Presentation Guidelines

For CREST students

We decided to carry out some background research . . .

My project is all about . . . . . see notes

What does my project do . . . Conclusion here!

BRITISH SCIENCE ASSOCIATION CREST Awards

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What to Expect

At the National Fair you will be asked to present your CREST project work in the form of a presentation. These presentations are important for communicating to the judges and other visitors to your project stand what your project is about and what you have learnt from the experience. Therefore you should ensure that you give yourself plenty of time in advance to produce your presentation materials and practise the delivery.

The presentation should be improved upon between the regional event and the national fair, or in the run up to the national fair for Self-nomination students. Judges will award marks for the quality of your presentation materials and your communication skills. Every mark counts – it could put you in a better position to win the top prizes. For the international prizes, a high quality display is an essential prerequisite at the US and European events.

The presentation MUST include the following elements:

- A poster
- A display area including table and any props or your project
- A full copy of your project report
- Your CREST certificate and other award documentation (Nuffield, EESE, Go4SET provided at venue)

How you chose to organise and present these elements is completely up to you! But here are some rough guidelines to help you produce a high quality display.

The Display Area

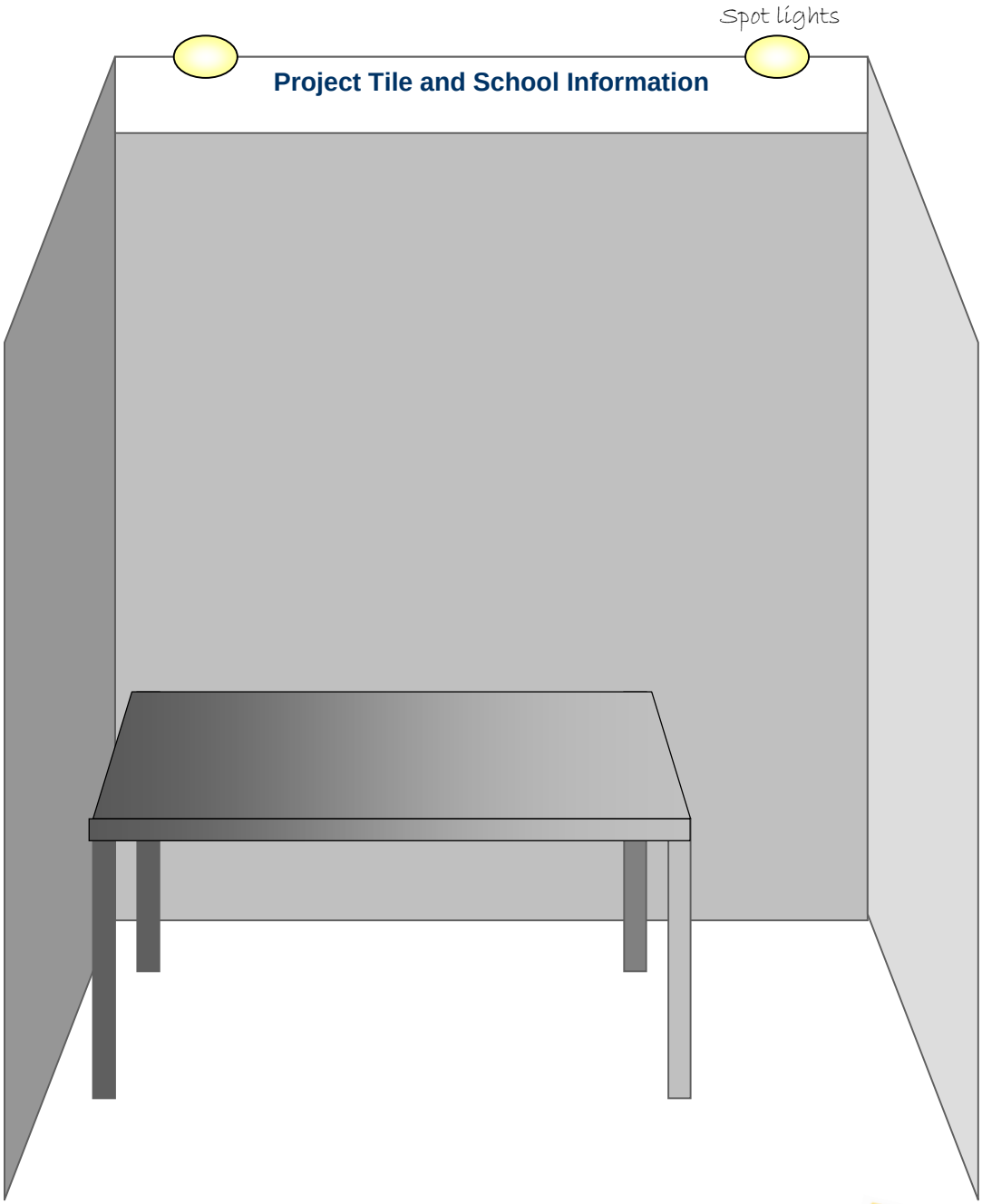
We will provide you with the following as standard:

