ready, set, Go Outside!

Ice is COOL

Go outside on a very cold winter day and check for ice. It's the coolest form of water there is. Go to a pond, marsh, stream, or even some big puddles. You can also do ice experiments in your kitchen or backyard. Note of caution: Be safe. Never go out on ice.

Parent/Teacher Note
Skills Learned:
Observation and comparison: habitat, physiological adaptations, and life cycles
Experimentation: measurement, physical properties of water, forming and testing hypotheses, comparing results

For more fun activities with ice, go to:
www.massaudubon.org/go

Close Look

Observe from the edge of a frozen pond and you may see a lot going on beneath the ice. The layer of ice that forms on the surface actually insulates the pond, so the water underneath stays a bit warmer. This helps pond plants and animals survive the winter. Look carefully. Can you find these things?

- *A plant that is partly above and partly below the ice*
- *An air bubble in the ice*
- *An insect or other small creature suspended in the ice*
- *A fish, turtle, or aquatic insect swimming underneath the ice*

Which is Lighter—Water or Ice?

Place ice cubes in a cup of water and see if they float to the top or sink to the bottom. If ice is lighter than water, the cubes will float.

Ice in the Air

Water in the air condenses as the temperature falls. In cold weather, the water forms crystals of ice and often appears as white frost. Look closely with a magnifying glass. You might see that each ice crystal is symmetrical with six sides, just like a snowflake.

Have a Meltdown

Fill a plastic container to the very top with ice. Bring the container indoors and let the ice melt. Once it has melted, is the water level higher, equal, or lower than the ice level before?