

Scientific Content and Communication

Was the purpose of the experiment evident?

Were the scientific concepts and conclusions presented of primary relevance to this lab?

Was the science presented correct?

Was the analysis appropriate and thorough?

Were all necessary experimental details reported?

Did the paper avoid details that were unnecessary to a basic understanding?

Visuals

Were figures and images explained clearly?

Were the figures and images uncluttered and clear?

Did the figures and images clearly connect to and enhance the main text?

Did the "money plot" encapsulate and communicate the primary conclusion(s) of the letter?

Writing Style

Did the writing both express interest in the topic, and encourage the reader to be interested?

Was the explanation concise enough to keep a non-expert's attention?

Was the tone of the writing approachable, without unexplained jargon to confuse the reader?

Was the writing well organized so that the reader can anticipate what is coming?

Did the writing feature proper grammar, punctuation and spelling, and appropriate use of units?

| Excellent | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory |
|---|---|---|
| 45-40 | 39-25 | 24-0 |
| The science was correct, relevant, complete, concise, and thoroughly explained for a non-expert reader | The science was correct, but there were omissions or assumptions of knowledge that hindered understanding for a non-expert reader | The scientific content was incorrect, incomplete, or incoherent to the point of being unhelpful to the reader |
| 35-33 | 32-24 | 23-0 |
| All figures, images, and explanations are well-presented and convey scientific concepts of primary importance | Some poor visuals detract from the writing | Visual presentation requires significantly more thought to interest and inform the reader |
| 20-18 | 17-11 | 10-0 |
| Succinct, clear, interesting writing with virtually perfect grammar, spelling, punctuation, and use of units | Overall well done, with some errors that detract from comprehension and enjoyment | Several problems with writing style that impede the reader's comprehension or enjoyment |

A 1 point bonus will be given if the recipient responds with discussion or questions.

A further 1 point bonus will be given for a meaningful reply to the recipient's response.

The written descriptions in the matrix above represent characteristics typical of the associated point ranges and are intended to serve only as a guide. Letters will often share characteristics from multiple columns.