

Grading Standards for Scientific Writing

an A paper. . .

- clearly establishes the context and purpose for writing
- anticipates and responds to the needs of the audience
- persuasively develops the subject matter
- is organized logically and clearly
- uses carefully focused, emphatic, and concise sentences
- chooses words for their precise meaning
- uses correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation
- follows the conventions of scientific presentation (format, documentation, graphics, and so forth)

a B paper. . .

- has a specific context and purpose, but these may be less clearly defined than in an A paper
- responds appropriately to the audience but may not anticipate their needs
- thoughtfully develops the subject matter, but the evidence may be less persuasive
- is generally organized logically, but the organization may not be readily apparent
- uses generally clear sentences, but they may be wordy or lack focus
- uses words accurately but may have some unnecessary jargon or a few overly general or vague words
- has few problems with grammar, spelling, or punctuation
- generally follows the conventions of scientific presentation

a C paper. . .

- often does not have a clear context for writing; it will generally have a purpose, but the purpose may not be readily apparent
- may have only a vague sense of audience or respond inappropriately for the audience
- is likely to treat the subject matter superficially
- will have some sense of organization, but the organization may be illogical or artificial; transitions are likely to be choppy or weak
- will have generally understandable sentences, but they may be awkward, wordy, or rambling
- may contain vague, inappropriate, or overly general words
- may have several problems with grammar, spelling, and punctuation, but these generally do not prevent understanding
- often does not follow the conventions of scientific presentation

a D paper. . .

- generally lacks a sense of context or purpose

- may show little understanding of the needs of the audience
- may show little understanding of the subject matter or may be incomplete
- is likely to be organized illogically or randomly
- is likely to have many problems with sentence structure and coherence that impede understanding
- is likely to use many vague and imprecise words or much inappropriate jargon
- may have many problems with grammar, spelling, and punctuation or may have a few problems of such severity that the paper is difficult to understand
- may show little awareness of the conventions of scientific presentation

an F paper. . .

- may respond inappropriately to the assignment
- may be very brief and undeveloped or include much irrelevant information
- may show little understanding of sentence structure
- may use words inappropriately
- may have many severe problems with grammar, spelling, and punctuation

For more information, contact the [Writing Across the Curriculum](#) program.