



STEM Education: *Black Panther* Style



By Michael DuBose

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Still pleading with students and parents alike to get young African American girls involved with STEM? Here's the latest hook! Introduce them to *Shuri*,



the teen sensation, half-sister of King T'Challa-*The Black Panther*. Not only is she the heiress to the throne of the imaginary *Wakanda*, but her mastery of STEM displayed in *her very own* laboratory is destined to ignite the imagination of young girls everywhere. This movie is a must-see for STEM inspiration!

Shuri was first created in the 2005 comic series *Black Panther vol.4 #2* by writer Reginald Hudlin, who so aptly stated his purpose in an interview with *Vulture*:

"I wanted everyone who read the book to be empowered. I wanted girls who read the book to feel as empowered as boys. So, I wanted her to be smart and tough and brave and everything you think of as a Black Panther, so that eventually she would be a Black Panther as well. Basically, I wanted a Halloween costume for my son and my daughter."

Talk about empowered, strong, and tough! She appears on the big screen 13 years later in the midst of a *real* world that has embraced STEM education, and its fruit, as a defining element that will transform underprivileged, underestimated, and undervalued youth into heroes of societies and cultures worldwide.

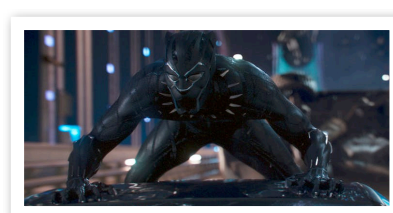
(Spoiler Alert...)

STEM teen *Shuri's* humorous and unrestrained excitement spills over as she observes her vast array of technological creations successfully operating in *Wakanda*, but also 6,000 miles away in South Korea! What STEM teen (without a driver's license) wouldn't want to

sit in a laboratory miles away, in the seat of the remote-controlled car that *Shuri* built, using hologram



technology to disguise itself as an average car while it is really a highly-advanced vehicle.



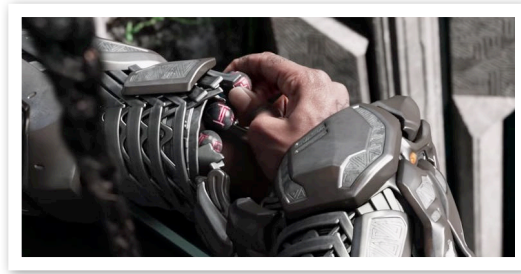
(Oh, and it also comes with Black Panther securely attached to the roof, twisting through the streets of South Korea!)

Teen video game enthusiasts would clamor to use *Shuri's* Vibranium-powered twin blasters, created for herself as she exits her lab and enters the epic battle scene.



If that's not enough, ScreenRant describes a few other STEM creations from *Shuri*:

- Virtual Reality (without the glasses) used in a surgical procedure.
- Wakanda's high-speed rail system that can zoom past Japan's bullet trains.
- Kimoyo beads attached to Hologram bracelets that work like your cell phone lots of uses. Nakia, for example, wears beads that can scan a person's vitals, or be used to prevent them bleeding out.



All in all, STEM-inspired girls *and* boys alike will surely free-fall in love with *Shuri* and hopefully be inspired to have fun while learning, laugh at their failures, and scream with excitement when their ideas make it from *their imaginary* Wakanda to the *real* global stage!

So parents and educators, continue to invest in children and inspire them towards STEM. Use the words of America's Supernanny, Dr. Deborah Tillman, to guide you:

“...in every child there are seeds of *greatness* and it takes a loving soul and a giving spirit to water those seeds so that every child has the opportunity to reach their Divine Destiny.”

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