

STEM BINGO!

<p>Build with blocks. Let your child build independently at first and make discoveries on his or her own. Then, join in the play and talk about what you build.</p>	<p>Make a ramp out of a board or cardboard box. Use it to make cars go and then experiment to see what happens when an item doesn't have wheels!</p>	<p>Put items in size order. You can use anything for this - nesting cups, stuffed animals, blocks of all kinds, even family members!</p>	<p>Make patterns with toys (color, shape, size), or by type of food during a meal.</p>	<p>Count things as you go about your day - during meals, in the car, during playtime, and even during bathtime!</p>
<p>Allow your child to deconstruct things you find around your house. Large boxes are great for this, as are other cardboard recyclables. Figure out how to put it back the way it was or continue taking it apart and make something new. Head outside and allow your child to take apart things they find in nature. Try making close observations about parts of leaves, flowers, or plants.</p>	<p>Young children love flashlights! Allow your child to experiment with the flashlight independently if he or she is old enough. With children of all ages, try illuminating favorite objects, putting the light under a lightweight scarf, behind clear/colored plastic (plasticware lids work great), and turning the lights off and using the flashlight together in the dark.</p>	<p>Head outside and count things you find in your yard or on a walk. Notice with your child that things found outside can be put into categories (living vs nonliving, trees vs animals, etc.) or come in different types (different species of birds or trees).</p>	<p>Experiment with and learn about colors! Try mixing playdough colors or different colors of paint to see what happens. Put a white flower in water/food coloring mixture and watch it change color!</p>	<p>Experiment with magnets! Using a strong magnet, allow your child to make discoveries about what the magnet will stick to around your house. Using large magnets helps keep this activity safe for young babies.</p>
<p>Try out loose parts play! Loose parts are any materials that can be combined, transported, designed, taken apart, and redesigned. Examples may include materials such as shells, stones, pinecones, sticks, bottle caps, balls, buttons, blocks, etc. Be sure to only include larger items if your child is young and at risk of choking. Check out this great video for examples: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=buMPY6WExLQ</p>	<p>Find a hill and get playing! Watch as your child discovers what happens to a ball when it is at the top of the hill. Wonder with your child what else could roll down a hill and experiment!</p>	<p>Follow your child's lead! When he expresses interest in a certain activity, use that interest to teach through play. Having conversations about numbers of things, size, shape, color, position (up, down, over, under, etc.) when you play is encouraging STEM thinking!</p>	<p>Try using "I wonder..." statements when doing the activities on this card. For example, "I wonder what would happen if we put this toy into the water?" Let your child think, make a prediction, and try it out! See if your child can come up with an explanation or new discovery. Add in what you know after he has made some conclusions of his own.</p>	<p>Try drawing a "blueprint" for a block tower and see if your child can build it. Simplifying this for a very young child might look like finding a block and seeing if he can find a matching block. Older children might be able to match a simple drawing using a couple shapes. To extend for even older children, add more blocks to your blueprint drawing or have your child draw the blueprint and then build!</p>
<p>Notice science and math concepts in books you read with your child. Ask open-ended questions about why things happen the way they do in the story. Even if your child doesn't necessarily get the answer "right", allowing her to talk through ideas helps to develop reasoning skills and builds self-esteem. With younger children, try making connections between the story and experiences the child is familiar with.</p>	<p>Get into water play! Whether in the bath, a water table, or even a spare plastic bin, experimenting with water allows a child to develop hand/eye coordination. Additionally, your child will learn about cause and effect and measurement, all while providing a great sensory experience!</p>	<p>Incorporate the senses during play! Talk about what you see, how things feel to touch, what things sound like, and if they have a smell or taste. Babies and young children love learning through their senses, especially when multiple senses are combined!</p>	<p>Experiment with ice. Together with your child, freeze a couple small plastic toys in muffin tins. When they are frozen, observe together the changes that occurred and allow your child to problem solve how to get his or her toys out. With babies, allowing them to feel ice on their skin activates the senses and provides a great learning experience!</p>	<p>Try incorporating STEM vocabulary when playing with your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •"Let's observe the bird to see what it does." •"Let's create a house with these blocks." •"Look, you made a pattern with these toys!" •"Can you predict what will happen if we try it this way?"