

# RESEARCH PROJECT

## University of Memphis Language Fair 2026

### GUIDELINES

- Students will submit a project based on particular countries and/or cultures in the target language. Projects must display effort on the part of students to present research on, and an understanding of, some aspect of a target-language speech community or culture.
- The following information must be visible on the project display:
  - **Category: RESEARCH PROJECT**
  - **Language**
  - **School**
  - **Name of student(s)**
  - **Name of teacher**
- Projects should not exceed an area of 3 feet by 4 feet.
- Projects that have won prizes in previous years may not be re-submitted.
- Maximum of three (3) entries per class and three students per project.
- Second language learners, native and heritage speakers/learners, and speakers of cognate languages are welcome to participate in this event.
- Students will make a two- to three-minute presentation in the target language (except for Latin) to judges in-person on the day of the Language Fair and respond to judges' questions in the target language for a minimum of two minutes. **At least one student from the group must be present at the time of presentations to the judges. Native speakers, heritage speakers/learners and speakers of cognate languages cannot participate in the presentation to judges, though they may be part of the research group.** See the Language Fair program for the schedule of presentations.
  - **Native Speaker** – the majority of formal education is in the target language
  - **Heritage Speaker/Learner** – the majority of formal education is in English, but the target language is commonly used for communication in the home
  - **Second Language Learner** – little or no experience with the target language outside of formal education
  - **Cognate languages** are ones that closely related to the language being tested, such as Portuguese speakers in Spanish contests. Speakers of cognate languages are excluded from the vocabulary quiz in the name of fairness and may not participate in this event.
- All display events (Art, Crafts, Greeting Cards, Posters, and Research Projects) must be in the appropriate room (organized by language) by 8:45 a.m. on the day of the Fair. They must also be retrieved from the rooms where they are displayed by 2:00 p.m. or they will be thrown away.

See the next page for judging criteria.



## JUDGING

CRITERIA	OUTSTANDING (3)	NOTEWORTHY (2)	INADEQUATE (1)
Content	The <b>unique</b> organization of accurate content and visual elements create a <b>striking and memorable work</b> . It has the power to “ <b>wow</b> ” the viewer.	The organization of mostly accurate content and visual elements creates a <b>cohesive work</b> . The work <b>holds the viewer’s attention</b> .	Content is <b>inadequate</b> or inaccurate. There is <b>little or no impact on the viewer</b> .
Creativity	The project shows <b>unique (“outside of the box”)</b> and <b>creative</b> interpretation with <b>great attention to detail</b> .	The project shows <b>creative</b> interpretation with <b>some attention to detail</b> .	The project is <b>not creative</b> and shows <b>no attention to details</b> .
Cultural Relevance	The project displays <b>significant understanding</b> of the target culture	The project displays <b>adequate understanding</b> of the target culture	The project displays <b>little to no understanding</b> of the target culture
Written Language Control	<b>Correct</b> usage of grammar structures and vocabulary; demonstrates <b>variation</b> of vocabulary and <b>control</b> of spelling/writing forms	Occasionally mistakes in grammar and vocabulary usage, but overall <b>understandable</b> content and purpose; some control of spelling/writing forms	<b>Difficult to understand</b> due to multiple grammar mistakes and multiple misuses of vocabulary and incorrect spelling/writing forms
Presentation to Judges	Communication is <b>completely comprehensible</b> ; Presentation is thorough and engaging; Responses to judges' questions display <b>clear control of content</b>	Communication is <b>mostly comprehensible</b> ; Presentation is adequate; Responses to judges' questions display some control of content	Communication is <b>often incomprehensible</b> ; Presentation is inadequate; Responses to judges' questions display inadequate control of content

Judges will determine whether the **research project** has real learning value for the student in the event of a tie.

If teachers have any questions about the research project, please visit [www.memphis.edu/fair/](http://www.memphis.edu/fair/) or contact [flfair@memphis.edu](mailto:flfair@memphis.edu).