- A stand
- Spot lights
- A table
- Table cloth
- chairs
- 1 power point
- Limited supplies of fixing materials (Please bring your own to make sure that you have enough, these supplied are for emergencies only)

When you fill in your application form to confirm your place at the national fair, you will be asked to tell us of any other requirements you would like us to provide (more power points, access to water etc.) or any special equipment you will be bringing (laptop, projector or your project item if you have built something).

The stand size will be confirmed closer to the event date, however the layout of the stand will be something like this.

Typical stand layout at the National Fair



You can use this page to plan your stand design and even your poster layout on your board.

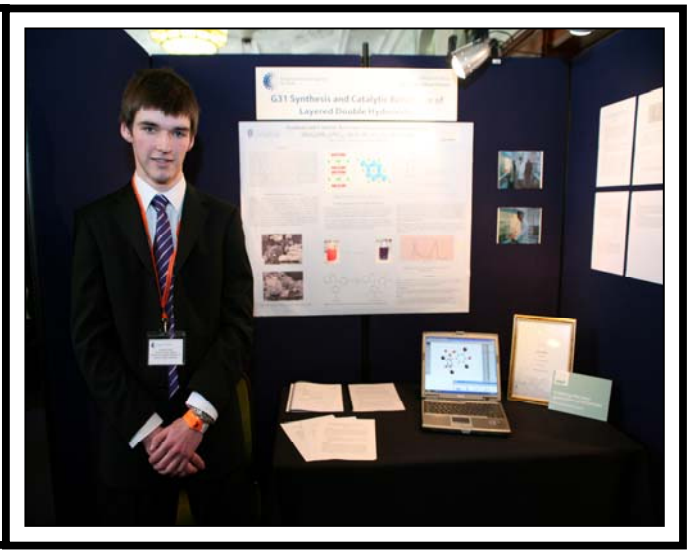
Don't forget to check the dimensions before you start!

How to plan your poster

Two types of poster

There are two main ways in which you can present scientific work:

- Display poster
- Academic poster



Display poster **Academic Poster**

Both are very useful at conveying information about a scientific and technological project however they cater to slightly different audiences.

The display poster
Pros

- *Shows work in an eye catching way.*
- *Uses the size of the backing board to frame individual elements of work which can be moved around to suit the venue.*
- *Cost effective in terms of printing and carrying.*

Cons

- *It can look untidy and*

The Academic Poster
Pros

- *Presented in a professional format.*
- *The work can be laid out in a standard format on the paper .*
- *Having only one page on a board looks neat and professional and does not distract the eye.*

Cons

- *It is expensive to print a large A1 or*

unprofessional if it has not been designed and made to a high standard.
- *Parts can get lost easily and you need a lot of mounting material with you to put it up.*
- *Can become overcrowded and 'messy' if not properly planned.*

A0 poster to fill an area, and more than one might be required.
- *It does not allow for the flexibility of adding new work, improving your display, or a change in display area size at a venue.*
- *It can look too formal.*

Whichever format you choose to use, you still need to think about the layout of your information in the same way.

Think of a title

Keep your title as simple and eye catching as possible. It has to be something that draws the person in to finding out more about your display.

The fish counting project

Does not sound too inspiring, and neither does

A study into the number of fish inhabiting a local river

Both do not convey to the reader the interesting points of the project or what impact the information might have on us to make us take note. If you make it into an interesting question…

Is there an army of fish at your front door?

It makes people take a second look. You could also phrase the project in an unexpected manner.

Fishy Figures

My title Ideas

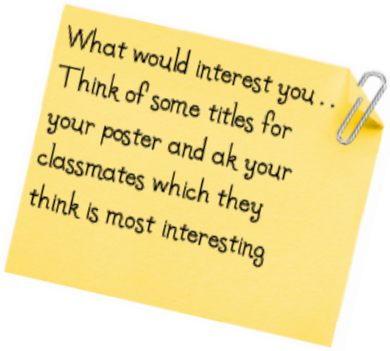
_____

_____

_____

_____

_____



Design your poster layout

Make the most of your display area. Use all available space to make an effective display, this does not mean you should pack it with as many things as you can fit in.... layout is crucial.

