

Student Projects and Writing Ideas

You can explore these suggestions on the Internet, by reading library books, and by interviewing your science teacher or other science experts. Share your research with classmates.

All the Spheres

After reading “The Lithosphere,” research the “spheres” that make up the atmosphere on earth and on the sun. Draw and label a diagram of these. Then research the greenhouse effect and the changes scientists see in the atmosphere. Explain the issues surrounding the greenhouse effect and how these impact you and the lives of all people.

For or Against Genetic Engineering

Use “Chromosome Poem” as a springboard for exploring the controversies around the genetic engineering of fruits and vegetables. Find information on the Internet, interview adults and peers, and use the data you’ve collected to take a position for or against the genetic engineering of fruits and vegetables. Transform your data into an opinion paragraph or a letter to the editor of your local newspaper.

Guide to Space Travel

Prepare a virtual tour of our solar system by drawing each planet. Then take your classmates for a ride through space explaining the topography of each planet and how each was discovered.

Celebrate Cells

Read “Fifty Million Million Cells” and investigate single-celled organisms or specialized cells in humans and animals, such as muscle, heart, blood, nerve, and skin cells. Illustrate 2–3 cell types or single-celled organisms and write about them. Include as many fascinating facts as you can find.

Writing Ideas

Read your poems to your classmates and/or arrange them on a bulletin board.

1. **It Can’t Talk Back.** Write a poem about something in science that can’t talk back, such as a cell, the moon, a bat, a black hole, a comet, or a giant squid. For models, read “Said the Little Stone” and “The Loneliest Creature.” These are called apostrophe poems. Brainstorm a list of ideas from the point of view of the scientific thing you choose, then write your poem.
2. **Find the Heart of It.** Look closely at a snowflake, a crystal, a chemical change, a rock, a motor, or a lunar eclipse and write a poem that shows you have pinpointed the beauty and poetry in science. These poems will provide excellent models for you to study: “Fifty Million Million Cells” and “The Xerces Blue.”
3. **Shape It!** Read “Why Leaves Change Color in the Fall.” Notice that the poem is written in the shape of a tree. Think of something science-related that you’d like to write a poem about, such as a shark, a spacecraft, a black hole, a comet, an ameba or paramecium, and so on, and write a poem in the shape of what you choose.