

Science Fair Projects, a Teachers Guide

by Mort Barish It's that time of year again. Kids learn by doing, and this is the opportunity the inquisitive geniuses have been waiting for. Is second-hand smoke harmful? Do boys or girls have better study habits? Is the air more polluted at the bus station than near my home? Kids are always asking questions and science fairs afford them the opportunity to answer these questions in a scientifically valid manner. Great science fair projects begin with the teacher or the parent. Helping your students select a project topic is undoubtedly your first task during the science fair season. DO help your students to find the right project. The internet can be a great resource for gathering project ideas. There are thousands of science fair project ideas listed. Teach them to enter key words like "science fair projects" or "science project ideas" or any combination of related key word. If the student is interested in biology, he/she could enter "biology science fair projects". Finding something that interests them is the key to their success. Here are some helpful dos and don'ts: * DON'T do the research yourself. The student's search for the right project is a necessary first step in getting their interest. It will be really exciting for the student to surf the web and enjoy the experience of finding the project that he/she just cannot wait to do. * DON'T micro manage their efforts. They should feel free to express themselves. * DO give them general guidelines for completion dates. * DO teach them the step-by-step scientific method. * DO make them feel secure about asking you questions. Presentation is another area where many students could use extra guidance. Even the greatest science fair project will fail if it's presented poorly. Show your students examples of award-winning displays. And be sure to tell them about the judges' criteria for excellence. Guide them on any science fair project limitations. Some science fairs discourage the use of live animals. Others may not permit projects that require growing plants because of the time required. Still others frown on the use of certain chemicals, especially for the younger grades. Make sure your students are aware of the limitations of your school. Over 200 [science fair projects](#) including information on the scientific method, and an understanding of what the judges are looking for can be found here at <http://www.terimore.com>.

About the Author

Mort Barish is co-founder of Terimore Institute, Inc. Terimore Institute provides science fair projects for children in grades K-12 to help them successfully compete in science fairs. He has been creating educational materials for children and related graphic communications for almost fifty years. He is the author of seven books and has won numerous awards for his graphic presentations.

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