

# Lesson Plan: Farm Animal Bath Time Fun

## Materials Needed:

- A large, shallow plastic bin, tub, or water table
- Several plastic toy farm animals (pigs, cows, sheep, horses, etc.)
- **For the "Mud":** A taste-safe mixture of 2-3 tablespoons of cocoa powder, 1/2 cup of flour, and enough water to create a muddy paste. (Alternatively, chocolate pudding or Oobleck with brown food coloring works well).
- **For the "Bath":** A separate bin or bowl with warm water and a few squirts of tear-free baby soap or bubble bath.
- Tools for washing: Soft-bristled toothbrushes, small vegetable scrubbers, sponges, or washcloths.
- Small cups for pouring.
- A small towel for drying the animals.
- A larger towel or waterproof mat to place under the play area for easy cleanup.

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## Learning Objectives

Through this sensory play activity, your child will:

- **Develop Fine Motor Skills:** By grasping the animals, holding a brush, and using a scrubbing motion.
- **Explore Sensory Textures:** By feeling the sticky "mud," the warm, bubbly water, and the wet animals.
- **Learn Cause and Effect:** By discovering that scrubbing with a brush removes the mud and that pouring water makes a splash.
- **Build Vocabulary:** By hearing and associating words like "dirty," "clean," "wash," "scrub," "bubbles," "wet," "dry," and the names of farm animals.

## Lesson Activities

### Part 1: The Muddy Farm (5-7 minutes)

1. **Set the Scene:** Place the bin with the taste-safe "mud" on your waterproof mat. Put the clean, dry farm animals next to the bin.
2. **Introduce the Animals:** Sit with your child and pick up each animal. Say its name and make its sound. For example, "This is the cow. The cow says 'Mooooo!'"
3. **Get Messy!:** Show your child how to dip an animal into the mud. Say, "Oh no! The pig is playing in the mud! He's so dirty now!" Encourage your child to help get the other animals muddy. Let them squish, smear, and cover the toys. Focus on using descriptive words.

### Part 2: Bubble Bath Time! (10-15 minutes)

1. **Prepare the Bath:** Bring out the second bin filled with warm, soapy water. Swish the water to make lots of bubbles.
2. **Time to Get Clean:** Pick up a muddy animal and say, "This cow is so dirty. Let's give him a bath!" Place the animal in the bubbly water.
3. **Model How to Wash:** Hand your child a small brush or sponge. Show them how to gently scrub

the mud off an animal. Use simple, repetitive language: "Scrub, scrub, scrub the pig. Wash the mud away. Now he's all clean!"

4. **Encourage Independent Play:** Let your child take the lead. They might enjoy simply transferring animals from the mud to the water, pouring water with the cups, or splashing in the bubbles. Narrate their actions to build their vocabulary: "You are washing the sheep! Look at all the bubbles you're making!"

### Part 3: Drying Off & Clean-Up (5 minutes)

1. **Dry the Animals:** Once an animal is clean, say, "The cow is all clean! Let's get him dry." Show your child how to place the wet animal on the small towel and gently pat it dry. This introduces the concept of "wet" versus "dry."
2. **Wrap Up:** Continue until all the animals are clean and dry. Line them up and admire how clean they are. "Look at our clean farm!"
3. **Involve in Clean-up:** End the activity by washing your child's hands together in the soapy water. Talk about how we get clean after we play.

### Differentiation and Extension Ideas

- **For a Hesitant Child:** If your child is unsure about the sticky mud, don't force it. You can start with just the water play portion. You can also be the one to put the mud on the animals while they watch, and their only job is to do the "rescuing" by washing them.
- **For Language Development:** Sing songs during the activity. A great one is singing "This is the way we wash the cow, wash the cow, wash the cow..." to the tune of "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush."
- **Extend the Play:** After the animals are dry, you can extend the play by building them a "barn" out of blocks or a cardboard box.