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STEM Education Resources

Every Flight Counts

An Introduction to Logbooks

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Define what a remote pilot logbook is.
2. Explain why pilots maintain logbooks.
3. Identify key information recorded in a logbook.
4. Complete a sample logbook entry accurately.

Introduction Activity

Ask students:

"Why do you think professional pilots keep records of every flight they make?"

Looking for: Verify flight hours, develop a portfolio of work, document maintenance issues track experience, improve skills, meet legal requirements

Important Vocabulary to Understand

Term	Definition
UAS (Unmanned Aircraft System)	The drone itself and all equipment and software needed to operate it
UAV (Unmanned Aircraft Vehicle)	The drone itself
Remote Pilot	A person who controls the drone from the ground
Visual Observer (VO)	A person who helps the pilot maintain visual contact with the drone
Mission	The purpose of the flight
Flight Time	The amount of time the drone is operated during a flight/mission

Locations	Specific details regarding where the flight took place
Aircraft ID	The name or identification number of the drone used
Incident	An unexpected event that affects the flight
Maintenance	Inspection, repair or overall upkeep of the drone
Remarks/Notes	Additional information about the flight conditions or observations

Lecture

Write on the board or display overhead. Have students take notes.

What Is a logbook?

A **logbook** is more than just a record of flights. It is a professional tool that documents important information about each flight and serves as a history of a pilot's experience. Logbooks can be physical or digital.

Remote pilots use logbooks to:

- Track flight hours and experience
- Record locations and purposes of flights
- Document equipment used
- Note maintenance issues or unusual events
- Demonstrate experience to employers or clients
- Improve flight planning and safety practices

Every flight/mission should be logged. Your logbook also becomes a part of your professional portfolio. Make sure you provide examples of aerial photos, maps or any other relevant data that demonstrates your skills that correspond to each mission logged in your logbook.

Let's Look at an Example

You have been asked by the high school yearbook team to take aerial photographs of the newly renovated stadium on October 14, 2026 before school starts at 8:30am.

The team specifically asked for photos of the new artwork on the press box as well as the new digital scoreboard. The morning is clear and sunny, with a slight breeze.

You used the school's DJI Mini 4 Pro that is labeled NHS1. The flight takes longer than the 15 minutes you had planned because you noticed the field has unique markings that seem to be added for the senior night game and you wanted to take extra photos.

What would your logbook look like after this flight?

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Remote Pilot Flight Log

Entry	Date	Aircraft ID	Location	Mission/Purpose	Flight Time	Weather	Incidents	Notes
1	10/14/26 8:30am	NHS1	North High Football Stadium	Yearbook photos- scoreboard and press box highlighted	22 minutes	Sunny, light breeze	None	45 total photos taken, making sure to include scoreboard and press box Artwork on field was highlighted in photos as well
2								

Let's Create Our Own

Provide students with a logbook or print out for them to use for the remainder of the class to record flights.

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