

Pathfinder: Science Fair Projects

Selecting a topic and identifying a problem can be the most challenging parts of doing a science fair project. As you come up with ideas, remember that any science question that involves testing a variable can be the basis for a good project. According to the judging standards of the Santa Cruz County Science Fair, projects "may consist of a demonstration experiment, a working model, charts, diagrams or collections with a scientific objective."

Getting Started

If you are having trouble deciding on a topic, try looking at one of these collections of science projects.

Books:

- [Science Experiments Index for Young People](#)
by Pilger, Mary Anne
JR 507.8016 PIL
A guide to science books that contain elementary and intermediate-level projects and experiments. Organized alphabetically by subject; includes a list of headings.
- [Science Experiments on File](#)
by Facts on File,
JR 507 Sc
Eighty-four experiments in the form of lab experiments and demonstrations for students from grades six through high school.

Related Websites:

- [Internet Public Library](http://ipl.org/) (http://ipl.org/)
Click on "Science Fair" (in the left sidebar) OR click on "KidSpace" - "Math & Science" - "Experiments & Science Fair Projects" OR enter your topic in the Search Box at the top of the page.
- [Librarians' Internet Index](http://lii.org/) (http://lii.org/)
Over 20,000 websites selected, organized, and maintained by librarians. Search for "Science Experiments" or "Science Projects".
- [Science Buddies](http://www.sciencebuddies.org) (http://www.sciencebuddies.org)
Try the "Topic Selection Wizard" for help with choosing a topic

You Already Have an Idea

If you have a general idea for a project (a project about ecology, for example), scroll down to see if any of the books listed at the bottom of the page might help you. To find other books with experiments, check the online catalog under one of these subject headings:

[Experiments](#)

[Science - Experiments](#)

[Astronomy - Experiments](#)

[Biology - Experiments](#)
[Botany - Experiments](#)
[Chemistry - Experiments](#)
[Crystals](#)
[Dissection](#)
[Ecology - Experiments](#)
[Electricity - Experiments](#)
[Electronics - Experiments](#)
[Magnetism - Experiments](#)
[Physics - Experiments](#)

Reference Databases:

- [Science of Everyday Things](#)
(<http://scplweb.santacruzpl.org:2048/login?url=http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/eBooks?ste=22&docNum=CX3408699999&q=scruzpl>)
Expands on the explanations of scientific principles and concepts using a step-by-step approach. Presents theories in their everyday applications for further understanding.
- [Science Reference Center](#)
(<http://scplweb.santacruzpl.org:2048/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?authtype=ip,uid&profile=ehost&defaultdb=sch>)
More than 630 full text titles including leading science encyclopedias, reference books, and periodicals, as well as biographies and images. Topics covered include: biology, chemistry, earth & space science, environmental science, health & medicine, history of science, life science, physics, science & society, science as inquiry, scientists, technology and wildlife.
- [Student Resource Center](#) (<http://scplweb.santacruzpl.org:2048/login?url=http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itweb/scruzpl?db=SRC>)
Grades 7-12. Contains biographies, essays and overviews; full text articles from more than 900 magazines and journals, with articles back to 1986; photographs, maps and graphics; documents, including diary entries, letters, recordings and more; and full text articles from encyclopedias and almanacs.
- [World Book Online](#) (<http://scplweb.santacruzpl.org:2048/login?url=http://www.worldbookonline.com/>)
The online version of World Book Encyclopedia includes more than 26,000 articles, 12,000 pictures and maps, and 7,000 links to editor-approved Web sites useful in helping students constructively explore topics further. In addition to the encyclopedia, features include an atlas, a dictionary, and resource guides on selected topics.

Related Websites:

- [Science.gov](#) (<http://science.gov/>)
Science information on many topics - provided by U.S. government agencies.

Project Presentation

These books and websites will help you find information about how to structure or present your project.

Books:

- [Science Fair Success Secrets](#)
by Haduch, Bill and Scheuer, Philip
J 507.8 HAD
Explains the scientific method and describes a variety of actual science fair projects in such fields as engineering, botany, behavioral science, and chemistry.

Related Websites:

- [Santa Cruz County Science Fair](http://science.santacruz.k12.ca.us/) (http://science.santacruz.k12.ca.us/)
Information about local workshops to help you plan your science fair project - plus links to many other resources.

A Few of the Many Books that Contain Science Projects

Check with library staff if you do not see a copy of the book you want on the shelf. Through the library's request system, books can be borrowed from another branch library.