

# Find a Science Research Topic with Ease:

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## A DRIPBL Guide to Launching Your Research Journey

At DRIPBL, we believe every student has the potential to contribute meaningfully to the world through research and innovation—no matter their background or location. Whether you're joining one of our innovation camps or pursuing a long-term science fair project, the first step is discovering the *right* topic for you.

Here's how to get started:

### 1. Start with Problems That Matter to You

Science is about solving problems. Begin by asking:

- What challenges do I notice in my school, community, or country?
- Are there global issues I care about—like clean water, public health, climate, or education?
- What news stories make me pause and wonder why something isn't working better?

At DRIPBL, many of our students start with real-world issues they've seen firsthand—from water contamination in rural Kenya to digital equity gaps in Arizona classrooms.

### 2. Think Across Disciplines

You don't have to limit yourself to biology or chemistry. The world's most pressing problems often require interdisciplinary thinking.

Try combining fields like:

- **Engineering + Public Health** → Design a low-cost air purifier for urban slums.
- **AI + Agriculture** → Predict drought risk using satellite data.
- **Psychology + Education** → Study the effect of gamified learning on memory.

If it sparks your curiosity, it's worth exploring.

### 3. Leverage the DRIPBL Innovation Lens

Our DRIPBL framework encourages youth to identify problems using five key lenses:

- **DREAM:** What could this be if you reimagined it without limits?
- **Research:** What don't we understand yet?
- **Innovation:** Is there a new way to do this?
- **Problem-solving:** What's broken and fixable?
- **Bold Ideas:** What if we rethought this entirely?

Use these lenses as filters to evaluate your ideas and spark inspiration.

### 4. Connect with Your Environment

Look around. Sometimes your best idea is in your backyard. Ask:

- Is there a local crop disease affecting farmers?
- Are students in your school struggling with mental health?
- Is your city dealing with waste management issues?

Interview local teachers, farmers, doctors, business owners—or simply observe. Research often begins with listening.

### 5. Use Global and Local Data

Browse datasets or reports from:

- **UN Sustainable Development Goals**
- **World Bank open data**
- **National or state science councils**

- **School and district-level health or academic data**

DRIPBL students have used everything from NASA's climate datasets to community surveys to frame impactful questions.

## **6. Check What's Been Done (and What Hasn't)**

Do a quick literature review:

- Use platforms like **Google Scholar**, **PubMed**, or **ResearchGate**.
- Check past winning projects on DRIPBL, ISEF, or regional fairs.
- Search science news sources (e.g., Science Daily, Nature Briefing).

This helps you avoid duplication and find gaps in current research.

## **7. Brainstorm with a Mentor or Peer**

DRIPBL connects you with mentors who've walked the path of discovery. Share 3–5 potential topics and ask:

- Which idea has the most potential for impact?
- What topic best matches my skills and passions?
- What has access to mentors, tools, or data?

Peer feedback matters too—start conversations in your cohort Slack or classroom forum.

## **8. Test It with the "DRIPBL 5"**

Ask yourself:

1. **Do I care about this deeply?**

2. **Can I find reliable data or people to talk to?**
3. **Is this new or meaningful?**
4. **Do I have (or can I learn) the tools to study this?**
5. **Can this help someone else if solved?**

If the answer is yes to most—go for it.

## 9. Stay Flexible and Curious

You might pivot. That's okay. DRIPBL celebrates iteration. What starts as “a project on water filtration” could evolve into “a low-cost sensor to detect groundwater arsenic.”

Let your curiosity guide you.

## 10. Ready to Dive In?

Join a **DRIPBL Innovation Cohort**, attend our **online research bootcamps**, or sign up for a **1:1 mentorship match** to bring your idea to life.

DRIPBL isn't just about projects. It's about creating bold problem-solvers for the future.

## Still Stuck?

Start with these questions:

- What's one thing in your life that *could* be better?
- Who do you want to help?
- What do you wonder about every day?

Start there. We'll help you build from it.