



Science Fair Projects

6th Grade to 8th Grade

Title: Consumer Science

"50% More Absorbent"

Stating the Problem - The Big Question

Your project is to test different brands of paper towels to find out which one will absorb the most liquid. Which brand of paper towel do you think is the best? Write a question that asks exactly what you want to find out from your experiment.

Forming a Hypothesis - A Smart Guess

Which brand of paper towel do you think will be the most absorbent? Different brands of paper towel vary in construction. Some paper towels are only a single layer of paper, while others are two or three layers thick. Some paper towels are "quilted," while others are smooth. Make a prediction about the features of a paper towel you think will make it more absorbent. Write a sentence, or hypothesis, stating what you think will be the answer to the Big Question.

Planning the Procedure

Research your topic in the library. Find books, magazines, encyclopedias and any other source that will give you general information about paper, paper towels, absorption or testing for absorption rate. Carefully write a description of your project. Your description should include:

- ❖ A detailed list of materials.
- ❖ The steps for your testing procedures. There are a number of different ways to test the amount of water that a paper towel absorbs. By developing two different tests, your research results will be more valid than if you used only one test. There are also two different ways that you could measure the amount of water absorbed. The amount of water could be measured by volume or by weight.
- ❖ A method for measuring and recording the data collected from your experiment, such as a chart, log or journal.

This project is from Daryl Vriesenga's book, *Science Fair Projects, Grades 4-6*, Michigan, Schaffer Publications, 1990. The Guide is available on line at: SchoolDoodle.com

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Make a chart or table to record the results of your experiment. Here is a sample of what you might use.

Chart

Paper Towel Brand Name	Paper Towel Features	Volume of Water Absorbed					
		Test #1	Test #2	Test #3	Test #4	Test #5	Average

Recording Results

It's time to start Testing your paper towels and collecting data. Carefully measuring the amount of water that each sample absorbs is extremely important. Test four or five samples of each paper towel. Use an entire paper towel each time, not a piece of one.

Drawing a Conclusion

Before testing the various brands of paper towel, you made a prediction about which paper towel would absorb the most water. How accurate was your prediction? Your experiment was to find out which paper towel absorbed the most water. Can you use this information to find which paper towel is the best value for the consumer's dollar?

Write a report explaining what you learned from your paper towel absorption research. You should include: your Big Question, your hypothesis, a description of your testing procedure, the data that you collected, and an explanation of what you learned about the absorption of different brands of paper towel.

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Display

A display is one way for you to show others what you have learned from your project. Your display could include charts and graphs that compare the data that was collected from testing the different brands of paper towel. Samples of the different kinds of paper towel and also the equipment used to test these samples can also be displayed. You might wish to let the viewers try the experiment themselves, and then compare their results with your charts. A copy of your report should be available for others to read.

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