

The logo features the word "STEM" in large, bold, colorful letters (S in red, T in yellow, E in blue, M in green) each inside a square of the same color. Below it, the words "starts now" are written in a dark blue, cursive font. The background is white with a border of colorful icons including a microscope, rocket, lightbulb, laptop, atom, gear, and others.

STEM starts now

Cooking With Parent

Recommended Age: 25–30 Months

STEM concepts: Science (physical science), technology (simple tools, simple machines), math (number sense and operations, measurement and mathematical reasoning)

Materials: A simple one pot meal recipe (see chicken soup recipe), any baking recipe, kitchen tools needed to complete the recipe, a table your child's height or a safe climbing surface for your child to stand

What to do: Include your child in baking or cooking a meal. Not only will they love being included and able to help but you're also including them on a great activity to learn STEM content. Science is everywhere. Science is especially evident in cooking. How the different components go together to create dinner is science. The tools you use to create a meal (a rolling pin, fork, spoon, pot and lid, pan) are simple tools in the subject area of technology. If you use an electronic mixer or blender, these are simple machines. Math is incorporated into cooking by measuring the ingredients or counting the amount of ingredients needed.

Language and Communication: As you are working with your child to create a meal encourage them to count along with you. Talk to them about what you are doing and how much you are measuring in an ingredient. If the recipe calls for half a cup of something show your child that half a cup is smaller than a whole cup and that it is half of the whole cup. Have your child count the amount of cut up carrot pieces being placed in the pot. Talk with your toddler about how the rolling pin helps them flatten dough easier or how a mixer helps stir the ingredients quicker and easier. This is a great conversation to encourage how technology helps humans do everyday tasks easier. Another conversation that you should have while cooking is telling your child that mixing the different ingredients makes things taste differently.

Expand the Activity: Read *Thunder Cake* by Patricia Polacco and then wait for a thunder storm to create your own thunder cake. This adds a weather science component to your STEM cooking!