

# 2026 - 27 CHALLENGE PREVIEWS



**FEELING WILD**  
EARLY LEARNING

**Our Rising Stars for Early Learners Challenge offers simple experiences with the creative process, and it gives young kids (preschool through 2nd grade) a place to work together and make new friends.**

Bats and dolphins use echolocation to find their way. Dogs use their noses. Cats use their whiskers. Animals have amazing ways of using their senses to explore the world around them. In this season's Early Learning Challenge, your team will learn how animals use their senses and create a fun story about animals who find a mysterious object. How will they explore it, and what will they discover when they work together?

For the 2026 - 27 Rising Stars teams will get to:

- Present a play about animals who find a mysterious object in their environment.
- Show how at least 2 animals use their senses to explore the mysterious object.
- Design and build a set that shows the environment where the animals live.
- Design and create a model of the mysterious object to include in your play.



**GAME CHANGERS**  
SERVICE LEARNING

**Our Service Learning Challenge is designed to engage students in public service that addresses real-life community issues.**

Video games are full of quests, obstacles, and creative solutions—and now, your team gets to bring that world to life! In this season's Service Learning Challenge, you'll design and carry out a project that addresses a real community need and share what you accomplished through a story set in a video game world. Collect your resources, avoid enemies, and strive toward your goals, all while making your world a better place!

Teams that choose the 2026 - 27 Service Learning Challenge will get to:

- Identify, design, carry out, and evaluate a project that addresses a need in a real community.
- Create and present a live theatrical Presentation that tells a story about at least one character who is attempting to achieve an objective within a video game world.
- Include a game resource and a desperate situation in the Presentation.
- Integrate information about the Project into the Presentation.
- Design and build a game resource tracker.
- Create and present two Team Choice Elements that show off the team's interests, skills, areas of strength, and talents



**GET SORTED**  
TECHNICAL

**The Technical Challenge prompts students to complete tasks by using engineering, research, strategic planning, and related skills.**

Adventures are great when everything goes according to plan. But what happens when something—or someone—ends up in the wrong place? In this season's Technical Challenge, your team will create a sorting system that can get things where they're supposed to be! You'll also present a story about a character who arrives in the wrong place. How will you sort the situation out?

Teams that choose the 2026 - 27 Technical Challenge will get to:

- Design and build a sorting system that can move team-provided items into groups.
- Create and present a story about at least one character who arrives in the wrong place.
- Include an influential character.
- Design and create an arrival effect.
- Integrate the items, the sorting system, and the sorting process into the Presentation.
- Create and present two Team Choice Elements that show off the team's interests, skills, areas of strength, and talents.



**UNDER INVESTIGATION**  
ENGINEERING

**Our Engineering Challenge asks students to explore and apply engineering skills and tools to design and build solutions to specific applications.**

Every great mystery starts with something puzzling, bizarre, or seemingly impossible. In this season's Engineering Challenge, your team will create a weight measurement system that can determine the weight of an object as accurately as possible and incorporate it into a story about a detailed investigation. What clues will your team uncover as the investigation unfolds, and what mysteries are waiting to be solved?

Teams that choose the 2026-27 Engineering Challenge will get to:

- Create and present a story about a detailed investigation of an unusual occurrence.
- Include a freeze that shows at least one character continuing to interact with elements of a scene while the rest of the action has stopped.
- Design and build a freestanding weight measurement system that will be used to determine the weight of randomly selected mystery weights.
- Integrate the weight measurement system, the mystery weights, and the weight measurement system testing into the Presentation.
- Create and present two Team Choice Elements that show off the team's interests, skills, areas of strength, and talents.

# 2026 - 27 CHALLENGE PREVIEWS



**LAB LEGENDS**  
SCIENTIFIC

**Our Scientific Challenge blends the curiosity of scientific research with the creative expression of performance art.**

Science is filled with competitive rivals who push each other to greatness. The stakes are high in this season's Scientific Challenge as 2 rivals are racing toward the same goal. Be sure to move the story along with a live-action montage. Who are these rivals? What motivates them? And how will they use applied science to reach their goal?

Teams that choose the 2026 - 27 Scientific Challenge will get to:

- Create and present a story about 2 rivals who are each attempting to achieve the same goal.
- Research different types of applied science and integrate your research into the Presentation.
- Design and create 2 different demonstrations of applied science.
- Create and present a live-action montage.
- Create and present two Team Choice Elements that show off the team's interests, skills, areas of strength, and talents



**ACT NATURAL**  
FINE ARTS

**Our Fine Arts Challenge helps students develop acting and creative skills through artistic media, theater arts, scriptwriting, and prop design.**

Move over, Aesop! In this season's Fine Arts Challenge, your team will create your own fable featuring non-human characters and an important lesson. You'll use natural materials to create at least one element of your Presentation. Leave your audience in awe as you design interactive scenery and an animated prop that brings your fable to life! What lessons will your team teach?

Teams that choose the 2026 -27 Fine Arts Challenge will get to:

- Present a team-created fable.
- Include an exaggerated character.
- Use natural materials to create and/or enhance at least one physical element of your Presentation.
- Design and create interactive scenery and an animated prop.
- Create and present two Team Choice Elements that show off the team's interests, skills, areas of strength, and talents.



**JUST DUET**  
IMPROVISATIONAL

**Our Improvisational Challenge is all about research, spontaneity, and storytelling. Teams receive topics and quickly produce skits.**

Two of a kind, partners in crime—great things come in twos all the time! In this season's Improvisational Challenge, your team will step into the shoes of a Famous Duo and show what happens when they find themselves in a ridiculous situation. With only a tool and background music to guide you, you'll improvise your way through a two-act story full of surprises, teamwork, and quick thinking!

Teams that choose the 2026 - 27 Improv Challenge will get to:

- Create an improvisational skit in 2 acts that tells a story about a famous duo.
- Act 1 must show how the members of the famous duo get into a randomly selected ridiculous situation.
- Act 2 must show how the members of the famous duo use a randomly selected tool to attempt to resolve the ridiculous situation.
- Incorporate background music into each act.



**INSTANT CHALLENGE**

**All teams will have the opportunity to solve an Instant Challenge. These challenges require teams to engage in quick, creative and critical thinking.**

In a world with growing cultural connections, increased levels and types of communication, and a new need for real-time teamwork and problem-solving, the ability to solve problems quickly is becoming increasingly critical.

Each team will be asked to solve an Instant Challenge for their DI tournament. The team must think on their feet by applying appropriate skills to produce a solution in a short period of time.

Instant Challenges are performance-based, task-based, or a combination of the two. Although each Instant Challenge has different requirements, all Instant Challenges reward teams for their teamwork. Instant Challenges are kept confidential until it is time for teams to solve them.

