

AlphaBEST Technology Arts

S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education has become the focus of educators across the world as we seek to create critical thinkers and the next generation of innovators. AlphaBEST has put together an integrated series of highly engaging, age-appropriate, STEM-focused Technology Arts programs proven to engage, while providing each student with an opportunity to begin developing the critical 21st century skills they will need to succeed.

Robotics Discovery (K-2nd; 3rd-5th)

Young future engineers will create working models of amazing machines and creatures, like a float plane simulator, a hungry alligator or a pair of singing parrots. Students build LEGO® models featuring working pulleys, gears, motors and sensors, connect them to a portable computer and then use student-friendly programming code to bring their imaginative creatures to life.

Pre-Robotics - Mechanisms & Machines (6-8)

Future engineers will take on assignments to assemble various LEGO® machines, models and robotic creatures while conducting real-world science (physics) experiments with motion, force and energy. Models are brought to life with the addition of motors, gears, generators - even sustainable energy like wind! This is an ideal introduction for students interested in participating in more advanced robotics programs. This national standards-aligned curriculum also ensures students learn how to effectively collaborate while building, testing and innovating their machines.

Animation Discovery

Stop motion animation (digital film making) brings inanimate objects to life. Utilizing software developed by the Tufts University team at iCreate to Educate, AlphaBEST students will create their own digital videos using basic classroom and household materials. The collaborative process is not only fun and engaging, it has proven to be highly successful in helping the young and young at heart to discover and express their creative ideas, develop problem solving skills and confidently conceptualize and share their ideas while experiencing literacy lessons in a whole new way.

Digital Art Discovery

This AlphaBEST program links art, digital animation and technology by introducing students to an easy-to-use tool that bypasses traditional presentation software programs. The software, Animation-ish, is the result of a unique partnership between FableVision, the award winning children's media company founded by illustrator and author Peter Reynolds, and Montreal-based Toon Boom Animation. By emphasizing digital art within a STEM program, AlphaBEST has turned STEM into STEAM, thereby encouraging whole brain development and nurturing the creativity and artistic gifts necessary to fuel innovative thinking.

Game Design Discovery

Almost every child loves to play computer games; however, playing a game is very different from creating one. Through dynamic individualized tutorials, AlphaBEST seeks to motivate students who may be just "passive" game players to becoming "active" game creators. During a series of lessons, students will author a prescribed computer-based game, which is theirs to keep, to play and to share with their friends. In addition to developing creative thinking and technology skills, students will be introduced to logic and problem solving techniques while reinforcing many math and reading literacy concepts.

