deep-sea diving – Print pictures of common sea creatures and cut them out. In a clear space, place them in the middle of the floor underneath an old sheet. Students sit around the edges. Call out a student's name, then one of the sea creatures underneath the sheet. The students all lift the sheet up and the chosen student has to 'dive' under and select the correct creature. If old enough, the student can then tell the class a feature of the creature.

Assemble some coins, an eyedropper and a cup of water. Have students count out how many drops can fit onto each coin. Older students can write down their results and present them in a table or graph.

Discuss the properties of water—its taste, smell, look and feel. Does water have a taste?

Create a brainstorm of what occupations use water; for example: firefighter, gardener, lifesaver etc.

Dancing sultanas – Fill a tall glass with soda water. Drop a sultana in and watch it 'dance' in the water.

Fill a jar or bottle with coloured water. Add some oil, put the lid on, and give it a good shake. What happens to both liquids?

Fill balloons with water. Draw eyes and fins on them and place them in a water tub. Provide small fishing nets for students to 'catch' the fish with.

Create a water collage using pictures from magazines, newspapers and the internet.

Conduct egg-and-spoon races, replacing the egg and spoon with water and a cup.

Place a ball of plasticine in a container of water. Does it sink or float? Mold it into the shape of a boat. Add weights like marbles or washers. How many can it hold?

Record different sounds of water (washing machine, dishwasher, hose, dripping tap, rain, ocean, washing hands etc.) and have students guess what type of water they are listening to.

Give students a cup of water and a paintbrush. Allow them to 'paint' objects outside such as plants, rocks, play equipment and pathways. What happens when they get wet?

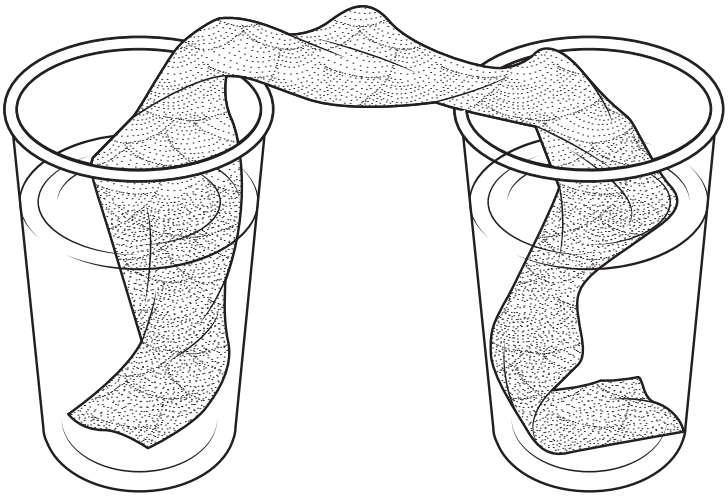
Line up children on their backs, alternating sides with their feet in the middle (the line should look like a zip). Place a bucket of water at each end and have students carry a sponge from one bucket to the other using only their feet.

Sink or float? Provide an assortment of objects and have students predict whether they will sink or float. Test their predictions in a water tray.

Make simple recipes, like making icy poles, squeezing fresh juices or dissolving jelly crystals.

Moving water experiment

Read and follow the experiment to find out how water moves. Tick each step (water droplet) as you complete it.



1. Collect your materials and equipment:

- a glass filled with water
- an empty glass
- two squares of paper towel

Steps

2. Twist the sheets of paper towel together to form a 'rope'.

3. Place one end of the paper towel in the glass of water.

4. Bend the other end over and place it into the empty glass.

5. Observe the water movement for a long time.

Explain what happened

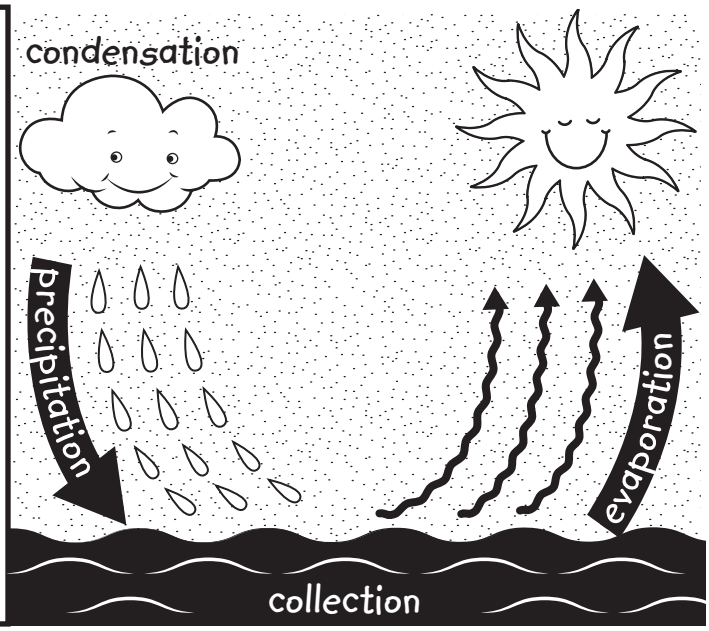
6.

