

# STEM Activity Centers

## Activity Two: You Are What You Eat

**Objective:** Participants will use a hands-on activity to learn how to sort, classify, and interpret their findings.

**Activity:** Participate in a zany archaeological dig through a preselected pile of everyday trash.

**Challenge:** As a table (groups of eight or fewer), sort through a pile of garbage and classify the “artifacts” that you find (ex. type of food product, common ingredients etc.).

**Materials & Equipment:** Trash  
Large sheets of chart paper  
Markers  
Plastic gloves  
Glue sticks  
Tape

### Steps:

1. Sort and classify the “artifacts.”
2. Tape two or three large sheets of chart paper together to make one long piece of paper. Trace the body of one of your table colleagues on the sheet of paper.
3. Using the sorted artifacts, construct an illustration of an eater/consumer of the waste by placing the artifacts on the drawing relative to where, or how, the piece of garbage is used or consumed.
4. Tape or glue your artifacts to the illustration.
5. Label and organize the artifacts according to your group’s interpretation of the data you collected.
6. Share your project! Invite others to view your project. Walk around and learn how other groups sorted, classified, and interpreted their garbage.

### Debrief:

- What data or evidence would you find in the trashcans in your centers?
- What might the trash say about the eating and consuming habits within your program ?
- Were there unexpected discoveries and surprises?
- What conclusions were you able to draw about the program?
- What other objects do you think could be used in this way?
- How well did the group work together?
- What happened when there were disagreements?
- Was there a planning process? What steps were taken in the planning process?
  - How well did the group work with the directions?
  - Did different people take different roles and participate in different way?