

# GUIDELINES FOR A SCIENTIFIC REPORT



Begin by choosing a topic that is small enough to cover in five to ten handwritten pages. Some scientific topics are so broad that volumes of books have been written on them. If you can think of only about five related questions to ask about your topic, it is probably small enough to do a good report on. Remember to use open-ended questions and not questions with yes, no, or numerical answers. They should be general enough to generate a page of information. For example: "Are volcanoes big?" is a poor question. A better question would be: "What is the range in size of the world's largest volcanoes?"

Once you have your questions, begin planning how you are going to collect the answers to those questions. Be sure to use at least three different sources to gather your information. Use library videos, electronic data, and interview an expert if you choose. Take notes. Do not copy your sources. Organize all of your information into paragraphs. Be sure to include an introduction and summary. Check your spelling and grammar, and write your final draft in the best handwriting you can. You may also type your report with double spaced lines.

Enhance your report with pictures, photos, examples, a non-working model, charts, graphs, and even a backboard. Make it inviting for your audience to read. You may even want to make a bound book out of your final draft report.

Finally, write a bibliography (a list) of all the sources you used. Include this at the end of your report.