

STRATEGIES FOR ADDING YOUTH VOICE AND CHOICE

STARTERS

| <i>If your activity includes...</i> | <i>... then consider...</i> |
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| Working with materials | Letting youth choose which and how much of each material they need. |
| Asking youth a specific question | Making time to also ask youth what other questions they have as they engage in the activity. (These don't need immediate answers.) |
| Telling youth when it's time to move on | Letting youth decide the timing for moving on to the next part. Make it clear that it's ok if they don't get to ___ at all (or telling them that if they want to get to ___ they need to move on to ___ about now) |
| Learning STEM content | Asking youth to choose what part of the lesson they're most interested in digging deeply into – what are they wondering about? |
| Answering questions | Asking youth to think of ways they could answer some of their own questions (e.g. a quick experiment, looking it up online, discussing with others) |
| Summarizing | Asking youth to summarize what they think they've discovered, and sharing that in groups or with a partner. |
| Asking a presenting group questions to get them to say more about what they did | Asking who else in the room has a question for the group that just presented. |
| A fixed ending | Asking youth if they had more time, what they'd wish they could create or explore further. |

DEEPER DIVES

| <i>If you're ready for even more youth leadership...</i> |
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| Let youth take turns to lead an activity of their own choosing with the group. |
| Let youth look through possible projects (e.g. Instructables.com or Howtosmile.com) and choose one they'd like to try. |
| Work with youth to create a place where “junk materials” can be stored, and start assembling a collection for “spontaneous” youth projects. |
| Bring in community leaders who can suggest authentic needs the community has that involve STEM learning. (e.g., building a better culvert to let fish pass, assessing water quality, solving transportation bottlenecks) |
| Help youth participate in ongoing STEM activities (e.g., Scratch programming, Zooniverse citizen science) by letting them try a few and then making a commitment. |
| Use capstone events, such as community days, to bring in parents and the community to acknowledge youth and motivate them to do their activities to a deadline. |