

Student Reference Handout

Four-question format for narrative lab reports

The narrative for laboratory reporting lets you tell the story of the by writing an essay that answers these four questions.

What was I looking for?

Describe the research question you were trying to answer or the prediction or hypothesis you were testing.

How did I look for it?

Tell what you did to answer the research question or test a prediction or hypothesis. Include a description of the method and materials you used. Mention safety issues and precautions.

What did I find?

Describe any observations you made, tabulate and discuss any data you collected, and show any calculations you made.

What does this mean?

Formulate a conclusion based on your data and calculations. Discuss the accuracy of your predictions or the support for your hypothesis.

Your report should answer these questions in narrative form, interrupted by data tables and calculations as necessary. Think of the report as the body of a letter you might write to a friend who was not there but will be tested on the material. Let the questions shape the narrative but do not restate the questions within the report.

Remember the report you submit is a final draft and should not contain any writing errors (grammar, spelling, punctuation).

Student Reference Handout

Four-question format for narrative lab reports

The narrative for laboratory reporting lets you tell the story of the by writing an essay that answers these four questions.

What was I looking for?

Describe the research question you were trying to answer or the prediction or hypothesis you were testing.

How did I look for it?

Tell what you did to answer the research question or test a prediction or hypothesis. Include a description of the method and materials you used. Mention safety issues and precautions.

What did I find?

Describe any observations you made, tabulate and discuss any data you collected, and show any calculations you made.

What does this mean?

Formulate a conclusion based on your data and calculations. Discuss the accuracy of your predictions or the support for your hypothesis.

Your report should answer these questions in narrative form, interrupted by data tables and calculations as necessary. Think of the report as the body of a letter you might write to a friend who was not there but will be tested on the material. Let the questions shape the narrative but do not restate the questions within the report.

Remember the report you submit is a final draft and should not contain any writing errors (grammar, spelling, punctuation).