

Developing students' science capital

Science capital is a measure of someone's science-related resources, attitudes, behaviours and ways of thinking. Students with more science capital are likely to be more engaged with science and feel it is 'for me'.

I'm a Scientist focuses on reaching schools where students have lower levels of science capital² and are less likely to study STEM subjects or have science-related aspirations.

The science capital approach goes **beyond contextualising science** – the key is to relate the content to **examples and experiences from the students' own lives.**¹

Making science personally relatable

The science capital approach to teaching aims to show students their lives, personal interests, attitudes and experiences can be connected to aspects of science and those who work in the field.

In *I'm a Scientist*, students' opinions, interests and experiences are elicited in the questions they ask during real-time conversations with scientists. Scientists show there is value in the students' questions by responding to them, acknowledging that students have important contributions to make. Students then make connections between science and their own lives, helping them see that science, and by extension, a science-related role, could be for 'someone like me'.

Seeing scientists as regular people

Students may not know people working in science-related roles, so their opinion of STEM careers and knowledge of what being 'a scientist' actually involves, can often be skewed.

I'm a Scientist introduces students to science professionals with whom they share personal interests and opinions. Through their interactions, students begin to see scientists as 'normal' and 'like me'.

Read more about how we contribute to students' science capital: ias.im/96.p.60

I thought scientists just looked like they do in the film *Flubber*... when I found out they liked Taylor Swift I realised they are more down to earth and not like a mad scientist.

Student

¹ The Science Capital Teaching Approach, 2017

² Read more about our mission to develop students' science capital at imascientist.org.uk/science-capital/

**Develop your students' science capital.
Get involved: imascientist.org.uk/teachers**