

This document contains “How to Write a Good Science Fair Report” information, by Mr. John Sullivan. All his coaching notes and the specific layout (title, headings, paragraphs, etc.) are in **BLACK** text.

The word processing instructions for formatting the report are in **RED** text, composed by Mr. Sullivan and Mrs. Barry.

*(Formatting notes: --Entire document should be typed in Times New Roman or similar font, in black ink; no colors.*

*--Except as noted, font size should be 12, and text should be aligned left.*

*--Press Enter key 6-8 times at beginning of document, to make Title appear near center of page, rather than right at top.)*

## **Mr. Sullivan’s Hints and Suggestions for How to Write a Good Science Fair Report for Grade 6**

*(Formatting notes: Title centered, 14-18 pt. typeface, Times New Roman or similar font, **bold** print, not color. Do not underline. Capitalize all words except articles (a, an, the) and prepositions (for, to, in, etc.).)*

*(Do not make title a “catchy, artsy” title – just tell it like it is.)*

*(Formatting notes: All this next information should be in 12 pt., **bold**, and aligned right, near the bottom of the page.)*

**(your name) First I. Last  
(your address) 173 Main Road  
(your city, state, ZIP) Warwick, RI 02886  
St. Kevin School, Warwick, RI  
Grade 6**

*(Formatting notes: Page Break after this line. Insert > Break > Page break. OK.)*

## **Table of Contents**

*(Formatting notes: The Heading “Table of Contents” – centered, 14-18 pt., same size as Title. Can use Format Painter tool to apply Title’s formatting to all other Headings in document, to make sure they are all the same.)*

Introduction	1
Main Paper	2
Conclusion	3
Appendix	4

(Save Table of Contents to do last, because page numbers will change as you work on your paper. Do the Table of Contents as shown: only record the page that the section starts on. The Table of Contents is not a numbered page.)

*(Page Break before Introduction)*

## **Introduction**

*(Formatting notes: From this point on, your paper should be double spaced.*

Select all your text from here to the end of the document, and press **Ctrl+2** keys.

Do **not** try to double-space by pressing the Enter key twice at the end of each line; doing so makes all your lines start with capitals, as though you were writing a poem, and it's very difficult to add or delete words. That works well for the Table of Contents, but not for paragraphs.)

*(Formatting notes: Every paragraph should be indented, like this. The word processing program (Word, WordPerfect, etc.) might indent automatically after you press the Enter key to start a new paragraph. If not, press the Tab key ONCE to indent.)*

Starting with this section, you will need to put page number (beginning of Introduction is page number 1) at center of bottom of page. Easiest to do is to write the numbers by hand with a black pen.

The introduction of your paper should give an overview of your topic and paper. This section of the paper is where you introduce the topic, tell why you picked the topic, and why you think it is interesting or important.

Next you should define your topic and give some basic information about your topic to the reader. Just give the basics on your topic; save the in-depth information for the main part of the paper.

You should end this section of the paper with a few main points that you think people should know about your topic. As you do your research, identify two or three main points about your topic and include them in this section.

This section, and the other parts of the paper, must be written in 12-point font, non-bold, Times New Roman (or similar) font, standard margins and double-spaced – just as this sample is.

The best way to explain what the introduction should include is to give an example. If my topic was the White-tailed deer, I would want to explain why I picked the deer and why I think they are interesting and important in the first paragraph. In the second paragraph, I would give some basic information about deer, like: they are mammals, they have hooves, they live in the Eastern US in forest areas and some other major facts about them. In the final paragraph, you should leave the reader with some of the major points about the deer. For example that White-tailed deer are herbivores who have specialized teeth to eat a plant diet. These deer also group together in winter and like to eat cedar throughout the winter.

This section of the paper will most likely be ½ to 1 ½ pages long. Please record page numbers on the bottom of the pages as shown below. No direct quotes can be used in this section.

*(Page Break before Main Paper)*

## **Main Paper**

The main paper is where you need to organize all your information into a clear paper. Keep paragraphs down to containing one main thought. I suggest organizing your paper starting with broad, basic information and moving to more specific, detailed information.

You will be using your research notes and putting the information into your own words. You may only use three direct quotes in this section. A direct quote is used when you think that the sentence is so important that it must remain in an exact quote to have full meaning. You do not need to use the three direct quotes in your paper if you do not want to. In a scientific paper, direct quotes are done in a very easy way. All you do is write the sentence (without quotation marks”) and then put the author’s name or website in parentheses after the sentence. Here’s an example: White-tailed deer have been found to be a major part of the Lyme’s disease transmission, which affects over 1250 Americans annually. (Sullivan, 2003). Or ([www.deerhead.com](http://www.deerhead.com), 1999).

Using the deer example, this is where you would tell the reader all about the deer. Start with basic: name, type of animal, where found, how long they live, what they eat, and other habits/info about them. Next, move to more detailed information: current status (endangered?), how they are monitored/cared for, any concerns/problems with deer, hunting of deer, diseases of deer and other information about the deer.

With a wide variety of topics, it is hard to give specifics, but there are some general questions that you may try to answer in this part of your paper: What is it? How

does it work? What is it made out of? How is it formed? What does it do? How did it come to be? What is the history of it? How does it change? How is it used?

This section of the paper should be well written and range from 3 to 6 pages. Make sure it is 12-point non-bold type. Do a spell check.

## Conclusion

The conclusion is a final summary of your project. You want to summarize those couple of major points from your paper that you highlighted in the Introduction. You should not put anything new in the conclusion of the paper. You are repeating yourself, but that is the point. Even though you are repeating yourself, **do not use the same sentences from your Main Paper!** You must state the information in a different way. You may not use any direct quotes in this section.

With the deer example, you would give a final reminder that the deer is a land mammal that lives in Eastern forests. It is a major hunted species that the states monitor. The teeth of the deer help it in its plant diet.

This section should be  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pages long and it should be in the same 12-point type non-bold, Times New Roman font, standard margins and **double spaced**. (HINT: If you do not know what that means, look at this paper! All of this is exactly that, so hold up your paper next to this and compare! If it does not match, change it. See me for help if you do not know how to change it. Any and all errors made in writing this paper (spelling, grammar, wrong type) will result in points taken off the paper grade. Make sure to type out your paper several days in advance to avoid problems.

*(Page Break before Appendix)*

## **Appendix**

This section is optional and it is where you would include any pictures, images, charts, graphics, or anything else that may be useful with your paper. You must indicate where you got the item(s) from. Make sure the Appendix is neat (straight lines, centered, etc.). You do not need to type these items. Number the pages and include in your Table of Contents.

*(Page Break before References)*

## **References**

Examples:

(Article: magazine, journal, encyclopedia, web site)

Sullivan, J.P. (2002). Good Science Fair Info. "Time Magazine" 257: 127-135

(Book)

Sullivan, J.P. 2002. The Book of Science Fair Reports. Sullivan Press, Coventry, RI.