

The Effects of Nitrogen, Phosphorous, and Potassium on Plant Growth

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Presented in an introductory course for non-majors at Bucknell University

Layout and Appearance		
Criteria	Positive	Negative
<p>APPEARANCE: Is the poster neatly constructed? Do the text and the figures stand out against the background? Are colors and fonts used consistently? Is the text large and legible from 3–6 feet away?</p> <p>SECTIONS: Does each section begin with a descriptive heading? Is there sufficient space between sections? Do the sections naturally flow from top left to bottom right?</p> <p>BALANCE: Is there a nice balance between text and figures? Is there too much text?</p> <p>PROOFREADING: Is the text free of typos and grammatical errors?</p>	<p>Poster is neatly constructed.</p> <p>Nice use of colored paper for contrast.</p> <p>Each section has a descriptive heading.</p> <p>Good use of space.</p> <p>Layout flows from top left to bottom right (except for Figure 1 and Works Cited).</p> <p>Good balance between text and figures.</p>	<p>Font size of body could be larger.</p> <p>Reduce amount of text by using bullets for the main points.</p> <p>Do not capitalize common nouns like nitrogen, potassium, and phosphorous (in the results section).</p>
Content		
Criteria	Positive	Negative
<p>TITLE: Does the title grab your attention?</p> <p>AUTHORS: Are the authors' names, affiliations, and contact information provided?</p> <p>INTRODUCTION: Were the objectives clearly stated? Do you understand why this study was done? Did you get enough background information to understand the system? Were any abbreviations defined for the general visitor? Were the hypotheses rational?</p> <p>METHODS: Were the methods described clearly and concisely?</p> <p>RESULTS: Were the graphs easy to understand? Were any graphics distracting?</p> <p>CONCLUSIONS: Do the conclusions match the data? Are reasonable ideas put forth to explain the observed patterns? Is there a clear connection between the conclusions and the original objectives?</p>	<p>Objectives are clearly stated in the introduction. Background info is nicely summarized in a table.</p> <p>Methods are clearly described.</p> <p>Results are clearly described, referring to the figures to support each statement.</p> <p>There is a clear connection between the objectives and the conclusions. The conclusions are supported by the data.</p>	<p>Title is descriptive, but does not hint at the results.</p> <p>Center authors' names below the title</p> <p>Use CSE in-text citation format¹ in the introduction.</p> <p>The first and last sentences of the methods are unnecessary.</p> <p>Graph format: delete gridlines and gray background; choose dark colors for lines and symbols (yellow line on white background barely visible).</p> <p>Include captions for the photos. Include a ruler as a scale bar.</p> <p>In the conclusions section, give possible explanations for the different results.</p>

¹ Council of Science Editors, Style Manual Committee. 2006. *Scientific style and format: The CSE manual for authors, editors, and publishers*. 7th ed. Reston (VA): The Council. 680 pp.