

Madison Public Library's

STEM KITS

What is a STEM Kit?

- A box of books and activities focused around a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) topic that Early Childhood Education providers can check out from the library for 6-8 weeks.
- STEM Kits are geared to 3 – 5 yr. olds
- Each STEM Kit will contain:
 1. 4-12 books (including fiction and non-fiction picture books as well as early readers in English and in Spanish) around a specific STEM focus for each kit
 2. Activity instructions & supplies
 3. Conversation Starter Cards with open-ended questions for you to use during and leading up to activities

The books and activities in the kits support the following STEM learning goals*:

1. That children make observations
2. make predictions
3. ask questions
4. expand their vocabulary
5. and demonstrate an increased interest in STEM topics

**from Dr. Sherri Killins' Interview with Rae Pica. "Teaching STEM in Preschool, really?"*

Books in the Kits

- Read-aloud titles
- Books best experienced by the children themselves (e.g. Herve Tullet)
- Narratives
- Informational
- All are connected to the concepts and activities in the kits.

Activities in the Kits

- Encourage an emphasis on the discoveries that children make through play and experimentation.
- Are meant to be open-ended explorations. Children may solve problems in unique ways – this is valuable as it encourages expanded thinking.
- Children may also use the supplies in the kits in surprising or new ways and this is valuable and desired!
- Teachers: feel free to add your own ideas and thinking to the activities included in the kits.
- You are encouraged to repeat the activities with your students. Children will often deepen or change their approaches when given the opportunity to explore the materials multiple times.

**Note: Until additional funds can be secured to support the kits, there are not funds for the replacement of non-consumables in the kits. So, there are some funds for more paper towels, corn starch, play dough, rice, pipe cleaners, and things like that, but not funds for another gears kit should one get lost or damaged in its entirety, for example.*

How do I get a kit?

- Request a new kit from your local YS librarian.
- They will deliver it to you within a week or so.
- You can return any STEM kit you currently have at your site when they deliver the new one, or you can call to have them pick it up anytime.

Labeling

- The **books** and **containers** in the kits are labeled with the name and number of the STEM Kit to which they belong.
- The kit **totes** are labeled on both ends
- The **materials** are labeled with MPL for easy identification as much as was possible so that you can recognize items as separate from your own classroom supplies.

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