ANSTO

Think Science!

Secondary Teacher Resource Pack

2026

Think Science! 2026 Terms and Conditions

Please carefully consider all terms and conditions below before registering your school.

Personal Information and Privacy	For students entering *Think Science!*, "personal information" includes photographic images, videos and sound recordings where an individual can be identified or his or her identity is reasonably apparent from the image or sound recording. ANSTO is committed to protecting personal information in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) (Privacy Act) and the Australian Privacy Principles. For further information you can refer to the ANSTO Privacy Policy on our website.
Submission of entries	A limit of three entries per class can be submitted. For schools with multiple classes in an age category, three entries can be submitted from every class. An online entry form must be submitted for each class. This must include teacher details, video links and student team details for 1-3 entries. Entry Forms must be submitted by teachers only. Entries must be submitted by the closing date: **Friday 3 July 2026.** Late entries will not be considered.
Logbook	Student teams must use a logbook to record all details of their investigation - either one provided by *Think Science!* or other suitable format. These must be retained by the school until judging is complete. A copy of the logbook must be provided if requested by the judging panel.
Student team size	Students must work in teams of 2 to 4. Individual entries and entries by larger teams won't be considered.
Age category	Entries can be submitted in one age category only: Years 3-4, 5-6, 7-8 or 9-10. Where student ages in a team span a wider range (ie. for small schools), the entry category must correspond to the oldest student in the team.
Rural and remote area schools	Entries from rural and remote areas may be considered for special prizes in addition to the main prizes. The rural and remote area prizes apply to schools from towns with a population of 5000 or less and more than 50 km from the nearest town with a population of 10,000 or more.

Role of participating teachers and schools	Investigations must be completed at school. Teachers must approve all investigation topics and can assist students with topic selection. Teachers can select the same topic for all students in their class. Schools are responsible for evaluating topics with respect to ethics. Teachers should support students through the science inquiry process and must ensure that students do their own work.
Announcing winners and displaying winning entries	Winners will be announced on the ANSTO website **by Friday, 21st August 2026**. Winning teachers will be notified by email. ANSTO reserves the right to announce the first names of all winning students, their age categories, and school names on the ANSTO website and on social media channels. ANSTO reserves the right to display video footage or still images (digital assets) from the winning entries on the ANSTO website and social media channels, as well as provide these digital assets to local media outlets.
Video presentations	Length of video entries must be **3 to 4 minutes for Years 3 to 6**, and **4 to 5 minutes for Years 7 to 10.** A YouTube link for each video must be provided on the online entry form. The visibility setting for each video must be set to 'unlisted' (not for public viewing, viewable only with your link). Any video footage taken on mobile phones, tablets or similar devices must be either captured in landscape or converted to landscape. Refer to the website for more information on videos.
Content	The content in each presentation must be the work of the student team named. This includes all graphs, tables, diagrams, photos, and video footage included in presentations. Students must explain all content in their own words. Entries with plagiarised content will not be considered.
Judging	All entries will be judged by an expert panel at ANSTO using an age-appropriate rubric. Judging scores will not be given to students or schools. The decisions made by the judging panel will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.
Prize redemption	Student gift cards, medals and certificates will be posted to the winning schools in September 2026. School prizes, consisting of science education resources chosen by the school, must be redeemed by **29 January 2027**. ANSTO will order and pay for school prizes, to a maximum of the prize value including GST and freight. ANSTO will arrange for prizes to be delivered to the school.

ANSTO reserves the right to alter the terms and conditions of *Think Science!* when necessary. Any enquiries about terms and conditions can be emailed to the ANSTO *Think Science!* Team at: thinkscience@ansto.gov.au

Think Science! Prizes

Over $10,000 in prizes are on offer for winning schools and students. In addition, rural and remote schools will be also eligible for special rural and remote area prizes.

The prize value for schools, as outlined below, is to be used for educational resources for your classroom or school. The educational resources can be of your choosing but must relate to the topic of science. The total value of the redeemed prize includes GST (if applicable) and freight to your school. The resources should be sourced from one supplier.

For student prizes, gift cards for all members of first placed teams will be supplied to the value of $50 each. All winners and placegetters will receive an ANSTO medal and certificate in recognition of their effort.

For Homeschool teams, students will be eligible for the student prizes only in their age category.

