

S.T.E.A.M. in Early Childhood

Thomas T. Peters, Ed.D.

SC Coalition for Mathematics and Science

Sandra M. Linder, Ph.D.

Eugene T. Moore College of Education, Clemson University

Nichole Myles

Children's Museum of the Lowcountry

Tracy Lamb, Moderator

SC First Steps Board of Trustees

**2017 Chairmen's Summit on Early Childhood:
Equity Begins Here**



STEM IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

FIVE “SIMPLE” STEPS TO SUCCESS.

Dr. Tom Peters

Executive Director

tpeters@clemson.edu

864-656-1863

FIRST STEPS SC December 8, 2017

FOUNDING PARTNERS



QUIZ Time!!!!

Part 1 – Name that Acronym!

- a. STEM
- b. STEAM
- c. STREAM
- d. THEMAS



Incorrect response

Part 2 – Who Cares?

You may discuss with a neighbor.

STEM + Pipeline = A Pervasive Association

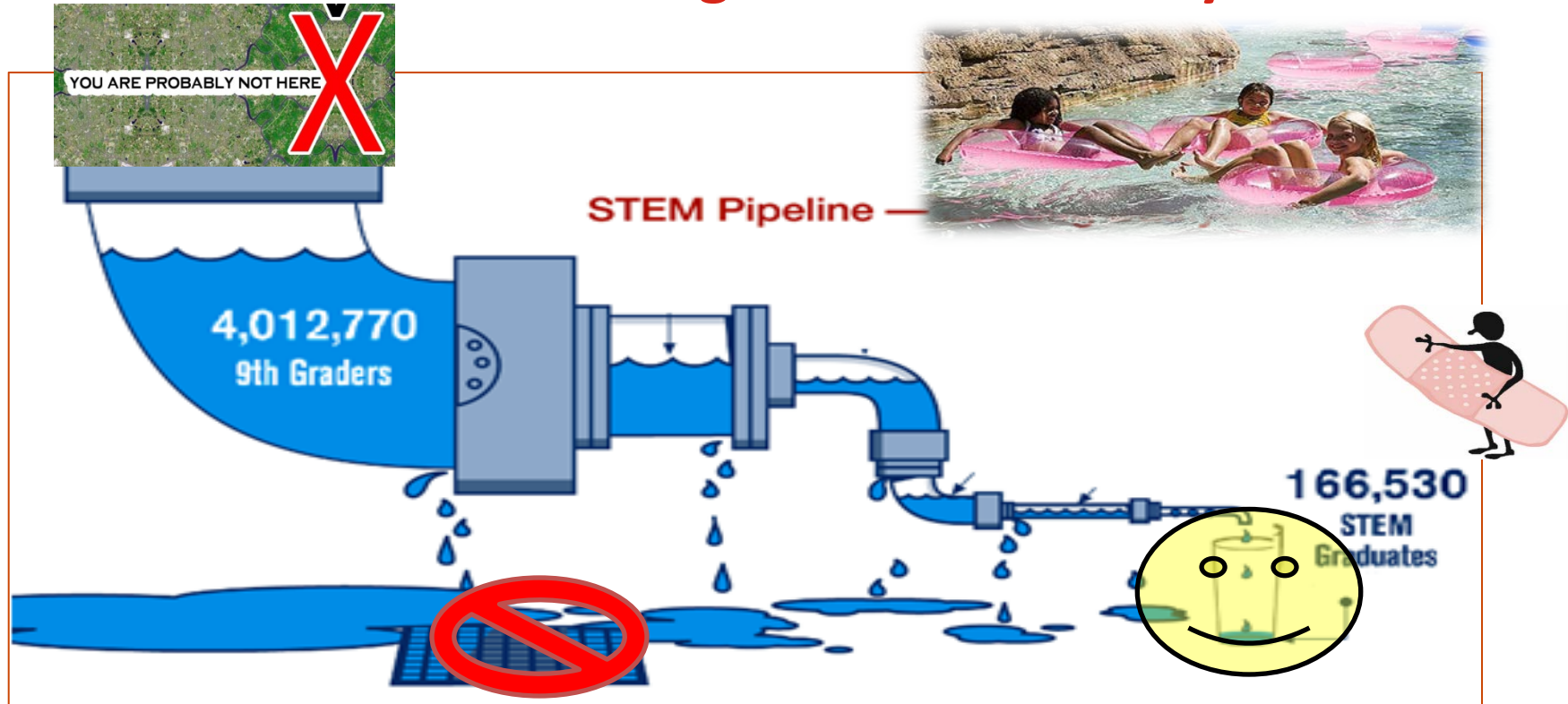
STEM Pipeline - About 1,500,000 results (0.61 seconds)



Source: NCES Digest of Education Statistics; Science & Engineering Indicators 2008

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What are some things this visual tells you?



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WISH
YOU
WERE
HERE



General knowledge about
the world we live in
matters for future STEM
success.

FIRST, Do No Harm!



SECOND, Engage Parents!

Before college, WHAT got you interested in STEM?

34% of males and 39% of females identify a family member.



Interest begins at age 7-8!!!

(Harris Poll 2011)

Who had the most influence on your decision to study in this area?

36% of college STEM students identify a family member.

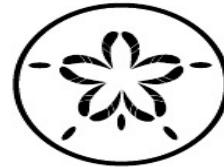
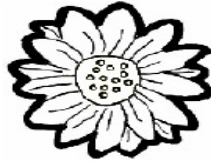
THIRD, Explore...don't Bore!

smell

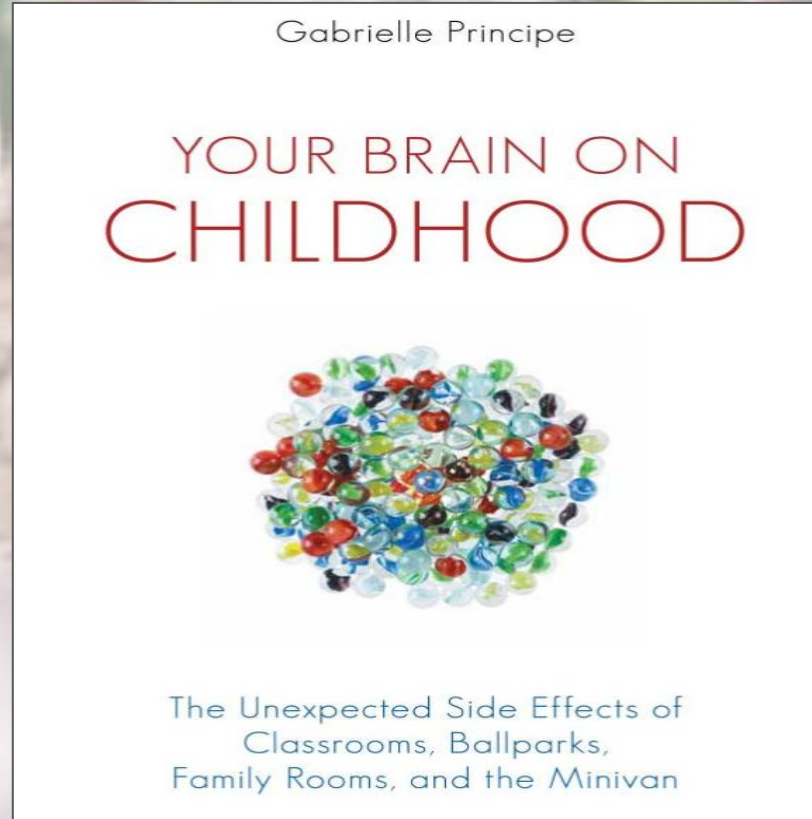
Name _____

Your Sense of **Smell**

You use your nose to *smell* things. This is your sense of **smell**.
Look at each picture. Circle the pictures that show things you can *smell*.



