

materials

Wet, dry and melting

Lesson at a glance

Open by holding up one dry sponge and one drippy wet sponge and ask what happened to the drippy one. Name dry then wet with real samples, then rotate small groups through shallow water trays to feel paper, sponge and cloth dry, dip them, and notice the change while waiting children watch one focus tray. Gather on the carpet to name one change each. Reveal two clear bowls — ice already melting and water that was ice — and introduce melt. Close with a short display-only talk: things change when they get wet or warm.

Learning objectives

- Explore what happens when paper, sponge or cloth get wet
- Watch ice melt and say that some things change when they get warm or wet

Before the bell – prep

Set two or three shallow trays with lukewarm water, dry paper squares, sponge pieces, cloth scraps and a towel per tray, plus spare dry samples on a dry mat. Start one ice cube in a clear bowl before the lesson and have a second bowl of fully melted water ready out of sight. Keep towels handy for floor drips.

**Materials**

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
shallow water tray	1	group	classroom	a large plastic washing-up bowl or roasting tin
paper squares (scrap paper cut into small pieces)	6	group	classroom	torn scrap paper or old envelopes
sponge pieces (kitchen sponge cut into small chunks)	3	group	supermarket	pieces of clean dishcloth or foam from packaging
cloth squares (cotton or old tea-towel pieces)	3	group	classroom	old sock pieces or clean cloth scraps
towel or cloth for drying hands	1	group	classroom	kitchen roll on a mat
ice cubes	6	class	supermarket	ice from a home freezer brought in a cool bag
clear bowl	2	class	classroom	a clear plastic food tub
spare dry paper, sponge and cloth samples for comparing	1	group	classroom	one dry piece of each material shared at the carpet

Safety watch-point

Sleeves up; lukewarm water only; wipe floor drips straight away; children stand back from ice bowls; no tasting water, ice or meltwater; wash hands after.



Teaching moves

- **Getting Started:** Hold up one dry sponge and one already-wet sponge. Ask only: what do you think happened to this one? Accept any guess in about three minutes, then stop — leave material names and trays for later so the surprise is still intact.
- **Wet and dry:** Point to a real dry sample and say dry once; point to a wet sponge and say wet once. Save melt for the ice bowls. Invite two or three quick guesses about what will change when paper, sponge or cloth get wet, then move to stations.
- **Wetting stations:** Model once with paper only in about a minute: I wonder... I think... I try... I noticed it went darker, floppy and a bit heavy. Send one group of four to six to the trays; keep the rest on the carpet watching one focus tray and answering Is it still dry? What changed? Can you squeeze it? Rotate so every child tries at least two materials. Stay close to wipe spills.
- **What changed?:** On the carpet, hold up wet samples beside matching dry ones. Invite several children to hold one wet item and say one change — darker, heavier, floppy, drippy, cold. Revoice: the water changed how it looks and feels; it is still paper, sponge or cloth, now wet.
- **Ice melts:** You handle the ice only. Bring bowl A (ice already melting in the warm room) and bowl B (water that was ice) to the carpet. Ask what they can see now, take a quick stay-hard / melt / get-bigger guess, then name melt for the first time: the ice is changing into water because our room is warm. Do not wait for a full melt in the lesson.
- **Make-sense talk:** Keep the carpet talk oral and short. Draw out only two ideas: water changes how paper, sponge and cloth look and feel; ice melts into water when it gets warm. Echo children's own phrases in slightly fuller words so they hear the big idea — things can change when they get wet or warm.



What it should show

Most infants will notice paper goes darker and floppy, sponge gets heavy and drippy, and cloth darkens and may feel colder. Affirm any real touch or sight change linked to water. At the bowls, expect them to see water around smaller ice and name that the ice turned into water because the room is warm. If someone says the paper turned into a different thing, show the dry twin beside it and keep the material name the same.



Misconceptions & interventions

- **It's not paper any more — it turned into something else when it got wet.** — Hold the wet sample beside its dry twin and say both names the same: still paper (or sponge, or cloth) — now it is wet. Water changed how it looks and feels.
- **The ice melted because we put hot water on it or because someone touched it.** — Point to the two bowls and the warm classroom: no hot water, no flame — only the warm room. The ice got warm and changed into water; that is melting.



**Differentiation**

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Invite the child to point to a wet or dry sample and say one word only — heavy, floppy, drippy or cold — while you hold both samples.	• Ask which material holds more water after a squeeze, and whether paper or cloth changed more.	• Ask them to tell the class one way sponge and paper changed differently, still using wet and dry.

Cross-curricular hook

Oral language: children practise one clear noticing sentence — it went floppy because it got wet — on the carpet share.