Next Gen Science Standards focus on STEM Practices – behaviors, skills, and activities – that involve a range of social, learning, language, and physical skills that can challenge students with disabilities.

**CRITICAL STEM SKILLS**

1. STEM requires students to create representations and models of abstract processes and concepts.
2. Students use logical reasoning and participation in an imaginative and communal process.
3. Illustrations, models, and diagrams can provide deeper understanding of abstract concepts.

**THINK ABOUT**

How might visualizations and models present challenges for your students with learning or cognitive disabilities? What about students with visual impairments? How might you use assistive and instructional technology to improve access?

**MAKE STEM MORE ACCESSIBLE**

- Use tools (both high tech and low tech) that allow students to create their own models.
- Offer multiple representations—a food web can be presented graphically or as a screen reader accessible table.
- Ensure educational materials provide multiple options for access—zoom, text-to-speech, switches, Braille, tactile graphics.