

Creating an Online Survey

GK-12 Science Fair Support

February 3, 2005

So you've decided to do a human survey for your science fair project. Great idea! But now the hard part is ahead of you. You have to create many pages of surveys, hand them out, collect them, analyze the data AND figure out how to present it. That's a lot of work, right? WRONG!! Below you'll find instructions on how you can create and administer your survey online. It is easy, convenient for you and your survey respondents, and also gives you the power of a computer to help you analyze and present your results. So read on, and in a few minutes you'll have your personal survey ready to go!

What you'll need to do this project:

- Before beginning this project you should already have decided on your topic of investigation for your survey. You should already have designed the questions you will ask on the survey and tested them on a small set of respondents to make sure they are clear and give you useful data.
- In order to do this project you will need a connection to the Internet, a working email address, and a web browser. If you do not have an email address, you can get one for free at <http://www.yahoo.com> or <http://www.hotmail.com>.

1 Step 1: Choose Your Survey Service Provider

In this document we'll walk you through the steps of setting up a survey using the free service provided by <http://www.votations.com>. However, there are many online services that provide free or relatively inexpensive survey support. You may wish to explore several of them and choose the one that best suits your needs. They are all relatively easy to use and have extensive instructions.

We suggest the [votations.com](http://www.votations.com) free survey option. If you choose this option, open your web browser and navigate to:

- <http://www.votations.com/services/surveyserv.asp>

On this page you can review the features of this service provider to see if they will meet your requirements. If you are not sure, there is no harm in continuing the process. You can stop at any time.

Other alternatives are:

- <http://www.createsurvey.com/>
- <http://www.opinionpower.com/startSurvey.html>

2 Step 2: Create Your Account

Next you need to create an account for yourself. Go to the following link and fill out the form there:

- <http://www.votations.com/asp/members/newaccount.asp>

We suggest selecting the FREE option for your survey. In addition, you may want to opt out of the news and updates.

3 Step 3: Begin setting up your survey

On the next screen you'll see a message telling you that no surveys are available. This only means that you have not yet created a survey. Click on the link to create a new survey. You will be taken to a survey set up page.

The first section asks you for website information. The service assumes that you have a separate website where you'll be linking your survey, but it isn't actually necessary. Type a title for your survey in the Website Name box (which can be the same as the title in the next section) and leave the Website URL box as is (just containing <http://>).

The next section asks you to title your survey. This title will be visible to respondents, so choose something informative and professional. In this section you will also choose how many questions will be displayed per page. In the free accounts there is no option to turn off the check that each respondent is unique. In certain ways this is an advantage because it prevents fraudulent double voting. However, it will prevent you from having many people enter their answers from the same computer. If many of your respondents must use the same computer to complete their surveys, I suggest selecting another service provider.

The next section asks whether you would like to collect your respondents email addresses. In

general, people do not like to give their email addresses except when necessary. Thus, for the convenience and privacy of your respondents I suggest leaving the box unchecked on this option.

In the final section you can choose your survey builder mode. The default is Quick Mode. Change this to the other option: Full Mode.

Finally, hit the “go to step 2” button.

4 Step 4: Enter Your Questions

The next screen you’ll see is a little bit cryptic. It should show a place to select a design a theme and a button that says “Insert”. Click the “Insert” button to begin adding in your questions. This will take you to a page where you can add in a question. Type in the question text and select the format you want for the answers. Once you have entered the question and answer format, press the button that says “add question & enter answers”. This will take you to a screen where you can add in the available answers for your question. Add the answers and then press the “Add the new question” button.

You will be brought back to the main screen of your survey. At this point you can see the design of your survey and try the different design options to get one that you like.

Hit the insert button to add another question and repeat the process described above for entering a new question. Keep going until you have entered all of your questions. The limit for a free account is 15 questions.

5 Step 5: Save Your Survey and Record a Link

When you are done entering questions (or any time along the way—it may be a good idea to save early in the process), click the “save your survey” link. This will take you to a new screen with various HTML code options. These are all of the different ways to include your survey on a website. We’re going to distribute the survey by email, so scroll all the way down the bottom of the page to where it gives you the “Text Link” option.

In the text box you will see something like the following:

```
<a href="http://www.votations.com/asp/survey.asp?pollid=139785">This is a Test</a>
```

From this, copy just the part between the quotes. This is the URL or web address of your survey. If you cut and paste this into a browser you will see your survey as respondents will see it. This is the link that you will give to people in order for them to respond to your survey. You can send this link out by email or you can print it on flyers and hand it out to people.

6 Step 6: Editing Your Survey and Viewing Your Results

You will notice that after saving you have a large number of options running down the right hand side of the screen. These links will let you edit your survey and/or see the results of your survey so far. Here are some of the options you'll want to explore:

- Under the section “Content Management” you can choose “Questions/answers editor” to add, delete, edit or reorder the questions on your survey.
- Under the section “Results Management” you have several options for viewing the results of your survey so far. This will be extremely helpful to you in doing evaluation.
- Under the section “Design/layout” you can change the look of your survey. You may want some knowledge of HTML before you change things in this section.
- Under the section “Global Seetings” you'll see an option for “Vote Statistics”. This will give you an idea of when people have logged in to answer your survey and how many people have answered.
- Under the section “Cut and Past Generators” [sic], you can get back to the screen where you can find the link for your survey. Remember to scroll down the bottom of the page and follow the instructions above for getting the link.

7 Step 7: Administer Your Survey

You are ready now to advertise your survey. You may do this by sending the link to your survey in an email to people you know or by printing the link up on a flyer and handing it out to potential respondents. The free service has a limit of 100 respondents per month for your survey. If this is not enough, you may either want to upgrade your service to allow more respondents or seek another service provider that allows more responses. Many of the service providers limit the responses for their free services.

Good luck!