



District Science Fair Rules: Experimental Design

The rules outlined below **must be adhered to without exception**. Please follow all rules listed so you will not experience disappointment or surprise on the day of the fair. ***The use of the steps in the Scientific Method are required and must be demonstrated, and visible on your display.***

NOTE: Photographs and illustrations are considered equal to or better than actual project or demonstration materials as long as the exhibit is accompanied by identification labels.

1. Plants, (except [c] below), molds, vertebrates, environmental pollutants and items listed below which are used in an experiment cannot be exhibited, but the project may be demonstrated through photography, illustrations, and/or diagrams.
2. Exhibit size is **limited** to 30 inches deep, front to back; 48 inches wide, side to side, and 96 inches high, floor to top. (Tables are 30 inches high.) **There can be NO exceptions.**
3. Only **ONE** student per project will be permitted. NO team projects are allowed.
4. **Proper attention to safety** is required of all science fair participants. **Anything which could be hazardous to the public is PROHIBITED FROM BEING DISPLAYED**. Specifics are outlined below:
 - a. **NO OPEN CONTAINERS WHATSOEVER!!!**
 - b. Live organisms pathogenic to man or live vertebrates (i.e. cultures of bacteria or fungi are prohibited; invertebrates can be displayed only in safe, enclosed containers)
 - c. Plants will be allowed if they fit within the project dimensions. Plants must be pre-watered. Poisonous or toxic plants are prohibited.
 - d. Vertebrate animals, living or dead, and their parts are prohibited.
 - e. Food, either human or animal, may only be displayed in sealed containers.
Note: The public must NOT sample food.
 - f. **DO NOT** display syringes or any similar devices.
 - g. Any flames, open or concealed, are prohibited.
 - h. Hot plates are prohibited. Do not use any highly flammable display material.
 - i. Dangerous chemicals, including caustics and acids, are not allowed. **Safe chemicals** such as table salt, sugar, or bicarbonate of soda **may be displayed** in quantities of less than 1 tablespoon.
 - j. Highly combustible solids, liquids, or gases are prohibited.
 - k. Do not use tanks which contain combustible gases, including butane and propane, both of which are prohibited.
 - l. Bare electrical wires/exposed knife switches may be used only with circuits of 12 volts or less.
 - m. **NO electrical outlets of any kind will be provided, nor will they be available.**
5. **The student may not display his/her name or school on the project.** All projects will be identified only by an assigned number.
6. **A contestant may enter only ONE exhibit.** The exhibitor must do all work on exhibits. Teachers, sponsors, parents, etc. may participate only in an advisory capacity. Judges will give special attention to displays using children's language and drawings. Avoid using technical terms that are not understood by the student.
7. **Scoring will be based on understanding and work done by students, NOT on the value of accessory equipment, either borrowed or purchased.**

Criteria for judging will be based on creative ability, scientific thought, understanding, dramatic value and technical skill, and clarity. **Decisions of the judges will be final.**

*updated October 2018 – Jessica Jones