



The 2012 MSMR Student Competition – “Get Me The News”

Student Packet – Contest Explanation, Rules & Details

In the 2012 competition, you may submit an **Essay**, a **Poster** or a **Webpage**. You may submit only one entry, so select carefully.

The Challenge

- For the **2012 MSMR Student Competition**, you are a reporter for a science website for teenagers.
- Your editor wants you to find a recent biomedical research breakthrough and report on it. In order to do that, you have to learn about this new research and present it in a way that shows you really understand what it is and what it means. Your presentation should also be appealing to your audience – teen science students.
- Your editor will accept your work as an Essay, a Poster or a completed Webpage, but she is a little cranky and she has established requirements for each different kind of submission. So make sure you don't get fired: follow the editor's rules.
- As a budding journalist, you know that there are many ways to get info about new research discoveries, including science websites, science news blogs, research journals, newspapers, magazines, news releases from research organizations, and your teachers, parents and friends. *To get you started, some specific suggestions are included on pages 8 and 9, below.*

Goal

- Your goal is to show that you understand the topic and can present it with originality, creativity, clarity and economy. Judging will be based on the quality of the information you provide, how well your submission exemplifies the actual biomedical research, and the power of your work. Create your entry so that your editor and your audience *want to* read or view it.

Prizes (in each Level)

Students

- 1st Place \$500
- 2nd Place \$250
- 3rd Place \$100
- HM – Certificate of Merit

Classroom Grants to Teachers

- 1st Place \$100
- 2nd Place \$50
- 3rd Place \$25

Level 1 = 7th & 8th grades; Level 2 = 9th – 12th grades

Rules

Deadline

- All Posters, Essays, Webpages and Entry Forms for the 2012 Competition must be submitted between January 16, 2012 and April 20, 2012, inclusive.

Eligible Participants

- **New England** students in grades 7 - 8 (Level 1) or grades 9 - 12 (Level 2). Public, parochial, private/independent and home-schooled students are eligible.

Submission

- **There should be nothing within the Essay, Poster or Webpage itself that identifies you or your school. Put *that* information in your Entry Form.**
- Submit by e-mail only. *Please follow these instructions precisely.*
 - **Essay or Poster:** (i) Attach your Essay (PDF only) or Poster (PDF only) and your Entry Form and send your e-mail to 2012competition@MSMR.org. (ii) In the Subject line write your Level and category (e.g., "Level 1 - Poster"). (iii) In the body of the e-mail list your name, your telephone number, e-mail address, home address, Entry title, and school name. (iv) Note: When you create your PDF, make sure your security settings allow copying and printing. (v) Do not use on-line or sample PDF-creating software that puts an icon, logo or other symbol anywhere on your work.
 - **Webpage:** (i) Attach your Entry Form and send your e-mail to 2012competition@MSMR.org. (ii) In the Subject line write your Level and category (e.g., "Level 2 - Webpage"). (iii) In the body of the e-mail list your name, telephone number, e-mail address, home address, Entry title, and school name. (iv) Put the link to your webpage in your e-mail.
- *Read and follow the specific category details on pages 4 through 7 below*

The Entry Form

- The Entry Form is essential and it must be completed fully. You may have to do some research (e.g., local newspaper contact name and information). Assure that the Entry Form is attached to the same e-mail as your Entry. The Entry Form may be submitted as a text file (e.g., MSWord) or a PDF.

Notification of Winners and Awarding of Prizes

- Winning students and their teachers will be notified by June 7, 2012. We prefer to notify by e-mail, so accurate e-mail addresses for students and teachers are very helpful. As a backup, please be sure that the listed telephone can take a voice message.
- Winning students, their parents and their teacher are invited to the MSMR Annual Meeting & Dinner where they will receive their awards. The Annual Meeting is in June and details will be sent to winning entrants.

A Model For Your Work – **The What A Year!** student website

- See the next page for information about our **What A Year!** student science website (www.WhatAYear.org)



The What A Year! Student Science Website

Every month, **What A Year!** (www.WhatAYear.org) presents a story of a recent biomedical research breakthrough. Each story answers three questions:

1. What was the discovery?
2. How was it done and who did it?
3. Why is it important? (E.g., Does it give us a better understanding of living systems? Does it point to a new cure for a disease or a new way to treat an injury or condition?)

The 2012 Challenge

- **For this competition, you are a science website reporter.** Learn about a recent breakthrough that interests you and then create your Essay, Poster or Webpage to answer the three main questions. Your submission must concisely and compellingly convey the information.

Some Points to Remember

- Really understand your topic. If you don't "get" it, you cannot present it well. Every teacher will tell you that the proof of really knowing something is your ability to explain it clearly to another person.
- Posters, Essays and Webpages must be your original work. Use your own thoughts and explanations. Make notes as you learn about your topic, and then construct your Entry using your own words and examples. As with every research project, include references for your sources of information. A bibliography *is* required in this competition.
- Don't use obscure language; clearly explain uncommon technical terms. Imagine yourself presenting to your classmates, not to a group of scientists.
- Judges will be interested in content clarity and impact, so avoid complicated fonts, vague graphics, odd special effects and merely decorative clip art. Graphics, whether in a Poster, or illustrating a point in an Essay, or as part of a Webpage, should help to powerfully explain its content.
- Spelling and grammar count!

