



Lemelson Young Inventors Challenge

Inventor's Notebook

An Inventor's Notebook is "an official record of the process of your invention...[It] is an ongoing record of all the events, actions, experiments, and observations during the entire development of the invention."
(*Steven Caney's Invention Book*)

Smart inventors keep a notebook, log or journal nearby to record all their ideas, thoughts, experiments and activities. The notebook serves many purposes: it keeps all notes available in one place; it helps in planning an invention; and, it **DOCUMENTS** your invention ideas should you need evidence to prove you are the owner and creator of the invention or idea, also known as your **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**. Right away, get in the habit of writing everything in your notebook, no matter how insignificant it might seem. You never know when that piece of information will come in handy.

Neatness is not the priority - Creativity is messy!

Suggestions to follow:

1. Date and initial your notes every time you work on your ideas at the time they are made and have them witnessed at least once a week. Show where you were at the time you had the thought. Write in ink and do not erase. Leave no empty spaces. Use a bound notebook.
2. Describe all your ideas, tests and results in great detail; describe how you got them. Also, record all changes and note the date. Begin your journal with all your ideas and the results of a survey.
3. Write about the problems you found and how you solved them. Include the results of each test
4. Include sketches and diagrams of your work whenever possible. Explain what your invention does and how your invention works. List cost and describe all materials used.
5. Include photos of all you're inventions-in-progress. They're excellent proof of what you have invented.
6. Have another person sign and date your log entries as a witness to prove the work and ideas are yours.
7. Explain why your idea is new and original (an invention) or that it is an improvement on an already existing invention (an innovation). List places you have checked to be sure your idea is new.

Your Inventor's Notebook will be a very important part of your project. **Notebooks** usually provide the best information about the invention and how it works; they illustrate the quality of research performed; and show the amount of time and effort that went into the invention. When you enter notes in your, try to be as complete as possible, write neatly and make the language clear so that others will understand your work. Poor grammar and spelling reflect on your Invention so keep that in mind when writing in your notebook.

**Your notebook can be the difference between
a good invention and
an Award - Winning one!**

Make notes while they're fresh in your mind!