

**Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.**

## Activity: STEM Animal Rescue

**This STEM activity offers children opportunities to explore their ideas, be curious, work collaboratively to problem solve and to create imaginative constructions for rescuing the animals.**

### Learning aims

- Collaborate with others
- Develop problem solving skills
- Explore the properties of a range of materials
- Follow own ideas to create a rescue craft
- Be curious.



### Resources

- A tray
- Water
- Soil or upturned bowl to act as an island
- Small world animals
- Rescue resources e.g. lollipop sticks, wood, string, glue, foil, plastic, tape, plastic tubs, small rubber tyres.

### Activity outline

1. Create an island in the centre of your tray and place the animals on the island. Add water around the island
2. Present the challenge - tell the children a story about the animals feeding on the island, as they were feeding, the rain came and flooded the area around the island. Explain that the animals are now stuck on the island and need to be rescued. They can't just be lifted up with hands, the children need to create a rescue craft that will hold the animals in and get them safely across the water
3. Talk to children about the size and capacity of a craft for the animals and the need for the craft to be waterproof with the ability to float. Discuss what it might look like, for example, size and shape? Will it need seats or standing room?

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4. Encourage the children to consider the different materials on offer and think about how they can be joined together to create a safe rescue craft. Invite them to experiment with different ideas
5. Support trial and error, inviting children to talk about their ideas and problem solve together to overcome challenges
6. Provide time for children to test out their constructed crafts and to amend their design if needed
7. Take photos of both successful and unsuccessful rescue attempts so children can talk about what didn't work and what worked well and why.

### Extension ideas:

- Leave the activity resources in your continuous provision to enable children to build on their ideas and try our new designs
- Provide loose parts or construction kits and encourage the children to collaborate to build a bridge to rescue the animals.

### NDNA products to support you with this activity:

- Online course – [Little Scientists Leading the Way](https://www.ndna.org.uk/little-scientists-leading-the-way)