

The JMU STEM Corps Guide to Success

A Resource Guide for K-5 Learning Facilitators

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I. What do we use to prepare?

For each week, there will be one folder of **Lesson Documents**. There are two files in this folder: **“Facilitator Guide”** and **“Image Slides”**. These are both PDF files that you can view and download from Canvas. You will review both before the lesson. We provide a set of printed copies to use during the lesson. The only reason these are separate files is one set is a portrait and the other is landscape.

Where can I find this? STEM Corps [Canvas page](#) under “Files” (in the left navigation menu). There is a folder for each lesson designated by the date of that lesson (e.g., “10/4 lesson documents”).

When will I have access to it? By Monday afternoon of that week (e.g., by Mon. Sept 30th for the October 4th lesson). I will post a Canvas announcement once it is available.

Can I get a printed copy to review? If you prefer to prepare by taking notes on a printed document, I am happy to provide that. Just let me know in advance so I can print enough copies. These will be available for pick up outside my office, EnGeo 3132, by Monday afternoon.

II. How should I use those resources and how long will that take?

Reviewing the Facilitator Guide

What is this? This is a lesson plan plus notes and tips for you throughout the plan. Each guide has a 1-page overview (page 1), lesson-flow table (page 2), activity protocol, and clean-up instructions, and list of materials.

How do I use it to prepare? Start by reading the **overview** using whatever process you use to synthesize information for a *general understanding* (**2 minutes**).

- You are not being tested on this (formally or by anyone questioning you) and you are not expected to teach that overview. The purpose is to provide a bigger-picture context for you to appreciate why this is part of the curriculum.
- **We found that LFs who understand the bigger picture and appreciate the value of what they are teaching are more invested, more effective at keeping kids engaged and learning, and have a better overall experience.**
- Before watching the tutorial, review the **activity protocol** to have a broad-strokes idea of what you will be doing (**8-10 minutes**). For example, are we assembling a model from instructions, doing a creative design challenge, testing predictions, or some combination, which parts do I want to give extra attention to during Dr. Cresawn’s tutorial?
- While watching the tutorial (see below), have the “lesson flow table” and “activity protocol guide” in front of you so you can follow along as you go through each part.
- Some lessons (not the first one) have different lesson documents for younger groups and older/blended groups. Once we assign members to specific groups (K-2, 3-5, or blended grades) for the semester, make sure to review the right documents.

How will I use the facilitator guide during the lesson?

- Each group will get two printed copies (double-sided, color) in their folder. These copies will include all parts of the facilitator guide *except* the overview page.
- The lesson flow table, which breaks down the parts telling you which page each part is on and materials you need for that part is not stapled to the rest, making it easier for quick reference.
- Have the lesson flow table and activity protocol on the table during the lesson.
- Some LFs use the provided pencils or crayons to check-off steps as you they go along.

Reviewing the Image Slides

What are these? This is a PDF file of a Google slide deck. Slide 1 is the first set of images you will hold up in front of the kids. Slide 2 is the talking points for the pictures on slide 1. Those talking points will be printed on the back of slide 1 so you can refer to them during the discussion as needed. Slides 3-4 are the images and talking points for the second discussion topic, etc. Each lesson will have ~3-5 image slides with talking points on the back. Each folder will have one printed set (full-size, in color, not stapled).

The last slides in that file are sides A and B of the take-home activity, which they do with your help at the end of the lesson. Each folder will have 5 printed copies of the take-home activity (English version). SLIs will have the Spanish versions and extra English versions.

How do I use them prepare? Before watching the tutorial, skim the image and talking points for a big picture idea of what you will be discussing (**<5 minutes**) and the take-home activity slides to make sure you understand what my instructions are asking them to do.

Have the slides accessible while watching the tutorial. I always discuss these at the start of the tutorial and give an example of how to use the talking points to guide the discussion in a way that doesn't sound like you're reading a script. I also go through the take-home activity explaining what we want the kids to do with tips for using the "Dear Family" prompts effectively.

Reviewing the Tutorial

Where do I find it? The url will be hyperlinked on the first page of the activity protocol guide *and* in the "lesson docs are ready" Canvas announcement.

What is it? A **~15-minute video** of me in my office walking through the lesson including the overview, images, how to do the hands-on activity following the activity protocol (with demonstration using the same materials you will have), and the goal of the take-home activity.

