



# STORY + SENSORY: SWIMMING ANIMALS

## For Preschoolers



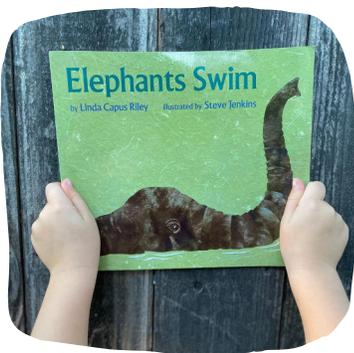
Story: Elephants Swim by Linda Capus Riley and Steve Jenkins

Sensory Table: Swimming Animals

Topics: Sensory, Reading Comprehension, Science, Movement

### STORY: ELEPHANTS SWIM, Written by Linda Capus Riley & Illustrated by Steve Jenkins

An informative yet simple story about what a wide variety of animals do in water. This book is full of rich vocabulary introduced through gentle rhyme, combined with beautiful paper collage illustrations. Some animals included may be new to young readers. There is more info in the back about how each animal moves through water.



### MOVEMENT: ACT IT OUT!

*A summer time version of OUTSIDE: Winter Animal Simon Says, pg. 51 in WinterKids' GOAL Maine Preschool Edition*

Re-read the story Elephants Swim. As you read about each animal, invite children to act out each unique way that animal swims. If you're at home this is fun to do in the bathtub or pool!

### SENSORY TRAY: SWIMMING ANIMALS



### MATERIALS:

- Sensory table/ tray or a medium sized storage container
- Water
- White Chia Seeds
- Measuring cups
- Bowl
- Blue food coloring
- Realistic animal toys/ figurines
- Rocks
- Garden trimmings

## STORY + SENSORY: SWIMMING ANIMALS || Continued...

### ABOUT THE CHIA SEEDS:



### How to prepare the chia seeds:

Prep the chia seeds a few hours ahead of time. In a bowl, soak one cup of chia seeds in two cups of water, and mix in blue food coloring.

After they've soaked for a few hours, spread the chia seed mixture into the sensory container/ table. Then gently add blue dyed water above it. The chia seeds should stick together and act as the floor of the body of water.

At first, the seed mixture helps hold the animals in place under water until children begin to play with the seeds- at that point they become an additional sensory and creative experience! (Think natural, edible water beads!)





## STORY + SENSORY: SWIMMING ANIMALS || Continued...

### PROCEDURE:

After reading *Elephants Swim*, fill the bottom of your sensory table (or a medium sized bin) with the chia seed mixture, then gently top it with a layer of blue water. Add rocks and garden trimmings to the water scene, along with a variety of realistic animal toys. Invite children to use what they learned in the story to demonstrate how each animal swims, and imaginatively play with the animals in the water.

### VOCABULARY:



Swim, rudder, kelp, wade, plunge, glide, paddle, seas, various animal names



### ANIMALS INCLUDED IN THIS BOOK:

Elephants, kangaroos, platypuses, armadillos, tigers, jaguars, sea otters, squid, hippos, wildebeests, pelicans, caribou, polar bears, sea turtles, walruses, whales.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK:



How does an \_\_\_\_\_ (animal) swim?  
 How can you make this \_\_\_\_\_ (animal) swim in our water?  
 Why does it need to swim that way?  
 How many animals do we have in our water?  
 How does the water feel in your hand?  
 How do the chia seeds feel?



Share your sensory table photos with us on social media! Tag us in your post (@WinterKids\_org on Instagram, @WinterKids on Facebook) and use the



hashtags: #MoveLearnExplore #WinterKids

Find more activities for your classroom or family in our WinterKids GOAL Binder, Maine Preschool Edition here: <https://winterkids.org/product/winterkids-guide-to-active-outdoor-learning-goal/>