FOURTH, Play Matters!



FINALLY, Consider a Different Metaphor!



Practice, grit, occasional wipe-outs, balance, a bit of luck, and bright opportunities awaiting if you can stay on board.

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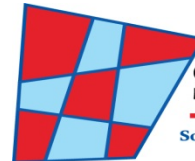
QUESTIONS?



SOUTH CAROLINA'S COALITION FOR MATHEMATICS & SCIENCE

SCCMS

- ACHIEVEMENT BY DESIGN -



S²TEM Centers SC

Solutions in Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics Education

Understanding STEM practices to better support 21st century learners

Sandra M. Linder

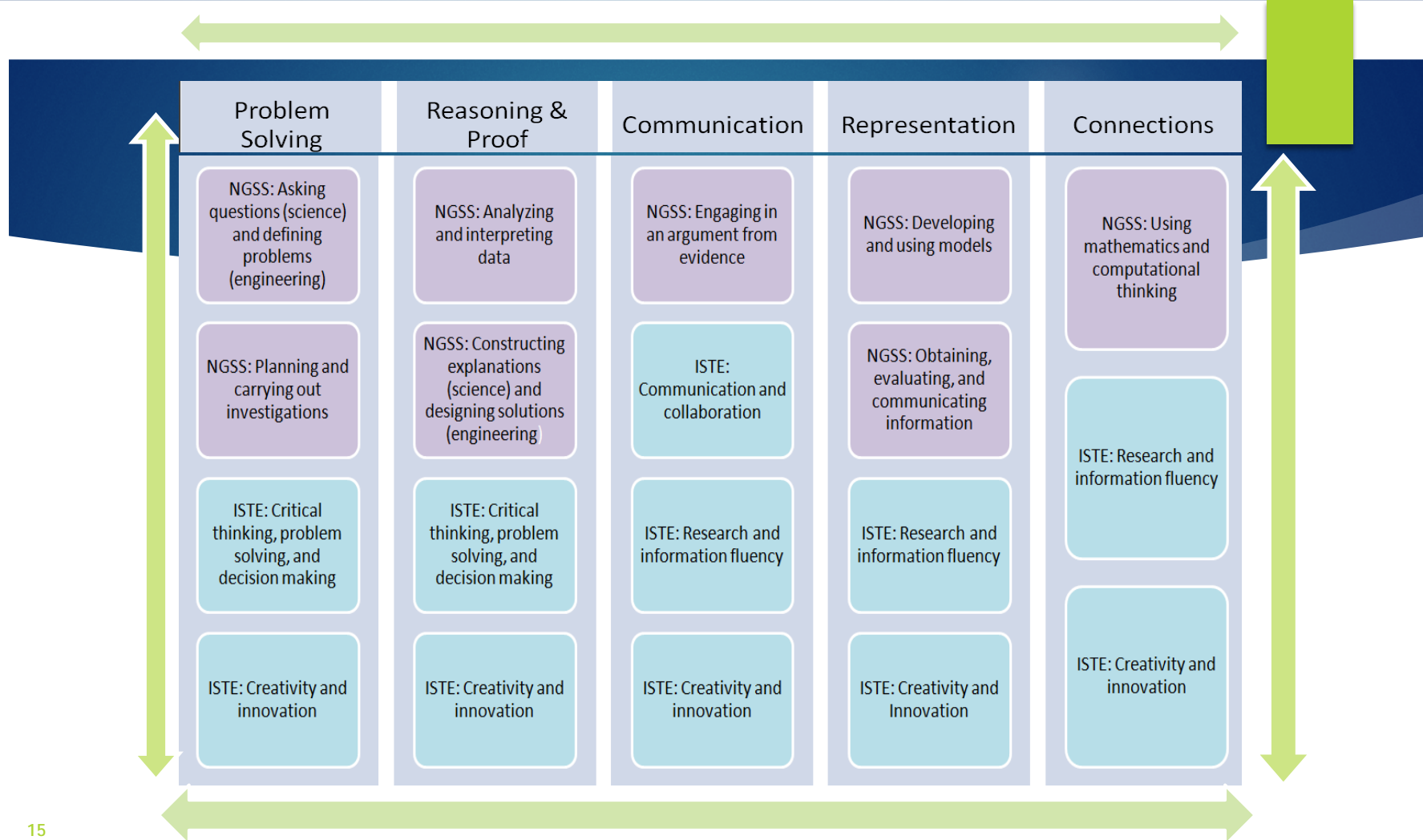
Associate Professor: Early Childhood Mathematics

Clemson University

sandram@clemson.edu

Why STEM?

- ▶ STEM was originally conceived not because of content but because the ways in which we engage in content are the same across Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics



STEM starts with problem solving

- ▶ The teachers' role in an early childhood classroom is to facilitate learning through ***problem solving scenarios*** (either play-based or formal lessons) and through ***questioning***.
- ▶ Teachers can pose short-term or long-term problems or scenarios (e.g.)
 - ▶ How can we set the table for snack? How can we make sure we all have the same amount of food?
 - ▶ How can we organize the materials in the art center so that they are accessible without teacher help?
 - ▶ How can we work together to solve this puzzle?

Designing STEM Provocations

- ▶ In addition to everyday experiences, teachers can develop open-ended explorations- also known as provocations
 - ▶ Implement in learning centers, outdoors, or any space where learning can occur
 - ▶ Provocations give teachers opportunities for intentional observations
 - ▶ Teachers carefully select materials and media and set out for children to explore without giving instructions or directions
 - ▶ A teacher wants to examine what children know and understand about early materials, "create a provocation area where children engage with rocks, sticks, leaves, sand, seashells, cotton, and other materials" (Eckhoff & Linder, 2017).

What do EC Teachers think of STEM/STEAM?

