



*Tour:*

## CAPITAL STEM

### Middle School Edition

*Destination:*

Washington DC & Baltimore, Maryland

*Specialization:*

Science, Math, History & Culture

*Itinerary:*

6-days / 5-nights in destination

## CAPITAL STEM - MIDDLE SCHOOL EDITION

### Washington D.C. & Metro Area

Day	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
1	Travel to Washington DC, transfer to hotel, check-in	Welcome, Safety & Orientation Briefing	Welcome Dinner
2	Washington DC Guided Monuments & City Tour	Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History + Qrius Program	Dinner & Potomac River Cruise - Washington Monuments
3	Udvar Hazy National Air & Space Museum + IMAX Presentation	I-Fly + STEM Master Class & Instructor-led Flights	Local Dinner
4	Hotel Check-Out	George Washington's Mount Vernon, Leadership or Slavery Tour & Lunch	Travel to Baltimore; Hotel Check-In & Refresh
5	Fort McHenry National Park with Flag Changing Ceremony & Ranger Program	The National Aquarium & Marine Science Tour or Master Class	Local Dinner & Exploration at Baltimore's Inner Harbor
6	Reflections	Farewell Dinner at Medieval Times Dinner Theatre	
		Depart Baltimore, Maryland for Home	



As with all sample itineraries, please be advised that this is an 'example' of a schedule and that the activities and hotels shown may be variable dependent upon dates, weather, special requests and other factors. Itineraries will be confirmed prior to travel.



**Hammock Expeditions, LLC**  
 1200 SE 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 8-150  
 Bentonville, Arkansas 72712  
 P: 984.223.9866  
[www.HammockExpeditions.com](http://www.HammockExpeditions.com)  
[www.STEMStudyTours.com](http://www.STEMStudyTours.com)



## A Message From Our Team

At STEM Study Tours, we believe students learn best when they're immersed, engaged, and inspired. Every program is built with intention - blending hands-on discovery, academic depth, and meaningful experiences that help students see the world (and themselves) in new ways. Our goal is for each itinerary to spark curiosity, build confidence, and create moments students carry long after the trip ends. We're honored to partner with schools who share that vision and to help bring learning to life beyond the classroom.

— Michele & The Hammock Expeditions Team

## Why Travel With Hammock Expeditions & STEM Study Tours

Schools choose us because we design programs that are organized, intentional, and built around real learning. Our itineraries combine strong academics with smooth logistics, giving teachers confidence and giving students opportunities to explore, ask questions, and grow. We partner with trusted local experts, communicate clearly, and support groups every step of the way so educators can focus on their students - not the logistics.

## What Sets Us Apart

- **Purpose-Driven Itineraries** - Students actively participate in meaningful, real-world learning.
- **Safety, Structure & Professionalism** - From 24-hour support to vetted partners and clear communication, we ensure teachers can focus on their students while we handle the logistics.
- **Hands-On, High-Impact Learning** - Our programs emphasize field science, conservation, and experiential learning - the kind that sticks with students long after the trip ends.
- **Student-Centered Design** - We balance learning with fun, reflection with adventure, and structure with flexibility. Every day is crafted to keep students engaged, energized, and supported.
- **A Team That Travels With Purpose** - We're educators, planners, naturalists, and travel professionals who care deeply about student growth. Your goals become our goals.

## Our Commitment to You

When you travel with us, you gain a partner who understands your vision, anticipates your needs, and delivers an experience your students will remember for years to come. We're here to support your school, empower your students, and make every moment meaningful.

**We want to be your educational partner. Let us know how we may serve you.**

*Michele, Christina, Izzy, Dana, Taylor, and the Team*



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This six-day journey invites middle school students to explore the heart of American innovation, history, and discovery through hands-on STEM experiences and cultural immersion. From the nation's capital to the harbors of Baltimore, the program blends science, leadership, and real-world learning in unforgettable ways. Students will connect classroom concepts to living history, meet experts who bring technology and exploration to life, and experience how curiosity drives progress. Each day balances structured learning with fun, teamwork, and reflection—creating a dynamic adventure that inspires future thinkers and leaders.

**Washington DC...** The Washington D.C. metro area - home to world-class museums, monuments, and research institutions - sets the stage for discovery. Students explore the Smithsonian Natural History Museum, the National Mall, and the Air & Space Museum, where science and history intersect in powerful ways. Guided tours and interactive programs reveal how innovation shaped the nation, while STEM workshops challenge students to think critically and creatively. Lodging in the greater D.C. area provides easy access to both the capital's landmarks and its surrounding educational hubs, making every day a balance of exploration, learning, and connection.



