

THE CASE OF RARE EARTH ELEMENTS



Student Journal Guidelines

Entry 1: Rare Earth Elements in Our Lives

Review the main “Student Introduction,” the “History and Future of Rare Earth Elements,” and the “Science of Rare Earth Elements.” Think about the many different ways that rare earth elements are incorporated into the products we use every day.

For one day, between the time you leave this classroom until you return, record every item you touch that contains rare earths. List the items in your journal. (Record each item only once; you don’t have to count each time you pick up the same cell phone.)

Of the items that you have listed, which three would be the most difficult to do without? Which three could you give up?

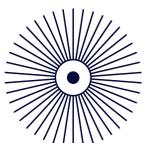
Review the list again. What items could easily be replaced with something that doesn’t use rare earth elements?

Entry 2: Investigating Rare Earth Elements

Choose an object that you use every day that contains rare earths, and investigate what role specific rare earth elements play in the production or functionality of that object. Include a list of the rare earth elements and their unique properties. Is it possible to remove rare earths from the process or object and still have it function? What features would it lose if the rare earths were removed? How might that change the overall design or functionality of the end product?

Entry 3: History and Associations

Over the course of this project you will learn more about rare earth elements and the many ways in which they shape our lives. What do you already know about rare earth elements and the controversies associated with them? What comes to mind when you think about rare earth elements?



As you research the many invisible ways you interact with rare earth elements on a daily basis and learn more about the recent global rare earth conflicts, write a paragraph or two describing something surprising or interesting that you learned.

Entry 4: Introducing Your Role

Familiarize yourself with your given role, and consider how that role fits into the larger game. Write a paragraph that outlines your role's interests, knowledge, and point of view. Create a professional description you might use to introduce yourself to a colleague. Choose a prop or article of clothing that would help identify your given role.

Write a paragraph that explains how your role fits into your interest group. How do the goals of your role fit with the goals and recommendations proposed by your group?

Entry 5: Understanding Your Interest Group

In your journal, answer the following question: how have key events, discoveries, or trends in the history of rare earth elements shaped the interests, goals, and points of view held by your role and your group?

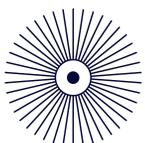
Entry 6: Article Review

Select an article from your interest group's section of the "References" page of the website. Read it, and then write a review. Be sure to include the following: a summary of the article, a description of how the article relates to your role and your interest group, and how you will use the information from the article to support your arguments during negotiations.

Entry 7: Opposition Research

To win the game, you need to understand not only your position but also that of the other groups. Identify one key argument that each of the other groups will make during negotiations, and plan how you would counter that argument. Use information from *The Case of Rare Earth Elements* website as well as your readings.

Consider areas where you might agree with the other groups. Which groups' goals most closely align with yours? How can you use that to your benefit during negotiations?



Entry 8: The Summit

From your role's point of view, reflect on how you did during the Summit. In what areas was your group strongest? Where was it weakest? Which groups made the best arguments?

For Interest Groups: Based on the feedback of the Stewards, which groups do you think they found the most convincing? What do you think they are looking for in a Sustainability Seal?

For Stewards: Which groups did you find the most convincing and why?

Entry 9: The Intersession

Get to know the members of your new working group. With which members do you share the most common ground? With whom do you differ the most in terms of goals and perspectives? What points of discussion promise to be the most difficult to compromise on? What is one specific proposal you can make for reaching compromise on a difficult point?

Entry 10: Debate

How does the proposal you are presenting to the Stewardship Council in this round reflect the goals and interests of your role? If your proposal is accepted by the Stewards, explain how your role "wins."

In what areas were you unable to achieve the goals of your role? What did you find most challenging about the compromise process?

Entry 11: Final Reflection

Respond to the following questions, not as your role but as yourself:

What did you learn over the course of this project?

How did your role influence the way you thought about the issues?

Has your view or understanding of rare earth elements changed?



Do you think world governments need to make policy changes related to rare earth elements?

Do you think there are things you can do as an individual or a class to help address concerns related to rare earth elements?

What should your school or community do to address concerns related to rare earth elements, and what can you do to encourage them to take the steps you suggest?

