
Mini-Report 1 – How Do Scientists Report Data?

In order for science to progress forward, it is important for scientists to communicate their results to each other. This allows scientists to learn from each other's results, to notice and analyze trends across multiple sets of experimental data, to propose new theories to account for phenomena seen across multiple scientific areas, and to question and verify other scientists' experimental results.

As such, scientists strive to report their results clearly, concisely and broadly to other scientists. To assist in broad distribution of these results, a large number of scientific journals are published every year. Some journals are published monthly or quarterly, while others are published weekly. Some journals have very narrow target audiences, while others target entire disciplines or even cross-disciplinary audiences. While individual journals may have specific formatting requirements, most scientific articles are written in the same general format. The purpose of this assignment is to introduce you to the way that scientific articles are written.

Instructions:

- 1) Download the sample scientific report from the Chemistry Department website.
- 2) Write a short written summary (in paragraph form) of the way in which the scientific report is written. Your summary should be typed, 1–2 pages in length, 12 point font, and double spaced. Your summary should address the following questions (not necessarily in this order):
 - a) There are six sections of the sample report, each of which is clearly identified with a bold title. What is each section called? What is the apparent purpose of each section? How do they differ in purpose? Why might other scientists want the report to be divided into clearly identifiable sections?
 - b) Is the paper written in first–person (“Next, I added 3.21 grams of salt”), second–person (“Next, add 3.21 grams of salt”), or third–person (“Next, 3.21 grams of salt was added”)? Is the paper mostly factual in nature, or does it contain many opinions? In which (if any) labeled sections are the author's opinions included?
- 3) Be sure to include your name on your written report.