Selecting appropriate activities is a cornerstone for creating an engaging STEM program during out-of-school time. It is essential that frontline staff feel confident and comfortable choosing and facilitating STEM activities.

One of the most effective ways to build a successful STEM program is to work together as a team to collaborate on activities that meet your students’ interests, experiences, and needs.

15 Questions to Ask When Selecting STEM Activities:

#1 Is the activity safe?
#2 Is the activity appropriate for the age group I am working with?
#3 Are the youth I work with interested in this topic?
#4 Does the activity have a hands-on component?
#5 What STEM skills will youth learn by doing this activity?
#6 Is there enough space, adequate time, staff support, etc. for this activity?
#7 Are there any reasons (school rules, program regulations, etc.) why I shouldn’t do this activity at my program?
#8 Is this activity suited to the unpredictable environment of out-of-school learning?
#9 Does this activity provide opportunities for collaboration?
#10 Is there additional background knowledge needed? Is it easy to locate?
#11 Are the materials and supplies required by the activity easy to access and affordable? If not, can I find other materials and supplies to use?
#12 Does the activity address STEM standards? (NGSS, CCSS, NCTM, NSTA, state, or local standards)
#13 Can the activity be part of an ongoing STEM theme that builds upon the previous experiences of youth?
#14 Can I make a real world career connection to this activity?
#15 Are there modern STEM role models to reference as part of the activity?