

Science Notebooks: why & how we use them in Mrs. McCabe's class

Purpose: You will be participating in scientific investigations in this class often, almost daily. The idea is for you to collect your data from these activities in a notebook, much like real scientists do, so you can look back and reflect on what you've learned as we progress through the year.

Goals: We will be assessing your notebooks throughout the year for content, to make sure you are learning what you are supposed to. But we will also be assessing your notebook for improvement in the way you think about science. Some of the skills you will be using, and improving on over time, are:

Observing	Recording data	Cause and effect
Comparing	Analyzing data	Questioning
Ordering	Drawing	Summarizing
Categorizing	Reflecting	Graphing
Hypothesizing	Procedural writing	

WHY do we use Science Notebooks?

● **Your Science Notebook Is a Thinking Tool:** One of the most important things you will realize is that your Science Notebook is a tool for putting together your own learning or understanding. Meaning, that instead of me telling you what you should know, you will discover much of it on your own with the help of what you write in your Science Notebook about the activities we do in class.

● **Your Science Notebook Enhances your Writing Skills:** Another essential part of your Science Notebook is it is a place for you to use various forms of writing—writing procedures, writing narrative descriptions, labeling, asking good questions, explaining what you've learned, and other styles.

● **Your Science Notebook Promotes Using Collaboration:** Finally, one of the biggest ideas I try to emphasize in class is that science is not done in isolation, or at least, not often done well. That is why we emphasize how to work productively and positively with your classmates and why you will work with your table members so often. Another way this is emphasized is when you use your Science Notebook. In your Notebook, you document your collaboration when you analyze data gathered by your table and come to consensus about what your data means, when your group discusses and then writes down answers to prompts I give you on the overhead, or even when you write together on the whiteboard and then record your group's ideas in your Science Notebook.

HOW do we use Science Notebooks?

- Students are required to bring their Science Notebook to class EVERY DAY.
- You will use a spiral notebook (minimum of 100 pages) each semester.
- Notebooks should be well cared for so they can survive the semester.
- We will periodically have spot-checks in class on days when assignments are due, and sometimes your entire notebook will be collected and graded.
- We will maintain in the back of your notebook a Table of Contents that shows where your work is located. This will come in handy when you need to locate something, like during a test, when you are allowed to use your Science Notebook as a reference. Your Table of Contents must also be kept current.
- Your Science Notebook will be the place where you record all of your notes from investigations. We will use a very flexible format for this called NOTEBOOK FORMAT. Using this info, you will occasionally turn in final drafts of the work in your Science Notebook in a more formal format, called PUBLISHED FORMAT.
- Number the FIRST PAGE # 1. On the back of PAGE # 1, number it as PAGE # 2. So in other words, odd numbers are always on the right side pages, and even numbers will always be on the left.
- Try to purchase a mini stapler and a glue stick of your own; this will allow you to attach papers, handouts, and graded assignments into your notebook immediately, instead of waiting until you get home. Any extras glued or stapled in must fit within the boundaries of the notebook page.

Acknowledgement:

I understand the importance of a Science Notebook in Mrs. McCabe's class and will bring one to class (or ask her for one today before I leave) on Tuesday, September 5, 2006.

Student Name

Date

Parent Name

Date