

## Tips for Good Science Writing

### **Remember your audience.**

Think about who will read your writing:

- What tone will appeal to your audience? Will they like a casual or more serious tone?
- What are they interested in?
- What attitudes are they likely to have toward the topic?
- What do they already know about the topic?
- What questions are they likely to have?

### **Make it clear.**

Science topics can be complicated and difficult to understand, so using clear language is extra important. Do not oversimplify your ideas because they are complex, but explain them thoroughly.

### **Make it interesting.**

Science writing should be exciting. It is concerned with the world everybody lives in! Think carefully about the language you use. Avoid clichés and predictable language, and use good, strong nouns and verbs. Do not include adjectives, adverbs, or small, uninteresting words if you can reword without them and keep the meaning.

### **Support positions with credible evidence.**

People who read science writing want to know why they should believe what you are saying. Providing sound evidence and citing sources correctly is especially important in science writing.

### **Use concrete examples.**

Science can be abstract, which can make reading about it challenging. Concrete examples show pictures and tell stories to your readers, and helps connect your readers to your topic.

### **Design charts and graphs carefully.**

Choose a visual display format carefully to show your data, and limit the data you display to what is necessary to communicate meaning. Make sure all parts of the visual display are labeled, and use color to show relationships. Refrain from visual effects that detract from the meaning.

### **Use scientific jargon carefully.**

Use scientific terms, or *jargon*, accurately. Call objects, materials, and processes by their correct names. Think carefully, however, about how and when you use scientific terms. If you are writing for a general audience, use only the scientific terms that are absolutely necessary and give readers a clear definition.

### **Get feedback.**

Spending a long time on a piece of writing can make you blind to its flaws. Get people to look at it and tell you what they think. With shorter pieces, you can give them a copy and have them read it to you out loud. The writing is yours, so only make changes that seem right to you, but take everyone's feedback seriously. They may have the same concerns your audience may have.

### **Proofread, proofread, proofread!**

The main problem with writing errors is that people focus on the mistake instead of the meaning. Get a family member or friend who is good at proofreading to look over your writing. The time it takes is worth the effort.