

STEM in Storytime

STEM is Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math

Any storytime can incorporate STEM concepts and ideas. Sometimes, it's as simple as broadening your focus to include new approaches to activities you're already planning. As you prepare storytime, you can add in new layers of scientific and mathematical thought or reasoning. Is there a chance for children to estimate how many there are of something? Is there an opportunity for the group to talk through how or why something happened? Are there patterns in the song or story that you can talk about as a group? Young children are learning how the world works and STEM concepts help them make sense of it all.

Things to try

- Include non-fiction or informational books in storytime.
- Ask children to make predictions about the story as you read. Use questions like, "What do you think will happen next?"
- Mathematical thinking is more than just counting! Any activity that helps children sort, match, or find patterns is developing early math skills.
- Art fosters scientific thinking, too! Art can be a chance to experiment with different materials and to explore concepts like color mixing or observation skills.
- Reason out loud about why things happen in books. Ask questions like, "I wonder why the ice melted?"
- Try including simple science experiments in storytime. Maybe you can use balloons to experiment with static electricity, or plastic bags to make a parachute!

Book Suggestions:

- *Do You Know which Ones Will Grow?* By Susan Shea
- *How to Spy on a Shark* by Lori Haskins Houran
- *Up in the Garden and Down in the Dirt* by Kate Messner
- *If You Plant a Seed* by Kadir Nelson
- *How to Clean a Hippopotamus* by Robin Page and Steve Jenkins
- *Alexander, Who Used to Be Rich Last Sunday* by Judith Viorst
- *Quack and Count* by Keith Baker

Getting Started:

STEM thinking starts with asking questions about the way the world works.

- Children will get excited about things that excite you. Show enthusiasm for informational books and scientific reasoning.
- Let children come up with their own ideas and solutions. Don't be too quick to jump in with the "right" answer.
- Literacy and STEM go together. Both areas of learning require pattern recognition, a rich vocabulary, and observation skills.

