

IN THE MIDDLE: STEM Challenges Fun for Students

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The STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) challenges we've done each month during homeroom this school year have been very fun. We recently completed a challenge called "Hang Ten," where homerooms create



devices and compete to see which can stay in the air the longest. (My homeroom didn't win!)

Another challenge we did this year was a very fun challenge called "Gummies in Space," where homerooms made a device that carried gummy bears as far as

possible. My homeroom made it to the finals, but once again, we didn't win.

Here at Barker, we also do STEM challenges with our parents at a monthly parent invite to lunch. I beat my dad playing a game based on the card game *War*, but instead of kings and jacks and stuff, there are black (positive) and red (negative) numbers. The usual rules apply, but you total up the cards at the end

of the round and whoever has the highest number wins. I murdered my dad (in the game, of course) with a score of... okay, I forgot -- it was a month ago. But I know I beat my dad by at least ten or more. All I need now is the victory chocolate he promised me while playing this.

The next STEM challenge approaching is a community challenge, kind of like Gummies in Space but we build bottle rockets. Some design ideas could be drawn from Mrs. Harmon's rocket from last year. We do need to keep an eye on quite a few of the homerooms, since we have quite a few competitors (cough, "Surmanation," cough). Oh yeah! I never said what materials, other than bottles, we get to use! We have bottles, and paper, and tape. I don't really know what we use to propel the rocket, but I'll soon figure it out!

So, there you have it. These are just a few of the STEM challenges that we've done here at Barker this year.

Marymae Waldron is a student at Barker Middle School. In the Middle is a regular column which is produced by MCAS middle

school students.