



UTPBTM

PERMIAN BASIN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FAIR

ELEMENTARY DIVISION RULES FOR PARTICIPATION 2026

1. Participation

Students must be in grades 3rd – 5th to participate in the Elementary Division of the Permian Basin Science and Engineering Fair. Projects must be done by a single student (i.e. no group projects).

2. Projects That Are Not Allowed

No student in the Elementary Division will be allowed to design or conduct any science project that involves:

- Firearms, explosives or discharge air pressure canister devices (i.e. potato guns)
- **Growing bacteria or mold of any type is not allowed.**
Students may do projects that involve yeast, plankton algae, protozoa, Archaea
- Causing pain, suffering, sickness or death of an animal or people
- Projects involving deception or purposefully deceiving people are not allowed.
- 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 student projects must follow the guidelines listed below to be allowed to display in the festival exhibit hall. These items may not be displayed during the fair, but, unless specified above, do not limit the types of experiments students can do (see #3).

Items Not Allowed:

- **No props or demonstration aids.** Students are instead encouraged to take pictures of equipment used in their experiments. Judges are interested in what students *know*, not what they can demonstrate.
- No organisms; living, dead or preserved (no plants or animals)
- No chemicals, crystals, liquids (including water)
- No human/animal parts or body fluids (for example, blood, urine)
- No human or animal food
- No poisons, drugs, controlled or hazardous substances
- No sharp items (for example: syringes, needles, pipettes, knives, tacks, nails)
- No glass or glass objects
- No pressurized tanks or containers
- No batteries
- No dirt, soil, gravel, rocks, sand, waste products, etc.
- No project, device, activity or substance that may be deemed hazardous to student health or safety
- No photographs or pictures of animals or people in surgical techniques, dissections or necropsies.

Discouraged Items

- Expensive, breakable or fragile items.

Allowed and Encouraged Items

- Photographs, drawings
- Students should always plan on taking photographs of their project steps as a visual explanation of their effort. Students must ask permission before photographing any other individuals for display on project.
- Be sure to properly credit/acknowledge all sources of graphics and photographers on the display board (Photograph taken by . . .).
- Students may use a computer and printer for written parts of the project.
- Consider blurring or putting a sticker over faces to protect identities of human subjects.

4. Display Board

- Project display should be on sturdy tri-fold board available at local craft and office supply stores. Written material, drawings and pictures should be securely attached to the display board.
- Projects will be displayed on tables that are 36 inches high. Size of display area may not exceed the following measurements: 15” deep, 48” wide, and 72” high. Due to space limitations, displays that exceed these measurements cannot be accepted.

5. Electricity for Your Display

- Projects are not allowed to use electricity as part of display for judging.

6. Project Organization at Permian Basin Science and Engineering Fair

- Grade Level: Each project is categorized by grade level or grade level equivalent

7. Parental Help

Some students are fortunate to have parents who have time to help them. However, parents who do the thinking or build the project for students do not really help them.

Parents are encouraged to help their children in these ways:

- Read and discuss the “Rules for Participation”
- Select projects which are appropriate for the child’s age and grade level
- Plan and manage project work, documentation and clean-up times
- Take your child to the public library or other places for research
- Help draw straight lines for a young child
- Listen to your child’s oral explanation of the project
- Ensure the child’s safety

Students must list any parental help in the References and Acknowledgments section of the project.

List of categories:

*Life Science

*Chemistry

*Physics/Astronomy

*Earth Science

*Engineering

*Behavioral/Social Science