

HOW TO CREATE A CLASSROOM STEAM LIBRARY?



Did you know that one of the biggest predictors to student achievement is in their access to books?

As teachers, we can help ensure access and equity for our students by creating a library in our own classrooms. Your library can contain just a few books to get started and can grow over time.



STOCKING UP

When it comes to creating your STEAM library, the first thing you'll need are the books themselves.

Try to incorporate fiction and non-fiction texts. Search for titles that both provide a context for the arts and STEM areas and which encourage students to explore, imagine and create. Tutorial books are fantastic for students who want to learn more about weaving, composition, drawing and more.



CREATING SPACE

This can be as simple as stacking some milk crates on top of one another in a designated area of your room. Or it can be as elaborate as bringing in some refurbished bookshelves. Have students help to organize the shelves by genre and topic, as well as author. They can even design a checkout system for the books!

Some may want to create a digital checkout system while others may want to get creative with a ticketing system for checking out the books.



DIGITAL OPTIONS

Don't forget that there are convenient digital options available for your library as well. Utilize tablets and computers for digital magazines, graphic novels and periodicals. These can all be used as sources for STEAM investigations. These digital options also provide ways for students to view artwork in museums online, listen to orchestras in symphony halls around the world, and to explore archived historical documents.



AFFORDABILITY

Setting up your STEAM Library doesn't have to be an expensive endeavor. Start by asking for book donations from parents and the surrounding community. Place a box outside your door for collections. Send a flyer to local businesses and ask them to save their old magazines. Many offices have treasure trove of these that they just throw away each month. Once you've exhausted these free or low-cost outlets, you can grow your library through grant applications or donors choose campaigns.

Reading and access to media is a critical component to student success. We can all be part of that solution! Hopefully, these tips will help you create your own Arts Integration and STEAM Library for your students.