



STEM Classroom Icebreakers

Ditch those muted video chats and bring the conversation back into your classroom. More than ever, students are yearning to interact with new classmates, and this STEM icebreaker is your first step into helping them form lasting friendships. Inspired by the activities found in *Discover Digital Video LAB*, this freebie draws on interview strategies that get students talking about shared personalities, hobbies and interests. Meeting new people can be simple — All it takes is asking the right questions to build strong connections.



HANDS-ON STEM EDUCATION

For over 30 years, PCS Edventures has inspired students to develop a passion for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), focusing our efforts on making learning and discovery a fun and interactive process for grades K-12.

- Classroom
- After-School
- Home Learning

Grade Band:

This icebreaker is perfect for all grade levels. Suggestions for modifications are included.

Background:

School is back in session! Time to meet new friends and reconnect with others, but it's been a while since we've practiced our communication skills. Not sure what to say? Why not start a conversation with a question?

Why Ask Questions?

Think back to when you were little. Chances are you were asking your parents, "Why?" and "What's that?" time and again. That's because even toddlers know how powerful a simple question can be.



When we ask questions, we actively participate in a conversation. We steer the discussion toward new places and ideas. The more you ask, the more you can learn about a person.

Better still, questions make us **active listeners**, eager to hear another person's thoughts and ideas. An active listener uses what they hear to develop their next comment. They respond directly to what someone says. What they hear also informs their **follow-up questions**. Asking someone a question that connects to what they have said shows you listened. Is there any greater feeling than knowing you've been heard?

Start the School Year with Fun Icebreakers

This fun STEM icebreaker is just what you need to get those questions flowing. Remember, asking helps us learn. The more you learn about a person, the easier it is to connect with others and form lasting friendships.

Key Terms:

- **Active listener:** Someone who gives their full attention to what others are saying
- **Follow-up question:** Asking a specific question based on what someone else said to clarify or learn more information

Example: "I heard you say you enjoy fishing. What was your most exciting catch?"

Materials:

- Personality Trait worksheet Page 6
- Pencil

Steps:

1. Take a look at the list of personality traits and think about which one best describes you. Circle that trait.
2. Think of questions you can ask your classmates that will help you find your Personality Partner(s), or someone who chose the same trait as you.

Here's the catch — you cannot use the trait in your question or ask anyone what trait they selected. Instead, think about hobbies or interests someone with your shared trait might enjoy. What might you ask to uncover the truth?

For example, if you chose the personality trait creative, consider asking:

- Do you enjoy drawing?
- What do you like to do in your free time?
- Would you rather read a book or write your own story?

3. Once you have found your Personality Partner(s), it's time to learn some more about them! What are their likes and dislikes? What are some other interests you share? Write down new facts you learn about your partner.
4. Introduce your Personality Partner(s) to your class through a presentation or recording!

Modifications By Grade Level

- Discuss the definition of each personality trait with the class
- Rather than having students find a partner, pair up students who chose the same personality trait and allow them to interview their partner using questions they developed

All Grades:

Bring students' presentation skills into the 21st century with free interactive software:

PRESENTATION STYLE	FREE OPTIONS
<i>Slideshow</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Slides • PowerPoint
<i>Recorded Video</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerDirector (Android tablet) • iMovie (Apple computer) • Perfect Video (iPad) • WeVideo (Chromebook/browser)
<i>Audio Recording</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocaroo

Take students' communication and collaboration skills to the next level! Explore digital storytelling with Android tablets included in every *Discover Digital Video LAB* program.



Discussion Questions:

1. How did knowing one thing you and your partner(s) had in common right from the start affect the conversation that followed?
2. What are the advantages of befriending people with different personality traits than our own?
3. What are the benefits of asking questions?

Extension:

Math: Make a bar graph or line plot to show how many students in the class selected each personality trait.

Discuss:

- How could we use this data to form new friendships throughout the new school year?
- Which personality trait did students associate with the most? The least?
 - How many fewer students chose ____ than ____ ?
- How many students are in our class altogether?
- If we repeated this activity at the end of the school year, would our data be the same? Why or why not?

English: Write a movie script about a character who shares your chosen personality trait. What challenges might they face? What lessons can we learn from their experiences? Record your movie and invite your class to the premiere!

References:

The Surprising Power of Questions (2018, May-June). Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2018/05/the-surprising-power-of-questions>

Personality Traits

Personality traits are adjectives that we use to describe people. Our personality traits often affect what we think, feel and do each day.

Directions: Choose one of the personality traits listed below that best describes you.

imaginative	adventurous	friendly
calm	responsible	confident

Questions I can ask to find my personality partner...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Personality Partners

We both enjoy:

An interesting fact about my partner is:

Something new I learned about my partner is:

Featured Product

This STEM activity was inspired by the activities found in *Discover Digital Video LAB.*



Students star in their own multimedia production using the *Discover Digital Video LAB*. Exciting curriculum with digital documentaries, historical recreation, original films, and more. Simple startup and step-by-step activities make it easy to set up in your classroom, student club, or after-school.





For more information, visit: <https://edventures.com/collections>
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