

PLAY STATIONS

i wonder...

Play Stations are activity centers that require less structure and encourage free play. These are a great way to break up a full-day program to give your kids (and volunteers!) a break. You can set up the same stations every day or change them up for each session. Let kids float around between stations freely, but designate leaders to supervise.

Some ways to monitor the flow is to tell the kids that each station cannot exceed a certain number of kids (e.g., 5-6), so if they see a station that is full, they can go to another one. If you feel there is a station that is more popular, set a timer for how long kids are allowed to stay, or ensure them that the station will be back the next day.

STATION 1 | Build-a-Thing

- Kids will have an (almost) endless supply of popsicle sticks, rubber bands, and clothespins to build whatever thing they can dream up!

STATION 2 | Cup O' Lego

- Kids will each be given one cup of various Lego bricks. Using just the bricks in their cup, kids will design and construct a bridge to get their Lego mini figures across the water.

STATION 3 | Run, Marble, Run!

- Kids will be given their own sheet of cardboard, and will use straws and tape to construct a marble run. Taping straws from top to bottom they will see if they can get their marble to run the maze, [like this](#).

STATION 4 | Magnetic Makers

- Kids will use magnetic tiles to construct their own creations or you can provide task cards like [these](#) with 2-D or 3-D challenges.

STATION 5 | Paper Plane Challenge

- Kids will use a variety of paper and techniques to build the best paper airplane.

STATION 6 | STEM Library

- Kids will have a chance to read some STEM-inspired stories, both fiction and non-fiction! Borrow the suggested titles (see Shop & Prep List) from your local library, purchase them, or see if anyone can lend you their copy!

STATION 7 | Fort the Love of STEM

- Kids will use all the essentials to build a classic blanket fort! Make it more challenging by changing up the number of people that need to fit inside.

STATION 8 | On Your Mark, Get STEM, GO!

- Kids will use a straw, sponge, and sandwich bag to race their toy cars. Check out [this video](#) to get an idea of how it should go.
- Stack two sponges inside a plastic sandwich bag. Place the drinking straw between the two sponges inside the bag and have one end stick out through the bag's opening. Seal the zipper as tightly as possible (except for where the straw sticks out) and tape over it as well.
- Kids can blow into the straw to inflate the bag, then position the straw behind a toy car. Have them press down on the bag to release air and charge the car forward!