

ASTEP

In order to develop teaching in classes that is based on the inquiry approach, ASTEP aims to encourage science professionals to become involved in the process to help primary school teachers and their pupils. They help provide a vivid and stimulating image of science as it exists in the real world.

Since 1996, the Assistance in Science and Technology at Primary School (ASTEP) program encourages researchers, students of science courses, engineers and technicians in industry to support primary school teachers in implementing and carrying out an inquiry-based approach that respects the school curricula. This approach, which must be carried out under the supervision of a teacher, mainly aims to allow students to become familiar with scientific knowledge by partially creating it themselves.

As real-life examples of how science is practiced, scientists help provide a vivid and stimulating image: they add richness to the teaching of primary school students, in playing the role of a teaching assistant, of which many forms have developed in recent years. Their presence alongside teachers gives teachers the opportunity to approach the science curriculum with less apprehension, to become confident in carrying out scientific or technological projects and to reinforce their knowledge of the content. While the challenge of assistance in science and technology is to stimulate curiosity and critical and independent thinking in students and give them a vocation from a young age, it is different from other forms of external participation because the pupils, teacher and scientist are brought together, in a mutually-enriching environment where skills are shared.

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