



Floating and Sinking



Programme 3 8 May

By Albert Crawford

Today's programme looks, in a simple form, at what makes objects float or sink - their weight, shape or because they contain air. Among the questions posed are why does a small metal drawing pin sink, and a huge metal ship float?

Poems

Floating

I flattened out my plasticine
And set it in the tank
And do you know the cheeky thing
Turned round and slowly sank.

But when I took it out again
And shaped it like a boat
It wasn't cheeky any more
For it began to float.

(Why did this happen?)

Albert Crawford

The Sad Stone

Its easy to float
Said the blue rowing boat
As it bobbed on the mill pond one day
There's nothing to that
Said an old cricket bat
As it bobbed and floated away.

And see so can I
Said a duck floating by
With a swish and a splish and a quack
But here I sit stuck
In the mud Mister Duck
Said the Stone oh alas and alack.

And I can float too
Said a battered old shoe
If I'm careful and sitting up straight
And of course so can I
Said a swan floating by
With four cygnets behind and his mate.

Deary me said the stone with a sort of a groan
 The whole world can float past but me
 The branch and the boat
 And even the goat
 And the iron ship out on the sea.

Oh stop all that groan
 Said the duck to the stone
 Quickly picking him up in his bill
 Sit there on my back
 And away with a quack
 They floated down to the mill.

Albert Crawford

Story

Suddenly Tosh let out a little scream. "We're done for!" he cried, "We'll never get over this mighty river"..... He looked wildly around him and suddenly he spotted something shining in the sun. "Here," he whispered, "help me push this into the river and we can climb on and float across. Hurry!" and he began to lift one side of the lid of an old sardine tin that was lying on the bank.....

words for discussion:- drawing pin; wheat harvester; hay field; the cat was feeling 'a bit peckish'; dockin leaf.

- Experiment with different objects and find out why they float or sink. (Libby and Michael ask them about a sponge, a plastic mug, a pencil, a paperclip, a pair of scissors and some paper and ask how armbands help you to learn to swim).
- Talk about things that float for a while, and then sink. Why do they do this?
- Try floating an empty milk bottle on its side. See how much sand is needed to make it sit upright and not sink.
- Float a paper boat. How many marbles do you need to put in it before it sinks? Why does it do this?
- Libby talks about seeing different sorts of boats on Lough Erne. What types of boats might be made of wood, steel, fibre glass, rubber or propelled by sails, engines, oars or paddles.
- Read the two poems again and think about their content. Why did the boat-shaped plasticine float and the flat piece sink? Discuss all the floating objects and creatures in the Sad Stone poem. How did they float?
- Do the children know the difference between weight and size?
- Think of words that rhyme with float. Think of the words that rhyme with sink. Now make up a little poem about things that float, and another about things that sink.

Story Comprehension

- Why are harvesters not friendly to fieldmice?
- Why did the sardine lid sink and the tin itself float?
- What was the cat called? (*Ginger*)
- What did the mice use to row their sardine tin boat? (*twigs*)

Northern Ireland Curriculum

Science

Materials and Properties:

Pupils should be given opportunities to explore the properties of materials including shape, colour, texture and behaviour.

Animals and Plants:

Pupils should be given opportunities to find out about some animals, including how they grow, feed, move and use their senses.

English

Talking and Listening:

Pupils should have opportunities to: describe and talk about real and imaginary experiences and about people, places, things and events.

Cross-Curricular Links