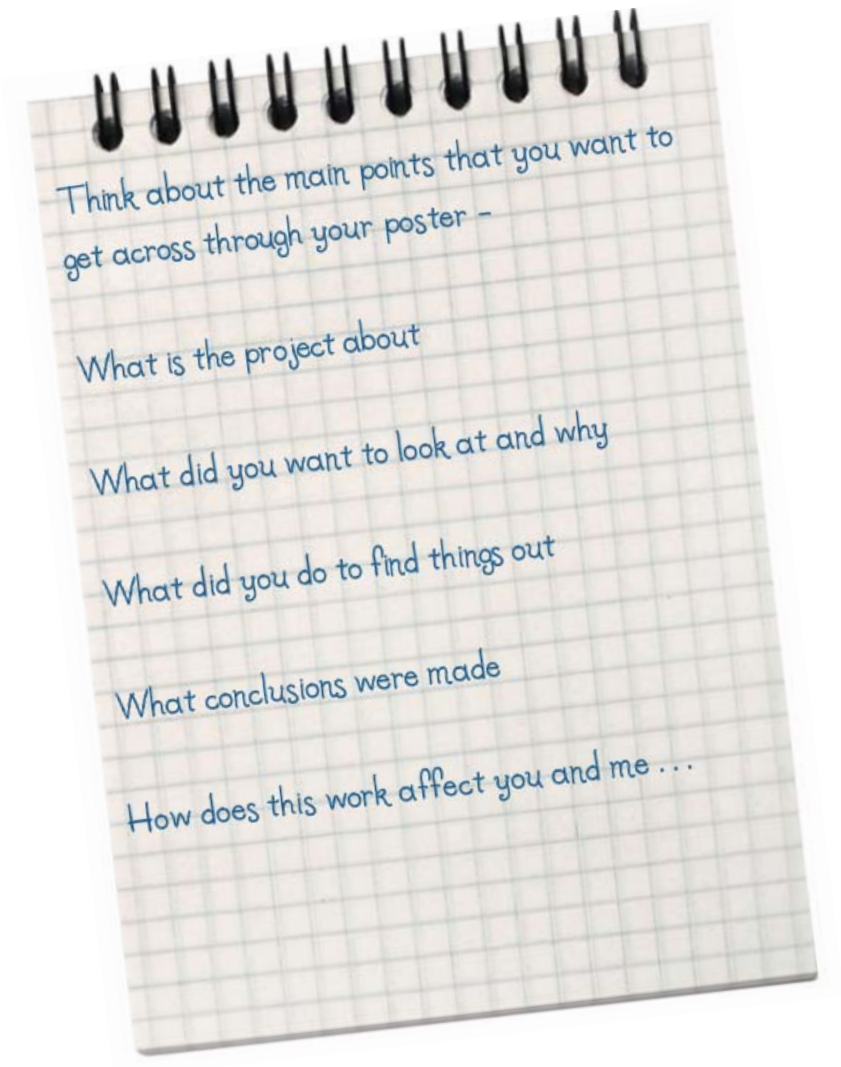
The general wisdom is that you should have

40% open space
30% images or plots
30% text

Too much text will put the reader off, or lose track. Too little and they will not understand what your project is about.

It takes quite a bit of time to get your words just right, so make sure you leave time to go through your text. The simplest way is to decide what you think is essential for people to know about your project and expand from there. You will find that even the simplest information can take up a lot of space.

Think about the main sections of your project and sketch out a list of your ideas. An example of the kinds of questions you should think about are shown here.



When you write up your work you need to be as succinct and as to-the-point as possible. You do not have a lot of room so think about what information the reader needs to understand the gist of the project.

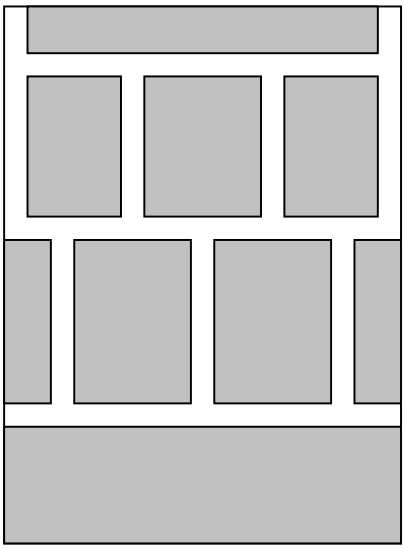
Golden rule of presenting any work (written or oral)

Tell them what you are going to tell them, tell it to them, tell them what you told them!

