

Mini-Model Presentations: A Tool For Teaching Dynamics Systems Thinking.

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Scott Guthrie (Associate Director, CC-SUSTAIN/CC-STADUS Project) has been teaching systems thinking and dynamics to high school students (using STELLA II) at Wilson High School in Portland, Oregon in a formal class and as an integrated part of other classes for the past six years. One of the goals of these courses is teaching students how to recognize and build models of dynamic systems. However, this is just one part of the much more complex job of teaching them to think and apply system dynamics principles in their everyday lives. Teaching students to use causal-loop diagrams while simultaneously teaching them modeling confuses and prolongs their learning of both tools. However, using the modeling language as a tool to begin constructing diagrams – not working models – of systems is a very helpful middle step and leads the students in the direction of the desired goal.