Indicator: Reads to follow a science experiment explaining how water moves. Explanation: Water moves by capillary action because the water 'sticks' (adheres) to the fibres of the paper towels.

Water cycle word search

1. Read the information text about the water cycle.

Heat from the sun evaporates **water** from **oceans**, lakes, streams, **rivers**, trees and plants. When it **evaporates**, it turns into a **gas** called water vapour. The **vapour rises** and forms **clouds** and falls back to the ground as **rain**, **hail** or **snow**. This returns to the oceans and rivers where it is collected.



2. Find the bold words from the text in the word search.

s	q	k	y	p	e	j	s	w	o
r	e	t	a	w	l	n	e	u	m
e	a	t	f	c	x	r	l	i	t
v	z	r	a	g	m	w	r	r	f
i	n	i	a	r	v	u	o	x	a
r	h	s	d	u	o	l	c	n	w
b	o	e	i	p	c	p	e	h	s
g	n	s	a	h	g	k	a	d	v
s	j	v	y	t	u	i	n	v	h
p	d	z	t	q	l	b	s	a	e

3. The four stages of the water cycle are:

_____ _____

_____ _____

Indicator: Reads an information text about the water cycle, then finds words from the text in a word search.

Wirrigan, the rainmaker – *an Aboriginal Dreamtime story—1*

Read the story.

Once upon a time in the Dreamtime, the country was having a long drought. The plants and animals were dying and the rivers were drying up. Without water, no food could grow and the people were starving. The people grumbled to Wirrigan, the rainmaker.

Wirrigan went to the waterhole in the creek each day and poked a stick in it, but still no rain fell. On the third day, he left his stick in the water hole. Near the waterhole was a large open shelter called a bough shed. Its roof and sides were made of branches.



The next day, he asked the people to use bark and material from the termite mounds to make huts raised above the ground. He took the people to the waterhole and he jumped in. Then he asked the people to jump in too. The young men laughed because they did not believe he could make rain. They threw him in the waterhole three times until he was very cold. Everyone left the creek.

That night when everyone was asleep in the bough shed, Wirrigan and the old people walked around it many times, carrying their belongings. Soon, a large, black cloud appeared. Wirrigan woke everyone up and told them to take shelter in the raised bark huts. The rain began to fall and lasted for several days. When the rain stopped, the land was green again and food had begun to grow.

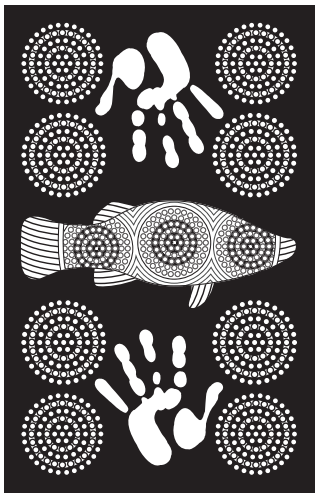
The people celebrated by holding a corroboree, but Wirrigan was not happy because he knew that many of the people had doubted him. To demonstrate his power, he took everyone to a very dry plain. He made a huge torrent of rain fall. It filled the whole plain with water. However, it did not rain anywhere else. He told the young men to fish in the water, but they still did not believe in his power. How could there be fish in the water when it was just rainwater? Finally, they threw their nets into the water and pulled out many different kinds of fish. No-one doubted Wirrigan again.

And the great plain filled with water became known as Corcoran Lake.

Indicator: Reads an Australian Aboriginal Dreamtime story relating to water. Use in conjunction with page 35.

Wirrigan, the rainmaker – *an Aboriginal Dreamtime story—2*

Complete the answers after reading the text on page 34.



