



Home Activity: Temperature Investigation

What's the Point?

Get kids thinking about hot and cold temperatures and how we measure them. In this investigation we begin by observing warm and cold water using our skin. Then we use a science tool-a thermometer-to measure the temperature of the water more precisely.

Related Game:

PBS KIDS Lab Weather Surprise- Don't let the snowman melt! Help Gerald match the correct items in the environment with the right temperature.

Book Suggestions

- *What Will the Weather Be?* By Lynda DeWitt

Supplies

- Kitchen bowls
- Ice water
- Lukewarm water. (It is very important that the water not be too hot for the thermometer to register. Thermometers can break)
- An outdoor thermometer (the kind with the red line) that will register cold and warm temperatures safely

How Do I Do It?

- Fill one bowl with ice water and another with lukewarm water.
- Have children feel the ice water or even the outside of the bowl. Describe how it feels. Is it hot or cold?
- Put the thermometer in the ice water. What is happening to the red line on the thermometer?
- Now observe the water in the second bowl. How does it feel? Is it warmer than the ice water?
- Place the thermometer in this bowl. What happens to the thermometer?
- Now make some predictions. What will happen to the thermometer if we put it back into the ice water? Back into the warm water?
- Record findings in your science journal.

Take It Further

With thermometers, it's not obvious what the red line in the middle and the little lines and numbers mean. That's why we introduce the thermometer by starting with observation we can make with our own senses. We can feel that the water is cold. Ask children what else they can feel that is cold or warm then link that observation to the behavior of the thermometer.