- ▶ Examination of teacher beliefs related to STEAM education following a one-day conference for early childhood educators (Jamil, Linder, & Stegelin, 2017).
 - ▶ 41 participants
 - ▶ Professional development focused on STEAM integration across the early years
 - ▶ 35 item survey- STEAM beliefs
 - ▶ Follow up interviews to better understand participant needs/challenges related to implementing STEAM practices

Brief Survey Findings

Item	Mean (SD)*
It is important for all students to learn exactly the same material in a class	2.88 (1.31)
The methods and concepts for a good STEAM lesson can all come from the same discipline	3.36 (1.58)
To understand what students really know, teachers should test them on demonstrating specific skills, instead of confusing them with application problems	2.69 (1.38)
If you cannot state what a student should learn from your STEAM lesson, you should not spend time teaching it	4.10 (1.26)

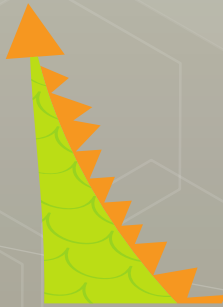
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Follow Up Interviews

- ▶ Focus on Products
- ▶ Priorities for Instruction
- ▶ View of Children
- ▶ Management

Moving Forward

- ▶ Sustained PD experiences focusing on STEM/STEAM processes
- ▶ Support for teachers when implementing STEM/STEAM practices
- ▶ Further research on teacher beliefs and motivation towards STEM/STEAM



full STEAM ahead: STEM & STEAM learning in the informal space

Nichole Myles, Executive
Director
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children's
MUSEUM
of the lowcountry

Where young children learn

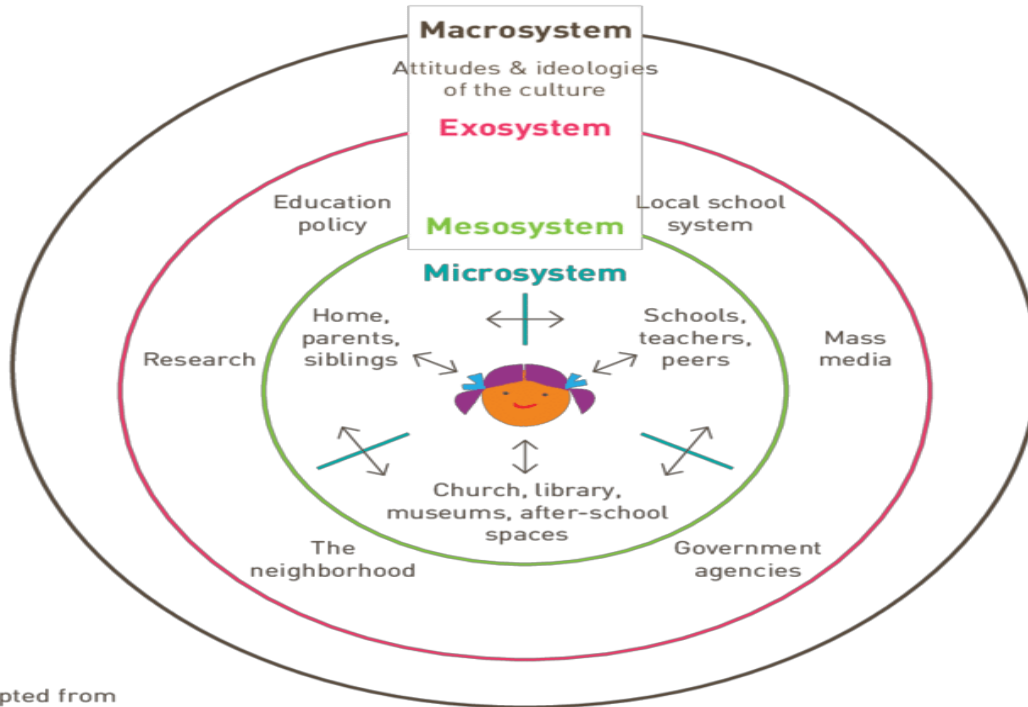
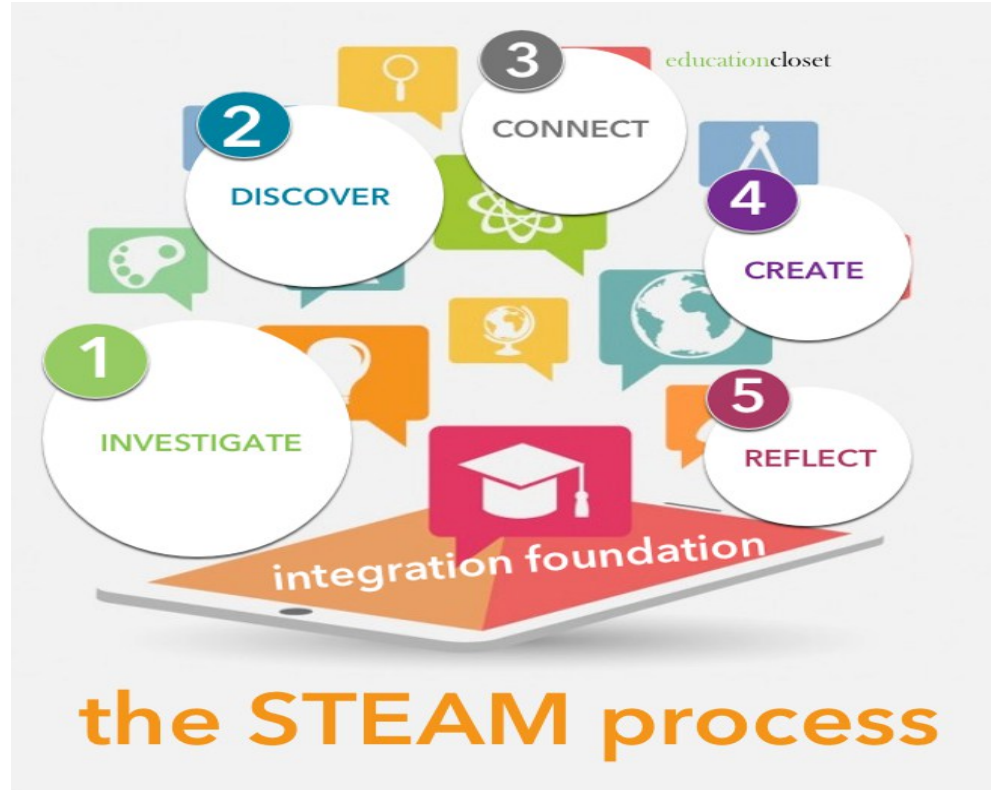


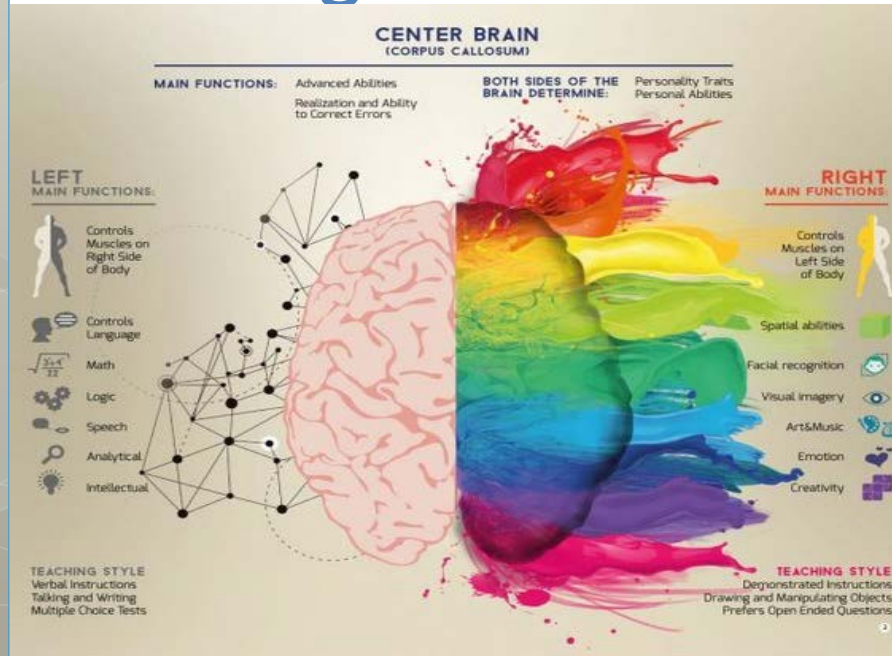
Diagram adapted from
Takeuchi & Levine, 2014

