LESSON 9

Publish & Disseminate

Choose a safe way to share your work. Publishing is optional.

About 95 min | Reading 30 min | Slides 60 min | Quiz 5 min

Learning objective. By the end you will be able to choose a safe, suitable way to share your research and spot warning signs of predatory publishers.

Key points

- Publishing is optional: a class talk, symposium, poster or competition all count.
- Check any journal with Think. Check. Submit. before you send it anything.
- Ask a teacher to review your work, and protect participants' privacy.

Learn

Publishing in a journal is optional. Sharing your work is what counts. Presenting in class, at a Research Nest symposium, at a science fair or competition, on a school poster wall or on a blog are all real ways to share research, and they help you get feedback. Some students also post their work for free in an open repository such as Zenodo, which gives it a permanent link, or add a Creative Commons licence so people know how they may reuse it.

Be careful with predatory journals and pay-to-publish 'high school journals.' They may promise fast acceptance for a fee, hide their peer-review process, or claim indexing they don't have. Before submitting anywhere, go through the Think. Check. Submit. checklist. Check whether the journal clearly explains its fees, editors, peer review and licensing, and whether it's listed in trusted directories such as DOAJ.

Before you share anything, ask a teacher or mentor to review it. If your study involved people, protect their privacy: never include names, photos or details that could identify a participant unless you have their permission.

Example

> After her survey project on school lunch waste, Leila got an email from a 'youth research journal' offering publication in 48 hours for $150. She went through the Think. Check. Submit. checklist and couldn't find any named editors or information about peer review, so she skipped it. Instead she presented at her club's symposium and wrote a blog post with her advisor, removing every student's name and grade from the data tables first.

Across disciplines

Scientists often share early versions of their work as preprints or post their datasets in repositories. Humanities scholars more often share through essays, conference papers, public talks and exhibitions.

Watch

Peer Review in 3 Minutes, NC State University Libraries (3 min): youtube.com/watch?v=rOCQZ7QnoN0

> **Takeaway.** Share your research in whatever way fits you, check any publisher carefully, and protect the people in your study.

Try it: Plan your sharing route

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. List three places you could share your project, such as a class, the club symposium, a competition, a blog or a repository.

2. If you’re considering a journal, run it through the Think. Check. Submit. checklist and note any red flags.

3. Go through your paper and remove or anonymise anything that could identify a participant.

4. Send your plan to a teacher or mentor and ask them to review it before you share anything.

Lesson 9 quiz

Circle one answer for each question. Pass mark: 4 of 5.

1. What makes an abstract "informative" rather than only "descriptive"?

A. It uses headings such as Background, Methods, Results and Conclusion
B. It reports what was found, not just what the paper covers
C. It cites the key sources behind the study so readers can check them
D. It is longer than 250 words so nothing important is left out

2. Noor's first figure was a 3-D pie chart of mean concentration in her three study spaces. Why was a bar chart a better choice?

A. The three means are separate values to compare, not parts of one whole
B. Pie charts are not allowed in APA style, so the figure would be rejected
C. A bar chart lets her claim more strongly that noise causes lower concentration
D. Bar charts can show every individual rating from all 84 students at once

3. A student studying local economics wants readers to see the exact average price, sample size and range for five shops. What should she use?

A. A pie chart, because it shows each shop clearly in one picture
B. A bar chart and a table showing the same numbers, to be safe
C. A table, because readers need to see the exact values for each shop
D. No table or figure, because a sentence is always clearer

4. A student studying medieval history sees a journal website with a DOAJ logo. What is the best way to check that claim?

A. Search for the journal's title or ISSN on DOAJ's own website
B. Trust it, because a website cannot legally display a fake logo
C. Email the journal and ask them to confirm they are listed
D. Check whether the logo image is high quality and up to date

5. An engineering team has a 4-week school project and mainly wants feedback and practice explaining their prototype. Which route fits best?

A. Submit to a journal, because only publication makes research count
B. Present at the club symposium or give a talk to the class
C. Upload it to the school repository with no supervisor check
D. Wait a year and enter a major national competition instead

Further reading

- **Think. Check. Submit.: Journals**, Think. Check. Submit.. A free checklist for deciding whether a journal can be trusted.
  https://thinkchecksubmit.org/journals/

- **Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing**, DOAJ, with COPE, OASPA and WAME. The standards trustworthy journals meet on fees, peer review, editors and ethics.
  https://doaj.org/apply/transparency/
- **About CC Licenses**, Creative Commons. Explains the licences you can use to control how others reuse your work.
  https://creativecommons.org/cc-licenses/
- **About Zenodo**, Zenodo, operated by CERN. A free open repository that gives uploads a permanent, citable DOI link.
  https://about.zenodo.org/