

Water wheels

Playing alongside the children in the water tray is a great way to support learning and challenge whilst also engaging and motivating children to learn.

Learning aims

- To support children in the use of mathematical skills and understanding
- To explore cause and effect; learning that our actions have an effect
- To develop fine and gross motor skills.



Resources

- Water tray
- Water wheels
- Different sizes of plastic cups or containers, spoons, ladles etc.

Activity Outline

Water is a great tool for learning about cause and effect and water wheels are a great example of this. We put water in the top and the wheel spins as the water comes out of the bottom.

Water Wheels are also a good source of:

- Mathematical understanding
- Language development
- Supporting fine and gross motor skill development.

Play alongside the children in the water tray, this is the best way to support learning and challenge further whilst also engaging and motivating children to learn.

Use the different sized containers to collect water and put it on the top of the water wheel. Talk about how much water you can collect and ask the children if they can find a container that will collect more water.

As you pour the water in the water wheel try different speeds, can the children see what happens to the wheel if you go slow or fast? How slow can they make the wheel go? How fast?

Extending the activity

Now see if the children can work out how to catch the water when it comes out of the wheel at the bottom. This is quite tricky as you have to work out which way the wheel is turning as well as position the pot in the right place. You also need to find the right sized container, if it is too tall it will stop the wheel from turning. This provides lots of opportunities for critical thinking.

Health and safety

Make sure you always supervise children around any water activities and ensure their safety at all times.