Science in the News

**PROPOSED EVENT CATEGORY:** Inquiry & Problem Solving  
**PROPOSED EVENT DIVISION:** Division B – Grades 6-9, Division C – Grades 9-12  
**NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:**  
LS1D: Information Processing > Obtaining, Evaluation, and Communicating Information  

1. **DESCRIPTION:** Participants will complete a written test based on current news within various fields of science.

   **A TEAM OF UP TO:** 2  
   **EYE PROTECTION:** None  
   **IMPOUND:** NO  
   **APPROXIMATE TIME/EVENT TIME:** 50 minutes

2. **EVENT PARAMETERS:** Each team may bring one 8.5” x 11” sheet of paper that may contain information on both sides in any form and from any source along with two stand-alone non-programmable, non-graphing calculators.

3. **THE COMPETITION:** Participants will complete a written test broken into two parts:

   a. **Part I: Current Events**
      
      i. This part of the test will consist of multiple choice, true-false, matching, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, or calculation questions.
      
      ii. Questions will focus on news developments from the previous three years. For the 2023 season, this means news that has been widely reported/published since May 1, 2020. This may include scientific breakthroughs/discoveries, inventions, scientific awards, studies, and more.
      
      iii. The intent of this part is to raise general awareness that science is continually evolving and expanding. As such, questions should not focus on obscure developments or minor details.
      
      iv. At least one question from each of the following science fields will be included:
         
         (1)Life, Personal & Social Science  
         (2)Earth & Space Science  
         (3)Physical Science & Chemistry  
         (4)Technology & Engineering

   b. **Part II: Science Communication & Analysis**
      
      i. In this part of the test, participants will demonstrate critical thinking and communication skills based on a review of one or more source materials. Therefore, these questions will likely require short answer or essay responses.
      
      ii. Questions may result from a focus on one or more activities, such as:
         
         (1)Reading an excerpt of a research paper and putting its key information into news article format
(2) Watching a news report and creating an appropriate headline

(3) Comparing two or more articles on the same or related topics

iii. Sources used might include published research papers; news articles from newspapers, magazines, or scientific journals; video or audio clips from online media sources; etc. The source material(s) must be news-oriented and not general science education.

4. **SAMPLE QUESTIONS:**
   a. **Part I:**
      i. Which telescope was launched by NASA in Dec 2021 to study other universes?
      ii. Which of the following groups of people does the CDC recommend receive a COVID-19 booster?
   b. **Part II:**
      i. Based on the research provided, who is most impacted by the findings in this study?
      ii. As a science journalist, what are three follow-up questions you would ask the expert cited in this study?
      iii. Which of the following articles best conveyed the findings of this study – and why?

5. **SCORING:**
   a. High score wins.
   b. Selected questions will be used to break ties.
   c. The score will be composed of the following elements: Part I: 50-67%; Part II: 33-50%.

6. **RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:** ScienceNews Explores (formerly ScienceNews for Students), National Geographic, New Scientist, Popular Science, Smithsonian Magazine, as well as numerous field-specific news sources.