

Science Fair And Invention Convention Stimulate AE/MS

By Melinda Siranian
AE/MS Science Teacher

The science fair project is an important piece of the middle school science curriculum. It gives students the opportunity to explore and investigate their own science question. While this is inspiring for many, it can also inspire fear and stress in many students (and their parents as well).

To help reduce the stress, we begin discussing the project upon returning from Christmas vacation. The discussion begins as an overview of the project.

The project itself is merely an exploration of the scientific method. Students are experienced with this method as it is the foundation for all of the lab work that is done in class.

All labs have a title, a problem (which is the question the experiment seeks to answer), a list of materials, a procedure (what is to be done to perform the experiment), and then conclusion questions to assess the student's understanding of the results and processes of the lab. The science fair project adds a hypothesis (the student's prediction for the outcome of the experiment), graphs to show the results, and a conclusion summarizing their results.

In addition to the science fair board, students also create a written report. The parts of the report are explained and demonstrated in class, giving students the opportunity to ask questions and then model the written work.

Getting It All Done

One of the major sources of stress for students is the size and scope of the project – how will I ever get this all done? The project is broken into its component pieces with individual deadlines for each piece of the project. Due dates begin at the end of January with the bulk of the project to be completed over February vacation (the experiment itself). Students hand in the pieces, which are reviewed and commented upon, giving the students the opportunity to work on several drafts of the project.

Seventh grade projects are limited in their scope to consumer products. Students choose a product and conduct tests to "prove" which brand of that

product is the "best." Class discussions focus on what would determine "best." There are numerous class discussions and modeling of how to do each step, with the students also working on peer review and editing.

As eighth graders, students are allowed to choose their own topic, given the limits of no living organisms, plants included. Eighth graders are given the same timeline to help them not be overwhelmed and also to help me keep track of their progress.

Overall, the projects are successful and students have a great sense of pride and accomplishment at the presentation night for parents. It is a great learning process, both in terms of scientific exploration as well as the students' ability to organize themselves and see a large project through to the end.

We are very fortunate to find wonderful judges for the fair from our community! Thank you to those who donate their time to evaluate our students' work.



Phil Brown, a member of DEKA's IBOT team, demonstrates this amazing self-balancing mobility aid at the AE/MS Science Fair.

Photo by Sharon Darling

Got News?

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By Jay Hubbard
AE/MS Grade 3 Teacher

Third grade students have been busy inventing devices to make their lives easier. They proudly displayed their inventions on March 24 at AE/MS' annual Invention Convention.



Maddie Trefethen took top invention honors for Glovekins, gloves made from napkins to keep hands clean.

Photo by Carmen Bates

nal Invention Convention.

The assignment involved creation of an invention, written documentation of the process, and explaining their creative and useful devices to the public at Invention Convention.



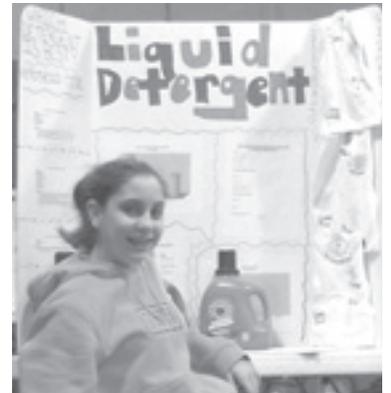
Jacob Hubbard solves "I can't reach the piano pedals." Now there's no excuse not to practice!

Photo by Carmen Bates



Haley Adams was inspired by the family "junk drawer" to invent Messy Drawer No More drawer dividers.

Photo by Carmen Bates



Lizzie Rego's Science Fair project compared liquid laundry detergents to see which one performs best.

Photo by Sharon Darling

AE/MS 2005-2006 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION AND INFORMATION GATHERING – MAY 18, 2005

It is time to register Andover children for kindergarten!
If your child will be five years old by September 30, please contact AE/MS at 735-5494 to set up an appointment for registration.
During the registration process the children will be asked to perform a variety of small tasks. The purpose is to gather information to help in preparing and planning for the new class. Children will meet Mrs. Pellegrino, the kindergarten teacher and learn a little about their upcoming year.
At the time of your child's appointment, please bring his or her birth certificate and immunization record.
An orientation day will be scheduled for late August.

Lake Farm Realty Welcomes A New Agent

Debbie O'Byrne has joined the Lake Farm Realty office in Andover. She is a seasoned educator who has a great deal of experience understanding the needs of families and their children.

Whether you're looking for a larger home, downsizing, or just moving out on your own, she is ready to listen and help you find the perfect home for the next chapter in your life!



Call Debbie at Lake Farm Realty at 735-5444



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