Visual Guide: Ice Cubes and Cornstarch Activity

What happens when you mix water and cornstarch? You get oobleck! (Oobleck is a substance that can mimic the qualities of both a solid or a liquid.) Put a fun sensory spin on this classic science experiment by incorporating ice cubes to make oobleck. As the ice cubes melt into the cornstarch, the consistency of each ingredient will begin to change. Try coloring the water with food coloring or liquid watercolors, and hiding small toys into the ice for even deeper sensory exploration.

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FIRST, pour water into an ice cube tray and put it in the freezer. Let it freeze overnight!

NEXT, sprinkle cornstarch on a tray or pan.

THEN, take the ice cube tray out of the freezer.

THEN, pop the ice cubes out of the tray.

THEN, put the ice cubes on the cornstarch.

Tip: Use your hands, spoons, a craft stick, or even a plastic cup for mixing.

NEXT, mix the ice cubes and the cornstarch together.

LASTLY, touch it, squeeze it, scoop it. As the ice melts, oobleck is made!

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Visual Activity Guides

As part of our Autism Access Initiative, NYSCI offers invaluable opportunities for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) to build a solid foundation of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) thinking skills. We are committed to encouraging children with ASD and their families to explore their science process skills, early mathematical thinking, designing and making through hands-on exposure to new materials, tools and experiences.

Many children are strong visual learners and visual thinkers, especially children with autism. Given this strength, NYSCI has created Visual Activity Guides, visual step-by-step instructions to help engage children in STEAM activities when verbal communication and instructions are difficult. Visual Activity Guides encourage the whole family to participate in playful hands-on activities while promoting a positive learning experience that is clear and engaging.

Use these Visual Activity Guides in a way that best makes sense for your child: printed on paper or displayed on a screen. Your child should be able to see the guide before beginning the activity and the guide should continue to be visible throughout. At first, you may need to physically guide your child (for example, gently guide your child by the shoulder and prompt them to point to each step). Try doing the activity more than once and gradually decrease physical prompts as your child begins to use the visual activity guide more independently.

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