

INTERVIEWING A SCIENTIST

(You may interview in pairs if you wish but separate reports, please)

It is time to do your own research to see if the dominant stereotype of a scientist fits.

Invite a scientist to have a conversation or interview with you. Think of the governmental and non-governmental agencies, universities etc. in your area which employ scientists. When you call, explain that you are an education student who is taking a science methods course for your Education degree and that you wish to know a bit more about scientists as there are many stereotypes held by the public including the children you will teach. Indicate it will take no more than an hour or maybe less. Arrange a time convenient to all.

You may use the following questions as a guide to help you draw up your questions for your interview. Please add others you feel pertinent -both before and during the interview so that it will be a very comprehensive interview. Being a good interviewer requires skill in intervening so as to promote more comprehensive answers.

1. What experiences, if any, influenced you to pursue a career in Science?
2. Are there any teachers who stand out in your mind as encouraging you to explore a career in Science?
3. What is the best part of the work you do- the part that gives you the most satisfaction? Conversely, what is the downside of your work?
4. In what ways is the scientific work you are pursuing similar or dissimilar to the school science experiences you had?
5. What contemporary scientific issue are you most concerned about?
6. What would you say to a student who wanted to shape his/her future with a career in science?
7. If you were to define science, how would you complete this sentence, "Science is....."

Write a report of your interview and submit by the due date on the syllabus. Your report should provide an introduction to your scientist, highlight or list the questions being asked along with the responses. You should also include a written reflection on the interview and the ways in which the interview supported or negated the stereotypic image of a scientist. Also, you may consider how this experience might support you in your teaching of Science to children.

(Questions included are taken from Science Stories, by Janice Koch, Houghton Mifflin Company, ISBN 0-618-12281-8, p.45,)