



Rolling on the River

Even if you don't live near a river, you can help your child make connections without even leaving home. After you've read together, try these sensory experiments for a closer understanding of the written descriptions of the river.

Small, sharp knives are not common toys for young boys or girls in this day and age. But in this activity your child can still have the experience and satisfaction of crafting a sea-worthy craft from wood.

Supplies

- bowls and small buckets
- stopper for the drain
- an exercise ball or large plastic toy ball and/or a blanket
- Internet access

River Sounds

Water coming out of the tap and going down the drain sounds very different than water that trickles and trips over rocks or rushes downstream. Simulate the sounds of the river at home. First, seal the drain of your bathtub or kitchen sink. Then, fill a variety of containers and buckets with water from the bathtub (or kitchen sink if using smaller containers.) Keep all the containers in the tub.

Slowly pour a smaller container of water into a larger one and ask your child to listen. What does he hear? Then pour a larger container of water into a smaller one. Does he hear a difference? Let your child pour water at different rates and ask him to imagine a small stream trickling into a larger river. Or a rush of water filling a narrowing riverbed. If he holds the container far above from where he pours it, could that sound be similar to a waterfall? Talk about and try to create what a flooding river or a river with low water might sound like.

Going with the Flow

In water, even heavy objects can move easily, drift and float. Have your child imagine he's a tree branch or log in a river. Have him think about floating on the water, but help him discover other sensations too. Simulate what it feels like to be carried downstream.

If you have an exercise or large rubber ball, have your child sit on it and bounce gently — he's bobbing down the river! If there are two strong adults available, have your child lay down in the middle of a blanket. Each adult grabs two corners, with one adult at the child's head, the other at his feet. Lift your child up off the floor and gently swing him back and forth — he's riding the waves. Walk in a circle several times — he's stuck in an eddy!

Talk with him about additional river flow movements you've read about and try other simulations. Rapids ahead?

Virtual Ride

Use the Internet to take a quick trip out to some western rivers. The kayakers who made these videos used cameras mounted to their helmets, so as you and your child watch, you experience the same feelings of motion that they did as they paddled and filmed.

Craft a Craft *(continued)*

Payette River: www.youtube.com/watch?v=N82fEPnrgKg

Colorado River: www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Cu2qddohBc&feature=channel

After you view the videos, look up more information with your child about these rivers, such as geographical location and river source and mouth.

After you've finished reading the books together and taken your homemade raft out on the water, you might enjoy watching this 30 minute film adaptation of *Paddle-to-the-Sea*: http://www.nfb.ca/film/paddle_to_the_sea/