

2013 Young Naturalist Awards Judging Rubric

	Excellent—Score 4	Moderate—Score 3	Limited—Score 2	Poor—Score 1
1. Question	Thoughtful, researchable question posed. The topic is specific.	Question posed may be difficult to research. Topic may be too broad.	Question posed too difficult to research. Answers to question may be too readily available.	Question not stated.
2. Hypothesis or Goal	Hypothesis clearly stated and testable. or Goal of the project clearly stated and doable.	Hypothesis stated. or Goal of the project stated.	Hypothesis unclear and untestable. or Goal of the project unclear and not doable.	No hypothesis or goal stated.
3. Background Research	Research thorough and relevant to investigation. Sources properly cited.	Research has some relevance to the investigation. Some sources cited.	Minimal research done. Information gathered not relevant to investigation. Sources not properly cited.	No background research done.
4. Procedure, Design, Materials (Published data may be used if project is based on prior research.)	Procedure detailed, thorough, and appropriate. Clearly defined sequential steps. Procedure can be replicated. Materials listed.	Procedure appropriate. Most steps and materials listed.	Procedure not relevant to investigation. Steps not well explained. Materials incomplete.	Procedure unclear, missing key steps or no procedure stated. No materials are listed.
5. Variables, Controls, Sample Size	Variables are identified. Controls appropriate. Sample size and/or number of trials appropriate.	Variables somewhat identified. Controls somewhat known. Sample size and/or number of trials insufficient.	Missing an important variable or control. Sample size insufficient. Only 1 trial.	Missing two or more variables/controls. No trials or sample size.
6. Data Collection	Appropriate amount of data systematically gathered and recorded.	Much of the needed data gathered and recorded.	Data unclear, poorly gathered and recorded.	No data gathered or reported.
7. Data Presentation: Tables, Graphs, Charts	Appropriate graphics used to display data. Tables, graphs, and/or charts accurate, easily understood and complete (titles, labels, data key, variables, correct units of measure).	Graphics used to display data. Graphics accurate, but some components (titles, labels, data key, variables, correct units of measure) missing.	Graphics are inappropriate for the type of data presented. Graphics not easily understood. Many components (titles, labels, data key, variables, correct units of measure) missing.	Graphics not used.
8. Discussion of Data Analysis/	Data thoroughly discussed. Sources of error considered. Explanation for how/why	Data discussed. Some sources of error considered. Explanation	Minimal discussion of data. Sources of error not considered. Explanation	Data not discussed. Sources of error not considered. Explanation

Conclusion	hypothesis was supported or rejected. Conclusions supported by data. or Goal of the investigation and the findings thoroughly discussed and evaluated.	attempted for how/why hypothesis was supported or rejected. Some data doesn't support conclusions. or Goal of the investigation and findings discussed.	attempted for how/why hypothesis was supported or rejected. Most data doesn't support conclusions. or Minimal discussion of the findings of the investigation.	for how/why hypothesis was supported or rejected not attempted. Conclusions not relate to data. or No discussion of the goal or findings.
9. Further Research	Changes to improve procedures suggested. Questions for further research posed.	Some changes to improve procedure considered. Questions for further research posed.	Some consideration for changes to procedure but lacking in depth/description. No questions for further research posed.	Changes to procedure or questions for further research are not attempted.
10. Visuals	Illustrations, photos, and/or maps are relevant, supporting and adding depth to the investigation.	Illustrations, photos, and/or maps included, but not all are relevant to the investigation.	Insufficient number of illustrations, photos, and/or maps. Some visuals not relevant to investigation.	No visuals included.
11. Essay Presentation	The investigation is presented clearly and concisely with a logical progression of ideas and supporting evidence. Strong personal voice.	The essay is organized but often strays from the focus of the investigation. Personal voice is present.	The essay not logically or effectively structured. No personal voice.	Essay not focused, poorly organized and shows little thought or effort. No personal voice.
12. Grammar, Spelling	No grammatical errors. No spelling errors. Essay title and word choice appropriate.	Some grammatical and spelling errors. Most words used appropriately. Essay title appropriate.	Some grammatical errors and spelling errors. Inappropriate use of words. Essay title inappropriate or misleading.	Many grammatical and spelling errors. Inappropriate word usage. No essay title.
13. Proper Citing of Sources	References (including visuals) properly credited. Bibliography properly formatted. Many sources, including academic and government websites, included.	References (including visuals) incorrectly cited or absent in the essay. Bibliography has some formatting errors. Few sources cited.	Citing of references in the essay poorly done or absent. Bibliography not properly formatted. Few references cited.	No bibliography.