

Caraway Elementary
SCIENCE FAIR
2009

Rules and Guidelines

The Caraway Science Fair follows the rules and guidelines set forth in Austin Energy Regional Science Festival 2009 Elementary Division Handbook ("Handbook"). The Handbook may be found on the Science Fair page of the Caraway website.

1. Types of Projects

There are three types of projects that students may enter (for more information, see Handbook):

- A. Collection with Classification:** A collection is a set of objects that have been placed into groups according to similar properties. For example, a student might collect rocks and then organize the collection by size, shape, color or hardness.
- B. Exhibit:** An exhibit is a demonstration, model or display. Demonstrations and models describe how and why something works. For example, a demonstration might show how an airplane is able to fly. A student might construct a model bridge to show how a bridge works. A display reveals details about the topic. A student might design a display about global warming.
- C. Experiment:** An **experiment** is a test of a question to which you do not already know the answer without testing. To test the question, you follow the steps of the scientific method. For example, "How do plants grow?" or "How do ocean currents work?" are not testable questions and therefore not proper experiments (instead, these are *exhibit* questions). However, "Does adding compost to my garden cause my vegetables to grow better?" and "Is salt water denser than fresh water?" are testable questions and proper experiments.

2. Projects Not Allowed

No project will be accepted that involves:

- firearms, explosives or discharge air pressure canister devices (i.e., potato guns)
- growing bacteria or mold at home
- causing pain, suffering, sickness or death of an animal
- any activity or substance that presents a danger to the student or the environment, including hazardous chemicals or radioactive materials.

3. Display and Safety Guidelines

All projects must conform to the following guidelines.

Items Not Allowed

- **No organisms; living, dead or preserved (plants or animals)**
- No human or animal body parts or fluids (example: blood, urine)
- No human or animal food items.
- No bacteria or mold cultures.
- No liquids, including water.
- No poisons, drugs, controlled or hazardous substances.
- No sharp items (examples: syringes, needles, pipettes, knives, tacks, nails, etc)
- No glass or glass objects.
- No pressurized tanks or containers.
- No batteries with open top cells (so that battery acid can be seen)
- No dirt, soil, gravel, rocks, sand, waste products

- No project, device, activity or substance that may be deemed hazardous to student health or safety.
- No photographs or pictures of animals or persons involving surgical techniques or dissection

Exception

Students in **1st – 3rd grades** may have **properly sealed** specimens (dead or preserved plant or mineral materials) as part of their project display. *“Properly sealed” means items cannot leak odor, liquid or particles out of their container. Items must be double bagged in sturdy (freezer) bags OR they must be placed in clear, plastic containers with the lid sealed using clear book tape. All items (shells, rocks, leaves, soil, eggshells, etc.) must be dried before sealing. We suggest that bags be attached to the project board with clear book tape for safe and neat display.*

Discouraged Items

- Expensive, breakable or fragile items

Allowed and Encouraged Items

- Photographs, drawings, stuffed animals/artificial plants, or imitation (play) food should be used to depict the prohibited or discouraged items.
- Be sure to properly credit/acknowledge all photographers on the display board.
- Students should take photographs of the projects steps as a visual explanation of their effort. Students must ask permission before photographing any other individuals for display on project.
- Student may use a computer and printer for written parts of project.
- Electrical projects may use batteries as sources of electricity.

4. Project Elements

The Handbook lists the elements (i.e., required parts) for each type of project. Make sure each of these elements is included or addressed in your project.

5. Display Board

Project display should be on sturdy 36” x 48” tri-fold board available at local craft and office supply stores. Written materials, drawings and pictures should be securely attached to the board. Due to space limitations, projects exceeding the above measurements will not be accepted.

6. Parental Help

Some students are fortunate in that their parents have time to help them with their project. However, parents who do the thinking or display for them do not help students develop their own skills. Parents are encouraged to help their children in these ways:

- Read and discuss the rules and guidelines
- Help them select projects which are appropriate for the child’s age and grade level
- Help plan and manage project work times and clean-up times
- Take your child to the library for research
- Help draw straight lines for a young child
- Listen to your child’s oral presentation of the project.

Students MUST LIST any parental help in the References and Acknowledgements section.

7. Registration

- Registration forms may be submitted by (1) giving the form to your teacher or (2) placing the form in the Science Fair Registration box located in the main office. Registration

forms must be submitted by **Friday, January 9, 2009**. *ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST SUBMIT A REGISTRATION FORM AND NO LATE REGISTRATION FORMS WILL BE ACCEPTED.*

8. Judging

- All students entering the Science Fair are encouraged to have their projects judged.
- If you want your project to be judged at the Fair, you must indicate this preference on your registration form. If you choose, on the form, not to have your project judged, you will NOT be allowed to later change your selection.
- If you wish to have your project judged, you must be willing to (a) attend the Caraway Fair, (b) speak about your project with, and answer the questions of, the reviewing judges and (c) attend the Austin Energy Regional Science Festival on February 20-21, 2009. Approximately fifteen (15) Caraway students will be selected to represent Caraway at the Regional Fair.
- Kindergarten students may have their projects judged; however, since the Regional Fair does not allow kindergarten projects, these projects will not be eligible to advance to the Regional Fair.
- Projects will be judged according to criteria established for each of the three types of projects. The review criteria are set forth in three separate Judging Forms (corresponding to the three types of projects). These forms are available on the Science Fair webpage. We encourage all participants – even if you are not having your project judged – to review the relevant Judging Form.
- Judging will occur from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on January 26, 2009. During the judging period, only participants will be allowed in the project display area (i.e., during this time the gym will be closed to the public, parents, etc). **Participants are encouraged to arrive 15 minutes early as judging will begin promptly at 5:00 p.m.** Each project will be reviewed by three different judges.