



STEM STRATEGIES THAT WORK

Instructional ideas that incorporate STEM culture in meaningful, effective, and practical ways.

STRATEGY: Student STEMbassadors

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BIG IDEA

Think about the *story* of your classroom and how you want it told. When visitors come to your room, they see only a small portion of your day and may not recognize the many STEMtastic things you and your students are doing. Student STEMbassadors help visitors see the *big picture* of your class while building their own communication skills! STEMbassadors welcome visitors and explain how your classroom supports development of the 4Cs of 21st century skills: collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking.



STEPS

Materials: None needed

Time: 1 hour to introduce; 5-10 minutes at least once a week to review 4Cs for classroom activities

1. Model and discuss how to greet a visitor:
 - a. Look at the person.
 - b. Speak in a pleasant voice.
 - c. Offer a greeting and say "My name is...."
 - d. Shake the person's hand.
 - e. Say "It is nice to meet you."

2. Discuss the 4Cs (including an introduction, if necessary):

- collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking.
3. Model and discuss how to summarize a lesson or activity and how it relates to the 4Cs. For example, "Today we are working on a project about careers. We are **collaborating** with classmates to create a solution to a problem in the career. We must use **creativity** to..."
 4. Within your instruction, regularly relate lessons and activities to the 4Cs and quiz students about how to share the information with visitors.
 5. Allow students to practice the role of STEMbassador. They may practice with classmates; other teachers; parents; and, finally, new visitors. Allow time for reflection and feedback, as well.
 6. Select two students each week to be the classroom STEMbassadors. Regularly rotate the job to allow all students to experience it and practice their communication skills.



SUM IT UP

Developing a culture of STEM must include activities that help students gain real life skills, such as greeting people and being ready to explain ideas. By establishing routines for STEMbassadors, you are helping your students gain communication experience, build confidence, and share the story of their classroom with visitors in an authentic way.



MORE CONNECTIONS

- When your students are confident, take it a step further and allow them to greet classroom visitors at the front office and walk them to the classroom. They can explain how the entire school is working on the 4Cs as they walk through the building past other classes.
- Practice digital communication skills, too: greetings, introductions, and discussions all take place over the phone, via email, or in written form. Lead class discussions about how the forms of communication are similar, how they are different, and in what situations they would be used.