

Writing a Lab Report

When writing a lab report, write it as if you are presenting material to a general audience. Write it as if you are presenting original research without assuming that the reader understands anything about what you did. Think about how to present the information in a clear and organized manner. I expect these to be typed. Your lab should be divided up into the following sections:

Introduction -

This section should describe to the reader what problem is being solved and have a brief mention of which procedures were used.

Procedure -

This section should contain a detailed description of how the data was collected. It should be written in paragraph form and not be a duplicate of the lab instructions. Write in your own words how you collected data with enough detail included so that someone could repeat your experiment. Don't include phrases like "make two columns on your paper" or "put your data in lab format" or "then type the data into the computer". Just talk about how you set up the experiment and collected data.

Data/Results -

In this section put your data in lab format as described on the sheet "Putting Data in Lab Format". If you used several methods to find the same answer, put a table at the end of this section which compares all the values that you found. Make sure that included graphs or other charts are labeled in such a way that they are easily referred to later.

Discussion -

This is the meat of the lab report. This is where you analyze the data presented in the previous section. Use this section to:

- Point out any unusual data.
- Compare and contrast the answers you found when solving this problem using multiple methods.
- Cite the pros and cons of the methods used for finding the answers.
- Provide a reasoning for what you will state in the next section the "Conclusion".

The length of this section can vary depending on the amount of data and number of procedures you have to analyze. Often this section is a page or more.

Conclusion -

This section should be no more than one or two sentences. It should simply state the final values you determined. No analysis or discussion should be here.