STEAM

- science
- technology
- engineering
- arts



Informal experiences in STEAM learning



- interdisciplinary
- open-ended
- hands-on
- project-based
- creative process focused
- values failure
- develops 21st century skills

STEAM learners in the informal space

- Wide developmental ranges of students
 - academically
 - socially/emotionally
 - motor
- Wide variety of experiences
 - opportunity gap
 - family/school culture





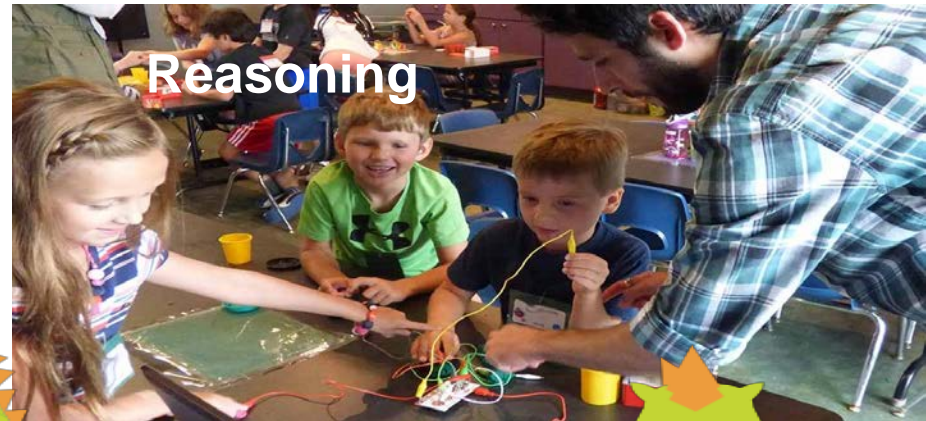
Observing



Planning



Testing



Reasoning

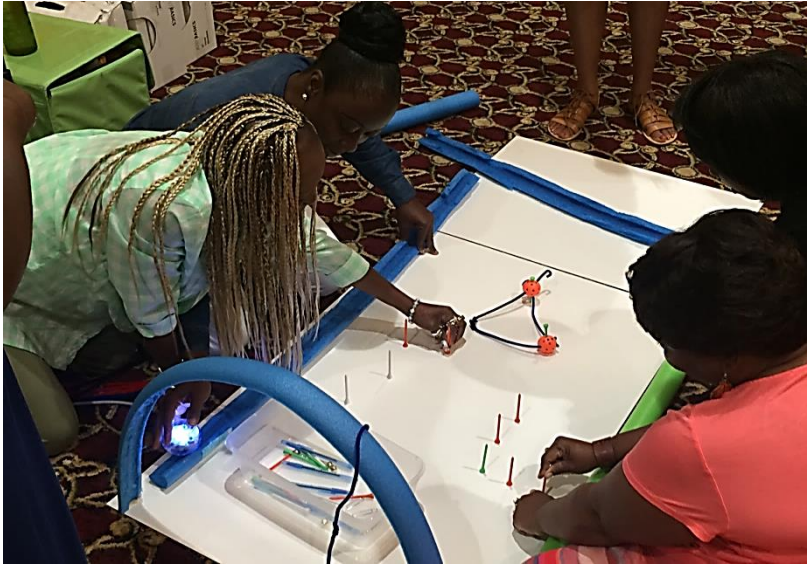


Engaging parents in the informal space

- collaborative
- observation
- follow up
- context and messaging
- meaning and importance
- NAEYC for families
 - *parents need to know it's okay if things don't work - there will be days that things won't work but children will figure it out.*

