

# May Watts Science Fair

## Guideline, Rules and Regulations

### Science Fair Guidelines

1. Important point - think safety first before you start. Make sure you have recruited an adult to help you.
2. Never eat or drink during an experiment and always keep your work area clean.
3. Wear protective goggles when doing any experiment that could lead to eye injury.
4. Do not touch, taste or inhale chemicals or chemical solutions.
5. Respect all life forms. Do not perform an experiment that will harm an animal.
6. All experiments should be supervised by an adult!
7. Always wash your hands after doing the experiment, especially if you have been handling chemicals or animals.
8. Dispose waste properly.
9. Any project that involves drugs, firearms, or explosives are not permitted.
10. Any project that breaks district policy, and/or local, state or federal laws are not permitted.
11. Use safety on the internet! Never write to anyone without an adult knowing about it. Be sure to let an adult know about what websites you will be visiting or have them help you search.
12. If there are dangerous aspects of your experiment, like using sharp tools or experimenting with electricity, please have an adult help you or have them do the dangerous parts. That's what adults are for, so use them wisely. (Besides, it makes them feel important!)

### Science Fair Rules and regulations

1. Only one student per entry, you can't work in a team of two until you get to middle school, sorry.
2. Adults can help, in fact we want them to get involved. They can help gather materials, supervise your experiment and even help build the display. They just can't be with you during the judging.
3. Experiments (Scientific Method) are required for competitive entries. For noncompetitive, collections and models are okay. You will not score very high unless you do your project using Scientific Method. Remember - you will be judged on the use of the "Scientific Method".
4. You cannot bring the materials of your experiment for the display or perform the experiment live. You will only be judged on your presentation and board. You can however, mount things on your board in a type of 3D display but remember that your board has to be able to stand by itself, so don't get carried away. If you do mount things on the board, try not to mount something expensive that you bought and make sure you have things mounted securely so they don't fall off. You may not mount any food or organic materials.
5. Displays must be on display boards or preferably standard trifold. They can be no longer than 100cm in height, 180 cm in length and 75cm deep. They must stand alone.
6. Limit your presentation to 8 minutes at the most, 4-5 minutes on speaking and the rest for the judges to ask questions.

7. No recording or transmitting devices are permitted. (no tape recorders or secret walkie talkies, cell phones or other James Bond toys.)
8. Respect all adults involved in the fair... especially the judges!
9. All decisions of the judges and science fair committee are final.

## **Getting Started (FAQs for Parents)**

- Does my child have to do a science project?

Participation in the Science Fair is strictly voluntary, and it is open to all grades. We work hard to make it a positive experience for all children. Every child who participates in the Science Fair is a winner.

- Are group projects allowed?

No, students can only do projects individually.

- How can I help my child?

The goal is to get your child to choose a simple question about a topic he/she is interested in, and then design a simple experiment to try and answer this question. The project should be child driven, child created, and fully understood by your child. Ideally, the experiment should involve making observations and recording results. Try to guide your child to a project that is in their area of interest yet within their grasp to complete with your assistance. It is helpful to continually remind yourself that this is your child's project, not your project!

- How do we choose a project?

There are many ways to choose a project. You could start by asking your child what they have been doing in class for science. You could think back to some of the why and how questions they have asked recently. Finally, there are plenty of science fair project books or online resources out there, but please only use them as a starting point. Your own child's imagination is a better source of inspiration. Remember, simple is best.

- How complex can the project be?

Your child should understand what it is they were trying to do and be able to explain it to others. Please avoid explaining the results in elaborate sounding scientific language that your child and his/her peers would not understand. The information in the display can be done by hand or computer generated, depending on your child's age and inclinations. The complexity of the topic should be grade-level appropriate, and you can let your child's interests and abilities guide you on this.

- After my child comes up with a project idea, how do we get started?

Submit a completed "Project Proposal Form". It should include the question(s) you are trying to answer, your hypothesis/hypotheses (what you predict/expect will happen), and how you propose to set up your experiment to test your hypothesis/hypotheses. The proposal needs to be detailed enough to make it clear that you understand the procedure, and that it is reasonable to believe it can be accomplished given the time and materials available.

## **Display Board Guidelines**

### **Suggested headings and information to put on your Science Fair Display Board:**

#### **Title**

- A brief title of your experiment
- Also include the student name and grade

#### **Purpose**

- The question you are asking o Background information that led you to your question

#### **Hypothesis/Hypotheses**

- What you thought would happen – your educated “guess”

#### **Materials**

- Description of materials (and equipment) used for the science project

#### **Procedure**

- Details on exactly what you did
- Part of this should involve measuring something
- Qualitative (rather than quantitative) measurement is ok for younger grades

#### **Results**

- Your observations of what happened
- If the experiment was done more than once, then show the results from different trials
- Be sure to include photos, graphs, charts, tables and/or other visual displays

#### **Conclusions**

- What you learned and conclusion
- Did your findings match with your guess or hypothesis/hypotheses?

#### **Background Research (younger kids could skip this section)**

- Summary of the research you did to help you understand the topic and plan the project
- Include list of references that you used

#### **(Optional) New Questions or Future Experiments on This Topic**

- What you might want to know next

#### **Tips:**

1. Keep your Display board simple, not too much text, uncluttered, easy to read
2. Make it colorful, printed text preferably, use diagrams, photos, charts etc. to make your point.