



Minority Engineering Program of Indianapolis The Project Poster

Grade: _____

Projects that are to be displayed to the public, such as at science fairs and contests, should include an attractive poster. Most science fairs limit the size of a project to a width of 4 feet, a depth of 3 feet and height within practical limits. To be on the safe side, it would be wise to restrict the width of the project to 46 inches. This would allow for the thickness of the partitions between the projects that are on display.

An excellent way to learn about project posters would be to actually see good examples at a science fair. If this isn't possible, ask your science teacher if he or she has some pictures or color slides of good posters and projects. The following suggestions should be of help in producing a good poster. See "*Bibliography of Selected Books on Projects and Experiments*", page 16.



A poster should be:

1. Made of sturdy material, such as thick poster-board, fiberboard, plywood, etc.
2. As large as is practical or allowed.

3. Attractive. Use bright colors, or use pastel colors, but use color! Often, projects that pertain to living things employ greens, yellows, browns, tans, while projects pertaining to nonliving subjects are often colored with blues, grays, reds and black.

4. Neat and orderly.

5. Comfortably readable by most people at a distance of 4 feet from the front of the table on which the poster rests. The letters of the project title should be no smaller than 1-1/2 inches high. Two to three inches would be better. No lettering on the poster should be less than 1/2 inch in height. Those who wish to learn the details of your project should get your permission to read your notebook.

6. Able to convey the “overall-all” idea of your project within ten seconds after a total stranger has first looked at it. Science fair judges and others who cannot understand what your project basically involves will move on to the next project. Many science fairs have between 100 and 300 projects on display!

7. Capable of standing erect by itself. This is probably the most neglected item by most students and yet is one of the most important parts of the total project. The easiest way of making a poster that will stand by itself is to make it in three sections that are taped or hinged together in back (see sketch on next page). The advantage of this type of poster is that it stands nicely and also can be made wider than 46 inches and yet fit into a 46-inch booth. Furthermore, it doesn't require a wood or metal rack or backing that the straight type of poster requires.

8. Labeled near the bottom with the student's name in small letters.

9. Lettered to show the title, purpose, and conclusions.

How To Letter Your Poster

1. Make a sketch of your poster on regular blank notebook paper. Decide where your explanations, drawings, etc. should be placed.
2. Lettering may be done in several ways, but regardless of which method is used, the student should first draw horizontal pencil lines with a yardstick to make sure the lettering will be straight and correctly spaced.
3. After the letters are drawn in with pencil, the student should make sure that all words are spelled correctly. Some students prefer to use stencils for printing, while others may wish to make letters from colored paper cutouts.