

Pointers for Finding a Topic:

1. Choose a topic you are interested in. You will be spending time and energy completing the project and the more you like your topic the easier it will be and the more fun you will have doing your investigation.
2. Don't choose a topic just because it might fulfill the requirement or looks easy.
3. The project needs a problem to solve and not be a research paper.
4. Science is about real-world happenings so look to the real world for ideas.
5. Read the category descriptions to see what might interest her.
6. The website Sciencebuddies at sciencebuddies.org has a topic wizard to help you get ideas by answering some questions. This website has projects that have been done as well. You can use these as ideas but do not copy someone else's work.
7. Use the **Topic Information Sheet** to help narrow interest.
8. **The Four Question Topic Selection Strategy** will narrow down the topic and will help you come up with variables.
9. Use the following checklist to see if the topic you have chosen will be acceptable.

Project Topic Selection Checklist

Yes/No	Descriptor	Yes/No	Descriptor
	Grade level appropriate		Has multiple repeated trials or test subjects
	Not a consumer project- generally only for elementary		Has a real-world connection. This will become an important part of the rationale.
	Has only one variable that is being changed.		Is cost effective
	Has not been overdone-ex: growing crystals		Materials and resources readily available to conduct experiment.
	Is original work-not copied from internet		Can be done at the appropriate location if called for such as a BSL 2 laboratory.
	Follows rules of fair		Can be done in the timeframe required.

If you have a "no" to any of the descriptors above, you should not do the project as is. Depending on what was checked above there are some steps you can take to correct any problems.

1. Identify why you got a "no" and try to identify alternatives.
2. Talk to your teacher or designated supervisor to see if they can suggest a way to change the research question to meet the indicator on the checklist.
3. Choose a new topic-do not be discouraged, many scientists have to explore several options before settling on an investigation.