

# Science Research Program

## Writing Your Abstract

*Goal:* Writing your abstract to catch the readers interest.

### *Rules for most abstracts:*

- Always in past tense
  - 250 words maximum
  - Only use “We” or “I” or “Me” or “My” if first person is used in your journal articles
  - “A”, “I” count as words
  - Numbers count as words (examples 3 = one word, 35 = one word)
  - Symbols count as words (examples → = one word - +/- = one word)
  - Punctuation does not count as words
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### *Understanding what an abstract is.*

The thought sequence for writing abstracts is totally different from that of a scientific paper or oral presentation. Knowing how to write a 250-word abstract is one of the most challenging areas of science research. This session will dissect the Five Component parts of abstract writing, separate them, then reassemble into a complete, comprehensive abstract that reviews that student's entire research. (Models and examples of abstract will be provided)

Scientists write journal articles and present their papers and posters at meetings to inform others of their research. “Abstracts” provide the reader in one possibly two good paragraphs WHAT is the problem, WHY it was important, WHAT you did, WHAT you found, WHAT it means and WHAT is next.

The thought sequence is often totally different from that of the paper or oral presentation. Your abstract should provide a full overview in the shortest amount of time.

### *Step 1.*

Analyze each of the following and jot down a few notes on each area

1. Background info:  
*One sentence identifying the problem*
2. Why you did it  
*One sentence identifying the importance.*
3. What you did to address the problem: *2-4 sentence summary of methods explaining how your research addressed both the basic and the more specific problems. Basically, what you did and why.*
4. What you found and what it means  
*3-5 sentences explaining what your results were (past tense) and what they mean (present or future tense), in that order. Be extremely specific and clear.*
5. Future research:  
*1-2 sentences highlighting what the next step is and why.*