Specific requirements

Essay The Essay should be between 1,000 and 1,500 words, not counting the bibliography. Use a readable non-script font, 10- to 12-point size and double spacing. Make sure that the Heading appears on the first page and number the pages. Do not put your name on any page.

More →



Check spelling, punctuation and grammar. Do not rely solely on spell-check software: some typos make other words that would be missed by a spell-checker. Also, computer grammar-checkers can steer you wrong, so be sure to read over your work several times and get another human to review it, too.

The following elements are required in your Essay: these *titles* are for guidance only ... they need not be included in your Essay.

- **HEADING** – The title of the Essay and the name(s) and affiliation(s) of the researcher(s). Your heading probably won't be the same as the one published by scientists in a technical journal; normally such titles use highly scientific words, and are not clear to the general public. If you found the news on a website, in a press release or in an article in a non-scientific publication, you will see that the title is more readily understandable than the published scientific one. Invent one like that for your submission.
- **OVERVIEW** – Describe the research advance and its significance. Sometimes the researcher will have included that; a journalist or press officer writing about the discovery *always* will: in fact, it may be the lead item in the story.
- **CORE** – Describe the researchers' hypothesis, methods and results. This will probably be the largest part of the Essay. Give your editor enough detail so that she can envision how the research was carried out; was the hypothesis confirmed? Choose your details wisely: there is no need to identify, for example, the brand of lab equipment used, the dosing ranges for animal models, or other facts that a scientist would want, but that are not needed for the general reader's understanding of the science.
- **CONCLUSION** – Summarize the potential health benefits of the research (maybe years from now) to people and animals; or, explain the new level of understanding this gives us into how living bodies operate, and what that means for the future.
- **BIBLIOGRAPHY*** – List the references you used, such as magazines and newspapers, websites, interviews, dictionaries, encyclopedias. Each school has a preferred bibliographic standard style: use the one your school endorses. For websites, give the website name as well as the page URL.

END

Poster On the next page is a schematic of a Poster. This is a sample only. It shows the Required Elements and *maximum* dimensions. Your Poster can be vertical or horizontal. Yours can be smaller or in a different height-to-width ratio. On page 6 there are more details about the Required Elements.

More →



**SCHEMATIC
(SAMPLE LAYOUT)**

Remember that this is a sample layout only ... it shows the required elements in **BLUE**. Your Poster should reflect your own design style.

The next page (6) has more details on the Required Elements.

We can accept only PDF files of your Poster. Please do not send other forms of graphics file. Note: The program you use to create your Poster may limit the actual Poster size. Plan carefully in advance.

36 inches (91.4 cm) maximum

HEADING
Title, author(s)/researcher(s), institutional affiliation(s)

PHOTO,
ILLUSTRATION
or
OTHER
GRAPHIC

OVERVIEW
Abstract describing the research advance

CORE

- Hypothesis
- Methods
- Results

TABLE,
GRAPH
or
CHART

IMPORTANCE
Summary of the importance of the work and its potential benefits or consequences

BIBLIOGRAPHY
List of references you used. Follow your school's standard bibliographic style

22 inches (55.9 cm) maximum

Page 5
MSMR • 73 Princeton Street • Suite 311, North Chelmsford, MA 01863
Tel. 978-251-1556 and on the Internet at www.MSMR.org and www.WhatAYear.org



The following Elements are required on your Poster: these *titles* are for guidance only ... they need not be included on your Poster. The use of photos, charts, tables, and other graphic tools that clarify the research is strongly encouraged.

Check spelling, punctuation and grammar. Do not rely solely on spell-check software: some typos make other words that would be missed by a spell-checker. Also, computer grammar-checkers can steer you wrong, so be sure to read over your work several times and get another human to review it, too.

- **HEADING** – The title of the Poster and the name(s) and affiliation(s) of the researcher(s). Your heading probably won't be the same as the one published by the scientists in a technical journal; normally such titles use highly scientific words, and not very clear to the general public. If you found the news on a website, in a press release or in an article in a non-scientific publication, you will see that the title is more readily understandable than the published scientific one. Invent one like that for your Poster.
- **OVERVIEW** – Describe the nature of the research advance and its significance. Sometimes the researcher will have included that; a journalist or press officer writing about the discovery *always* will: in fact, it may be the lead item in the story.
- **CORE** – Describe the authors' hypothesis, methods and results. This will probably be the largest part of the Poster Give your editor enough detail so that she can envision how the research was carried out; was the hypothesis confirmed? Choose your details wisely: there is no need to identify, for example, the brand of lab equipment used, the dosing ranges for animal models, or other facts that a scientist would want, but that are not needed for the general viewer's understanding of the science.
- **CONCLUSION** – Summarize the potential health benefits of the research (maybe years from now) to people and animals; or, explain the new level of understanding this gives us into how living bodies operate, and what that means for the future.
- **BIBLIOGRAPHY*** – List the references you used, such as magazines and newspapers, websites, interviews, dictionaries, encyclopedias. Each school has a preferred bibliographic standard style: use the one your school endorses. For websites, give the website name as well as the page URL.

