

## **Science Fair Journal Guide**

Name

Academy of Science and Technology

Special Topics in Science

Teacher

Due Date

### **Science Fair Journal Guide**

One of the most fundamental pieces of conducting scientific research is documentation, and one of the easiest ways to do this is a journal. However, up until this point you have likely either never kept a scientific journal or kept a scientific journal with little care for the formatting of it. In scientific research, lab notebooks are often kept in a uniform format. This formatting includes a bound notebook, not one that has a spiral ring. Examples of notebooks that are often used in science fairs include basic composition notebooks. On the front of your notebook, you should have the title or something related to your project, it should also contain some type of dating system. However, it must not include your name, school, or any personal information that could be used to identify you. At a fair, if you have personally identifiable information on anything you will be forced to cover it or remove it from the display. The next couple pages should contain your title page and multiple pages of table of contents as you will likely fill your notebook. Each right page should have a page number in the bottom right, the back of the page should only be used for miscellaneous things, such as calculations and possibly pictures.

At the back of the notebook should be the annotated bibliography including all resources that were consulted in the paper. The annotated bib in the back of the notebook does not have to be in alphabetical order like other research documents. The annotated bibliography will be covered in more detail in a different guide.

In terms of each entry, each entry should have a title that relates to the information discussed with a clear purpose. It should also have a clear date. Multiple dates can fit under the same entry in a notebook, however, there must be some connection between the dated entries. For example, your preliminary designs and final design testing results should not fit under the same entry. Additionally, some other things to note while recording information in a journal

include chemicals, devices, formulas, results, and procedures that are actively used by the researcher. Including a picture with an entry can increase the impact that it will have on viewers and make it easier for viewers to envision your work. These pictures should have a short description if your journal entry does not already include them and should have a citation if the picture was taken from an outside source. Each journal entry can be typed or handwritten, however, if your journal entry is handwritten, it must be done in ink, preferably, blue or black ink for the majority of your text. If the journal entries are typed, then the text should be black, times new roman, 12 pt. Font as following the APA guidelines and the entries must be printed and glued or taped into the notebook.

Most importantly, display your notebook at the fair. Judges prefer to see that your work was through and tedious. A lab notebook full of valuable entries demonstrates the process that you went through to get to the fair. If your notebook has stains or other minor imperfections that are completely fine, once again, this can show your dedication to completing your project. However, if the notebook is stained or damaged to the point where the judges may have difficulty envisioning your work and may instead mistake you as disorganized, it may be a good idea to either start over and copy old journal entries or create an additional lab notebook. You can have multiple lab notebooks, and it is encouraged if you need it, however, make sure that each entry does demonstrate a clear purpose.

If you wish to see an example of an average to above average, typed freshman year journal, see the link below. You should strive to somewhat meet this guideline, if not surpass it as there are some mistakes and the annotated bibliography is not included.

**Journal Example:**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zO7VPsvHq9kKhG0oAgmHY2jZzHIWmlOA/view?usp=sharing>

**Plan of intent/schedule that was included in journal:**

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1jm-CKKVZt\\_ygcCdUpqk7NAhpdoMzATr/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=100725799973682099401&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1jm-CKKVZt_ygcCdUpqk7NAhpdoMzATr/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=100725799973682099401&rtpof=true&sd=true)