

The Structure of a Lab Report
Final Lab Report Due: May 22, 2009
Adapted from *BioZone Student Workbook*, 2009

You may submit as many drafts as you'd like up to one week before the Final Lab Report is due.

Overview:

Once you have collected and analyzed your data, you can write your report. When writing your report it is useful to write the methods or results first, followed by the discussion. Although you should do some reading and research, the introduction should be one of the last sections that you write. Writing the other sections first gives you a better understanding of your lab. Each section should be on a separate page, i.e. materials and methods section will begin on a different page and after the introduction.

Sections of your report:

- I. Title Page
 - ❖ The title should provide a clear and concise description of your lab activity (Photosynthesis Lab IS NOT ACCEPTABLE)
 - ❖ Make sure all names are spelled correctly (particularly mine).
 - ❖ Include the name of your class.
 - ❖ The Honor Pledge must be typed and signed.

- II. Introduction
 - ❖ The introduction must be written in narrative form.
 - ❖ You may use first person in your lab report.
 - ❖ The introduction must include the objective of the lab activity and background on the concepts being investigated.
 - ❖ Included in your introduction is possible hypothesis and predictions of outcomes from the experiment.

- III. Materials and Methods
 - ❖ The materials list should be complete – describe species of organisms used and number of organisms used.
 - ❖ The methods or procedures section should contain sufficient detail. *Too little and the lab cannot be repeated. Too much and it gets too confusing.*
 - ❖ Explain how data should be collected.
 - ❖ DO NOT BEGIN YOUR PROCEDURES SECTION WITH – “GATHER YOUR MATERIALS.” WE KNOW THAT.

- IV. Results
 - ❖ A presentation of your results including clearly labeled charts and/or graphs.
 - ❖ Choose the correct type of graph and do not connect the points.
 - ❖ Tables should summarize data collected
 - ❖ Keep any explanations of data brief.
 - ❖ No discussion of results is part of this section.

- V. Discussion
- ❖ In your discussion section, you interpret your results in relation to questions you tried to answer or explain in your lab.
 - ❖ If your results support your hypothesis and predictions your discussion will be brief.
 - ❖ However, if your results do not coincide with your hypothesis and predictions (Are they unexpected? Do the results conflict with your hypothesis?); then you will need to evaluate and explain what may have occurred.
 - ❖ Discussion should refer back to your results to support your hypothesis and predictions.
 - ❖ Include any limitations your lab may have and how to improve the activity.
 - ❖ Your conclusion is made at the end of your discussion.
- VI. Citations page
- ❖ The citations page should follow the Pingry Manual of Style.
 - ❖ A minimum of 3 references may be cited.
 - ❖ Only one internet reference may be used.

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