What is an idea log?

- A complete record of all your thinking on a project.
- A place to store your ideas as you have them.
- It’s not a presentation medium for communication - it’s just for you.

Why keep a logbook?

- To record your ideas so you won’t forget them.
- To help clarify ideas floating around in your head.
- To keep your thoughts all in one place.
- For legal reasons.
- Because prototypes don’t tell the whole story.
- Because it counts for 10 percent of your grade.

What to do in an idea log?

- Explore alternatives at every step
  - Constraints and options
  - Materials
  - Energy forms
  - Techniques and mechanisms
  - Spirit and message
- Ask ”what if…”
  - what if you broke the rules
  - what if you then found a way to get there within the rules
- Brainstorm ideas
  - defer judgment - let the ideas flow, record them for later evaluation
  - go for quantity - give yourself lots of choices, make room for new ideas
– leapfrog - build on. transform/twist/translate/modify your own ideas

• List: questions, attributes, options, alternatives, limitations, challenges
• Analogize: what is this problem, material, situation like? sketch it
• Plan: your time, your materials, your construction - diagram and organize
• Concretize: thinking and get something built - sketch and note changes

How to keep an idea log?

• Give it some class - respect your ideas.
• Be visual on purpose; be verbal when it makes sense.
• Use color to clarify, highlight, focus.
• Annotate, comment, editorialize, review your own ideas.
• Use arrows & bubbles to show direction and connectedness.
• Use a form which lets you carry it around.
• Carry it with you wherever you go - you never know when you’ll have an idea you don’t want to forget.
• If you have an idea and you don’t have your logbook with you, just write your thought down on whatever’s handy and staple it into your book later.