

Tornado in a Jar



Weather

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Preschoolers
2.5 - 4 years

Have you ever wondered what a tornado looks like without getting too close? Create your own tornadoes at home in a controlled environment...a jar! Kids will love to swirl the water around over and over, watching the funnel cloud form and spin around in the jar. This activity is mess-free and can be done again and again!

Learning Outcomes

Domain:

Language

Indicator:

Spontaneously using the language of mathematics, inquiry and reasoning as they play

Skills:

Using descriptive language



Materials

- 1 cup of water
- A jar with a sealable lid
- Blue food coloring
- Clear or blue dish soap
- ½ tsp white vinegar

Instructions

Step 1: Fill your jar $\frac{3}{4}$ full with water.

Step 2: Add a few drops of blue food coloring and dish soap.

Step 3: Add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vinegar. This will help the bubbles keep their shape so that you can see the funnel inside the jar!

Step 4: Seal your jar nice and tight. Hold the jar by the top of the lid and gently move your wrist around in a circular motion to form the funnel in the water. The more you swirl, the bigger the funnel will form!



Age Adjustments

For older preschoolers: Older preschoolers will likely have more developed muscles in their wrist to swirl the water around. Experiment with sizes of containers to make bigger tornadoes. Does a smaller jar or larger jar work better to create the funnel "clouds" in the water?

For younger toddlers: Younger children may show greater interest in the funnel "cloud" of the water. Add sparkles, small beads etc. inside the jar so the children can see them move up and down the funnel to make it a bit more visually appealing to them!



Playful Questions

- What type of weather is needed to form a tornado?
- Do tornadoes typically happen in warm or cold weather?
- What do you think happens to the ground under a tornado?
- Have you ever seen a tornado outside?
- Do you know who studies and researches tornadoes?