Primary	**School Prizes**		**Student prizes**	
Place	**Years 3/4**	**Years 5/6**	**Years 3/4**	**Years 5/6**
1st	$1000	$1000	$50 + Medal	$50 + Medal
2nd	$650	$650	Medal	Medal
3rd	$400	$400	Medal	Medal
Rural and remote area prizes	Up to 2 x $300 prizes		Medals	

Secondary	**School Prizes**		**Student prizes**	
Place	**Years 7/8**	**Years 9/10**	**Years 7/8**	**Years 9/10**
1st	$1000	$1000	$50 + Medal	$50 + Medal
2nd	$650	$650	Medal	Medal
3rd	$400	$400	Medal	Medal
Rural and remote area prizes	Up to 2 x $300 prizes		Medals	

Think Science! Secondary Resources

Think Science! Video Checklist for Years 7–10

Communication is an important science skill, and the video that your team creates will play a major part in your success in Think Science! 2026.

The best videos are well planned before any filming is done to ensure they fit the maximum 5 minutes allowed. Your video needs to be creative, entertaining and fun, and grab your viewer's attention. Check out all of our winners from 2025, including our Primary school winners, at https://www.ansto.gov.au/2025-think-science-competition-summary-and-results to see what makes a great investigation video!

To plan your video, you should construct a **storyboard** which indicates what you will show to your audience for each scene and what you will say for that scene. You can use our **storyboard template** to help you!

While creating your storyboard, and during your filming process, this checklist will help to ensure you have included everything. We have also provided **maximum times** to cover each aspect in the video. Your video must be **no longer than 5 minutes**.

Print the video checklist and put a tick against each item to check you have included it in your storyboard.

Questioning and predicting (maximum 60 seconds including introduction)

We have:

- ☐ stated the scientifically testable question or aim of our investigation
- ☐ presented a short summary of the science and scientific concepts that relate to our investigation
- ☐ proposed a testable hypothesis (what we think will happen based on our research)

Planning and conducting (maximum 90 seconds)

We have:

- ☐ identified the independent and dependent variables (what we changed and what we measured) and described how we measured them
- ☐ described how other variables were kept the same to ensure a fair test
- ☐ stated safety risks and any ethical issues for our investigation, and explained how we minimised these risks and issues (risk assessment)
- ☐ included photos or video to clearly show the set-up of our equipment for our investigation (equipment)
- ☐ clearly described the logical steps we followed to carry out our investigation (method)
- ☐ included video showing our team carrying out our investigation and recording the results

Processing, modelling and analysing (maximum 60 seconds)

We have:

- ☐ presented an appropriate, well-organised and easily readable table of all our observations and measurements, including our trial averages (results)
- ☐ included an appropriate, easily readable graph or clear photos of our results
- ☐ described any patterns, trends or relationships shown by our results, and identified any anomalies

Evaluating

We have:

- ☐ stated our conclusion, and whether or not our results support our hypothesis
- ☐ explained our results using our knowledge of the science and scientific concepts related to our investigation
- ☐ related our findings to the real world and suggested questions for further investigation
- ☐ reflected on possible sources of error in our investigation and stated how our investigation could be improved

Communicating

Now that you have checked your storyboard it's time to make your **video**.
Here is a checklist for your team to consider when you are making your video:

We are:

- ☐ including creative ideas and features to engage the viewer and make it fun to watch
- ☐ filming in a quiet area so there is no background noise
- ☐ filming where there is enough lighting so that everything presented can be clearly seen
- ☐ looking at the camera when speaking and have only one team member speaking at a time
- ☐ speaking loud enough and clearly enough for the viewer to hear and understand
- ☐ speaking at the right pace (not too quickly or too slowly)
- ☐ ensuring that any text, data tables and graphs presented on screen are large enough to be easily read and to clearly see all details, and enough time has been allocated for the viewer to look at and understand them
- ☐ using voice-overs to explain tables, graphs and other visuals presented on screen
- ☐ checking the spelling of all our text
- ☐ checking that our final version of the video is **between 4 and 5 minutes long. Videos longer than 5 minutes will be excluded from judging.**

HINT: Play your video for your teacher, friends and family to get their feedback before submitting – they might notice something you missed that needs fixing!