🔗

Webpage On the next page are required elements of the Webpage as well as technical requirements and restrictions. Make sure that your Webpage includes your Bibliography*.

More →



You have wide latitude in creating your Webpage, but it must include the elements listed below (although you do not have to specifically label each section of the Webpage unless you want to). Remember, you are making a Webpage in order to take advantage of the power of webpages (e.g., mouse-overs, pop-ups, spiffy graphics, etc.), but you cannot simply have a page that is a series of links to other websites. Text on your site may not exceed 1,500 words and should probably be a lot less.

Check spelling, punctuation and grammar. Do not rely solely on spell-check software: some typos make other words that would be missed by a spell-checker. Also, computer grammar-checkers can steer you wrong, so be sure to read over your work several times and get another human to review it, too.

- **HEADER** – The title of the Webpage and the name(s) and affiliation(s) of the researcher(s). Your heading probably won't be the same as the one published by the scientists in a technical journal; normally such titles use highly scientific words, and are not clear to the general public. If you found the news on a website, in a press release or in an article in a non-scientific publication, you will see that the title is more readily understandable than the published scientific one. Invent one like that for your submission.
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- **BIBLIOGRAPHY*** – List the references you used, such as magazines and newspapers, websites, interviews, dictionaries, encyclopedias. Each school has a preferred bibliographic standard style: use the one your school endorses. For websites, give the website name as well as the page URL.
- **TEAMS** – Teams of up to two (2) students may submit Webpages. Each submitter must complete an individual Entry Form, check the "Team" box, and list the other team member's name.



Useful Links for Researching

What A Year! - monthly research stories – www.WhatAYear.org

Learn what **What A Year!** is all about, but don't use any of our stories for your own entry.

Organizations whose members conduct or sponsor research

These organizations' members include colleges, universities, hospitals, biotechnology firms, medical device firms, and pharmaceutical firms. Not every research facility is a member, so if you have a particular place in mind, go to its website and look in its News section. Note: If you have interest in a particular disease or condition (e.g., diabetes, colitis, cancer, heart disease, autism, malaria, depression, Alzheimer's, macular degeneration) find associations or organizations that focus on that condition and see what research they are sponsoring or reporting.

Connecticut United for Research Excellence (CURE) – www.curenet.org

New England Biotech Association – www.newenglandbiotech.org

Massachusetts Biotechnology Council – www.massbio.org

Massachusetts Medical Device Industry Council – www.MassMEDIC.com

New England Biotech Association – www.newenglandbiotech.org

Print and on-line publications

This list excludes subscription publications. Many libraries, especially college and university libraries, subscribe to scientific publications in the life sciences.

BioMed Central – www.biomedcentral.com

Over 100 open-access journals.

Bioresearch Online – www.bioresearchonline.com

Current Biotechnology News Shorts – www.bio-link.org/newslist.htm

DrugResearcher.com – www.drugresearcher.com

Breaking news in drug discovery research.

Frontiers in Biosciences – www.bioscience.org

A journal and virtual library.

Genetic Engineer News – www.genengnews.com

NanoBiotech News – www.nanobiotechnews.com

PubMed – www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/

PubMed is the National Library of Medicine's search service: it provides access to over 15 million citations.

RNAi.net – www.rnai.net/news/default.aspx

Science Daily: Science News and Articles – www.sciencedaily.com

Science Functional Genomics Website – www.sciencegenomics.org



More Resources

Bioscan Directory –

<http://www.bioworld.com/servlet/com.accumedia.web.Dispatcher?next=bioScan>

Profiles of more than 2,000 biotechnology companies worldwide, including historical data, key personnel, pipelines, products on the market, and more.

CRISP – <http://crisp.cit.nih.gov/>

(Computer Retrieval and Information on Scientific Projects) A biomedical database system containing information on research projects and programs supported by the National Institutes of Health and other agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services.

EurekaAlert! – www.eurekaalert.org

Science headlines from the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

The New York Times and *The Boston Globe* both report on science in their print and on-line editions. *The Boston Globe* pays particular attention to news releases and announcements from New England companies and institutions.

* A Word About Wikipedia

We love Wikipedia and have become absorbed for hours there, following link after link. But please remember that Wikipedia should not be your primary reference. Get your information from first-hand sources, and always double-check what you read in any on-line reference site, especially those that allow anyone to edit an article.

In fact, here is a note from the Wikipedia website itself about its own reliability: "Wikipedia cannot guarantee the validity of the information found here. The content of any given article may recently have been changed, vandalized or altered by someone whose opinion does not correspond with the state of knowledge in the relevant fields. Note that most other encyclopedias and reference works also have similar disclaimers." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:General_disclaimer.

