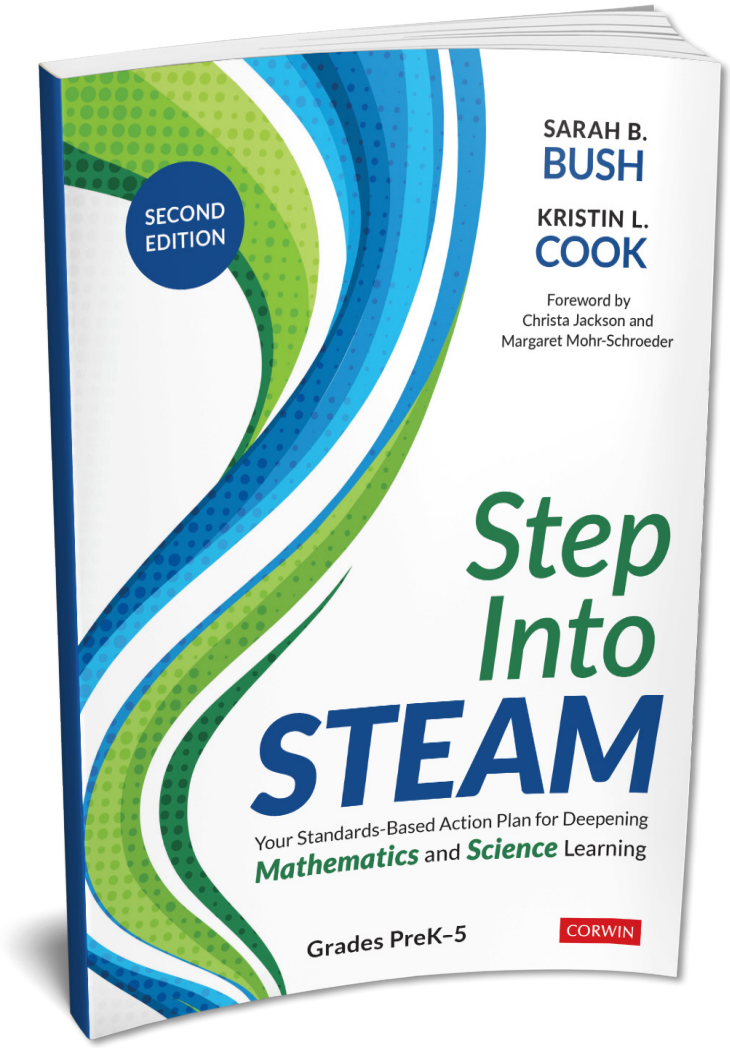

Thank you

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Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from Step Into STEAM, Grades PreK-5.

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CORWIN

FOREWORD

by Christa Jackson and Margaret Mohr-Schroeder

In our rapidly evolving world, the ability to think critically, solve complex problems, and innovate is more essential than ever before. As educators, it is our responsibility to equip learners with the skills and mindsets they need to navigate an increasingly uncertain future. STEAM education, which integrates science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics, provides a powerful framework for cultivating these vital capacities from an early age. Yet, the practical implementation of STEAM in elementary classrooms has often been met with uncertainty and apprehension. How can we ensure that STEAM is not merely an enrichment activity for the select few but a foundational experience for every learner? How can we seamlessly integrate STEAM into the already packed schedules of elementary teachers? And most importantly, how can we make STEAM truly meaningful and transformative for our learners?

The second edition of *Step Into STEAM* is an indispensable resource for elementary educators who recognize the transformative potential of STEAM learning experiences. The second edition embodies the evolving and flexible nature of STEAM, ensuring access to diverse learners across changing educational settings and novel tools, while providing educators guidance on creating authentic, purpose-driven inquiries to deepen application of science and mathematics concepts.

Crucially, the arts are not an afterthought within the book but are woven inextricably into the fabric of each STEAM experience. The authors recognize that the arts unlock vital modes of expression, communication, and innovative thinking—capacities that amplify and enrich learners' engagement with scientific and mathematical concepts.

The second edition of *Step Into STEAM* is for educators who desire to foster curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking in their learners, while preparing them for the complex challenges of the 21st century. Too often, STEAM is viewed as an enrichment activity reserved for "gifted and talented" learners. This book challenges that notion, making a compelling case for why authentic STEAM education should be a core component of the learning journey for all learners. *Step Into STEAM* builds a foundation for unwavering commitment to authenticity and accessibility. The authors, seasoned educators and STEAM advocates, have distilled their years of experience into a practical, hands-on resource that is both inspiring and actionable.

Step Into STEAM: Your Standards-Based Action Plan for Deepening Mathematics and Science Learning, Grades PreK–5, Second Edition, by Sarah B. Bush and Kristin L. Cook.

What truly sets this book apart is its masterful integration of problem-based inquiry as the foundation for STEAM instruction. Rather than emphasizing a rigid set of activities with predetermined outcomes, the inquiries revolve around open-ended contexts that engage learners in the thrilling process of exploration, discovery, and iterative problem-solving. By prioritizing the process over the final product, problem-based STEAM inquiries nurture the very skills that will serve learners well in our rapidly changing world: critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, and an unwavering drive to ask questions and seek solutions. The tangible examples provided offer elementary teachers a rich toolkit for implementation, complete with standards-aligned plans, materials lists, and thoughtful assessment strategies.

This new edition of *Step Into STEAM* perhaps most impressively serves as a masterclass in designing authentic, equitable STEAM education. The authors understand that true equity goes far beyond superficial inclusion; it requires creating learning environments that affirm and build on the funds of knowledge, cultural identities, and lived experiences that each learner brings into the classroom. In this regard, they situate their work in the Equity-Oriented STEM Literacy Framework (Jackson et al., 2021), which focuses on disrupting the STEM status quo and providing access and equitable opportunities to all learners.

The authors place empathy at the heart of STEAM instruction, one of the connected components within the Equity-Oriented STEM Literacy Framework (Jackson et al., 2021). In an age when societal challenges grow increasingly complex, the authors understand that lasting solutions can only emerge from a place of deep understanding, compassion, and a genuine desire to create positive change. By tapping into learners' innate curiosity and drive to make a meaningful impact, the lessons engage learners in rich, authentic tasks that resonate profoundly with their values, identities, and communities.

As the world continues to change at a dizzying pace, the importance of STEM skills and STEAM literacies will only continue to grow. The second edition of *Step Into STEAM* provides a comprehensive road map for cultivating the creativity, problem-solving abilities, resiliency, and empathy that will empower the next generation of innovators, entrepreneurs, and global citizens.

The authors recognize that no single educator can be an expert in every discipline. Collaboration is essential. They provide guidance on building professional learning communities, leveraging available resources, and fostering an ethos of collective growth and support.

In an era plagued by uncertainty and accelerating challenges, this book offers a beacon of hope—a vision of education that equips all learners, regardless of background, with the tools to ask probing questions, construct new knowledge, and develop solutions that can transform our world. The future is not something we simply predict; it is something we create. The second edition of *Step*

Into STEAM is an essential guide for any educator committed to nurturing the infinite potential within every young mind. Together, with our young people, we have the power to create a future that is brighter, full of access and opportunity, and more sustainable for all.

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