

## Directions For Judges

1. The purposes of science fairs include encouraging students to think scientifically and creatively. These two things should account for the most consideration in judging. The judging forms reflect these objectives. With modern information technology it is possible for a student to present a lot of impressive information without really having to think or understand the topic.
2. Try to do a quick visit to the projects before the students are present. Check for general impression and organization. Look at the notebook as well as the backboard.
3. Visit the project again with the student(s) present. Be pleasant and encouraging. Take notes if necessary but don't fill in the whole judging form while you are there. Try to be genuinely interested in what the student has done. Later, meet with other judges who have visited the project to fill in the forms.
4. Part A of the judging form deals with scientific thought. It is in the form of a rubric. For grades one to six students, first decide whether the material deals with science or technology. The definitions will help. The grades 7 to 12 projects are divided into three possibilities; experiment, innovation and study. Once the type of project is identified, move down the appropriate column to decide on the level attained. Then move to the right and give a mark in the range shown. Be sure to consider only the level of scientific thinking at this stage. Transfer the mark to the summary box on the front of the form.
5. Part B deals with the creativity of approach. Good scientists think creatively. Rank the project and give a mark in the range shown. Transfer the mark to the summary box on the front of the form.
6. Part C deals with the display. For younger students, be sure that the work is their own. This section allows for a certain amount of artistic flair.
7. Part D for the grades 1 to 6 students deals with their interview. For group projects, try to talk to both students equally. The grades 7 to 12 students use this part of the form to judge the project abstract. You should have this before going to the project. Use the interview to gain information for the other parts of the judging form only.
8. Once the marks for all four parts are transferred to the summary, add them up to get a score out of 100. Use the marks to rank all the projects in the same level and division. The ranking is used to decide on medals.
9. Carefully fill and sign the colored comments form with the label on it. The school will get this form to review with the students. Be encouraging but don't praise highly for mediocre work. Give recommendations for improvement but don't be overly critical.

### *Tips to ensure the exhibitors and you have a successful judging experience*

- Introduce yourself - where do you come from, what do you do. Ask the students likewise.
- Ask questions in an upbeat and positive manner, remembering that these are elementary and high school projects, not MSc or PhD examinations.
- The students have worked very hard to get here, and even the weakest exhibit is entitled to a full and rewarding interview.
- Finish by telling the students how much you have enjoyed your time with them, and find two things about their presentation to praise .
- Do not coach them. If they do not understand a concept, do not explain it to them, because the judges that follow you must find them with the same knowledge base that you did.
- Do not comment in any public area on any exhibit where an exhibitor or delegate can hear you.
- If you find an exhibit that you are unqualified to judge, please inform Judging Chair immediately.