

BUILD A DAM

RINGTAIL'S HOLLOW Environment & Outdoors



THE ADVENTURE:

Beavers build dams to flood out streams and create safe habitats for their families. Dams block streams or rivers to create a calm pond deep enough for the beavers to build a lodge.

Design and build a dam, then add water to one side to test your dam. You can build your dam in a paint tray or head outside to a sandbox or beach instead. Try different materials to find out what works best to keep the water on the upper side of your dam.

DO:

- Build a dam across the middle of the container.
- Test your dam by pouring water on one side. Does any water make it through?
- Tweak your dam until it keeps all of the water on one side of the container.
- For an extra challenge, try building a dam without any glue.

PLAN:

- Do you want to do this adventure inside, outside or at camp? Do you have access to a sandbox or beach you could use instead of the paint tray?
- What do you know about beaver dams?
- Why do beavers build dams?
- What materials will you use to build your dam?
- Do you want to do this adventure alone or in small groups? How will you make your groups?
- Where will you get water to test your dam?



REVIEW:

- What do you know now that you did not know before?
- What materials worked best? What didn't work so well?
- How does your dam compare to a real beaver dam?
- What do you think would happen to your dam if the water was flowing instead of sitting still?
- What elements of STEM were in this adventure? Science? Technology? Engineering? Mathematics?
- What did you like about this adventure? What did you not like? How would you do this adventure differently?

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MATERIALS:

- 1 paint tray Beaver Scout or group (in kit)
- Plasticine
- Popsicle sticks
- Toothpicks
- Straws
- Twigs
- Leaves
- Access to water

ONLINE RESOURCES:

- Beavers www.dkfindout.com/uk/animals-and-nature/rodents/beavers/
- Building a dam like a beaver www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/eng06.sci.engin.design.littledam/building-a-dam-like-a-beaver/
- Beaver Dam Craft Projects for Kids www.ehow.com/list_6787740_beaver-dam-craft-projects-kids.html

SAFETY TIP:

- Water on the floor can be a slipping hazard. Make sure to clean up any spills as soon as they happen.
- If you ever run into a real beaver dam, remember that it is an animal's home and not somewhere to play.