

Math Fair Guidelines

(www.mathfair.com)

A SNAP math fair is based on four main tenets:

Student-centered

In a SNAP math fair, the students are front and center. They are involved in the presentation. Their displays present problems, not solutions. Passers-by try the problems, and the students help them solve the problems. As well as standing for "Student-centered", the S in SNAP stands for "Super-interactive".

Non-competitive

No first prize! No arguments about judging. No negative feelings by students who do not win a prize. No prizes are awarded at a SNAP math fair. No prizes are needed.

All-inclusive

The participation rate should be 100%, whether its for a single class, a single division or for an entire school.

Problem-based

Students present problems (not the solutions) to the spectators. They will help the spectators solve the problems. Of course, the students must first solve the problems themselves and prepare tabletop displays.

At a SNAP math fair, the students are focused on the process rather than the result. It gives them a broader understanding of the meaning of mathematics. This is the underlying vision that makes the SNAP program so unique and so effective.

Organizational Guidelines

Teachers distribute the problems

How to do this is the teacher's call. You can use anything from cookie jar approach to assigning special problems to specific students, although either extreme is probably not optimal. Teachers have accomplished this in different ways (see the getting started pages).

Students work in small groups

Doing math should not be an isolated activity. Different students bring different skills to the group. Future leaders have to learn about co-operation.

Allow sufficient time

A good problem takes time to solve. An attractive tabletop display is more than a few minutes work. If students work on the fair as part of their daily schedule, a week is a minimum.