Mackenzie Community School Science Department

Formal Lab Report Format

All formal lab reports will be typed according to the order described below.

HEADING	DESCRIPTION
Abstract	• brief outline (50 – 100 words) of your lab • should summarize each of the sections of your lab in one or two sentences; the reader reviews this section to see if the rest of the paper is relevant to his/her work • although this is the first section of the report, it is the LAST part that you write
Introduction	• all reports begin with an introduction that should include all pertinent background information needed for a reader to understand the lab (ie. definitions of terms, historical background, pertinent scientific laws and theories, chemical equations, mathematical formulas, etc.) • MUST include a concise statement of the problem being investigated • an hypothesis (an educated prediction) will normally be required
Experiment *May* be split into two (2) sections.	Materials/Equipment/Apparatus • optional (depends on teacher's requirements) • a LIST of all the materials used during the lab activity • include a properly labelled diagram if required; use a ruler and pencil; pen may be used for labels Procedure/Method • consists of a brief *summary* of what *was done* during the lab activity • MUST be in *past-passive tense* eg. "The apparatus *was set up* as directed"
Results *May* be split into two (2) or three (3) sections.	Observations • table of quantitative observations, with appropriate headings and units • descriptive observations are in point form, describing what was seen *before*, *during* the activity, and *after* the experiment was completed Calculations • include *sample calculations* showing HOW your results were obtained from your observations • eg. If you collected data for mass and volume, and are required to determine the density, you MUST show how you calculated the density (using proper units and significant digits) Graphs • completely and correctly labelled • MAY be computer-generated
Discussion *May* be split into three (3) sections.	Trends (if any) and/or Interpretations (if required) • suggest patterns or relationships amongst variables in the data • describe what you have learned from this lab activity Questions • completely answer any discussion questions relevant to the lab Sources of Error • DISCUSS the implications or effects of experimental errors present in the activity
References	• properly list any literature cited, if any

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