

## What is a STEM?

STEM is an acronym. It was used originally by the US government to describe fields of study that helped immigrants get work visas: science, technology, engineering, and math. Today, educators are linking these areas together in what is called STEM curriculum. When we break down the acronym into its parts, we see that early childhood programs practice STEM activities every day.

**Science** activities include exploring water and sand, comparing and contrasting natural materials like rocks and soil, rolling balls across the room, and looking through a magnifying glass to count how many legs are on the bug that was caught during outdoor play.

**Technology** activities include computers, but also identifying simple machines like gears and wheels and pulleys.

**Engineering** in preschool happens in the block area. There children are planning and designing structures every day with little teacher direction.

**Math** activities include counting and matching shapes and making patterns.

Source: <http://www.bostonchildrensmuseum.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/STEMGuide.pdf>