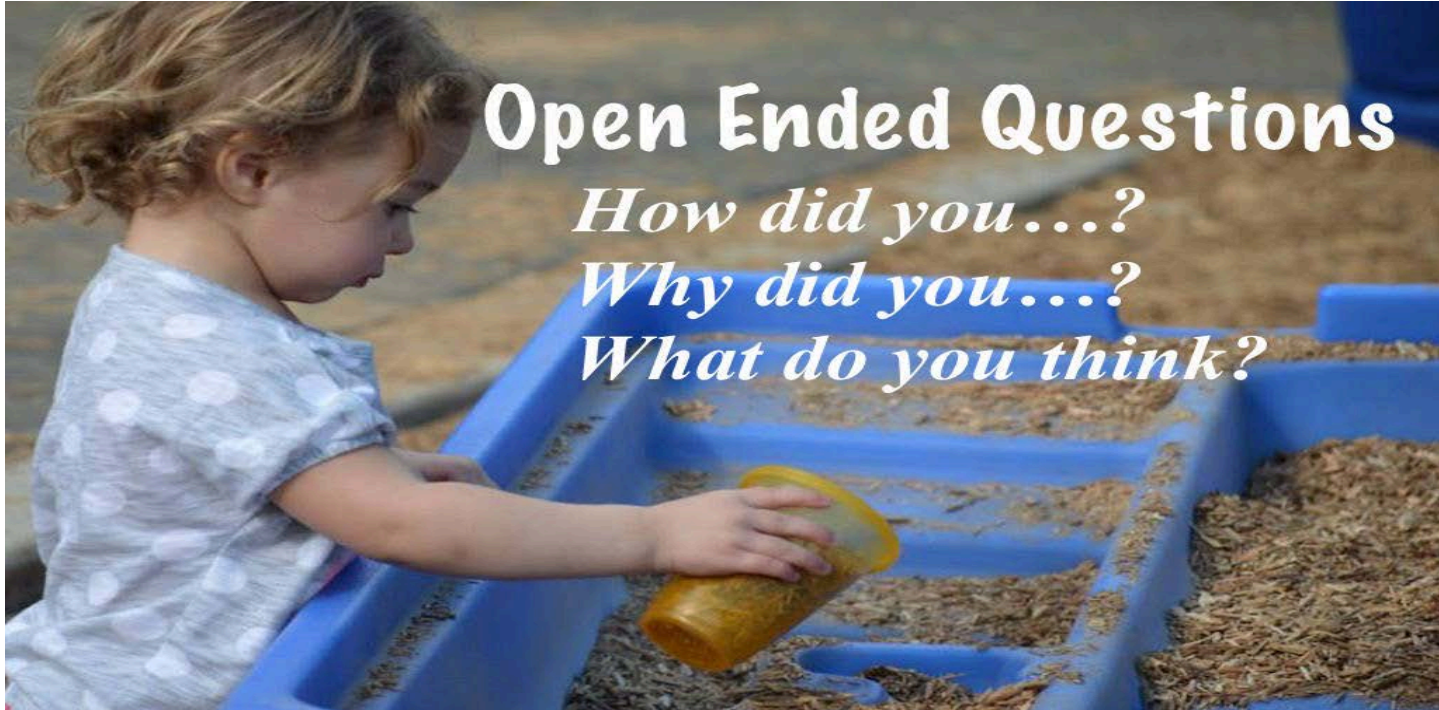


Teachers in the informal space



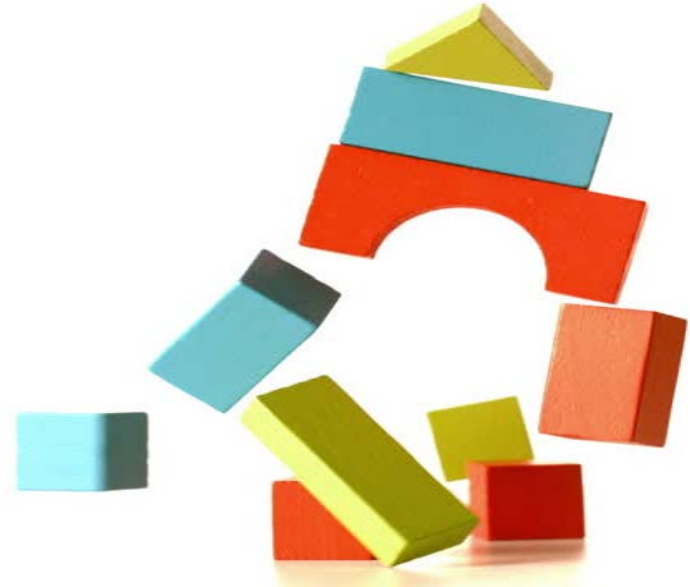
- observations of student behavior, interests and skills
- confidence building experiences
- relationship building experiences
- new classroom competencies
- inspiration
- practice

STEAM language



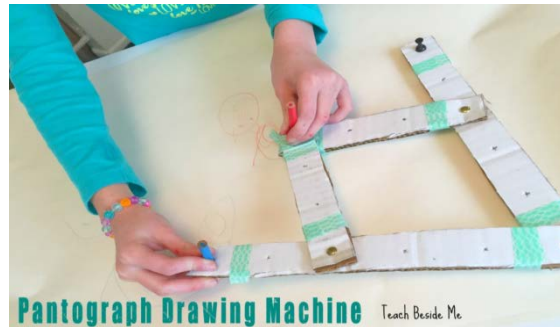
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- failure as part of the process
- it's a glitch
- finding safe spaces to fail



Technology in the informal space

- not just electronics
- age-appropriate tools
- simple machines
- child-directed tools
- problem-solving opportunities



A word about the arts in STEAM

- not just visual arts; dramatic arts, dance & music
- process vs. product
- open-ended
- let students choose and explore the media
- retelling stories in other formats (songs, dance)



STEAM to support Standards



- South Carolina Early Learning Standards
- Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework
 - Approaches to Learning
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 - Language and Literacy
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 - Physical Development

Is it a STEAM experience? ...what's the intention?

- what is this intended outcome of the activity/experience or lesson?
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- TinkerLab tinkerlab.com
- The Show Me Librarian showmelibrarian.blogspot.com/p/all-things-steam.html
- Education Closet educationcloset.com/st



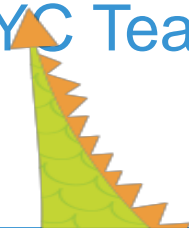
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- ◉ STEM/STEAM Lessons, Activities, and Ideas by We Are Teachers on Pinterest www.pinterest.com/weareteachers/stemsteam-lessons-activities-and-ideas/
- ◉ Babble Dabble Do babbledabbledo.com/25-steam-projects-for-kids/
- ◉ How to Smile howtosmile.org
- ◉ Library Makers librarymakers.blogspot.com
- ◉ PreKinders prekinders.com/science-page



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- 17 New ways to build www.modernparentsmessykids.com/play-idea-17-unique-materials-building-creating/
- Teach Preschool teachpreschool.org/category/science-and-nature/
- Math Science Music mathsciencemusic.org/#/
- Sphero Education www.sphero.com/education
- NAEYC Teaching Young Children naeyc.org



