

Be able to tell:

Invention's name

How it works

Problem it solves

What do judges look for?

Originality of Invention. This concerns the concept of the invention.

- Is the invention novel?
- Did the inventor come up with a unique, unusual, or extremely clever solution to a problem?
- Did the inventor recognize and select a particularly unusual or difficult problem?
- Is the idea one that the child could have developed?

Inventing Process. This concerns the effort the inventor put into creating the invention.

- How well did the students document the process?
- What resources were used? Was credit given to others who helped?
- Were the steps taken to get from idea to completed project clearly described, including failures, reasons for choice of materials, and resources?
- What was done to find out if the idea is unique?

Invention Effectiveness. Evaluate how well the invention solves the original problem.

- Does the invention do what it is supposed to do?
- Does it work? Does it work even better than anticipated?
- Does the invention solve other problems?
- Are you looking at the actual invention or a scale model?

Practicality of Invention. Analyze the invention for its advantages and limitations.

- How does the invention compare to existing items that might solve the same problem?
- Is the inventor knowledgeable about it in relation to other items that he or she is trying to improve upon?
- Is the invention more efficient? Is it more cumbersome?
- Was some thought given to overall design, including ease of use and the choice of appropriate materials?

Need for the Invention. Understand why the student selected the particular problem.

- Why did the inventor decide on this invention?
- What are its benefits? Who will benefit (the general public, people with handicaps, the elderly, children, or only the inventor)?
- Is the invention generally useful?
- Is the invention more or less environmentally destructive than currently available products?

