*Name:*_____
*Class:*_____
*Date:*_____

Assign Yourself Trimester Projects

Assign Yourself projects are investigative projects that are designed to enrich your science experience in a direction that you choose. Projects are expected to be completed independently, with support from your family and teachers, and at home or away from school. Approximately ten hours of work, including research and reporting should be invested into each project. Each trimester students will present their project to the class for all to learn about topics of interest to middle school kids. We hope that eighth graders will try to stick to topics related to physical science: chemistry, physics, astronomy and technology however some life science or earth science topics will be approved by the teacher. Projects should reflect ingenuity not the size of your allowance. We hope that you will drop a project if it becomes "boring" to you and to choose a topic that motivates you to learn more. *Assign Yourself* should be one of your favorite things you enjoy about eighth grade science.

How to begin

Think about things you are interested in or curious about. This may be a topic related to a sport you play, a hobby or an activity that you have done that relates to science. Talk to members of your family about topics that they are curious about or have experience with. Look through your science textbook for pictures or discussions that spark your interest. You can go online and do a search of science fair topics for middle school. You can then narrow your search to specific areas of physical science. Try to think of a question that you can answer by doing this project. Our school library and the public library is a source of resources for you to gain information about different topics. Talk to your teacher about topics of interest if you need further advice.

Keep track of time and references

You must submit a time sheet and a bibliography on completion of this project. An example of your time sheet and bibliography format can be downloaded from my website: www.science8.org or picked up in the classroom. No fewer than three references are acceptable on your bibliography. You may use textbooks, reference books, encyclopedias, Internet sites (reputable ones), personal interviews or periodicals. Our class will spend one day in the school library working with our librarian and a few days in the computer labs to help get appropriate references for your projects.

Materials

Some projects may require scientific equipment or supplies. You can borrow any science equipment from the classroom laboratory to help run experiments. Any items

borrowed from the school are expected to be returned in good working order upon the completion of your project.

Presentations

Your class presentation should be less than ten minutes in length. The form of presentation may differ depending on the topic you choose to investigate. You may want to make a Power Point or Keynote slide show, a website or a short movie. You can bring in a model and explain it to the class. Short demonstrations or experiments are always interesting to eighth graders. You can bring in a photo journal or scrapbook of your project or share sketches or diagrams of the results of your experiment. Other ideas for presentations may be a short debate on a topic or a dramatic interpretation of the most important things you learned from your investigation. The following is a list of suggestions to make each presentation interesting and organized.

- Come up with a catchy phrase or title for your project that sparks the attention of your audience.
- Begin your presentation with a "hook" that should focus your audience's attention to a specific area that relates to your topic.
- Come up with a list of a minimum of three objectives that you hope your audience will learn from your presentation.
- If a member the audience wants to learn more about your topic be able to provide information about where someone could go to find out more or to repeat your project.
- Be able to articulate the best references/resources you used for your project.
- Have an outline of how you want the presentation to go.
- Let the audience know about the materials you used for the project.
- Conclude your presentation with a final summation or time for questions and answers.