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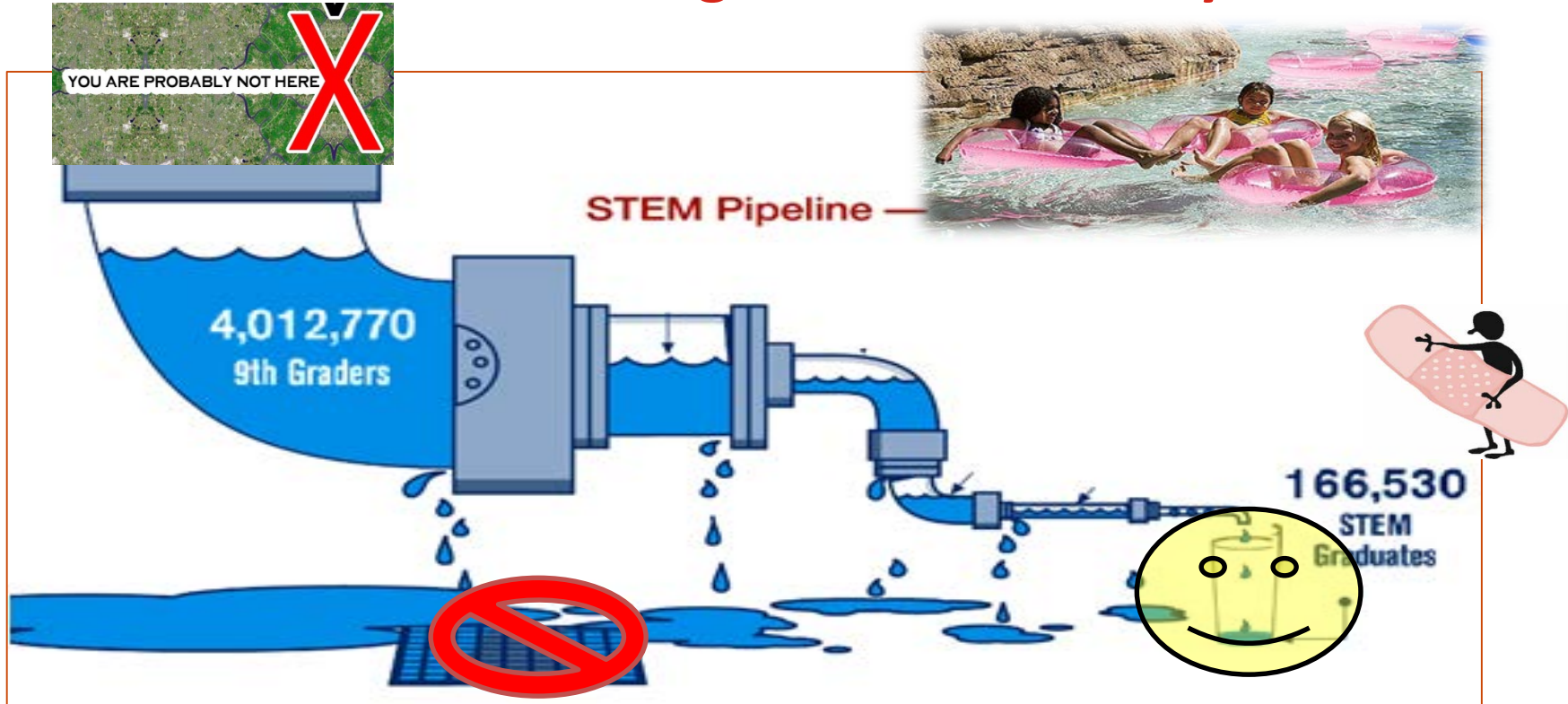
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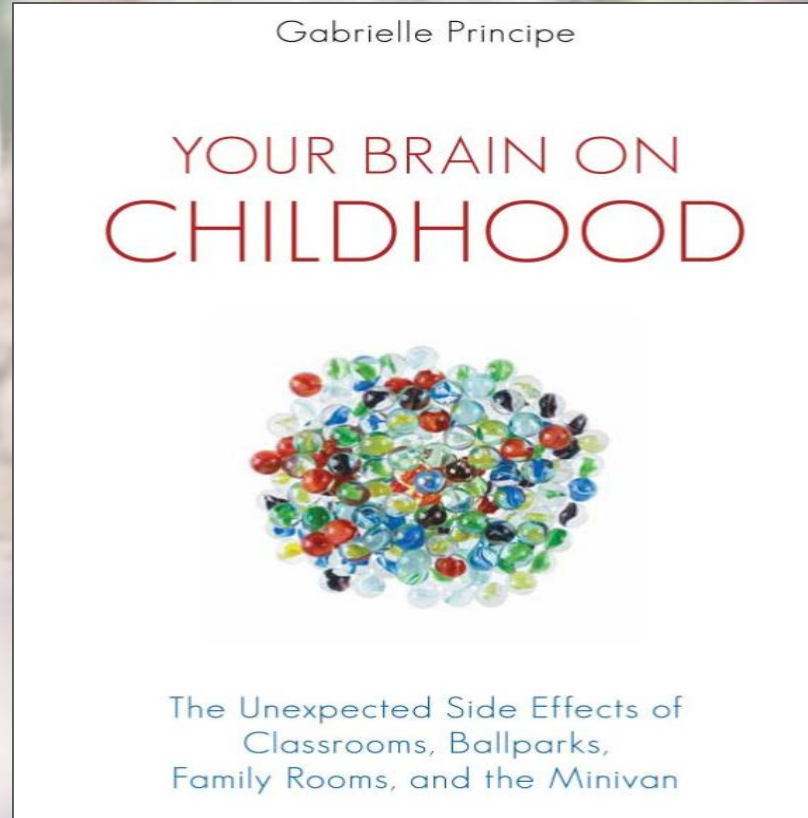
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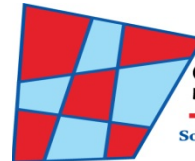
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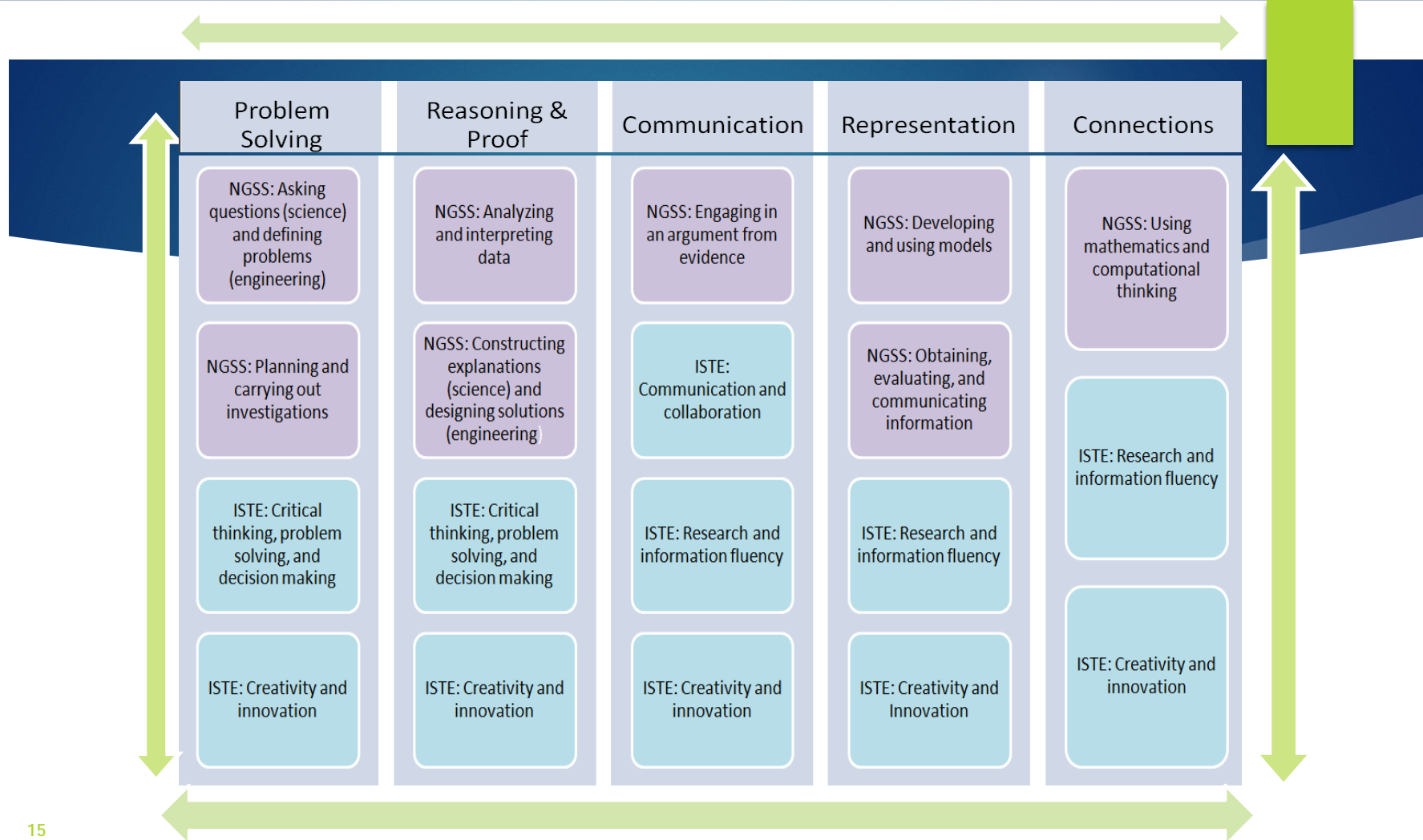
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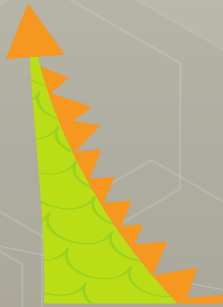
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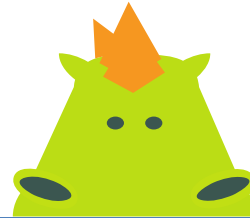
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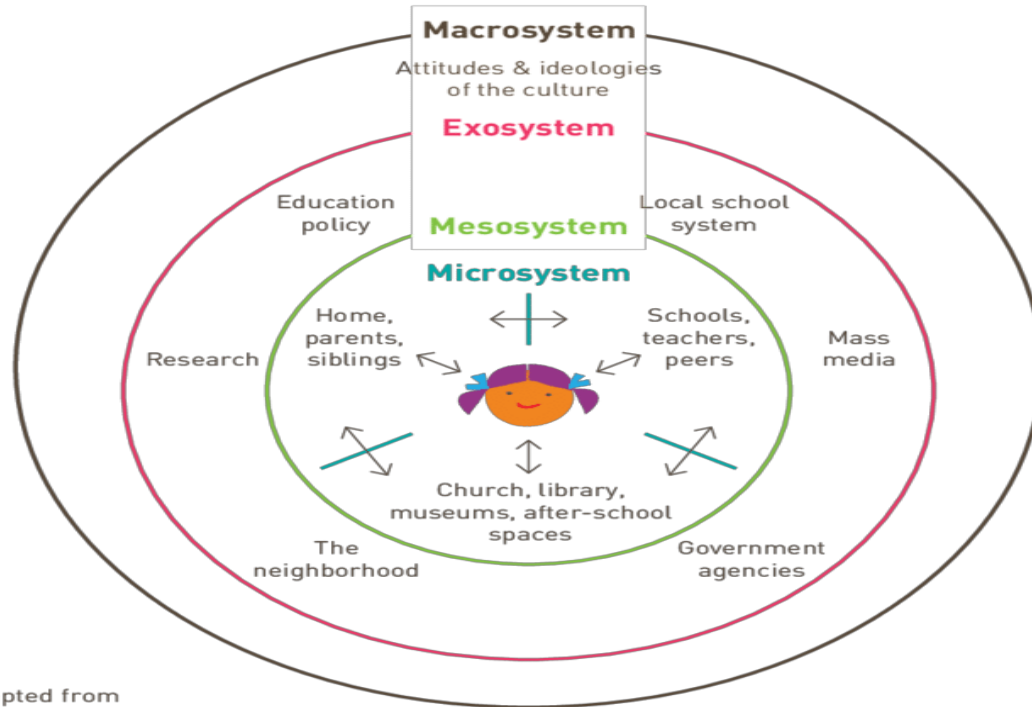
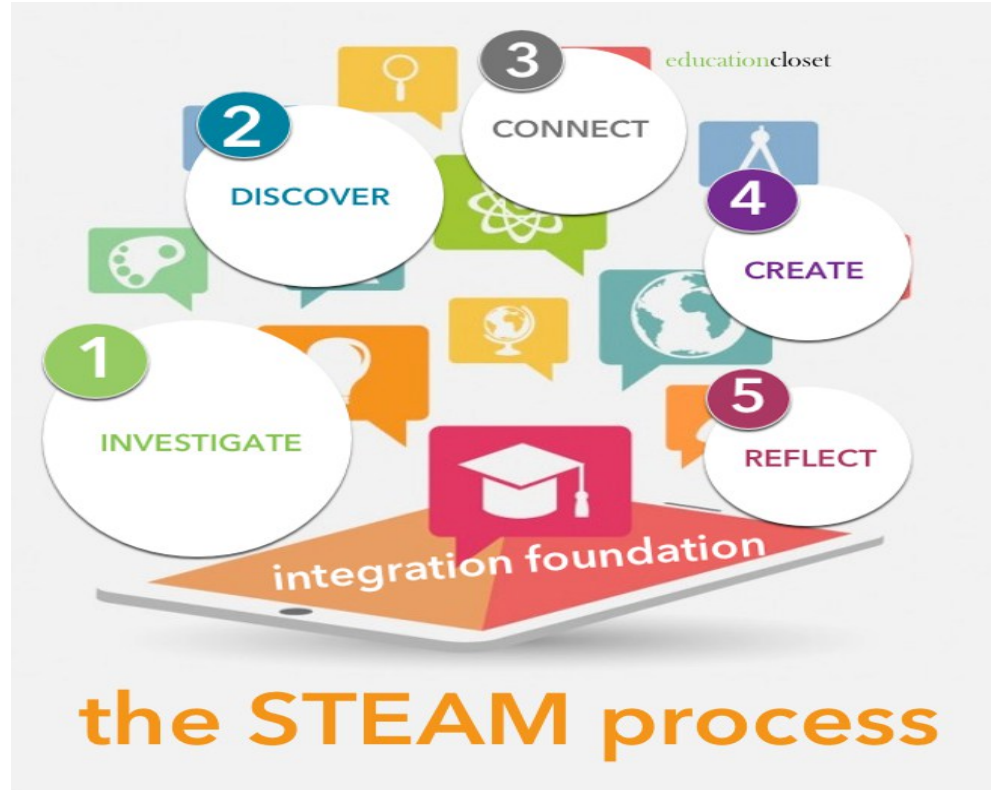


