



STEM STARTS AT HOME

Growing Thinkers through Everyday Play

A parent guide for Kindergarten to Grade 2

WHAT STEM REALLY LOOKS LIKE AT HOME

S **Science** is asking why and finding out.

T **Technology** is using tools to solve a problem (and a wooden spoon counts).

E **Engineering** is building, and rebuilding after it falls.

M **Math** is counting, sorting, measuring, and noticing patterns.

Your child is already doing this. Your job is to notice it, name it, and keep it going.

Five Habits of a Young Thinker

1 Noticing

Paying attention on purpose. Play I-Spy with describing words instead of names. **"What do you notice about this one?"**

2 Wondering

Asking a question worth chasing. Keep a Wonder Jar for the ones you cannot answer. **"I don't know. How could we find out?"**

3 Predicting

Guessing what will happen, and saying why. Guess which bag is heavier, then lift them. **"What do you think will happen if...?"**

4 Testing

Trying it and watching what happens. Sink or float with five things from around the house. **"Let's find out together."**

5 Explaining

Putting the thinking into words. Let them tell someone else what you found out. **"How did you figure that out?"**

The Words That Keep Ideas Alive

QUESTIONS THAT STOP

- "What colour is it?"
- "How many are there?"
- "Is that right?"

QUESTIONS THAT GROW

- "What do you notice?"
- "Why do you think that?"
- "How could we find out?"

Wait five seconds

Most of us wait less than one. Young children need longer to gather their words, and the silence is where the thinking happens.

Resist the rescue

When the tower falls, the instinct is to fix it. Try "What could you try next?" or "Show me what happened."

Say "I don't know"

Three words that teach more than the right answer, as long as "let's find out" comes next.

**Start
this week**

Pick one moment you are already in every day: the kettle boiling, the walk to the car, bath time. Ask one question, then wait five seconds. That is the whole practice.