Lab Reports

Lab reports contain information describing data that have been collected in a laboratory experiment using the scientific method.

The report should consist of five distinct sections that reflect the progressive stages of the experiment. The sections of a lab report are: **Introduction, Purpose, Procedures, Results, and Discussion**

Grammar, Writing Style and Sentence Structure

1. Reports are always clearly written.
2. Avoid long run-on sentences and only use technical terminology when necessary to convey a thought.
3. Avoid paragraphs that are too long. Shorter paragraphs provide easier reading, however, the short paragraph should not consist of only one long sentence.
4. Follow correct grammar and punctuation rules.

Typing Requirements for this Report

1. Type reports on standard 8 1/2" X 11" white bond paper.
2. Double spacing is used throughout the paper including the title page, text, tables, and reference page.
3. Paragraphs should be separated by double spacing.
4. Margins should be uniform 1" at the top, bottom, right, and left of each page.
5. With the exception of the title page, number every page of the report including the reference page in the upper right-hand corner.

Cover Sheet Title Page

This is a separate page that only includes the:

1. Title of the report, author, class, instructor, date, and institution
2. All elements of the title page are typed in upper and lower case letters
3. Double space after each line of information and center on the page
4. DO NOT NUMBER THIS PAGE
The Lab Report

1. **Introduction.** The introduction begins on the page after the title page and will be the second page of the report.
   
   A. This section of the report will introduce the experiment and
   B. Provide background information about the topic.
   C. References should be cited in the introductory text.
   D. This section should be several paragraphs in length.

2. **Purpose.** In one or two sentences, state the purpose(s) of the experiment.

3. **Methods and Materials.**
   
   A. In this section, you should "describe your methodology in detail sufficient to permit your experiment to be repeated
   B. The methods and materials section provides information about how the experiment was conducted and what materials were used.
   C. DO NOT list procedures! Instead, they should be written in 3rd. person using complete sentences.
   D. **Reference to the lab manual can be made as to where the procedures can be found in detail.**

4. **Results.** In this section, you summarize your findings, using tables, graphs, and words.
   
   A. Try to give the reader a sense of the data and point out any particularly interesting trends or data points.
   B. The Results section is not the place to discuss why the experiment did or did not work.

5. **Discussion.** Results are interpreted in this section.
   
   A. The discussion section should open with a statement of support or non-support for the hypothesis originally stated in the purpose section
   B. Any errors due to material, equipment, or experimenter malfunction should be placed in this section.

   **References**

   A. References are to be listed on a separate page just as you had a separate page for the title page
   B. The reference page can be singled spaced.
   C. The heading should be centered on the page.
   D. Double space between the reference heading and the reference list.
E. When listing each reference, the first line of the reference should be flush left with the margin and the remainder indented 5 spaces.

The order in which a reference is typed is as follows:

References

Author's last name, first name (or initials). Year of publication. Title of the article or book. Vol., pp#. Publishing company. City of publication.

*references are not required, however, the use of references increase your chances of receiving the full 10 points.