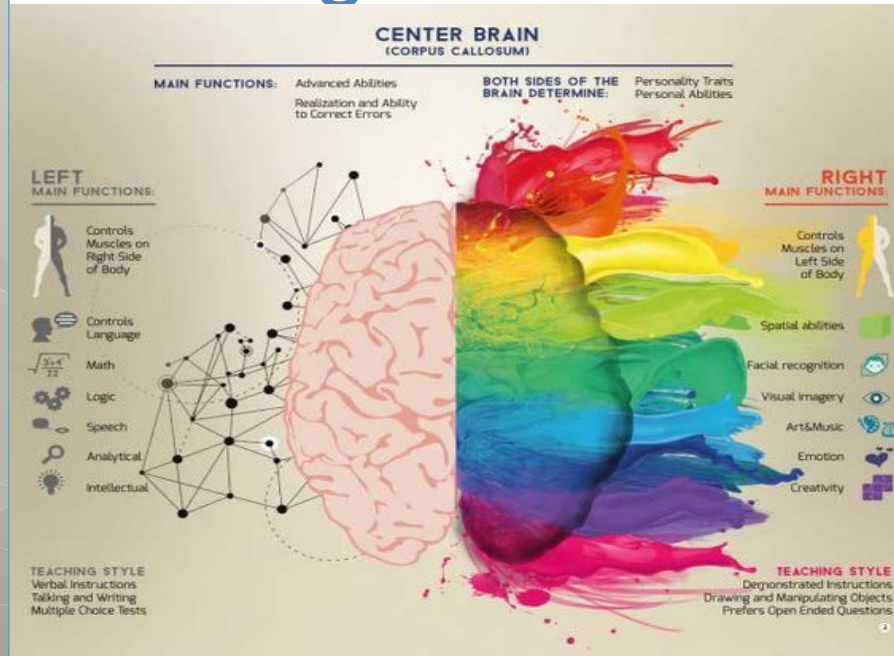
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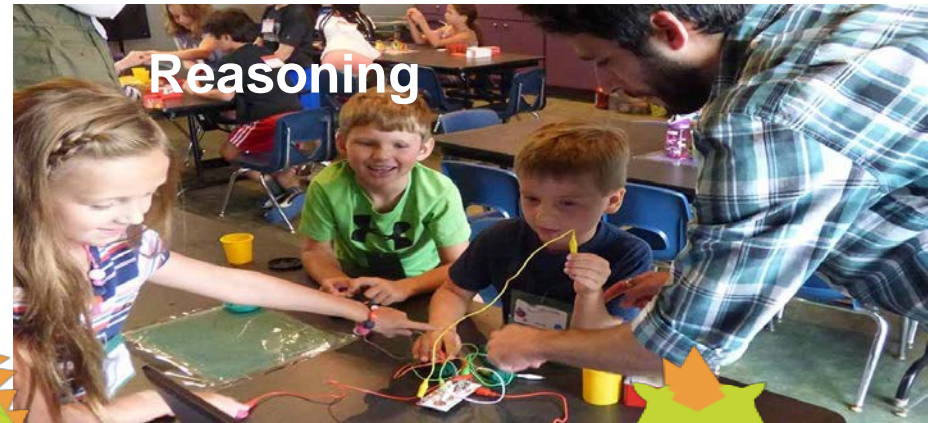


