



Science and the Banana (sink or swim!)

This is a simple experiment for you to do with children. It's great fun!

What you will need:

1 x bowl

1 x banana (you can also use apple or an orange)

Jug of water - enough to half fill bowl

Pencil and paper

Instructions:

- 1) Before you start the experiment, ask the children if they think the bananas, once immersed in water, will sink or swim?
- 2) Half fill both bowls with water
- 3) Place your banana (apple or orange) in the water
- 4) Record your findings
- 5) The banana should float





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Bananas float in water because they are less dense than water. Also, fruits like apples and oranges float in water because they have many air pockets in them.

How can you explain that to a child:

Things that are packed full of 'stuff' sink.

Things that have little stuff in them and lots of empty space float.

You could cut two small, identical squares of aluminium foil and show the children that they both weigh the same.

Then compress one into a tiny, dense ball while loosely crushing the second one into a much larger ball.

Then you take one while a child takes the other one, hold them over still water and ask (with a touch of suspense) what they will happen when you drop the aluminium foil balls into the water.

Then let go of them!

