



WASL - SCIENCE

The Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) in Science has three categories of questions and answers (also referred to as scenarios), they are: **inquiry, systems and application** (design). **Inquiry** is the asking of questions and setting up reproducible tests, measuring changes and reporting the results using data collected. We usually think of these as experiments. **Application** is designing a solution to a stated problem using observation and research in order to generate ideas for the design. We usually think of this as solving a particular problem. **Systems** is the study of scientific concepts such as the water cycle, interdependence of ecosystems, the food web, transfers of matter and energy, etc. Student's think of this as a report and teachers refer to it as curriculum content.

When exploring project ideas with your child; think on these three levels. If she wants to know how long it takes for mold to grow on cheese left in the refrigerator that would be an **inquiry** entry. If he wants to increase the amount of butterflies that come to his backyard, that would be an **application** project. If she wants to create a model of the human eye or share her collection of rocks, this would be a **systems** entry. We have included a T-Chart of the steps involved for the Inquiry and Application process. This T chart gives the specific, step by step methods that required on the WASL scenarios.

For a more in depth description and understanding of the **Essential Academic Learning Requirements (ELARS)** and **WASL** testing, go to the OSPI (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction) website at:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/curriculumInstruct/science/ealrs.aspx>