



## Discovery Education's "Young Scientist Challenge"

### Overview

Discovery Education's Young Scientist Challenge is the premier national science competition for students in grades 5 through 8. The Young Scientist Challenge (YSC) is designed to encourage the exploration of science among America's youth and to promote the importance of science communication. In 1999, Discovery Communications launched the competition to nurture the next generation of American scientists at a critical age when interest in science begins to decline. Over the past nine years, more than 540,000 middle school students have been nominated to participate in the competition. Winners have gone on to speak in front of members of Congress, work with the nation's top scientists, and pursue academic careers in the sciences.

### Process

In order to enter, students must be in grades 5 through 8, and must submit a video entry online at [www.discoveryeducation.com/youngscientist](http://www.discoveryeducation.com/youngscientist) between **March 1<sup>st</sup> and June 15<sup>th</sup> 2008**.

Students will be challenged to create a one- to two-minute video about a specific scientific concept which they will select from a list of five concepts provided by YSC judges.

Video entries must demonstrate the student's understanding of the scientific concept explained and his or her comfort level discussing science in general.

Videos do NOT need to be "produced" or of high caliber. Judges are not evaluating production skills. Videos may be recorded on cell phones or simple digital cameras, for example. In addition, local libraries and schools may be able to loan cameras to students.

Videos will be screened to determine whether they meet all entry requirements and will then be presented to a panel of online judges.

Over the summer, judges from Faraday Studios will review the video submissions and choose 51 semifinalists: one from each state and the District of Columbia. Winning entries will be based on the average of scores awarded by a panel of judges using the following rubric.

- Creativity (20%)
- Content meets stated contest criteria (30%)
- Persuasiveness (10%)
- Classroom suitability (10%)
- Overall Presentation (30%)



## The Finals

In the fall, 10 finalists receive an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, DC for the competition finals, consisting of a series of individual and team challenges, some of them in front of a live audience. These age-appropriate challenges are developed and administered by Head Judge Steve Jacobs, science educator, creator of “Jake’s Attic” and founder of Faraday Studios. Finalists will be judged on their communication and scientific problem solving skills. At the end of the competition, American’s Top Young Scientist will be awarded a \$50,000 savings bond, and other finalists will receive exciting prizes.

## Prizing

### SemiFinalists (51 - one from each State and the District of Columbia)

- \$250 Cash
- Tee-shirt
- Plaque for Middle School
- Plaque for Student's Teacher
- Certificate

### Finalists (10 – chosen from the 51 SemiFinalists)

- An all expenses paid 4-night, 3-day trip, in late Sept., early Oct. for the student and ONE parent/guardian to Washington, D.C.
- \$1,000
- A YSC Medal
- Special YSC finalist apparel
- A chance to win various prize trips (in the past we've set students to Space Camp, on a trip with Rangers at Grand Tetons, etc).

### First Place

- All of the above (except for the \$1,000) PLUS
- A U.S. Savings Bond for \$50,000 (Cash value \$25K)
- A trophy
- The title of "America's Top Young Scientist"

## Science Teacher Challenge --- New for 2008!

We are excited to announce that, in addition to the student challenge, 2008 will feature a teacher competition. Beginning March 1<sup>st</sup>, science teachers who are members of the Discovery Educator Network (DEN) are invited to enter. DEN teachers will be asked to submit a video entry, as outlined in the rules on the official entry form.

In late summer of 2008, judges will select the five teachers who will receive an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, DC for the competition finals. Teacher finalists will compete in a series of individual and team challenges, some of them in front of a live audience. At the end of the competition, judges will award the top teacher with a special prize.

