Float or Sink?

**Materials:** bucket with water, towel, various objects to test for floating and sinking

**Background Information:** Different objects do different things when they are put in water. Some objects float, which means they sit on the top of the water. Other objects sink, which means they go down to the bottom of the container of water.

**STEM Career Connection:** Professional or research anglers are people who use a rod and line to catch animals that live in water either to be eaten or for research by humans. Many anglers use lures, or artificial bait with hooks, that sink into water where the fish are found, and bobbers, small floats that help bait and lures stay at the right depth for fishing and signal when a fish has taken the bait.

**Literature Connections:** *Floating and Sinking* (My Science Library) by Amy Hansen, *Things That Float and Things That Don’t* by David A. Adler, *Does It Sink or Float?* (What’s the Matter?) by Susan Hughes

**Challenge:**
1. Gather a set of objects for testing. Objects can be collected from inside or outside and should be able to get wet.
2. Fill a large bucket/bowl with water. (This can also be done in a bathtub or sink.)
3. Predict (guess) which objects will float in water and which will sink.
4. Test each object in water to see if your predictions are correct.
5. Remove the objects from the water, dry off, and return

**Extension:** An object can also suspend in water, which means it doesn’t float on the surface or sink to the bottom of the container but kind of hangs out in the middle. Can you find or create an object that suspends in water?

**HINT:** This is a great activity to do outside or in the bathtub to minimize mess.

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