When Linguists Go to High School

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Our Motivations

❖ Diversity in Linguistics
❖ Demystify Language Structure
❖ Popularize Language Science
❖ Multi-disciplinary Relevance of Language
High School Motivations

- Get Students on University Campus
- Sit in Lecture Hall
- See Who Creates Knowledge
Activities

- Lecture at HS
- Working groups on campus
  - neurolinguistics
  - psycholinguistics
  - developmental linguistics
  - bilingualism
  - syntax
  - phonology
  - ...

Content Goals

❖ AP Psychology
❖ biological basis of behavior
❖ memory and cognition
❖ human development

❖ On Data
❖ appreciate gap between data and interpretation
❖ explore diverse methods for measuring content of mind
Benefits to HS Students

❖ First taste of Academic Discourse
❖ Exposure to Primary Research
❖ Makes Higher Education Real

it was a very interesting experience. It gave me an overall feel of what it’s like to be a college student, having work on campus, and sitting in the lecture hall

(High School Student Feedback, 2013)
Benefits to Language Scientists

- Interdisciplinary communication
- Framing field for non-experts
- Sense of Civic Engagement
- Broader understanding of how research fits into society

getting a chance to communicate details of my own research and the field as a whole to such a new audience really made me think about how to communicate about what we do.

(Graduate Student Feedback, 2013)
Expanding our Program

- Lab Internships
- Maryland Day
- Science Fair Judging
- STEM Career Fairs
- More High Schools
- Middle/Elementary Schools

I always find it interesting to talk with non-specialist audiences, and to see how their questions differ from those of specialists. It also increased my faith in the intellectual curiosity of teenagers. Another benefit was that the visit helped me to find a summer intern for our research group, who went on to do very good work with us.

(Faculty Feedback, 2013)
Lessons Learned

❖ Use your Expertise
❖ Meet them where they are
   ❖ Intellectually
   ❖ Programmatically
❖ Expect to Learn Something
Thanks

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http://languagescience.umd.edu/beyond-umd/language-science-everyone