



Guidelines for Teachers and School Sites

1. Science Fairs are most productive when all teachers in a school agree they are worthwhile. Have a site meeting to determine if this is something toward which everyone is willing to contribute. Once you have made this decision, make sure that everyone becomes involved in planning and preparation.
2. Set a suitable time and date for your school fair. Check with the regional fair to find out dates for this years' fair and when entries are do. Set the date at least two weeks prior to that date. This will allow time for revision of projects based on comments made by your fair judges.
3. Set a timetable for teachers (and one for students), and then stick to it.
4. Projects should be required, not completed on a voluntary basis. You may want to limit this to certain classes or grades. Advise parents of these students what will be required of their children, when it will be due, and what they can do to help.
5. Students need varying amounts of instruction and guidance in how to conduct a research project or investigation. This makes it a necessity to spend class time working with students on their projects. Even with instruction on the scientific method, proper control of variables, and budgeting of time, many students experience difficulty in applying these concepts on their own.
6. The most difficult task you will face in helping students with their research project will be deciding on a topic. This needs to be done early, so if problems arise there will be enough time to rethink their topic.
7. Arrange for some class days to be spent in the library and in the school's computer room in order for the students to gather background information on their topics. Your librarian and computer specialist may be willing to spend a portion of one class pointing out the specific sources of scientific information in your library or on the NET, and how to access that information.
8. Have a discussion with your students about the correct use of "affect" and "effect". You will want your students to complete a bibliography of their background research. You may have to give them instruction in preparing a bibliography. As projects develop, you will want to discuss ideas on preparing their displays to attract attention.
9. Set a due date for the projects that precedes your science fair date by at least a week. This provides you with an opportunity to grade the project and suggest some improvements.