

Unforgettable / Middle Level

Da Vinci

(120-20369) Glenelg Country School / The Shadows, Ellicott City

Recipient: Entire team

For: An extremely elegantly designed and carefully crafted solution.

Text: The Shadows impressed our Appraiser team with their elegantly designed and carefully crafted solution! Demonstrating their knowledge, experience, and skill, the team designed a unique solution that is truly deserving of a DaVinci Award. Their level of craftsmanship was particularly striking! What a pleasure it was to get to watch this team work together! Our Appraiser team would be thrilled if we had the chance to meet "Derek" and his bendy-back buddy again in the future.

Unforgettable / Elementary Level

Renaissance

(120-68774) Calvert County Public Schools / Magical Stowaways, Huntingtown, MD

Recipient: Entire team

For: Team used mechanical methods to educate our appraising team about the inner workings of the brain and its memories.

Text: Summary,

This team fused clever mechanical engineering with bold tech, creating a glowing 3D-printed brain and a whole crowd of rubber-band-powered spectators whose clapping hands stole the show. Magnets became their secret stage magic, sliding objects under a "mystery table" to reveal surprises without a single direct touch. And instead of a normal book, they unveiled a GIANT tome—practically the size of its carrier—that opened with dramatic flair for some truly "light reading."

Real magic tricks, sharp comedy, and clear, well-researched brain science kept everyone laughing, learning, and fully engaged. Their creativity, precision, and showmanship didn't just meet the challenge—they elevated it, dazzling the room and leaving an unforgettable impression.

Original

Using aspects of rudimentary mechanical engineering along with high tech applications, such as 3D printing, this team created a realistic model of the human brain. They designed the brain artistically, inputted the information for 3D printing, and enhanced the resulting structure with lights to show where the brain activity was occurring during the performance.

This team used commonly found items to create a full audience, complete with actuating clapping hands that truly enhanced the recollection of a memory. With simple rubberbands, levers, and linkages, this team created visually accurate and three-dimensional spectators that appeared inside of the memory depicter.

Magnets! They became this team's secret weapon! They used magnets creatively and appropriately to move items under a magic table and reveal hidden treasures in a top hat. By not taking the easy route of just putting things on a table and pulling something out of a hat, they used magnets to decrease team interaction with the structure and achieve the same goals in a theatrical and entertaining way.

This team could have used a regular run-of-the-mill book to convey the library information and they would have easily completed their desired goal. Instead, they created a GIANT book (as large as the kid carrying it), which opened for some "light reading", as the team member called it.

The comedic aspect and magic tricks sealed the deal for our appraising team. They made us laugh while educating us on the brain, memory, and their mechanical prowess. This team actually used real magic tricks and comedy to keep us on our toes and draw us into their performance and help the audience better understand the inner workings of the brain. It was very evident that this team did some SERIOUS research on the human brain and went the extra mile to show us what they learned.

This team's extra efforts, successful recreations and accurate incorporation into their performance enhanced the appraisers' understanding of and engagement with this teams' solution.

Becoming Super / Middle Level

Da Vinci

(120-47724) The Tome School / Tome Heroes, North East

Recipient: Entire team

For: Imaginative staging, shadows, and seamless scene changes created an engaging performance blending science and storytelling.

Text: From the moment the performance began, the production captivated the audience with its imaginative storytelling and theatrical creativity. Through inventive staging and dynamic visual choices, the TEAM MEMBERS transformed complex scientific ideas into a vivid and engaging experience. The production used shadows and lighting effects with great creativity and imaginative design to clearly portray electricity and other scientific elements for the audience. A particularly unique aspect of the performance was its ability to tell two stories at once, allowing the audience to experience both the narrative and the science behind it. The special effects helped bring complex ideas to life, while quick and seamless scene changes kept the pacing moving smoothly and maintained the audience's attention. The actors also explained the science behind elements such as the pulley system and IV in a way that was easy to understand and naturally integrated into the performance. Overall, the production blended creativity, imagination, and strong storytelling to deliver an impressive and entertaining experience.

Above and Beyond / Elementary Level

Renaissance

(120-02624) Calvert County Public Schools / Nuclear Bananas, North Beach

Recipient: Entire team

For: In recognition of this team's novel use of materials to ensure a stronger solution in their instant challenge.

Text: This team showed wonderful creativity in how their unconventional use in combining some of the available materials resulted in a stronger solution. Their imagination led them to success in their instant challenge.

Unfortunately, we can't explain exactly how clever their solution is because this is instant challenge and we made a promise not to tell!

Spirit of Discovery & Imagination

(120-70644) CCPS / Mt. Hope DI Big Brains, La Plata

Recipient: Entire team

For: In recognition of the team's universal cooperation, sharing, turn-taking modeling superior spirit of teamwork and sportsmanship.

Text: This team demonstrated superior teamwork and sportsmanship in their instant challenge by giving each team member turns and supporting one another throughout the activity. The appraisers found that by watching each other so naturally supportive was incredibly moving, a true example of spirit-lifting teamwork.

Above and Beyond / Middle Level

Da Vinci

(120-92877) Father Andrew White School / DI Legendz, Mechanicsville

Recipient: Entire team

For: Team chose a strong and relatable message of making wise choices in their presentation.

Text: When the world is your oyster, it can be hard to decide on an idea for your performance. Many teams land in the whimsy of fantasy worlds. The DI Legendz chose to base their skit in a real-life situation on resisting peer pressure and evaluating choices. Using humor and consequences, they portrayed real world choices faced by all audience members. The appraisal team felt their story exemplified the DaVinci award. The team took risk in presenting real challenges and creativity to interweave humor in their solution.

Give and Take / Elementary Level

Da Vinci

(120-22920) Calvert County Public Schools / Emerald City, Sunderland Elementary

Recipient: Entire team

For: Applied challenge elements in an unexpected and creative approach to their solution.

Text: The team came in and used ordinary materials as never seen before and was able to meet the requirements of the challenge effortlessly and with extreme efficiency. The entire appraisal team was taken aback and awed with how this the younger ELEMENTARY team solved the challenge.

As this was an IC we can't talk about the specifics of what they did but it was astounding.