Bibliography

Key Info

- Make a list to keep track of ALL the books, magazines, and websites you read as you follow your background research plan (http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_background_research_plan.shtml). Later this list of sources will become your **bibliography**.

- Most teachers want you to have at least three written sources of information.

- Write down, photocopy, or print the following information for each source you find. You can use the Science Buddies Bibliography Worksheet (http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_bibliography_worksheet.pdf) to help you.

Collect this information for each printed source:	Collect this information for each Web Site:
- author name - title of the publication (and the title of the article if it's a magazine or encyclopedia) - date of publication - the place of publication of a book - the publishing company of a book - the volume number of a magazine or printed encyclopedia - the page number(s)	- author and editor names (if available) - title of the page (if available) - the company or organization who posted the webpage - the Web address for the page (called a URL) - the last date you looked at the page

- The bibliographic information for different types of resources are located in different places, so you may need to do some detective work to get all of the information for your bibliography. Try looking in these places:

  - the title page of a book, encyclopedia or dictionary
  - the heading of an article
  - the front, second, or editorial page of the newspaper
  - the contents page of a journal or magazine
  - the header (at the top) or footer (at the bottom) of a Web site
  - the *About* or the *Contact* page of a Web site

- When it is time to turn in your Bibliography, type all of your sources into a list. Use the examples in MLA Format Examples (http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_mla_format_examples.shtml) or APA Format Examples (http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_apa_format_examples.shtml) as a template to insure that each source is formatted correctly.

- List the sources in alphabetical order using the author's last name. If a source has more than one author, alphabetize using the first one. If an author is unknown, alphabetize that source using the title instead.

Overview

A bibliography is a listing of the books, magazines, and Internet sources that you use in designing, carrying out, and understanding your science fair project. But, you develop a bibliography only after first preparing a background research plan (http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_background_research_plan.shtml) — a road map of the research questions you need to answer. Before you compose your bibliography, you will need to develop your background research plan.

With your background research plan in hand, you will find sources of information that will help you with your science fair project. As you find this information it will be important for you to write down where the sources are from. You can use the Bibliography Worksheet (http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_bibliography_worksheet.pdf) to help you, just print out a few copies and take them with you to the library. As you find a source, write in all of the necessary information. This way, when you are typing your bibliography you won't need to go back to the library and find any missing information. The more information you write down about your source, the easier it will be for you to find if you want to read it again.

When you are writing your report, you will use the sources in your bibliography to remind you of different facts and background information you used for your science fair project. Each time you use some information from a source, you will need to cite the source that it came from. To cite a source, simply put the author's name and the date of the publication in parentheses (Author, date) in your text. If the person reading your report wants to find the information and read more about it, they can look up the reference in your bibliography for more detail about the source. That is why each source you use must be listed in a detailed bibliography with enough information for someone to go and find it by themselves.

Your bibliography should include a minimum of three written sources of information about your topic from books, encyclopedias, and periodicals. You may have additional information from the Web if appropriate.

Examples of Bibliography Formats

There are standards for documenting sources of information in research papers. Even though different journals may use a slightly different format for the bibliography, they all contain the same basic information. The most basic information that each reference should have is the author's name, the title, the date, and the source.

Different types of sources have different formatting in the bibliography. In American schools, the two most commonly used guidelines for this formatting are published by the MLA (Modern Language Association) and the APA (American Psychological Association).

The MLA guidelines call for the bibliography to be called Works Cited. Science Buddies has summarized some of the most common MLA formats for your use: MLA Format Examples (http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_mla_format_examples.shtml).

The APA guidelines call for the bibliography to be called the Reference List. Science Buddies has summarized some of the most common APA formats for your use: APA Format Examples (http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_apa_format_examples.shtml).

Your teacher will probably tell you which set of guidelines to use.

On the Science Buddies website we use the following guidelines:

- APA format for online sources
- MLA format for all other sources
- APA (author, date, page) format for citations in our articles

Getting Started

Download and print the Science Buddies Bibliography Worksheet (http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_bibliography_worksheet.pdf). Keep several copies with you and fill in the information as you do your research. When you are finished, type the information from the worksheet into a formatted bibliography using the examples listed above.

Sample Bibliographies

Sample Bibliography: MLA Works Cited Format (http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_mla_works_cited_examples.shtml)

Sample Bibliography: APA Reference List Format (http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_apa_reference_list_examples.shtml)

Bibliography Checklist

What Makes a Good Bibliography?	For a Good Bibliography, You Should Answer "Yes" to Every Question
Have you included at least 3 sources of written information on your subject? (If you include Web pages, they should be in addition to the written sources.)	Yes / No
Have you included complete information to identify each of your sources (author's name, the title, the date, and where it was published)?	Yes / No
Have you used the proper format for each of your sources? Most teachers prefer the MLA or APA formats.	Yes / No
Is your Bibliography in alphabetical order, by author's last name?	Yes / No
Do you have sources of information to answer all of your research questions?	Yes / No

You can find this page online at: http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_bibliography.shtml