2026-2027 STEAM Fairs
Art & Research Project Description & Rubrics
Kindergarten – 5th Grade

Project Overview:

The Art & Research project combines science research with visual art. Choose an animal, research how and why it moves, and use what you learn to create an original artwork connected to the theme Animal Locomotion.

This project has two separate parts: a research paper and an original artwork. The two pieces should connect to the same animal and demonstrate what you learned through both science and art.

Project Steps:

1. Choose: Select an Animal

Choose an animal you would like to study. Think about how the animal moves and what makes its movement interesting or important.

2. Research: Learn About Your Animal

Use reliable sources to learn about your animal. Research its physical features, habitat, behaviors, and methods of locomotion. Record your sources as you work.

3. Investigate: Study Animal Locomotion

Focus your research on how and why the animal moves. Consider:

- How does the animal move?
- What body structures help it move?
- How does its movement help it survive?
- How does it move to find food, escape predators, find shelter, or locate mates?
- How might its habitat influence the way it moves?

4. Write: Create Your Research Paper

Organize your research into a paper written in your own words. Use facts and evidence from your sources to explain the animal and its locomotion.

5. Imagine & Plan: Design Your Artwork

Use your research to plan an original piece of art showing the animal and its movement. Think about how line, shape, color, texture, form, space, and value can help communicate movement.

6. Create: Complete Your Artwork

Create an original artwork that clearly connects to the theme **Animal Locomotion** and accurately represents the animal you researched.

7. Reflect: Connect the Art and Research

Think about how your research influenced the artwork. Be prepared to explain what you learned about the animal and how your artistic choices communicate its movement.

Research Paper Expectations

The research paper should be written in the student's own words, use reliable sources, include citations and a bibliography, and connect to the animal shown in the artwork. Teachers and families may provide guidance, editing, and revision support.

Eligible research papers may move forward for submission to The Academy of Science – St. Louis Science Fair.

Research Paper Format

- Maximum of 5 pages
- Typed on 8.5 x 11-inch white copy paper
- 12-point Times New Roman font
- Double-spaced
- Printed and submitted in a folder
- No tri-fold board or display board required

Research Paper Sections

1. Title Page: Project title, student name, teacher, school, and grade
2. Introduction: Animal and reason for choosing it
3. Animal Background: Habitat, physical features, and behaviors
4. Animal Locomotion: How the animal moves and the adaptations that help it move
5. Movement & Survival: How movement helps the animal find food, escape predators, find shelter, or locate mates
6. Conclusion & Reflection: What the student learned
7. Bibliography: All sources used

Art Project Expectations

Create an original artwork connected to the theme Animal Locomotion. The artwork should represent the animal you researched and communicate how it moves.

Artwork must:

- Be 12" × 18"
- Be the student's original work
- Be submitted as a Drawing, Painting, Mixed Media, or Digital Art piece
- Accurately represents the researched animal
- Clearly communicate the animal's movement
- Demonstrate thoughtful use of artistic techniques, effort, and craftsmanship

Eligible artwork may be submitted to John Grapperhaus, Visual Art/Springboard Coordinator, for consideration in the St. Louis Public Schools Art Fair. Work with your school's art teacher to submit art projects to Mr. Grapperhaus.

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Student Names:		Grade:		Sequence #:	
Teacher's Name		Project Title:			

Research Paper				
Category	**Exceeds Expectations**	**Meets Expectations**	**Approaching**	**Beginning**
Title & Introduction (5)	**5** Creative, accurate title; engaging intro explains animal and student interest	**4** Clear title; intro explains animal and interest	**2-3** Title or intro incomplete, vague, or missing	**0-1** No clear title or intro
Background Information (10)	**10** Provides accurate, detailed information about the animal's habitat, physical features, and behaviors; demonstrates strong understanding.	**8-9** Provides accurate background information about the animal, including most required areas.	**5-7** Provides limited background information or is missing important details.	**0-4** Provides little or no accurate background information.
Animal Locomotion (15)	**15** Clearly and accurately explains how the animal moves and the body structures or adaptations that make movement possible; uses specific research details and appropriate science vocabulary.	**12-14** Accurately explains how the animal moves and identifies structures or adaptations that help it move.	**7-11** Gives a basic explanation of movement but lacks detail, accuracy, or explanation of adaptations.	**0-6** Provides little or no accurate explanation of how the animal moves.
Movement & Survival (10)	**10** Clearly explains how locomotion supports the animal's survival and makes strong connections to needs such as finding food, escaping predators, finding shelter, locating mates, or living in its habitat.	**8-9** Explains how movement helps the animal survive and includes relevant examples.	**5-7** Makes a limited or unclear connection between movement and survival.	**0-4** Does not explain how movement supports the animal's survival.
Conclusion & Reflection (10)	**10** Clear and thoughtful reflection; explains what was learned, any surprises, and why the research is important.	**8-9** Reflection explains what was learned and provides some insight.	**5-7** Basic reflection; may lack depth or clarity.	**0-4** No reflection or unclear conclusion.
Grammar, Spelling & Formatting (10)	**10** Writing is clear, well-organized, with no grammar/spelling errors; follows all formatting directions.	**8-9** Few minor errors; paper is mostly neat and follows directions.	**5-7** Frequent grammar/spelling errors; formatting not fully followed.	**0-4** Many errors; hard to read; does not follow format.

Continue to next page for art rubric.

****Students/Teachers are to complete the top portion of this form and make sure it is attached to the STEAM Fair project for judges to reference, all scores are entered through the shared digital scoring form.****

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Kindergarten – 5th Grade

Student Names:		Grade:		Sequence #:	
Teacher's Name		Project Title:			

Research Art Project				
Category	**Exceeds Expectations**	**Meets Expectations**	**Approaching**	**Beginning**
Creativity & Theme (10)	**10** Artwork clearly and creatively communicates Animal Locomotion; the animal's movement is an important and easily understood part of the artwork.	**8-9** Artwork clearly connects to the Animal Locomotion theme and shows the animal in movement.	**5-7** Connection to animal movement is present but limited or unclear.	**0-4** Artwork does not clearly connect to the Animal Locomotion theme.
Accuracy (10)	**10** Animal features are realistic and consistent with research.	**8-9** Most features are realistic and connected to research.	**5-7** Some features are inaccurate or unclear.	**0-4** Artwork does not reflect researched animal.
Creativity & Artistic Choices (10)	**10** Original artwork skillfully uses artistic techniques and elements of art to communicate movement and create a visually engaging piece.	**8-9** Original artwork uses artistic techniques and elements of art effectively and shows creativity.	**5-7** Artwork shows limited creativity or purposeful use of artistic techniques and elements of art.	**0-4** Little evidence of original artistic choices or purposeful use of artistic techniques.
Effort, Craftsmanship & Presentation (10)	**10** Artwork is complete, polished, detailed, and display-ready; materials and techniques are used carefully and demonstrate strong effort.	**8-9** Artwork is complete, neat, display-ready, and demonstrates good effort and craftsmanship.	**5-7** Artwork is somewhat incomplete, rushed, or not fully prepared for display.	**0-4** Artwork is incomplete, poorly prepared, or demonstrates minimal effort.

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