Think Science! How to make a video

View the video in the link below to find out some tips and tricks for producing the best possible video entry:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DkbtJtVevP4

Think Science! Judging Rubric for Years 7-10

This is a small team (2 - 4 individuals) event. Teams submit a short, creatively presented video 4 - 5 minutes long, showcasing a first-hand science investigation. **Videos exceeding 5 minutes in length will not qualify for judging.**

Science Inquiry skill	Developing	Competent	Excelling
Questioning and predicting	• states a question and/or aim that is not clear • presents some background information • proposes a hypothesis	• states a clear, scientifically testable question and/or aim • summarises some relevant scientific concepts that underlie the topic being investigated • proposes a testable hypothesis	• states a clear, scientifically testable question and/or aim involving variables being investigated • summarises the context and relevant scientific concepts that underlie the topic being investigated • proposes a testable hypothesis which is supported by the research
Planning and conducting	• considers some safety concerns • identifies the independent and dependent variables, and attempts to identify variables to be controlled • outlines an experimental procedure • includes photos or video of the experimental set-up	• identifies risks and any ethical concerns, and describes safety measures taken • Identifies the independent and dependent variables and describes how they are measured, and identifies and controls other variables • describes a logical, valid and reproducible experimental procedure, that uses appropriate equipment • includes relevant photos or video of the experimental set-up and the performance of the investigation	• describes risks and any ethical concerns and explains the safety measures taken • identifies the independent and dependent variables and describes how they are measured, and explains the measures taken to control each of the other variables • describes a logical, valid and reproducible experimental procedure, that uses appropriate equipment, and ensures accurate and reliable measurements • includes relevant photos or video that show the experimental set-up, and clearly demonstrate how the equipment was used in performing the investigation

Science Inquiry skill	Developing	Competent	Excelling
Processing, modelling and analysing	• creates a table to display relevant observations and measurements • uses a further representation of results, including diagrams, photos, graphs • identifies patterns and trends in data	• creates an appropriately labelled table to display relevant observations and accurate measurements with calculated means • uses further appropriate representation to display results, including diagrams, photos, graphs, models, mathematical relationships • describes patterns, trends and relationships in data, and identifies anomalies	• creates a well-organised and appropriately labelled table to display relevant observations and comprehensive accurate measurements with calculated means • uses further appropriate representation to clearly display results, including diagrams, photos, graphs, models, mathematical relationships • comprehensively describes patterns, trends and relationships in data, and identifies anomalies
Evaluating	• relates an observed pattern, trend or relationship in results to a relevant science concept or theory • identifies a real-life situation related to the investigation findings or states a relevant testable question for further investigation • identifies a possible source of error or assumption in the investigation and suggests a modification to the investigation • formulates a conclusion that is supported by results	• explains the results using relevant science and scientific concepts • describes a real-life situation related to the investigation findings and suggests a relevant testable question for further investigation • reflects on possible sources of error and assumptions in the investigation and suggests some valid improvements to the investigation • formulates a clear conclusion that is supported by results, and relates it to the hypothesis	• comprehensively explains the results using relevant science and scientific concepts • explains how the investigation findings are relevant to the real world and suggests relevant testable questions for further investigation • reflects critically on the investigation and possible sources of error and assumptions, and proposes some valid improvements to the investigation • formulates a clear, precise conclusion that is supported by results, and relates it to the hypothesis

Science Inquiry skill	Developing	Competent	Excelling
Communicating	• presenters generally heard and understood	• all presenters can be clearly heard and understood, and speak at a comfortable speed with minimum background noise	• all presenters can be clearly heard and understood, speak at a comfortable speed with minimum background noise, and maintain good eye contact with the audience
	• text, graphs, photos and videos are clear, and large enough to be seen.	• text, graphs, photos and videos are clear and large enough to be easily seen, with sufficient time for viewing.	• Concise text, relevant graphs, photos and videos are clear and large enough so all details can be easily seen with sufficient time for viewing
	• presentation showcases some parts of their investigation and is significantly shorter or longer than 5 min	• presentation is well-sequenced and engaging, showcases all parts of their investigation and is between 4 and 5 min in length	• presentation is well-sequenced and engaging, showcases all parts of their investigation, is between 4 and 5 mins in length, and is creatively produced

Rubric content follows the Australian Curriculum v9, 2022

Video Storyboard

Group Name _____

Shot number	Shot number	Shot number	Shot number
What are we seeing?	What are we seeing?	What are we seeing?	What are we seeing?
What are we hearing?	What are we hearing?	What are we hearing?	What are we hearing?

