



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE



PRE-COLLEGE RESEARCH
EXCELLENCE PROGRAMS

Suggestions for Teachers

Supporting Student Research

Writing the Science Fair Lab Report is often the most difficult part of the Science Fair project for students. This part of the process takes support from you, their science teacher. You will find detailed information in this Handbook to help you help them. However, in this age of increased collaboration among teachers, please remember that your students also have English teachers and librarians that you might recruit to help you and your students.

The production of the Lab Report is a major paper including a short literature review on the topic on which the student chooses to do his research and experimentation. English teachers in your building may be open to allowing students to work on this paper as an English assignment, especially since it qualifies as an “explanatory essay incorporating narrative elements” in Common Core. You and your students may find their help immensely beneficial.

Setting Students up for Success and Creating Excitement

Dedicate at least one class period to go over the Science Fair Handbook, your expectations, and, most importantly, build excitement. Show some examples of quality displays that explain interesting projects. You can find pictures on the Internet.

Group Projects

Be careful if you decide to allow students to work together on the project. Group projects often are completed by only one person in the group and that becomes very clear on presentation day. Think about how you will prevent that or consider requiring all projects except the most labor-intensive ones be done individually.

Importance of the Lab Notebook

Consider making the number of points awarded for maintaining a thorough journal/notebook significant enough that a grade of “A” cannot be obtained without one. A quality notebook is absolutely essential if a project moves forward into regional competition.

Grading the Science Fair Project

How students are assessed on their project is entirely up to you. It is recommended that you provide the rubric you will be using to students at the beginning of the project. Sample rubrics can be found in this handbook for you to adapt as you like.