

## Spotlight on Real-World Practice

### Puddle Ponderings

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*“Will it float?”*

*“You need to make it lighter to make it more floatier!”*

*“What? How come my boat started to sink? I’ll wash it. It might be the mud.”*

*“I think my sail made it move faster than yours. I’ll help you make one.”*

*“Where did the puddle go? We were just floating and now the puddle is getting more little.”*

Science, language, critical thinking, creativity, cooperation, all this learning comes from a simple puddle. Today was the first day of heavy rain in a long time at our little school on the hill. When a spot of sunshine showed up a treasure of puddles came with it. Our kindergarteners had a wonderful opportunity to learn from a simple floating and sinking lesson. Their only parameters were that their boat fit in the little basket at “testing station” before they go out into the puddles and that those with no boots on ask a friend with boots on to help them get their boat out of the middle of the puddle.

We talked about going back to the drawing board if their boat sank and we talked about how not every experiment will work the first time. The children were off and running, grabbing items from the creation station, paper from the communication center, and miles and miles of tape from the supply shelf. The children designed, tested, observed, discussed, hypothesized, retested, and redesigned. They watched plastic float and cardboard sink. They pondered about the depth of the water, the speed of the boats, and the disappearance of the puddle. But in the middle of the science lesson, they showed compassion as boats floated into the middle of the puddle, helping each other to retrieve boats for the no boot friends or offering a popsicle stick for friends who didn’t have any. The children called each other over to share their new discoveries or to show each other how to add something new. When the experiment was over, they found wet clothes on their bodies and they offered each other their extra dry clothes if they didn’t have some of their own.

Our youngest learners will have a rich curriculum with the hands on experiences we provide, but they also receive an education that honors them as learners and brings the culture of friendship and compassion to the forefront. Educating the whole child is more than the curriculum; it is the child’s opportunity to use knowledge in an engaging, challenging, and safe environment supported by caring, perceptive, and qualified adults.