### Did you know?

- › Washington D.C. isn't in any state! It was created in 1790 as a neutral capital so no single state would hold national power.
- › The famous phrase "taxation without representation" is still heard here today because D.C. residents pay federal taxes but don't have full voting representation in Congress.
- › The District of Columbia was named after explorer Christopher Columbus, whose voyages helped shape early European exploration of the Americas.
- › D.C. is one of the most international cities in the United States, home to more than 170 embassies and cultural centers. About 20,000 international students study here each year, and 15% of residents speak a language other than English at home.
- › The Smithsonian Institution is the world's largest museum complex, with 21 museums and the National Zoo - and admission is free.
- › The Washington Monument was once the tallest structure in the world until the Eiffel Tower surpassed it in 1889.
- › The Lincoln Memorial has 36 columns - one for each state in the Union when Lincoln died.
- › The word "lobbyist" became popular thanks to President Ulysses S. Grant, who complained about people trying to influence him while he relaxed in the lobby of the Willard Hotel.
- › The National Mall isn't a shopping mall - it's a two-mile park lined with monuments, museums, and history.
- › Beneath D.C.'s streets runs a maze of historic tunnels connecting government buildings, some dating back to the 1800s.

## Day 1

Dinner

**Arrival, Welcome & Kickoff** - Students arrive in the Washington D.C. metro area and get checked into the hotel, settling into their rooms and meeting their Tour Director. Once everyone is unpacked and refreshed, the group gathers for our Welcome, Safety & Orientation Meeting, where we walk through trip expectations, daily routines, and how our team keeps students supported and supervised throughout the week. It's a chance to meet the staff, review safety protocols, and set the tone for a fun, respectful, and curiosity-driven adventure. The evening wraps up with a welcome dinner, giving students time to relax, connect, and get excited for the days ahead. If your group arrives early, we're always happy to help plan additional activities to make the most of your first afternoon in the capital region.

## Day 2

Breakfast & dinner included; lunch on own

Today's activities include:

**Washington DC City Tour with a Private Guide** – Spend your morning discovering the nation's capital with a private educational guide who brings Washington D.C.'s stories, symbols, and heroes to life. As you travel through the city's historic neighborhoods and along the National Mall, your guide will share the meaning behind some of D.C.'s most famous landmarks — from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial to the powerful tributes honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and America's veterans. Your group is welcome to hop on and off the motorcoach to explore memorials up close, take photos, and experience these sites in a meaningful way. If you have special requests or must-see locations, we're always happy to tailor the route to your group's interests. It's the perfect introduction to the capital, blending history, civics, and reflection with an engaging, student-friendly pace.



**Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History** – Students step into one of the world's most fascinating science museums, where dinosaurs, deep-sea creatures, gemstones, ecosystems, and ancient civilizations come to life under one roof. As they explore the Hall of Fossils, the Ocean Hall, and the Hall of Human Origins, students see how scientists uncover Earth's story through evidence, discovery, and research. Interactive exhibits and real scientific artifacts help them connect classroom concepts to the natural world in a way that feels exciting, hands-on, and age-appropriate.



**Q?rius – The Coralyn W. Whitney Science Education Center** - During their visit, students participate in Q?rius, the museum's innovative teen science learning lab designed to help young people think and work like real scientists. Guided by Smithsonian educators, students handle authentic specimens, use scientific tools, and investigate questions through observation, data collection, and critical thinking. Whether they're examining fossils, studying insects, or analyzing minerals, the Q?rius experience encourages curiosity and empowers students to explore STEM in a personal, meaningful way. It's an engaging, discovery-driven session that turns the museum into their own working laboratory.



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***Dinner & Dance Cruise on the Potomac*** - Students cap off their evening with a lively dinner and dance cruise on the Potomac River, hosted by City Experiences. As the boat glides past the illuminated monuments and bridges of Washington D.C., students enjoy a kid-friendly buffet dinner and time to relax with friends. Once the music starts, the dance floor opens for a fun, supervised celebration that keeps the energy high. With stunning skyline views, fresh air on the open decks, and a safe, private space just for your group, this cruise offers a memorable way to experience the capital at night.



