

AQ26 - Arctic Activities

Ice Block Excavation



An ice block excavation activity involves freezing objects within a block of ice, then providing tools (like warm water, salt, or a hammer) to help young people "excavate" the objects from the ice. This activity combines scientific exploration with a fun, sensory experience

Preparation:

Choose waterproof objects to be frozen, like small plastic toys of arctic animals, shells, lego blocks and minifigures or even frozen fruit.

Place some of the objects inside a glass container, such as a bowl or mixing jug or in large disposable plastic cups.

Add just enough water to the contain so that the objects become submerged.
Place the container in the freezer until the water is completely frozen.

Repeat this process of adding objects, water then freezing to create different layers within the ice. This will ensure that the objects are evenly distributed throughout the block.

Excavation:

Take the bowl/jug containing the ice block out of the freezer and turn in upside down into a high walled tin tray.

To remove the block, carefully pour warm water over the surface of the container.

WARNING! POURING HOT WATER OVER COLD GLASS CAN CAUSE IT TO VIOLENTLY CRACK AND SHATTER. Only use water that is warm to the touch to help remove the ice block from its container.

Provide young people with tools to excavate the objects, such as:

Warm water in a squeeze bottle or small cups.

Salt to help melt the ice faster.

Paintbrushes to spread the salt.

Spoons, craft sticks, or small hammers or mallets to gently chip away at the ice.

Magnifying glasses to focus the suns rays

Encourage young people to observe the ice melting, the objects being revealed, and the different textures and sensations.