

General Rules for Scientific Writing

- **Organize data** so that it is easy to put in specific scientific order
- **Know your audience** so that you know what information to include, and what should be left out
- Write in **complete sentences** and be **clear** and **concise** using **specific** wording. (Flowery prose reflects flowery research)
- **Do not get too technical**, but also **avoid colloquial words**

Article Format

Scientific articles should have adhere to the following format:

- **Title** - should include author's name and researcher(s) contact information.
- **Executive Summary/Introduction** - a brief (100-words or less) overview of the experiment, which should include: objective, methods, results and significance.
- **Materials and Methods** - what your hypothesis is and how you tested your hypothesis. Describe procedures and methods in great enough detail for another researcher to reproduce the experiment.
- **Results**-data findings presented, but not interpreted.
- **Discussion** - researchers discuss and explain their findings and its significance
- **Endnotes/References** - literature citations, previous findings, and other sources used in research or the presentation of data

A helpful resource for what should be included in each section can be found at:

<http://csmres.jmu.edu/geollab/fichter/studresrch/format.html>

Technical Rules

Abbreviations

- Do not abbreviate words except measurement words used with data (ex. 7mm; 15 min.; does not apply to temperature—always presented in F,C,K) Measurement words should be spelled out when used generally, or without data (ex. "length was measured in millimeters.")
- Use **past tense**
- Use **third person**
- Use **active verbs**
- **Paraphrase** where possible to avoid lengthy, unnecessary quotations

The appropriate citation style guide varies depending on the scientific field, although the *Journal of ERW and Mine Action* prefers the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed.

(http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)