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Science Fairs and Observational Science: A Case History from Earth Orbit (Paperback)

By Paul D Lowman

Bibliogov, United States, 2013. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 246 x 189 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****. Having judged dozens of science fairs over the years, I am repeatedly disturbed by the ground rules under which students must prepare their entries. They are almost invariably required to follow the scientific method, involving formulating a hypothesis, a test of the hypothesis, and then a project in which this test is carried out. As a research scientist for over 40 years, I consider this approach to science fairs fundamentally unsound. It is not only too restrictive, but actually avoids the most important (and difficult) part of scientific research: recognizing a scientific problem in the first place. A well-known example is one of the problems that, by his own account, stimulated Einstein's theory of special relativity: the obvious fact that when an electric current is induced in a conductor by a magnetic field, it makes no difference whether the field or the conductor is actually (so to speak) moving. There is in other words no such thing as absolute motion. Physics was transformed by Einstein's recognition of a problem. Most competent scientists can solve problems after...



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