



FULL STEAM AHEAD

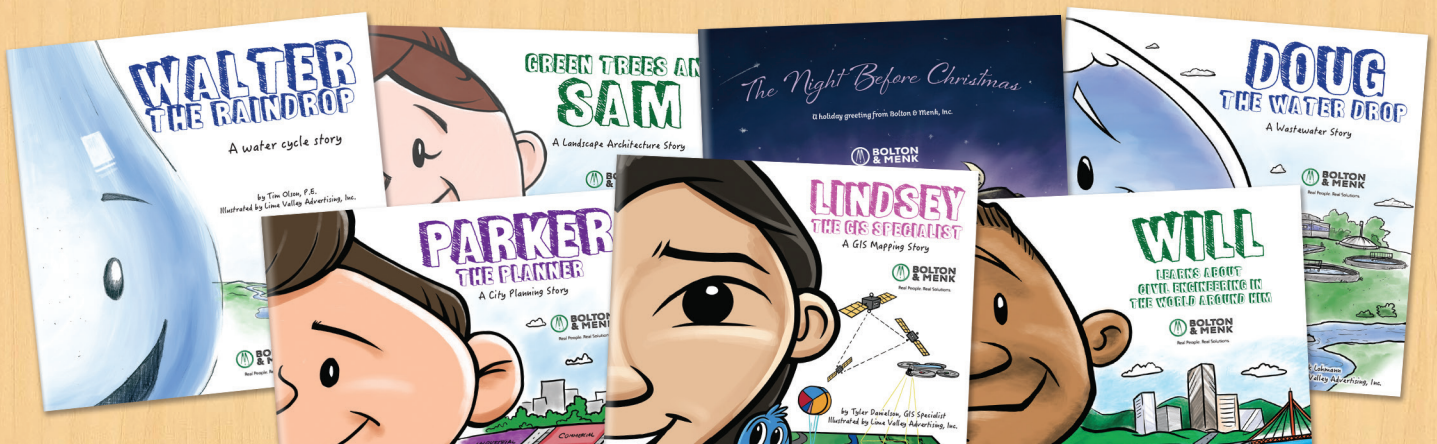
Bolton & Menk's children's books chart new territory for STEAM education

Studies show that STEAM-related topics need to be introduced to children at the elementary level. STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) is the academic campaign that focuses on introducing curriculum based on these topics to early childhood learners through high school.

The Pew Research Center reports that while the STEAM job market has grown drastically since 1990, much faster than other job markets, there is a shortage

of employees to fill those jobs. Only one in five STEAM students felt their K-12 education prepared them, yet 78 percent of college students say they decided to study STEAM in high school or earlier, and 21 percent decided in middle school or earlier, according to Harris Interactive.

STEAM topics are not frequently written about in children's books and are charting new territory for children in the 6- to 12-year-old age range. So, with





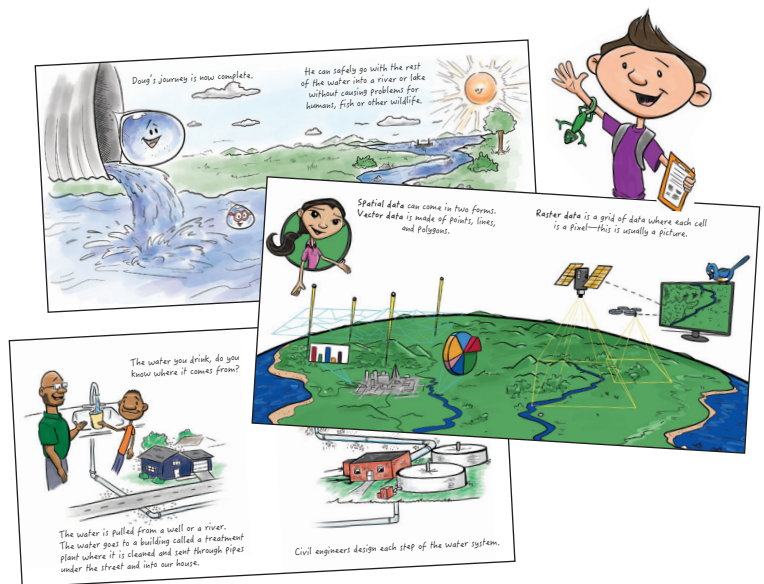
As a result, this book series has the potential to promote diversity in the associated professions that make up STEAM. The books introduce children to the AEC (architecture, engineering, construction) industry and demonstrate construction, environmental, and social issues landscape architects, planners, and engineers solve. These books share technical information in a clear and concise manner for children to understand and relate to. They broaden a child's perspective of the world, enhance their knowledge of the built-environment, and bolster critical and creative thinking skills.

"Our mission is to make kids real-world ready. These books show kids a realistic future in a medium that is relatable, accessible, and fun," said first-grade teacher, Lori Briggs.

the goal of increasing awareness, especially by a younger audience, of the professions in the STEAM industry and the benefits these fields provide to the public, a regional engineering firm, Bolton & Menk has developed a children's book series.

What started as a standalone tool used to partner with communities hosting the Smithsonian Waterways Traveling Exhibit, has snowballed into a seven-part series dedicated to teaching children about different areas of STEAM. Bolton & Menk's first book, "Walter the Raindrop, A Water Cycle Story," was developed and handed out in conjunction with children's activities being offered during the waterways exhibits. Seeing that the first book was able to engage children, the idea grew, and the firm saw the need to raise awareness and understanding of career opportunities in STEAM.

Bolton & Menk began to approach staff within its various work groups to develop additional stories. The purpose of the project evolved into a STEAM effort – to develop a series of children's books that promote reading and education about a variety of careers in the STEAM field.



Bolton & Menk released a seventh book in 2019 and have plans to release two more by the end of the year. Creating this book series has been a fun way for the firm to get a new generation involved in STEAM-related fields. Getting children excited about STEAM fields at a younger age opens them up to even more possibilities of what they could grow up to be. Check the series out at www.bolton-menk.com/library.

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