Name _____ Period _____ Date _____

The DuPont Challenge
Essay Writing Details

Science Teacher Stuff

- ❑ Remember-- this is a science paper. There should be lots of science in your paper.
- ❑ This contest is highly competitive-- there are usually 8000-10,000 applicants. Therefore, it is in your best interest to find an unusual topic which you can explain precisely and which will spark the interest of one of the judges. Or, you could do a not-so-unusual topic, but give it an unusual twist by your treatment/premise/point of view.
- ❑ Your topic should be current, insightful, and grade-level or above. I don't want to read an encyclopedia-style report about tornadoes. I would like to read about a developing technology to better predict tornado weather patterns.
- ❑ You are required to have 10 <u>credible</u> sources
    - o Encyclopedias and are **not** allowed
    - o **Only 2** Wikipedia sources are allowed
    - o Sources older that 10 years should be **avoided**, if possible
    - o Most of your sources should be from scientific journals or data banks on the internet
    - o Two of your sources must be **non-web based** (an actual journal, magazine, book, etc.)
    - o You may be able to email or phone interview an expert in your field

English Teacher Stuff

- ❑ You must cite all of your sources in MLA format
- ❑ Avoid personal pronouns such as I, me, you, etc.
- ❑ The paper should consist of a good introductory paragraph, where you introduce your topic and your point of view; followed by the body of your paper, where you support your point of view; and finally, a concluding paragraph, where you briefly summarize your major points and draw a conclusion.
- ❑ You should not have any grammatical or spelling mistakes in your paper. Proof-read, proof-read, proof-read! Then have someone else proof-read it for you. Ask your English teacher to proof-read it for you – but get it to them early!!
- ❑ Make sure you have good transitions from one paragraph to another, so your ideas flow smoothly.
- ❑ Avoid abbreviations, contractions, slang and, of course, "text" language
- ❑ Introduce an acronym before you use it ("According to the United States Geological Survey, or USGS, blah blah blah.")

Make it Pretty – these are requirements!!!

- ❑ Use 1-inch margins on all sides
- ❑ Everything should be printed at 12 characters per inch – including the title
- ❑ Do not use headers or footers (not even page numbers)
- ❑ Do not use boldface type at all
- ❑ Double space the essay, and leave a space between each bibliography entry
- ❑ Do not write in "chapters" of any sort. Your paper is not long enough to do so
- ❑ Indent or double space between paragraphs
- ❑ The paper must be 750- 1000 words. Put your word count at the end of the essay
- ❑ The bibliography must be on a separate page
- ❑ The paper must be printed on regular 81/2" x 11" white paper with black or dark blue ink
- ❑ Print on only one side of the paper and staple all papers together with the bibliography last
- ❑ Print or write your name and period in the corner by the staple.
- ❑ Your paper must be saved as an electronic document you can access at school

Stay Organized

- ❑ Use note cards for handwritten notes. Include the bibliographical information on the back of the card
    - o When you go to write your paper, you can shuffle the cards in the order that you want to use them, and you can discard those that you don't plan to use.
    - o Also, when writing the bibliography, you can alphabetize the index cards in the order they are to be typed.
- ❑ Keep a numbered list of your sources and use the numbers in your note taking and outlining to keep track of where the information came from.
- ❑ Keep an electronic document that you cut and paste web page URLs and other bibliographic information
- ❑ Remember – each idea that is not your own must have a citation
    - o Direct quotes
    - o Paraphrased information (you put it in your own words)
- ❑ Use the computer to type your paper. Be sure to make a back up copy on a disk or save it to a USB drive. I may have you make corrections after the paper is graded, so you will need to keep these copies after you turn in the paper. In addition, your contest entry must be submitted electronically.

Don’t look like a Doofus

- ❑ Remove all hyperlinks
- ❑ Be sure you have a consistent font throughout your paper
- ❑ Turn your checkpoint assignments in on time
- ❑ Don’t wait until the last minute!!!!

Grading (This is also how the essays will be scored by the judges)

Essays will be judged based on the following rubric categories, and each is weighted according to the percentages in parentheses:
•Mechanics & Conventions (25%) – You set it up correctly and have no grammatical errors
•Ideas & Content (25%) – You have included lots of science and your own thoughts
•Organization (20%) – There is a logical sequence to your paragraphs an the information flows
•Style & Creativity (20%) – You have an unusual topic or twist to approaching your topic
•Voice (10%) – Is it interesting to read, or does it read like a 5th grade book report?