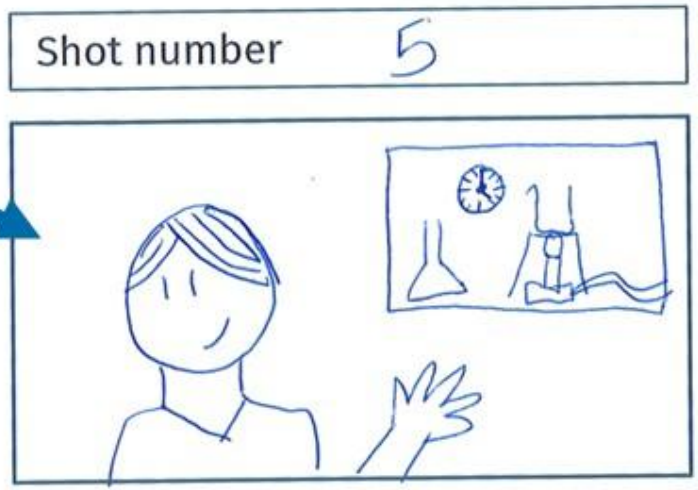
Shot number	Shot number	Shot number	Shot number
What are we seeing?	What are we seeing?	What are we seeing?	What are we seeing?
What are we hearing?	What are we hearing?	What are we hearing?	What are we hearing?

Video Storyboard

- Storyboards are used to plan out your video so that you can ensure you don't forget to include something in your final edit.
- Planning each shot helps you to consider what you are communicating and how it will be seen by your audience.

The shot number will assist in ordering your filming sequence during editing. Remember, you don't have to film everything in order, and you may decide to come back later and reshoot certain shots

A simple diagram of what the shot will look like, helps to visualise how the video will come together. Examples of types of shots include animation or live action which can be a wide angle or close up. The shots may also include pictures, diagrams and/or text,



A few words to accompany the diagram of what the shot will look like.

Add notes of any talking, music or sound effects.

Think Science!

SAFETY

considerations when choosing topics

NO MICROBIOLOGY EXPERIMENTS

There are strict protocols for microbiology experiments in schools, which are difficult for students to follow. We have decided not to allow any investigations involving mould, bacteria or fungus

FOLLOW WHS AND CHEMICAL SAFETY GUIDELINES

Teachers need to check school or state-based education department safety guidelines.

NO HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Your science investigation **should not** involve any hazardous substances **including:**

- radioactive substances
- hazardous biological substances
- hazardous chemical substances

Ask yourself:

CAN YOU CONDUCT THIS INVESTIGATION SAFELY AT SCHOOL OR HOME?

PROPER SUPERVISION

Students should have proper supervision while they conduct their investigation.

CLEAN UP

Make sure all materials can be disposed of safely, if necessary.

If you are unsure if your investigation is safe, please contact **thinkscience@ansto.gov.au**

Think Science! Tips and Tricks!

General tips

1. **USE** the supporting documents

2. Keep the investigation **SIMPLE**
   - One **dependent** variable
   - One **independent** variable

3. Make sure your whole **TEAM** is involved!

4. Give yourself plenty of **TIME** to complete your investigation and video!

5. Use **past tense** when explaining your investigation

Video tricks

1. Good **SOUND** quality essential
   - use the microphone close to your face especially when recording outside

2. Alternate shots between **talking to camera** and **voiceovers** with slides

3. Take time **EDITING** your video
   - you might need to re-record some video and/or audio
4. Be careful with music and animations - **too much** can be **too distracting**!
5. Ask people to watch your video and give **feedback**

6. Use your **OWN** photos, videos, images and results

Technical Recommendations

Keep it to the **TIME LIMIT**
- **4-5 mins**

Submit your video via an **'unlisted' YouTube link**

Use any video editing software you have available to create an **mp4 file**

Platforms you might find useful:
- Canva
- Adobe Express
- Loom
- MS PowerPoint
- Prezi

Email thinkscience@ansto.gov.au if you have any questions

ANSTO

Think Science! Topic Ideas!

Stuck for topic ideas? Here are a few to inspire you...

- Does changing the height of a ramp affect how far a car will travel?
- How does changing the amount of baking soda and vinegar affect the height of an explosion? (careful to change only one: baking soda or vinegar)
- Does changing the type of liquid affect how quickly a nail will corrode (rust)?
- Does the length of the wire affect the power of the circuit?
- What materials provide the best insulation?
- Will more air inside a basketball make it bounce higher?
- Which type of inside window covering is best for saving energy?
- What conditions are best for making the tallest sandcastle?
- How do fins on a rocket affect its flight?
- How does temperature affect the brewing of tea?
- What is the best shape for a parachute?
- Which conditions produce the best echo?

Email thinkscience@ansto.gov.au if you have any questions

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