

12/30/2011

Dear _____,

I am writing to you because your name was given to me as a possible judge for our upcoming Zion Lutheran School Science Fair. This year, for the first time, our Science Fair will have judges, independent of our classroom teachers, to determine the quality and validity of the students' experiments. The experiments will be on display in our school gym on display boards, and will have the students' written reports attached. Teachers will be grading the projects separately, and will have different criteria for grading than you will have for judging.

Anyone is welcome to be a judge, but we are particularly hoping for judges who have some background in a scientific field, and who, in order to reduce the possibility of bias, do not personally know our middle school students.

Judges are responsible for completing the attached Judging Rubric for each student in one of our Middle School classes (between 14 and 17 students). The rubric provides a simple, standardized scoring method for judging the students' work. The main aspects that you will be judging are the quality of the visuals on the display board, and the degree to which each student followed the Scientific Method. Depending on how carefully you choose to investigate the projects, it should take between two and eight minutes to judge each project, so your total time commitment will be between half an hour and two hours.

The projects that you score the highest will receive prizes, and the student in each grade who completed the highest scoring project will have the opportunity to go to the Washington State Science & Engineering Fair in Bremerton.

Our school science fair is being held on January 19th (Thursday), and the judging is to take place between 10am and 7pm on that day.

We would greatly appreciate your help in judging our projects. Please let me know if you will be able to participate.

Thank you for your support,

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	Excellent (10)	Good (7)	Fair (4)	Poor (0)	Notes & Opportunities for Improvement
Visuals: Neatness	Items are straight, headings are clear and large, title is easy to read; gluing/taping is invisible	Items are not quite straight, not glued or taped to display properly	Display is visually displeasing due to several gluing/taping issues; hard to read headings, misaligned	Display is impossible to understand due to sloppy work	
Visuals: Organization	Headings follow the Scientific Method in a logical, easy-to-understand order	Most pieces of the Scientific Method are in place, but parts may be confusing	All necessary parts are evident, but there is little organization	Display is impossible to understand due to lack of organization	
Visuals: Splash	Display is fun to look at; full of color, and interesting pieces; display attracts and challenges viewers with several fascinating pieces	Display is pleasing, and somewhat interesting, but doesn't hold casual viewers attention	Display is not visually appealing, and tends to be overlooked by adjacent displays	Display attracts no attention because of its blandness	
Scientific Method: Problem	A clear, concise scientific problem or question is being investigated	A scientific problem is being investigated, but may be too broad, or poorly formulated	A problem is being investigated, but the field is extremely broad, or not scientifically sound	It's unclear what is being investigated	
Scientific Method: Hypothesis	A clear, concise, testable "I think _____ will happen" statement is evident	A testable hypothesis is evident, but is poorly worded	A hypothesis is evident, but isn't clear and isn't testable	It's unclear what the hypothesis is.	
Scientific Method: Procedure	The procedure is made to properly test the stated hypothesis, clearly established, and followed exactly. Procedure is repeated as necessary to produce sufficient data.	The procedure properly tests the stated hypothesis, but is not clear, or not followed exactly, or not repeated as necessary to provide sufficient data.	The procedure is hard to understand, and may or may not test the hypothesis, and may or may not have been followed exactly or repeated.	It's unclear what procedure was used	
Scientific Method: Control/Variables	A scientific control, dependent and independent variables are clearly and accurately identified, based on the procedure, and being properly tested	A scientific control, dependent and independent variables are identified, but are not being accurately tested	A scientific control, dependent and independent variables are wrongly identified, and therefore wrongly tested	It's unclear what the scientific control, dependent and independent variables are	
Scientific Method: Data & Analysis of Data	The data clearly explains what happened in the experiment, and how variables influenced the data; a graph or chart furthers understanding	Data explains what happened, but fails to explain how variables influenced the results, or no chart or graph is present	Data is present but fails to explain what happened, or the relationship between variables and data	It's unclear what data is present, or how it was gathered	
Scientific Method: Research & Conclusions	There is evidence of extensive research to explain the data and results of the experiment, from a wide variety of sources including the project itself	There is evidence of research, but only as a means of meeting requirements, with little correlation to the project	There is some evidence of research, but it misses the mark, and doesn't relate to project	It's unclear whether any meaningful research was undertaken	
Overall Quality	Project represents massive effort, evident by vibrant display, well-devised experiment, and brilliant interpretation of results	Project represents solid effort, but could have been more insightful or meaningful with better preparation and work ethic	Project represents some effort, but often resorts to aiming for minimum requirements	It's unclear whether much meaningful effort went into this project	
Category Score	Judge's Name				
Project Title	Total Score				/100