

Notes to the Future

By:
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Fluorescence:

This exhibit was well-liked by all the young kids and the parents as well. The effects of the different objects under the black light truly caused all sorts of entertainment for each spectator. It was an enjoyable experiment because of all the kids and adults who flocked to our station.

Daytime for the younger audiences:

It is very important to have an abundance of pens and writing utensils for the kids to color with. After explaining the importance of sunscreen and UV rays, as well as the laundry detergent, we let the kids pick different colored pieces of paper and pens to draw with. The kids really enjoyed watching the glowing detergent and the “yucky” (as many said) color of the clear sunscreen as it appeared yellowish-brown under the black light.

For additional entertainment, we brought in an invisible pen that does not show up under regular light but is visible under the black light. It is very important, however, to watch the kids with the pens because many had a wonderful time drawing on themselves. With all the kids coming to the exhibit, one exhibitor should keep track of all the pens and watch the kids to make sure they do not color all over their skin.

Nighttime for the parents:

Every parent who approached the table was much more interested in hearing us talk so make sure to have the sunscreen and laundry detergent explanations ready. The parents and adults thought that the laundry detergent was the coolest thing at the exhibit and really enjoyed the explanations. You will not need the magic pinwheel trick as much as the other tricks. If the pinwheel was bigger it might be more impressive – also the lines must be extremely straight or else the effect of “white light” and “opposite turning wheels” will not work.

Some parents are a little shy when it comes to walking up the exhibit – they cannot be lured by the pretty lights and colored pens/paper so it is important to call them over and ask them if they would like to learn about fluorescence. Most will be happy to come over after you have acknowledged them.

Set up:

Make sure to have one large table to yourselves at the set up day because the bricks should be at the back of the table holding the lights, and all the paper/pens and bags of water, sunscreen and laundry detergent must be in front.