### **Day 3**

Breakfast & dinner included; lunch on own

Today's activities include:

***Smithsonian National Air & Space Museum: Udvar-Hazy Center*** - Students explore aviation and space exploration on a massive scale at the Udvar-Hazy Center, home to some of the most iconic aircraft and spacecraft in history. From the Space Shuttle *Discovery* to the SR-71 Blackbird and the Enola Gay, students walk beneath engineering marvels that shaped scientific progress and human exploration. The hangar-style layout lets them see aircraft up close, examine real mission equipment, and understand how innovation, problem-solving, and courage have propelled flight from the earliest experiments to modern space travel.



Their visit includes a large-format ***IMAX presentation***, where students experience flight, space, or science-focused storytelling on a towering screen with immersive sound. Whether they're soaring through the solar system or diving into the physics of flight, the IMAX film deepens their understanding of STEM concepts in a way that feels exciting, cinematic, and unforgettable. It's a highlight of the trip that brings the wonder of exploration to life.

***iFly Indoor Skydiving & STEM Master Class*** - Students take science to new heights at iFly, where physics, engineering, and pure adrenaline come together in an unforgettable experience. Their visit begins with an iFly STEM Master Class, led by trained flight instructors who break down the real science behind the vertical wind tunnel. Students explore concepts like force, drag, lift, airflow, and body position through demonstrations and hands-on experiments that make physics feel exciting and accessible.



After the workshop, it's time to suit up and step into the wind tunnel for ***instructor-led flights***. With expert coaching and real-time feedback, students feel how small adjustments in posture and balance change their movement in the air—turning abstract STEM concepts into something they can literally feel. It's a thrilling, confidence-boosting experience that blends learning with adventure and becomes a highlight of the trip.



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## Day 4

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Today's activities include:

***George Washington's Mount Vernon: Galleries, Mansion Tour & Leadership/Slavery Program*** - Students spend the day exploring George Washington's Mount Vernon, the historic estate of America's first president. Their visit begins in the interactive galleries, where artifacts, films, and hands-on exhibits introduce Washington as a leader, innovator, and farmer. Students then tour the Mansion, walking through the rooms where Washington lived and made decisions that shaped the early nation.



Afterward, students participate in a specialized educational program- either a **Leadership Workshop**, which examines Washington's character, decision-making, and challenges, or a **Slavery at Mount Vernon Tour**, which provides an honest, age-appropriate look at the lives of the enslaved people who lived and worked on the estate. Both options deepen understanding and encourage thoughtful reflection.

**Baltimore...** The final leg of the journey takes students to Baltimore, a vibrant waterfront city known for its marine science and historical significance. Here, they dive into hands-on learning at the National Aquarium and Fort McHenry, discovering how ecosystems, conservation, and leadership intertwine. Evening activities at the Inner Harbor and Medieval Times add excitement and celebration to the experience. Baltimore's mix of science, history, and coastal charm provides the perfect conclusion to a week of discovery—leaving students inspired by the world around them and their role in shaping its future.

***Baltimore's Inner Harbor*** - Students explore Baltimore's Inner Harbor, one of the East Coast's most vibrant waterfront destinations and a perfect blend of history, science, and fun. With its scenic boardwalks, historic ships, and lively atmosphere, the harbor offers an exciting change of pace after their time in D.C. From the National Aquarium to hands-on science centers and open-air plazas, the area is packed with places to discover, learn, and explore. Whether students are spotting harbor views, grabbing a snack, or enjoying the buzz of the waterfront, the Inner Harbor provides a memorable backdrop for the Baltimore portion of their adventure.



## Day 5

Breakfast & dinner included; lunch on own

Today's activities include:

***Fort McHenry National Monument: Flag Change Ceremony & Ranger Program*** - Students visit Fort McHenry, the birthplace of the national anthem and one of the most inspiring historic sites on the East Coast. Standing on the same grounds that defended Baltimore during the War of 1812, students take part in a flag-changing



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ceremony, helping raise or lower the enormous Star-Spangled Banner that flies over the fort. It's a powerful, hands-on moment that connects them directly to the history that inspired Francis Scott Key's famous words.

Their experience continues with a National Park Service **ranger program**, where students learn how the Battle of Baltimore unfolded, explore the fort's ramparts and barracks, and discover how ordinary citizens played extraordinary roles in shaping the nation. The program blends storytelling, primary sources, and interactive learning, making history feel vivid, personal, and relevant for middle schoolers.



