Scoop and Pour

measurement, measurement vocabulary, volume

Materials
- sand and water table
- many containers of different sizes (bottles, cups, bowls, milk cartons, empty clean juice cans)
- boxes (for use with dry materials)
- spoons, scoops, funnels, strainers, beaters
- water, sand, seeds, or anything that can be poured

What to do
1. Fill the sand and water table with any type of material you choose: water, sand, seeds, and so on. (As an example for this activity, we’ll use water.)
2. Place several different containers in the sand and water table. Let the children explore the materials before starting the activity.
3. Fill one container with water with the children’s help.
4. Pick out another container. Ask, “If I pour the water from this bottle into this other bottle, will the second bottle be able to hold all the water?”
5. Let each child make a prediction, then pour the water from the first container into the second as the children observe.
6. Ask a child to describe what happened. Were their predictions correct?
7. Continue with several other containers, following the same procedure.
8. Ask the children to line up the bottles from the one that held the most to the one that held the least.
9. Pick out a standard container, such as a measuring cup. Point out one of the larger containers in the table. Say, “If I want to fill the big bowl with water and use this measuring cup, how many times will I have to fill the cup and pour water into the bowl?”
10. Write down the children’s predictions.
11. Let each child take turns using the cup to fill the large bowl. Record the number of cups by making a slash on a piece of paper for each cup.
12. When the bowl is full, help the children count the number of slashes. Compare that amount with the predictions the children made.

More to do
This activity can be done with a variety of materials. Use different sizes of containers and common objects. For example, in the dramatic play center, ask which of three different size boxes would make the best bed for a baby doll.

Virginia Jean Herrod, Columbia, SC
Searching for Buried Treasure

counting

Materials
sandbox or sand and water table
shovels
several small objects to hide

What to do
1. Bury several groups of small objects (for example, five blocks, four toy cars, and eight pencils) in a sandbox or sand and water table.
2. Then, call out the buried items, and ask the children to find them.
3. Once all the items have been found, count them as a group to make sure everything is accounted for.

+ Erin Huffstetler, Maryville, TN

Shoveling Sand

counting, volume

Materials
plastic tub filled with sand
large plastic sheeting or plastic swimming pool
large number of 2” paper triangles
transparent tape
plastic drinking straws or stir sticks
assortment of plastic sand pails or containers
plastic sand shovel or scoop
marker

What to do
1. Place the tub of sand and the other materials on the plastic sheeting or in the swimming pool. This makes cleanup easier.
2. Create a large number of “flags” by taping paper triangles to drinking straws.