

Hints and Tips for Supporting your STEM Ambassador Activities

Please find below a list of hints and tips that you may find helpful when supporting STEM Ambassador opportunities/activities with schools and students. You can also find lots of activity ideas and support resources via the [STEMNetworking Resource Bank](#) or by talking to your local STEMNET contract holder (www.stemnet.org.uk/contacts).

Important Information for all STEM Ambassador activities involving young people

The teacher should be with you at all times when you are delivering your activity and is responsible for the behaviour and control of the students.

Teachers are also responsible for risk assessing any practical activities in schools so it's crucial you ensure you keep them informed of the activity you are planning including details of any props you are hoping to bring with you on the day and any potential risks with the activity of which you're aware.

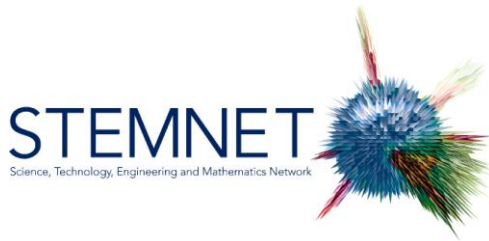
Preparation before the Activity

Questions to ask the Teacher or Lead Organiser of the Activity

Once your local STEMNET Contract Holder has put you in direct contact with the teacher at the school or the lead organiser for the activity, use this as your opportunity to ask any questions about the activity and what to expect on the day. Some guidance questions that you may want to ask are listed below.

Know Your Audience!

- How many students will be attending the activity and what age will they be?
- What is the range of special needs in the class? Will any of the students have a special needs assistant with them?
- How many male and female students will there be at the activity?
- Have the students been told anything about the activity to prepare them beforehand? If yes, what information have they already been told?
- Will there be any other adults, apart from the teacher, in the room with you when you're doing your activity e.g. teaching assistants?
- What have the students learnt recently that may link in with your activity? Is your activity gauged at the right level?



- What follow-up will the teacher be carrying out with the students to link into the curriculum?

Practical Information to help you be prepared on the day

- How much time have you got for your activity?
- What equipment will you need to bring with you on the day? Is it possible for any of the equipment you need for your activity to be provided by the school on the day?
- What time should you arrive on the day to ensure sufficient time to get yourself set up?
- What are the rules regarding acceptable behaviour in the classroom (please note, teachers are responsible for the behaviour and control of the students)?

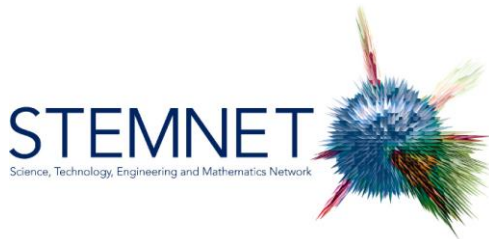
Practical Information to help you with remote activities e.g. a Skype interview, webinar etc

- Have you had a test run with the teacher to ensure your internet connection is working?
- Have you arranged somewhere quiet so you won't be disturbed or distracted by noise during your activity?
- Are you able to guarantee that you'll be able to commit the time required and won't be interrupted by pressing work commitments?

How to ensure you feel prepared and confident on the day

There are lots of things you can do to help you feel as prepared and confident as possible on the day of your activity. Here are some suggestions that you may find helpful:

- Ensure you interact with all the students including giving them a chance to ask questions or have a go at doing something practical themselves
- If you're planning something practical, make sure you have a practice run first! This helps you ensure it works and also assists you in gauging how long the activity may take on the day.
- Vary how you deliver your activity e.g. brief presentation followed by practical activity. This will help keep the students engaged!
- Go to your activity armed with salary information, entry qualification requirements and opportunities for career progression, related to your career as the students are likely to ask! Your Professional Institution or employer should be able to assist with this.
- Think about what key message(s) you would like the students to take away at the end of your activity e.g. science is exciting and not just for geeks!
- Keep it simple and fun!



Struggling for Ideas? Here's some quick and easy ideas to get you started!

- Ask the students to sketch or describe their idea of a typical scientist, engineer etc. Discuss their results with them.
- Take along a 'prop' from your job/career and ask the students to guess what you do. Encourage them to ask questions to see if they can guess what you do.
- Take a familiar everyday item e.g. an ipod, and think about how you can link it to what you do. You can then bring this item along with you for your activity and get the students to think about how it links to your job.
- Introduce your activity with a quick demo e.g. use a pump to blow up a balloon while you're talking. It'll catch the students' attention when it bursts and can lead nicely into a discussion about pressure.
- Bring along a multiple choice quiz about your career or area of expertise and encourage the whole class to take part e.g. split the class into teams, the winning team gets a prize¹!

You can find more activity ideas and suggestions via the:

- [STEMNetworking Resource Bank](#) – includes ideas and activities submitted by other STEM Ambassadors
- [RAEng² Engineering Engagement Project](#) – tried and tested activities primarily aimed at 11-14 years olds

Your local STEMNET Contract Holder (www.stemnet.org.uk/contacts) can also provide you with advice and guidance on supporting STEM Ambassador opportunities/activities in schools.

And finally...be yourself, play to your strengths and have fun!

STEMNET

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¹ Ensure you agree with the teacher beforehand if you bring along any prizes or freebies for the students as part of your activity. It is highly recommended that you don't give out any prizes or freebies to students until the end of your activity to ensure you have the students' full attention for the duration of your activity!

² Royal Academy of Engineering