1. Why were the people starving?

2. Where was the waterhole?

3. What is a bough shed?

4. Which two materials were used to construct the huts?

5. Why did the young men laugh at Wirrigan?

6. What did Wirrigan do to make rain fall while the others were sleeping?

7. Why was Wirrigan unhappy even though the people were celebrating?

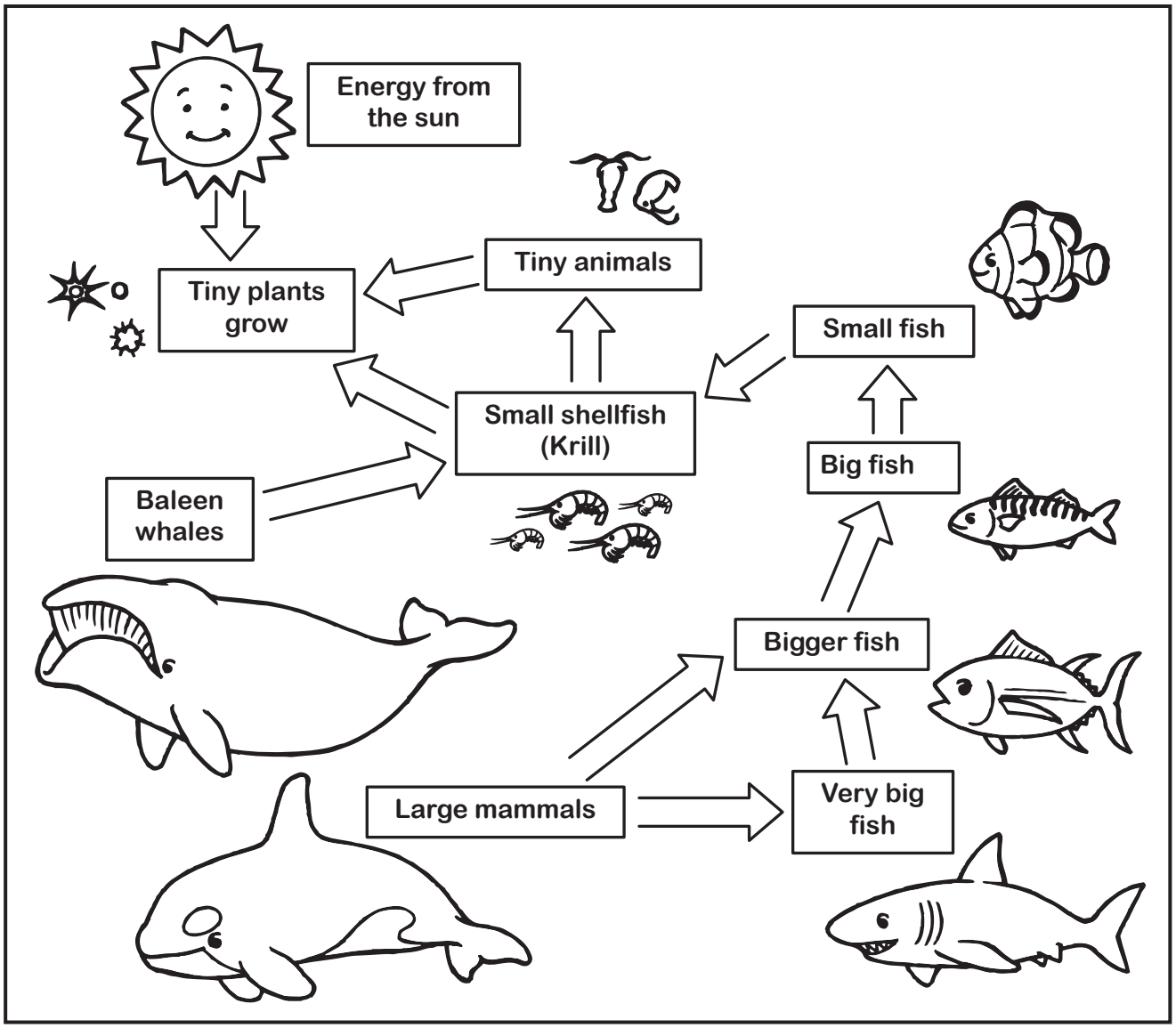
8. How did he prove he was a powerful rainmaker?

Indicator: Completes comprehension questions relating to an Australian Aboriginal Dreamtime story. Use in conjunction with page 34.

Ocean food chain

The ocean is like a huge restaurant—there is something for everyone!

Follow the arrows to discover what eats what.



Complete the sentences.

1. Energy from the _____ allows tiny plants to grow in the ocean.
2. Krill eat _____ and _____.
3. Small fish eat _____.
4. Most big sea animals eat _____ animals.
5. Baleen whales eat _____.
6. Without _____, there would be no animals in the ocean.

Indicator: Follows arrows of food chain. Completes sentences to show understanding of the food chain.