How much do I need to pay attention? Please give your full attention to this. Do not have it playing in the background while doing something else or watch it right before you leave on Friday. Figure out the best place and device to watch the video so you can refer to the facilitator guide at the same time. If your attention span doesn't allow you to follow along for 15 minutes (I get that), watch part of it and come back to it when you can focus again. Do not assume that you got everything you need by watching only part of it.

Total preparation time if you follow these suggestions: **~25-35 minutes**.

III. Where do I go and what should I do when I get there?

Locations and Parking:

Bluestone Elementary School- 750 Garber's Church Road, Harrisonburg.

The first lot you will see as you approach Bluestone is the front lot, which is used by buses and usually chaotic this time of day. Your best bet is to **go past this first lot and take the next right** (at the "Heritage Oaks Golf Club" sign) **into the big parking lot**. From there, go in the main entrance (which will be obvious) head straight down the hall until you get to the giant staircase. Take those steps down to the cafeteria (can't miss it). If you need to park in the front lot for accessibility reasons, you may use the side entrance on the right side of the building, down the hill by bus pick-up. That entrance leads straight into the cafeteria.

Stone Spring Elementary School- 1575 Peach Grove Road, Harrisonburg. Park in the **front parking lot**, use the doors on the left and walk straight back to the cafeteria.

Ride Needs:

If you already indicated in your interest form that you need a ride, you will be contacted by either Sarah Kennedy (Stone Spring) or Shia Ananth (Bluestone). They will try to match you with someone who is assigned to the same weeks. See #2 under "what do I do if?" for more information.

Arrival:

- For both clubs, be in the **cafeteria by 3:30**. If you are coming from campus or within a ~5-minute drive to campus, **give yourself at least 15 minutes** to get there, park and into the cafeteria.
- In addition to SLI's taking attendance for our records, the B&GC requires check-in usually with a sign-in sheet. The process for this year is TBD. You should not need to check in at the school office.
- When you get there, find the SLIs and hang-out in that area until the pre-lesson meeting starts. They aim to get there by 3:20 and usually have some set-up work to do.
- The pre-lesson meeting should start by 3:35 and last no more than 5 minutes. They will make sure everyone has their bag of materials and folder and let you know which group you are working with (if there has been a change since you were originally assigned or it's your first time).
- LF partnering and group-assignments: we are still coordinating this process with B&GC staff.

How the grouping and LF partnering works.

- The kids are divided into groups with 4-6 kids, each group seated at a different table. Bluestone (60 kids max) children divides kids into 10 groups. Stone Spring (35 kids max) divides into 6 groups. There will smaller groups on low-attendance days.
- On the first week, we (SLIs and Dr. Cresawn or Luke) will match you with a group and (unless there is reason to), you will work with that same group all semester. For the first week- if you want to work with another LF in particular, stay together when we are assigning LFs and let us know. LFs who join us after the first week will be assigned where needed.
- Groups will be given numbers. The expectation is kids always sit with the same group. Kids that aren't there on the first week, will be added to a smaller group on the second week. Expect some flux because of irregular attendance. Kids are not permitted to switch groups to be with a friend.

- **Sticker rewards:** Be prepared to explain how this works on week 1. See here (page 7).
- You and your partner LF/s will sit with the kids at the table in the kid-sized chairs for the duration of the lesson. If you need materials from the SLI station or need to get the attention of a SLI or B&GC staff member, you will send one LF so there is always at least one with the kids.
- The B&GC staff are usually in the same color T-shirt making them easy to spot. The SLIs will be rotating, observing, looking for issues they can help with, available for questions or to join your group for extra support if needed (see more under question 5 below).
- On our first week of year (10/4), you will take a few minutes to do introductions and make nametags for yourselves and the kids. Eventually we will have permanent name-tags on lanyard for the kids.
- If it's after our first visit but it's your first time there, take a minute to introduce yourself to the kids and learn their names.

IV. What do I do if....?

1. I need to cancel because I'm sick, called into work, etc.

Send me (cresawko@jmu.edu) an email or direct message in Group Me as soon as you know. You don't need to give a reason. You will be removed from the roster for that week. SLIs take attendance based on who is signed up for that week. If you do not let me know, you will be marked as a no-show which will affect your potential to continue being part of STEM Corps.

