



## CLASS CHATS: VIRTUAL CAREER TALKS

*Class Chats* connects Amazon professionals with students for live, interactive career talks. The programme exposes students to a breadth of careers in the tech sector (not just technical jobs!) through Amazon employees who share their personal career journeys. Amazon speakers video conference into classrooms to deliver a 15-minute career talk, followed by a 15-minute student Q&A session. The programme also includes a free Teacher Toolkit with lesson plans for pre-and-post learning.

### Resource overview

**Website:** [Class Chats](#)

*Class Chats* are designed to fit within one class period (30-45 minutes).

In the United States and United Kingdom:

Step 1 – Teachers book a *Class Chats* using the online scheduling tool. *Class Chats* are typically booked 1-3 weeks in advance. Teachers are recommended to provide their own video conferencing link, but have the option to ask the Amazon guest speaker to provide a link.

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- **Launch year**  
2020
- **How many schools are currently making use of it?**  
250+
- **Other tags**  
Is informed by research | Free of charge
- **Career development**  
Job fairs & career talks | Accessing information/guidance
- **Age group**  
Primary (ages under 12) | Lower-secondary (ages 12 to 15) | Upper-secondary (ages 16 to 18)
- **Technology**  
Video streaming
- **Countries**  
[France](#) | [Germany](#) | [India](#) | [United Kingdom](#) | [United States](#)



Step 2 – The day before the chat, teachers spend ~20 minutes to prepare students for the speaker using a lesson plan complete with slides and student handouts from the [teacher toolkit](#) (free download on the *Class Chats* webpage).

Step 3 – At the scheduled date and time, teachers join the video conference with their Amazon guest speaker.

Step 4 – After the Class Chat, teachers use the lesson plan to facilitate student reflection.

In India, Germany, and France, teachers schedule *Class Chats* through an NGO partner rather than directly with Amazon. Although the booking is done through an NGO, the speakers provided for the *Class Chats* are exclusively Amazon employees. Please visit the website for more information.

## Description of technology

*Class Chats* takes the classroom guest speaker concept to a virtual experience so any classroom can meet with an Amazon professional for a career chat.

Technology required to host a *Class Chat* guest speaker:

- Computer with internet connection
- Video camera
- Microphone
- Speakers (so students can hear the guest speaker)
- Projector or smartboard (so students can see the guest speaker and presentation)
- A video conferencing system such as Zoom, Teams, Google Meet, WebEx, Skype, etc. (Amazon speakers can provide an Amazon Chime video conference link if preferred.)

## How the resource makes career guidance more effective, efficient and/or equitable for students

*Class Chats* gives students access to professional role models where they can learn about in-demand careers in a meaningful, human-connected way. Class Chats are designed to share stories around the speakers' school years, post-secondary education, career path, and obstacles overcome to ensure their success is perceived as relatable and attainable to any student. The Amazon speakers understand this is a programme intended to primarily support students in Title 1 schools. A Title 1 school is a U.S. school that receives additional educational support from the government because at least 40% of the students are identified as low-income.



*Class Chats* supports career readiness with:

- Career exposure – students learn about careers in the technology industry (not just tech jobs!) they might not know of. Amazon speakers work in a breadth of careers, from computer science and robotics to business, marketing, real estate, finance, design, entertainment, sustainability and more.
- Role models that challenge stereotypes - Students interact with diverse role models who challenge myths about who works in tech and what it is like to work in a big tech company. Amazon guest speakers are diverse in age, race and ethnicity, gender identity, ability, and more.
- Equitable access – *Class Chats* are free for schools. With a virtual-first design, students that aren't in tech-hub cities have access to connect with professionals at Amazon.

## Challenges or potential barriers to use

Classrooms must have the technology to support whole-class video conferencing – internet, computer, projector or smartboard, camera, microphone, and speakers.

*Class Chats* is currently available in the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, and India. It is not available in other countries at the time of this case study.

The resource is free of charge.

## Support for users

Most teachers are able to schedule and host *Class Chats* without any help. Some classroom teachers may need support to set up the classroom technology for video conferencing to ensure students and the Amazon guest speaker can interact via video and audio.

The experience is most successful when teachers use the provided ~20 minute lesson plan to prepare students in advance of the *Class Chat*.



## Additional details

Has the resource been...	Yes or No?	Description	Link
...informed by research?	Yes	<p><i>Class Chats</i> launched in response to requests from teachers for students to be able to meet industry professionals and learn about their jobs. The programme's internal evaluation results show that <i>Class Chats</i> positively impact students' interest in computer science careers. After the <i>Class Chat</i>, 70% of 276 teachers reported that their students were interested in career opportunities in computer science, compared to 53% reporting the same before a <i>Class Chat</i>.</p> <p>A growing body of literature and research support the idea that career role models can positively influence students' future career outcomes.</p>	<p>Some relevant publications include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* OECD Education Policy Perspective: <a href="#">Getting the most out of employer engagement in career guidance</a></li> <li>* Gallup Report: <a href="#">Developing Careers of the Future: A Study of Student Access to, and Interest in, Computer Science</a></li> <li>* <a href="#">Which role models are effective for which students? A systematic review and four recommendations for maximizing the effectiveness of role models in STEM</a></li> </ul>
...funded by government?	No		
...recognized by peers?	No		
...evaluated?	No		

This resource has been endorsed by Canton High School, in Canton, Texas in the United States.

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