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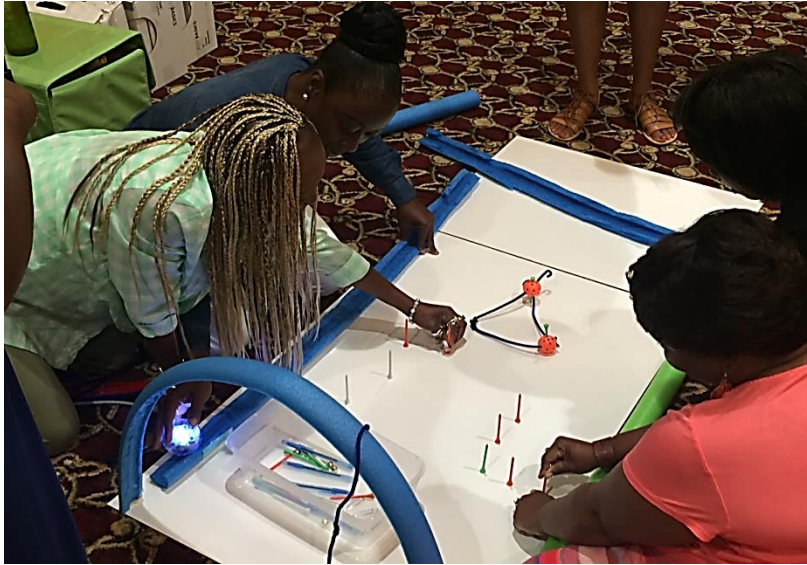


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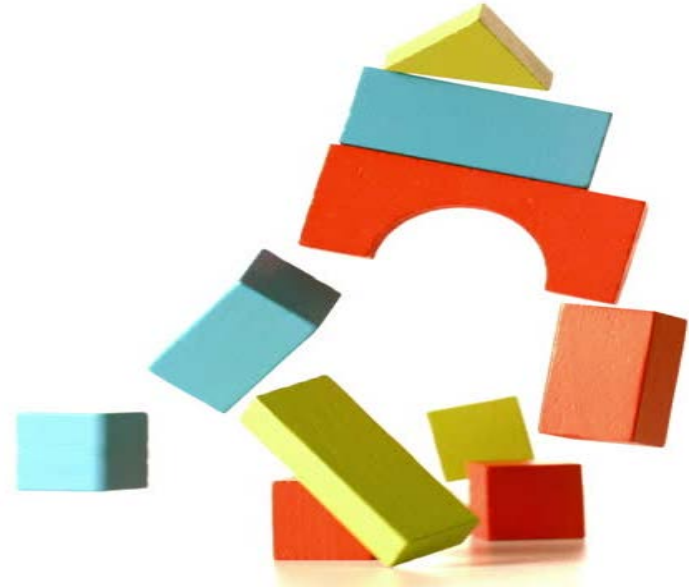
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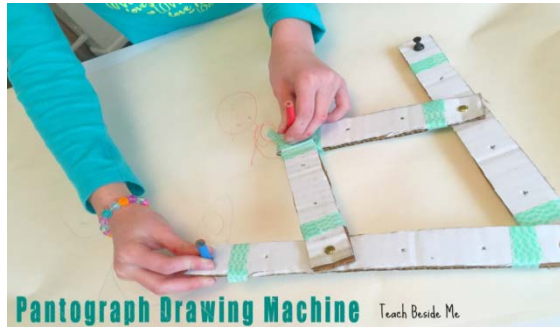
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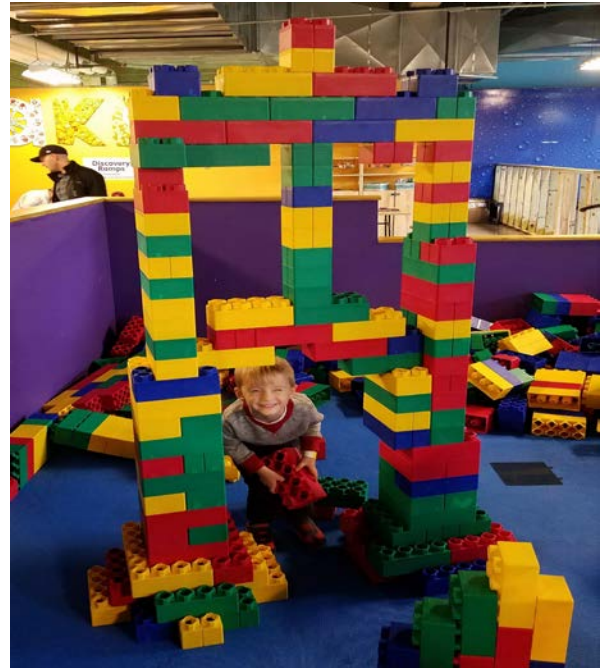
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- STEAM Art Lessons www.smores.com/tgc/steam-art-lessons
- TinkerLab tinkerlab.com
- The Show Me Librarian showmelibrarian.blogspot.com/p/all-things-steam.html
- Education Closet educationcloset.com/st



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- ◉ STEM/STEAM Lessons, Activities, and Ideas by We Are Teachers on Pinterest www.pinterest.com/weareteachers/stemsteam-lessons-activities-and-ideas/
- ◉ Babble Dabble Do babbledabbledo.com/25-steam-projects-for-kids/
- ◉ How to Smile howtosmile.org
- ◉ Library Makers librarymakers.blogspot.com
- ◉ PreKinders prekinders.com/science-page



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- ◉ Teach Preschool teachpreschool.org/category/science-and-nature/
- ◉ Math Science Music mathsciencemusic.org/#/
- ◉ Sphero Education www.sphero.com/education
- ◉ NAEYC Teaching Young Children naeyc.org

