

Parents' Guide to the Kids' Inquiry Conference

The Kids' Inquiry Conference is an opportunity for children to present discoveries made during scientific investigations based upon original questions. This guide is designed to help parents who are curious about how to best assist their children.

How did the children select the questions being investigated?

Students have been invited to select their own testable questions. A testable question is one that can best be answered by designing an experiment or by conducting observations. Sources of questions have been from our science units, books students have been reading, science articles written by students in past years, and experiences at school and elsewhere. Your child selected a particular question of special interest.

How can I best assist my child during the investigation and planning for the conference?

Since the question selected by your child is one of particular interest, he or she is curious about finding an answer on his or her own. Minimal guidance from parents may be helpful, but permitting space for the child to investigate and gather data on his or her own is an important part of the scientific process.

As your child plans for the conference, please

Do

- be available for guidance *if* your child should need your help
- ask questions about your child's investigation and how it is progressing
- be ready to supply materials that your child may need for the investigation the conference
- help your child schedule meetings with partners
- trust your child's judgment as he/she investigates the question

Do Not

- change or revise the question being investigated
- offer advice beyond that sought by your child
- gather data, make posters, write the article, or prepare the presentation
- arrange partners for your child
- attempt to make the investigation more than your child originally planned

On the day of the conference, please

Do

- plan to visit and see your child's presentation or hands-on activity
- help with carrying of materials, setup and cleanup
- have lunch with the students
- visit other presentations and hands-on activities
- take photographs

Do Not

- sit in the front of the presentation rooms
- ask questions following presentations before student participants have asked theirs
- help your child with the presentation or with the answering of questions
- assist behind the hands-on tables

Thank you for your assistance in helping to make the Kids' Inquiry Conference a success!