

Engineering

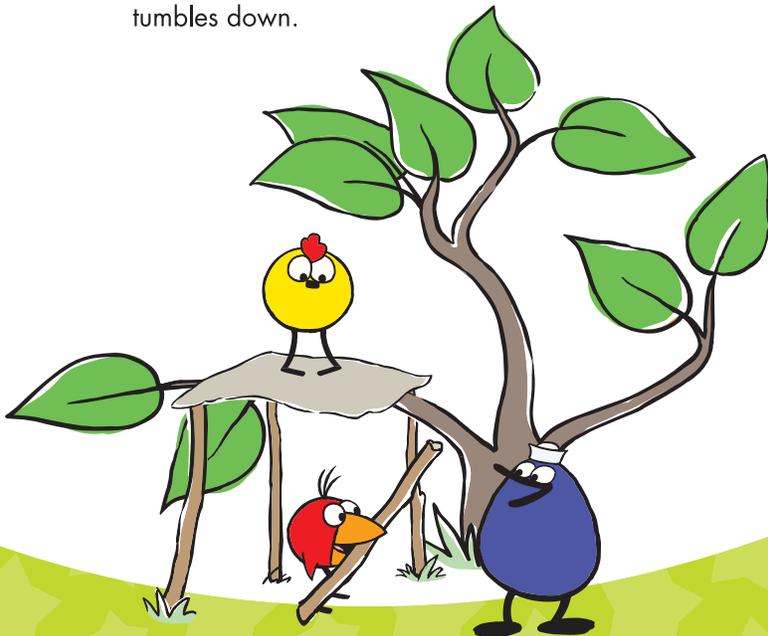
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How can so much fun teach STEM skills?

Playing with blocks and other building materials develops math and science skills, helping children learn about gravity, balance, shapes, and problem solving.

Try these Activities!

- **Mix it up.** Use mixed sets of building materials. Try mixing building blocks with Legos, or foam bricks with cans.
- **Recycle it.** Use cardboard boxes, plastic bottles, nesting cups, or leftover containers as building materials.
- **Basic shape cutouts.** Draw three basic shapes on paper (square, circle, and triangle), and let your children cut them out. Save the cutouts (and scraps) for use in other projects.
- **Challenge it.** Create a set of challenges for children using a variety of building materials.
 - How tall can you make it?
 - Build a tunnel you can crawl through.
 - Build something as a team.
 - Build something in five minutes.
 - Unbuild. Slowly take apart a tower until it tumbles down.

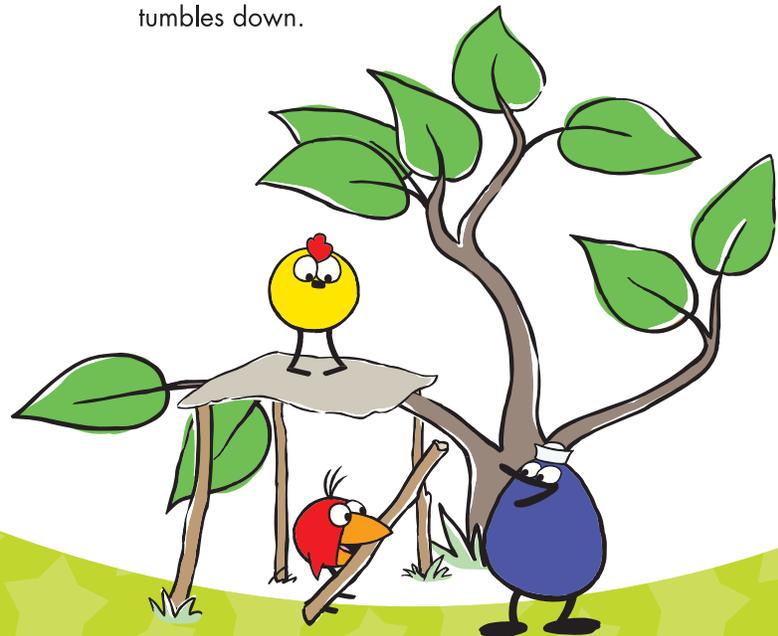


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Tell Children:

- “What do you think will happen?” “Will the structure stay by itself? Is it balanced?” Ask leading questions.
- “Here, you try.” Share successful ideas among the group. Encourage children to learn from one another.
- “Can you take turns building with the blocks?” Encourage cooperative behavior.

Tell Parents:

Unit blocks make it easy to measure. Use blocks at home to build a tower the same height as your child or you! Your child may be four blocks tall and you may be eight blocks tall.

Brain-Building Connection:

Engineering activities encourage brain development as children solve problems, use a variety of materials, design and create, and build things that work.

Read All About It:

Block Building for Children: Making Buildings of the World with the Ultimate Construction Toy by Lester R. Walker

Block City by Robert Louis Stevenson and Daniel Kirk

Changes, Changes by Pat Hutchins

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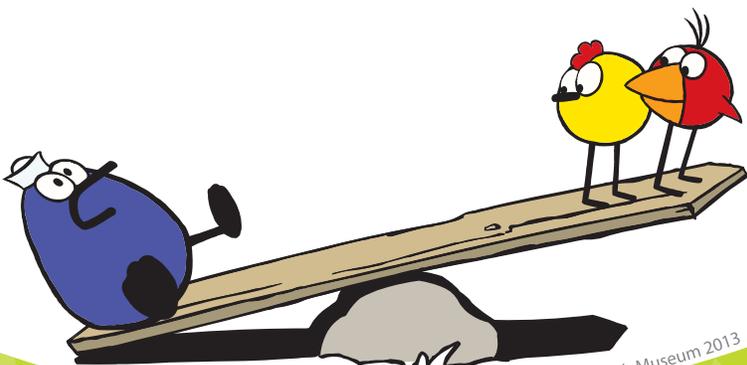
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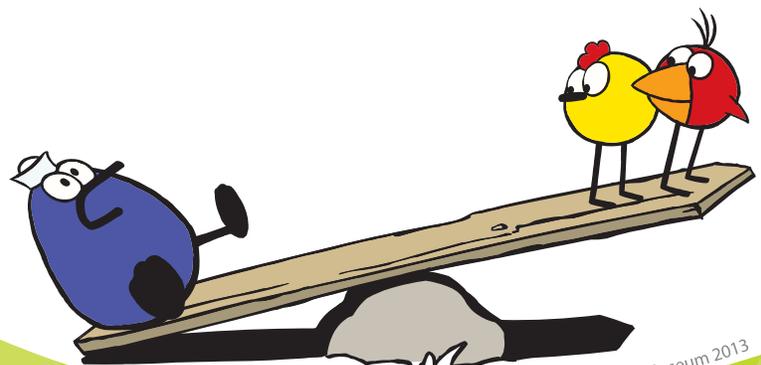
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