(MS)²TC 7ᵗʰ Grade Science Fair Project Display Board Guidelines

■ *Your display will "talk" to the judges about your investigation! Your display needs to tell a clear story about your investigation.*

■ Must follow rules for display boards as dictated by the SEFMD. Important SEFMD fair display rules:

- Credit *all* photographs (including those cut from magazines, etc.) on a display board with their origin.
- If you include photographs of people other than the investigator, then permission must be given.
- A parent's permission *must be* obtained to display photographs of minors.
- Project display board must stand on its own (tri-fold project boards only).
- Project display board must NOT exceed size restrictions set by the SEFMD. Junior Division display boards may NOT exceed 36" wide x 108" high x 24" depth.
- Display boards CANNOT include:

  - live material
  - cultures, fungi
  - chemicals, dry ice
  - food (human or animal)

  - valuable equipment (make use of photographs instead)
  - no electricity will be available
  - anything potentially hazardous to the public is prohibited

■ Spelling and grammar are correct.

■ The display board should use pictures, diagrams, tables, graphs, and text to tell a clear story about your work. All visual elements MUST have descriptive and relevant captions.

■ There should be an easy-to-find title. Title should be original, creative, and relevant to project.

■ The story of your investigation should flow clearly, probably starting in the upper left part of the board. If the flow is complex, use section titles or even numbered steps to help the judge. It shouldn't be too crowded or too busy in appearance.

■ **FONT TYPE & SIZE**: You must type all text using a legible font type and size. The following guidelines can be found at www.sciencebuddies.org:

- **Use a font size of at least 16 points** for your main body text. Anything smaller is too hard to read. (See table below for more information on text size.)

- **Stick with traditional fonts** like Arial, Times New Roman, or similar typefaces.

- Use *italics* or **bold** for emphasis, not for all your text.

- **Don't place your text on top of a picture**; that makes it difficult to read.

- Don't use ALL CAPS; THEY ARE MUCH HARDER TO READ.

- Don't use reverse type (white text on a dark background).

- It is hard to read. Use black characters on a white (or pastel) background.
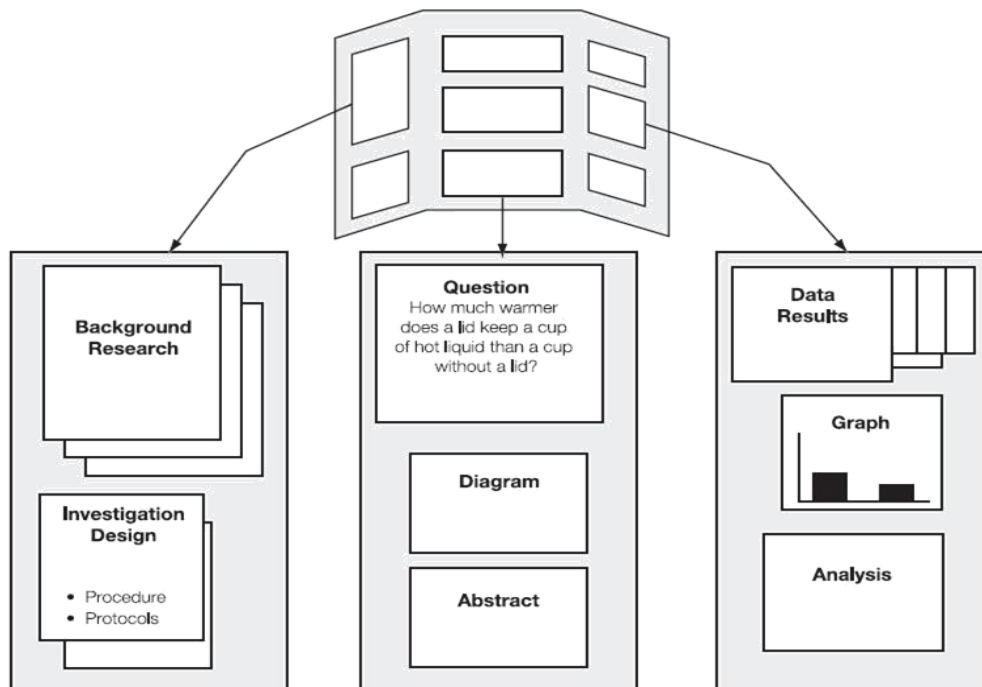
- *Don't use artistic fonts.*

- They are much harder to read.

- Don't use more than two or three different fonts on your board. Times New Roman for body copy and Arial for headings makes for a nice combination.

■ **CUTTING, GLUING AND MOUNTING**: Remember that text boxes stand out when backed by a border. Edges of all elements should be neat, even and securely glued to display board. Neatness matters!

■ **APPROPRIATE PLACEMENT OF WORK**: Arrange your work under the relevant headings:
- **Question/Problem Statement & Hypothesis**
- **Abstract**
- **Procedure** (step-by-step design plan and diagrams)
- **Results/ Data Analysis** (in some visual format, such as a graph; data tables may also be displayed)
- **Conclusion, etc.**

■ **PHOTOGRAPHS**: Use relevant photographs, but do NOT use photographs primarily as decoration. As a general rule, judges are not impressed by photographs cut from magazines or downloaded from the internet.

■ Fair display rules require ALL photographs on a display board be credited with a statement of origin. For example: "All photos taken by the investigator." Or, "Photo: Scientific American, March 2004." Or, "Photo taken by Mark Brown, investigator's father."

■ Photographs of the student researcher (in the Junior division) must not show the researcher's face (or color of their skin from arms, hands, etc).

■ **Text Size Guidelines:**

Item	Font Size (points)	Comments
Title	150+	You want your title to be visible from across a room!
Headings	32+	Should be easily readable from 5 feet away by someone just walking by.
Subheadings	20+	This text is smaller than headings, but more noticeable than main text size.
Main Body Text	16 – 18	This is a comfortable text size for someone who comes closer to read more.
Captions	12 – 16	It's OK to make these a bit smaller than the body text if necessary.

■ **A final assessment**: Look at the display board. Ask yourself the following questions:
- Is it easy to understand and follow? Is the lettering neat?
- Are the tables and graphs drawn with rulers, and do they accurately display the data?
- Does the display use color effectively? Does it look like the scientist cares about helping others understand the project?

A Sample Display Board

Name_____ Section_____

(MS)²TC 7ᵗʰ Grade Science Fair Project Display Board Grading Rubric

_____ Follows rules for display board as per SEFMD guidelines. (5 pts)

_____ Has an easy to find title that is original, creative and relevant to project. (5 pts)

_____ All texts and font types are readable at appropriate distances as per text size and font guidelines. (5 pts)

_____ Effective use of pictures, diagrams, tables, graphs, and text to tell a clear story about project. Includes effective use of photographs and not merely as decoration. (5 pts)

_____ Narrative of experiment flows clearly and logically. And display board is NOT overly crowded or too busy in appearance. (5 pts)

_____ Information is organized correctly/accurately on display; shows appropriate placement of information under the relevant headings: Question, Hypothesis, Procedure, Results, Conclusion, etc. (5 pts)

_____ All visual elements such as pictures, graphs, and diagrams have descriptive and relevant captions. (5 pts)

_____ Evidence of care and attention given to creation of display board shown; edges are neat, display is void of excess glue, smudges, tears or wrinkles, text and visual elements are aligned neatly, etc. (5 pts)

_____ Overall appearance of display is visually and aesthetically pleasing to the eye; displays effective use of color and contrast. (5 pts)

_____ Spelling and grammar are correct. Half point deduction for each spelling or grammatical error. (5 pts)

_____ **Total Points** (50 pts)