

October 2025

STEM Learning with Dotty's Place



Growth, Confidence, and Year Two Joy

Returning to work with some of the same students this fall has been a gift. They walk in excited, ready to explore, and more confident in solving problems independently. I've noticed how freely they jump into creative play, using what's around them to test ideas. With improved kits and a summer spent fine-tuning my process, I feel more grounded in how meaningful our Game Times are. I see now, more than ever, that this work really matters. STEM exploration builds joy, curiosity, and confidence in every child who walks through the door.

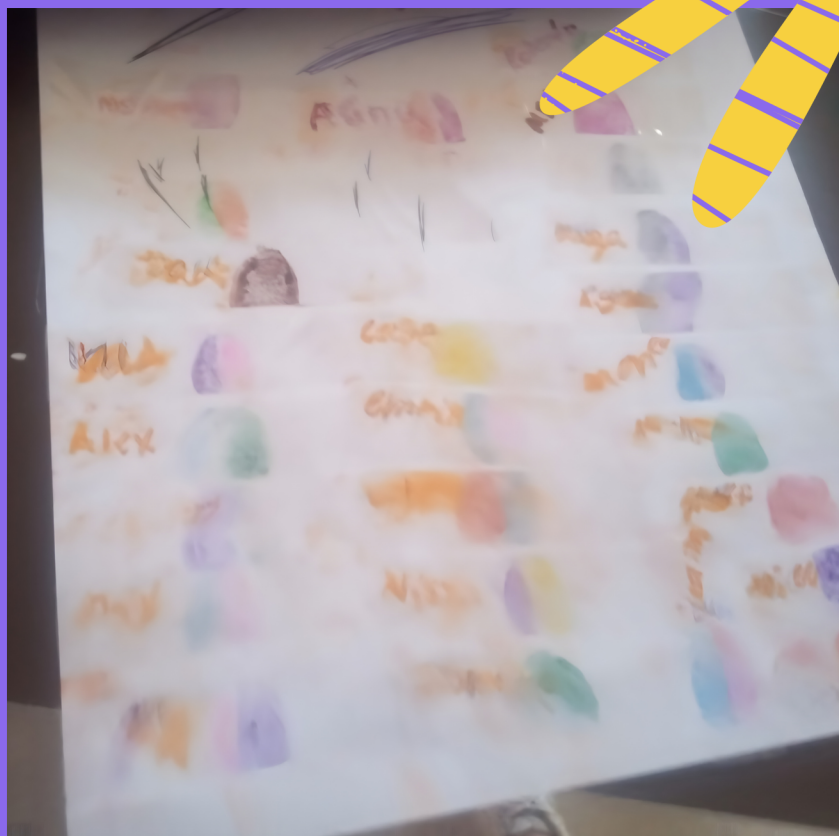
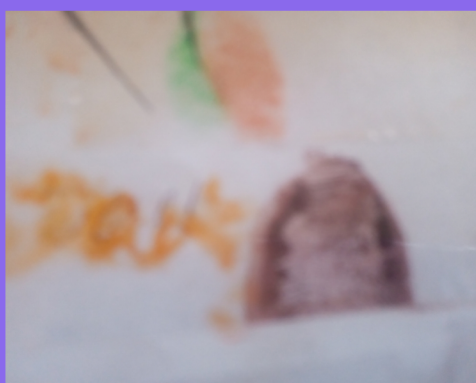
Tips for Teachers

Create, Don't Just Duplicate

One shift that changed everything? Letting go of over-instructing. When kids have fewer step-by-step guides and more open-ended choices, they stop copying and start creating. At first, they may hesitate, but soon they learn: there's no "wrong" way to explore. I've seen kids build ramps using chairs, combine kits to solve problems, and share ideas freely. Instead of rushing in to "fix" things, I step back. I let students become the helpers and the inventors. It's not chaos. It's creativity. Try it yourself. If you need some structure, create a menu board with examples, not rules. You'll be amazed what students come up with when you make room for their ideas.



*One young student decided that she wanted to explore with fingerprints. She found out that she could use a marker and tape.



Menu Board for Wood Planks

Choose one of these activities to EXPLORE



1) Build

Build objects like towers, vehicles, bridges and more.



2) Draw

Draw pictures with lines formed from planks.



3) Write

Write your name or practice spelling words.



4) Race

Grab a partner to see who can build the fastest, tallest or strongest.



5) Match

Copy an object from a picture



6) Play

Explore and have fun!