

A report should allow another person to take what has been written and repeat the experiment; the best model to follow is any recipe because cooking is simply carrying out an experiment in which a chemical change occurs and the products are eaten! Have a look at any recipe and you will see a logical flow written in short, simple sentences - just like your report. Pictures and diagrams are optional - they are used to improve the appearance and to make the meaning of the written instructions more clear.

Writing a report needs at least two stages.

The first stage is the initial draft which may be a series of bullet points, with bubbles and arrows moving items around and perhaps with some crossing out.

The second stage is the neat report which may be written either in the active voice (*added the solid, John poured...*) or the passive voice (*the solid was added, the liquid was poured*).

First, copy each heading into your book then follow the guidance

Second, take your draft notes and write a neat version.

Title should be short but informative

Introduction what are you trying to find out?
try to outline the method in one sentence
which variable are you going to change?
which items are likely to remain constant?
what do you expect to happen?
what prior knowledge are you using to justify this prediction?

Equipment needs to be precise so include sizes and volumes

Instructions (these should be important and relevant so you do not need to tell anyone to get the equipment from a cupboard)
each instruction should contain a single action
numbering is useful but not essential (some recipes do and others do not)
use logical time order
eg do not drop an item and then remember to turn on the stopclock
the draft must have each instruction on a new line

Observations the order in which results are reported is not necessarily the same as the order in which you actually did the experiments
(in a film, the order of shooting bears no relation to the final sequence and often the opening titles are added last)
a table is useful for summarising measurements
if you have diagrams, to show shape, or longer descriptions of what you saw, then dividing the whole page into sections may be more useful

Analysis draw a graph if this is a useful way of presenting the information
can you see a pattern in your results?
are any observations very different from the rest?
do the results follow your prediction?

Evaluation can you suggest further experiments?
give reasons why these experiments could be useful

