Keep Records

• Use an Inventors’ Notebook to keep good records of your inventing process.
• Include a title, purpose, description, drawings, ramifications (consequences or new things that could grow out of your invention), novel (new) features, prior art (similar patents you found in searching), and advantages of your invention.
• Keep entries in chronological order (first date to last date) and number the pages if they aren’t already numbered. When creating a new page, write the date at the bottom of the page. It’s even better to keep pages in order in a bound notebook.

Test Your Invention

• Build and test your invention to prove it really works and write in your Inventors’ Notebook what happens at each step.
• If you can’t actually build a sample of your invention in time for the contest, include drawings and a description explaining how the invention will work. Label the different parts of your invention on the drawings.

Be Prepared

• Pack everything you need for the competition the night before so you can make sure nothing is missing. The judges can’t give you credit for something they can’t see.
• Have someone read your written materials to check for misspelled words and correct any misspellings.
• The judges enjoy looking at your inventions, so have fun explaining what you invented.
• Visit the USPTO kids’ pages at http://www.uspto.gov/kids/ to see fun activities and find useful information about patents and trademarks.

Draw your invention here!