Ten Tips for Scientists Visiting a Classroom

1. **Know what the students are learning in class and the approximate level of their understanding.**
   It is better to prepare and ease through a lesson than to speak over the students’ heads and cause them to become lost and disinterested.

2. **Take the necessary amount of time to properly present a specific topic.**
   It might be better for you to attend a class for multiple sessions in order to see a unit through from beginning to end. Some units work better if they are not disjointed.

3. **Ask the teacher for a seating chart, with pictures if possible.**
   Use student names as much as you can to encourage participation.

4. **Keep your plans flexible.**
   Don't expect to be able to follow a detailed lesson plan, especially if you don't normally work with that particular age group. Rather, prepare several different ways to go with a particular lesson that require more or less participation, time, background knowledge, different teaching and learning styles, etc. This way you can adapt as you go.

5. **Show enthusiasm and excitement.**
   It will increase student interest in the lesson, but also in general for the entire subject. A visiting scholar has the potential to affect big changes in student perceptions.

6. **Be yourself and maybe try to make some jokes to connect to the students (don’t be so serious).**
   Students have a general stereotype of scientists so anything that you can do to dispel those notions will be beneficial and make science more exciting.

7. **Use visual aids as much as possible.**
   It maintains student interest and it helps to make the lesson more easily understandable.

8. **Encourage active participation.**
   Anything that gets them moving and/or working usually helps break the monotony of a lecture.

9. **Be sociable with the students and ask them about their interests outside of school.**
   If the students know you care about them, they'll give you more (attention, effort, etc.)

10. **Do not be afraid to take control of the class and command respect from the students.**

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