***The National Aquarium: Private Tour or Science Lab Program -***

Students dive into one of the country's most impressive aquatic environments at the National Aquarium, home to thousands of animals and ecosystems from around the world. As they explore habitats ranging from tropical rainforests to coral reefs and the open ocean, students discover how marine life adapts, survives, and interacts within complex ecosystems.

Your experience will include either a guided tour, or if possible, a Science Lab program – dependent upon availability - offering an insider's look at the animals, exhibits, and conservation efforts that make the aquarium a global leader. If a lab program is possible, students will explore themes like animal behavior, water quality, habitats, and conservation through hands-on experiments, observations, and problem-solving activities. Whether they're behind the scenes with an expert or experimenting in a lab setting, the National Aquarium experience brings marine science to life in a way that's exciting, immersive, and unforgettable for middle school learners.

***Medieval Times Dinner & Tournament*** - Students step back into the age of knights, castles, and epic competition at Medieval Times Dinner & Tournament. As they take their seats inside the grand arena, the lights dim and the excitement builds for a high-energy show filled with jousting, sword fights, horsemanship, and cheering sections that make every student feel part of the action. While the tournament unfolds, students enjoy a four-course feast served medieval-style—no utensils needed—which always adds to the fun.



With colorful banners, dramatic storytelling, and skilled performers who bring the Middle Ages to life, this evening is a perfect blend of entertainment, history, and pure student-friendly excitement. It's a highlight of the Baltimore portion of the trip and a memorable way to celebrate their final night together.

**Day 5**

Breakfast

***Reflection Circle*** - Before heading to the airport, students gather for a final reflection on their week - a chance to celebrate everything they've learned, experienced, and accomplished together. From hands-on STEM labs to behind-the-scenes discoveries, they look back on the moments that challenged them, inspired them, and brought the group closer. It's a warm, meaningful pause in the day where students share highlights, thank their leaders, and recognize how much they've grown. With new confidence, new friendships, and a deeper understanding of the world around them, the group begins their journey home - carrying memories that will stay with them long after the trip ends.



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As your program comes to a close, we hope students leave feeling inspired by the history they've walked through, the science they've explored, and the memories they've created together. From hands-on learning to unforgettable shared experiences, this journey is designed to spark curiosity, build confidence, and strengthen connections that last long after the trip ends. Thank you for traveling with us and for trusting our team to guide your students through this meaningful adventure. We wish you a safe trip home and look forward to welcoming you on another Hammock Expeditions experience in the future.



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# CAPITAL STEM – WASHINGTON DC

## Middle School Edition

<b>Minimum Booking Numbers:</b>	20 students
<b>What's Included:</b>	Roundtrip flights or motorcoach transportation 5-nights' accommodation in destination Breakfasts & dinners daily; starting with dinner on arrival and ending with breakfast on departure 1 lunch at Mount Vernon (please let us know if you need more included in your itinerary) Airport transfers + transportation to activities shown in itinerary Guided City Tour with a DC-licensed guide Smithsonian's Natural History Museum Smithsonian Qrius Programming Dinner & Dance Cruise on the Potomac Udvar-Hazy National Air & Space Museum with IMAX Presentation iFly STEM Master Class + Instructor-led flight experience George Washington's Mount Vernon, Galleries & Tours Baltimore's Inner Harbor Exploration Fort McHenry National Park with Flag Changing Ceremony, film and Ranger program The National Aquarium with tour or class Medieval Times Dinner Theatre Personal Tour Director 24-hour emergency assistance
<b>What's Not Included:</b>	Fully comprehensive insurance ( <b>mandatory</b> ) Baggage costs, pay directly to airline if required Baggage handling - everyone should be able to pull / load their own bag Transfers to/from home airport Lunches, snacks or beverages other than at designated mealtimes Meal selections other than ones provided for the entire group (we are generally able to cater for allergy conditions, vegetarians, halal and in some cases vegan) Cost of personal passports, visas or visa waiver fees Cost of inoculations or medication required for travel Sightseeing / Entertainment / Transport not shown in Itinerary Hotel incidental deposits & bills – mini-bar, movies, etc. Gratuities – drivers, hotel services, local guides, tour director Credit card fees if individuals wish to pay via credit card instead of ACH Additional taxes, fuel surcharges or fees levied by governments / suppliers

As always, our staff are always available to you to answer any questions you may have regarding programming. If we may serve you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us.



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