

“Pooh Sticks” Ice Ships

Take the classic game of tossing a twig over a bridge and watching the current magically make the found item reappear – affectionately known as “Pooh Sticks” – and bump it up a notch or two with this activity. Use a few environmentally-friendly items to create floating ice ships that can journey through nature, a pool, or even a bathtub.

Materials:

- Tupperware containers
- Masking or painter's tape
- Twigs (height is limited to the freezer's depth)
- Natural liquid food coloring (one-two drops)
- Water
- Flowers, leaves, flower petals...any biodegradable (and light!) item



Directions:

Start by clearing out a space in your freezer that will accommodate the size and type of ice boat for your builder. **The height of the twig matters!** Fill the plastic food container with water. Again – choose your own boat size (Tupperware) and thickness (volume of water). Add a drop of natural food dye to add visual appeal.

Next, grab a **helper**. One person holds the twig in the pool of water while the other person gently tapes it in place. Try **pre-cutting** a slit in the tape before sliding it down the twig. Add flower petals, leaves, or other **natural embellishments** to the water. We used cosmos and petunias! Let the boats **freeze overnight**.

The next day, take the **frozen boat** to the water. Carefully **thread a leaf** over the stick mast (bottom of the 'sail' first). Hold the stick to ensure it stays in one piece! Time to float your boat in the creek, or in the backyard pool, or even at bath time! Because the materials are **biodegradable** (sticks and petals), the flora will only add to the fauna.

Extension:

- ✓ **We're going to need a bigger (ice) boat!** (Try a 13x9 baking dish!)
- ✓ What other natural/biodegradable materials can you **add to your boat?**
- ✓ Try an **informal race** down a stream “Pooh Stick” style.

See the “I’ve been thinking...” section at www.ioanruddimanedd.com for continuously updated content.

- ✓ Predict how long the ice ship will take to **melt**. *What will speed it up?*
- ✓ As always, **share** your ice boats online at **#littlechildrenBIGactivity**.