

## **Games – All divisions**

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Albert Einstein said, “Creativity is intelligence having fun” - at Wesley College this past week, this is exactly what happened. Educational research tells us that active learning increases student performance in science. What could be more active than students devising and playing their own science games? At the Games Judging Day at Wesley College, students enjoyed setting up their games and playing them with the science teachers who were the judges. We were also pleased to welcome student teachers from The University of Melbourne, who were mentored by the practising teachers. The judges used a rubric which closely followed the guidelines listed in the Science Talent Search Handbook.

This year 141 entries (representing over 200 students) were judged and almost half of these were awarded bursaries. It is pleasing that teachers are making time available in the crowded curriculum for students to pursue STS endeavors; given that STEM is now such a vital cog in schooling. When completing their projects, students used their interpersonal skills to devise a project based on an area of science of their choosing.

The best entries were those that not only contained good science, but showed evidence that research was used to develop the game around finding solutions to real life issues.

Although students entering the Games section are not obliged to follow the theme for the year, the topic of Future Earth lent itself very effectively to concerns about global issues of Global Sustainability. Other popular topics were related Ecosystems, Food Technology or other environmental issues. Tasks that promoted problem solving were highly regarded whereas “luck” squares in board games, ‘Opoly’ based games and recall of trivial facts did not score well. Overall, the judges were very impressed with the creativity shown by students to produce eye-catching and innovative games, which were original and fun to play.

All this was made possible by the generosity of many science teachers who encouraged their students to enter the Science Talent Search, guided their research of the science ideas and inspired them to express their creativity in many different ways. Many of these teachers also gave hours of their free time to judge the entries. We thank the parents for supporting their sons and daughters in preparing their entries, bringing them to the venue and sharing with them the experiences of the day.

We also thank the students who put so much work into completing their entries and brought them to be judged. They have achieved much learning about science and shared their learning with the players of the games and with the judges.