

Microscope Experiment – Hints from Previous Quarters (in random order)  
BI-102, Fall '07, Dr. C. S. Tritt

Remember to follow all instructions carefully and double check that you've complied with all requirements.

Use report covers with clear fronts.

Include cover page with title, names, course & date.

Include section headings.

Double space body text (captions may be single spaced). This leaves plenty of room for me to write (it also looks better).

Cite (reference) my handouts as sources. Cite other sources as well (including your textbook and other web and non-web sources).

You may write in first person (I and we) for me. You active voice ("We connected the widget" rather than "The widget was connected"). Remember other professors may require reports be written in third person (always ask).

Write procedures in past tense. Results and conclusions are generally in present perfect tense.

Reports will get longer and more detailed in later courses.

Faculty expectation of grammar and wording will also probably increase.

Number figures and include captions on each figure. Many readers may simply look at your figures and read the captions. Figure numbers make referring to figures easier and more specific ("see Figure 1" versus "see the figure below").

Remember to describe important equipment completely. For example, a Brand X Model A microscope.

Remember to credit the source of all "barrowed" images used in reports.

Unlike in creative writing when you should vary your word choices, in technical reports use consistent wording.

Procedures sections were tend to be weak. Remember, your procedures must include enough details for your work to be reproduced by someone of your skill and knowledge.

Hypothesis and conclusions should be clearly stated and well connected.