Dear Families:

Today, we explored the concept of “sink or float.” We made boats out of milk cartons and used various weighted objects such as pennies and rocks to see how many objects it would take to sink our boats.

Because buoyancy is a difficult concept for young children to grasp, we do many hands-on activities to demonstrate this concept so that the children can make the connection on their own.

The bathtub is a great place to conduct such hands-on activities at home. Give your child different objects to “test out” in the tub. Many children believe that heavy objects sink and lighter objects float. Point out that some heavy objects like boats float, while lighter objects such as coins sink. Ask your child: “Why do you think this is so?” Then categorize your objects by whether they sink or float. This activity can go on and on⎯and discussions about displacement, gravity and shape can come into play. But, for now, stick to the concept of “sink or float.”

Have fun with your bathtub experiments!