2. I was supposed to get a ride from someone but they cancelled, can't get in touch, etc.

Contact the **carpool coordinator** for your club. Shia for Bluestone or Sarah for Stone Spring (see more under "ride needs" above). They will be arranging rides before the first lesson with the hopes that those arrangements work all semester. Their email and phone info is in the SLI section (top of page) on the 24-25 [Member Roster](#). They will share their preference for how to contact them.

3. I forgot to prepare

Hopefully you realize this before Friday afternoon when it's time to leave for the club. **If so, it is best to cancel (see #1 above)** then come up with a reasonable timeline and strategy for making sure you are prepared for the next lesson. I am happy to meet and discuss ideas for scheduling time to prepare and making the best use of that time.

4. I was assigned to K-2 but put with 3-5 (or vice versa).

We hope to avoid situations where students are working with a different age group than you were assigned to, but we have limited control in how many kids of each grade-band will attend the club that day and how the B&GC staff will adjust for fluctuating attendance. If this happens for a lesson where there is a lot of differentiation, tell one of the SLIs and they will go through the appropriate facilitator guide and slides, highlighting the differences to be aware of.

5. I am having trouble with behavior management or keeping kids engaged.

For significant behavioral problems that cannot be easily addressed and is impacting the safety, learning, or enjoyment for other children, tell one of the B&GC staff members (at that time, don't wait until the lesson is over). If you can't easily get their attention or they are not responsive, tell one of the SLIs who will talk to the B&GC staff. The B&GC staff should address significant behavior issues; it is not yours or the SLI's responsibility.

For less significant problems (the kids don't seem interested, one child is dominating the conversation, getting in patient with another student, etc.) tell one of the SLIs. They will sit with your group, observe, and model some strategies you can try.

6. I have some kids who just scribble all over the take-home activity and/or don't want to talk through it.

This will happen from time-to-time and more often with the younger kids. It's almost 5PM on a Friday and they have been in learning mode since 8AM. There are a few strategies you can try:

- (1) simplify the instructions by explaining the first part, demo what you are asking them to do, give them time to do it without distraction, then move onto the second part of the instructions.
- (2) ask the child if it's OK for you do the activity with them (on their same sheet or a separate one if you have extras). As you are working, talk about what you're doing and ask for their help.
- (3) Ask the SLIs to come over to your table and help.
- (4) If you aren't having luck, you can just recognize that this kid is checked-out and as long as they are still seated and keeping themselves entertained with scribbling, it's a win.

7. I did everything you said to prepare but didn't feel as prepared as other LFs

Let me know and we will find a time to meet so I can help you find a strategy that makes you feel confident going into the lesson and meets the expectations you have for yourself

8. I want to apply for one of the SLI positions next year?

- Attend as many lessons as you can, be well-prepared, enthusiastic and engaging during the lesson. SLIs pay attention and notice who is prepared and invested and I often ask them about position applicants to ensure they would be good role models for LFs.
- Respond to the feedback request you will get for each lesson and provide good feedback that demonstrates your level of investment in this program.

Sticker rewards- This sheet will stay in your group folder- you will get the same one every week.

- Tell them about sticker rewards during your small-group introductions on week 1.
- Each group can earn up to 3 stickers each week.
- They have to earn them as a group, not individually.
- You have a full sheet in your folder and we will replace these when you run out. **Make sure the extras stay in the folder.**
- Earned stickers will go on the front of the group folder.
- We will have some kind of reward the last week of STEM (April) for groups with a certain number of stickers (# of stickers and reward to be decided).
- At the end of each lesson, LFs will decide how many stickers they get each week (you don't need to always give 3 and it's OK to give no stickers on a particularly bad week).
- Suggestion- ask the kids who best exemplified the good behaviors to place the sticker/s on the front of the folder where they want.
- Use the back of this paper to make a list of your top 5 sticker-earning behaviors & keep it in your folder. Have the kids contribute to this list and review it when done.

Below are some behaviors for you and your group to consider:

- Being good listeners (not interrupting or having side conversations).
- Staying in their seat
- Being kind to one another
- Being respectful to you
- Participating
- Asking for help when they want it
- Asking questions about what they're learning
- Making sure everyone gets a turn to help with the activity
- Making sure everyone gets a chance to share their ideas when asked
- Doing the take-home activity
- Helping with clean-up (if time allows)

Group Number _____

We can earn stickers for:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____