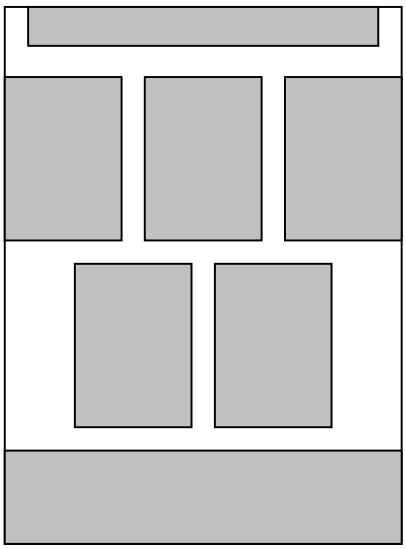
I.e. introduction work conclusions

Once you have decided on what you want to put in writing, you have to consider the flow. As seen before, on a single poster this is quite easy to layout; however the same 'flow' principles can be used for a display that uses lots of different posters.

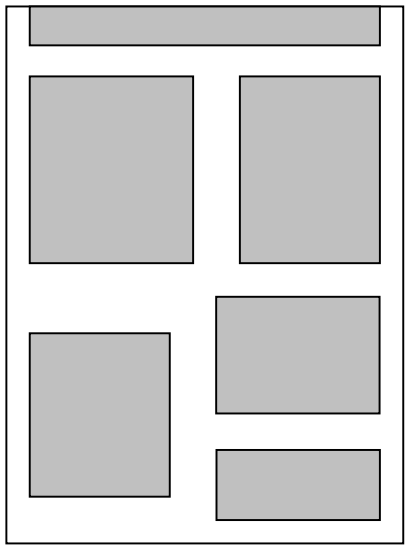
The eye always starts at the top left hand corner, from there you can use arrows, blocks or shapes and images to guide the readers' eye around your work.
Remember! Less is more. Don't over crowd your space and leave 40% of it open



Too much information



Still too much ....



Clear and simple

***Tips for your text*:**

- The poster should be readable from a distance of 1 metre. Don't use a font size less than 18pt
- Use a simple font, not some ornate script that is hard to read
- Think of your work like a story, with a beginning (the aim), middle (the work) and end (the conclusions)
- Keep the word count as small as you can while saying everything the reader needs to know to understand your work and its importance
- Use language appropriate to the audience – technical words need explaining or substituted for phrases that mean the same thing – hydroponics becomes either. Hydroponics (the growing of plants in a water based nutrient solution *or* water based plant growth)
- Keep sentence structure direct and simple, without being repetitive. You could use bullet points to help you do this.
- Only use images that help describe the work

How to plan your presentation

Once you have thought about and planned your poster layout, think about what you will have on your table.

You should have a full copy of your report/portfolio (preferably in colour and bound), if you have completed a technology based project you will probably have the item you designed to bring along.

What else could you bring? (here are some suggestions to get you thinking)

- *A laptop with a video, or presentation on loop showing your project progress*
- *A prop of some of the instrumentation you used if you cannot bring the real thing*
- *A model (really good for biology and chemistry projects)*
- *Something people can use to help them understand a difficult principle you have used (very useful for maths and physics based projects)*
- *Pictures of you during your project.*
- *Copies of a summary sheet about your work*

Don't bring anything just because you feel you should .. find out from friends and family weather the item you want to bring really helps convey your project topic

Don't forget that anything you bring needs to be in good condition, so you will either need to be able to safety courier the equipment to the venue, or bring it via public transport from your home / school to London.

Here are some examples of good displays at previous events.

Practicing your presentation for the judges

At the Fair the judging sessions usually last between 15-20 minutes each. You will be expected to present your work in the first 3-5 minutes at your stand for the judges before they ask you questions.

The judges will be looking for evidence of various areas including planning skills, the project process, application to real world, creativity and communication skills. They will ask you questions about your project to find out what you personally have learned from completing your work.

Before the Fair, you should practice what you want to say to the judges. It is useful to have a five minute (maximum) speech planned.

If you have worked in a team on the project, use all team members to describe the project from aim to conclusion. You should also think about who will answer questions. Are you all going to speak? Are you going to talk about specific areas? Are you going to take turns?

Think of a list of the important points you might want to say and ask your teacher to come up with some practice questions for you to try. If you are feeling brave you could even do this in front of your class or year assembly.

Think about what you have personally gained from the experience of completing your project and working on a science/technology/engineering/maths topic. Remember to be confident when you speak, after all there are no wrong answers!

More information and guidelines will be available on the website closer to the event date.

www.britishscienceassociation.org/sciencefair

Last of all, enjoy your time at the National Fair, and Good Luck from the British Science Association!