

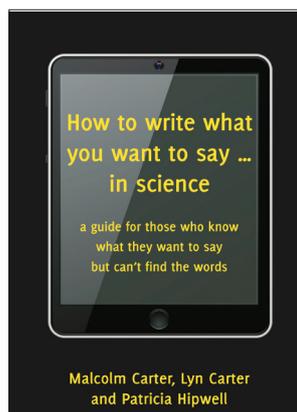


How to write what you want to say in science

Authors: Malcolm Carter, Lyn Carter and Patricia Hipwell

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Review by Hamish Gibson, Georgiana Molloy Anglican School, WA



Writing for academic purposes in the sciences can be a difficult concept to grasp for students, and an even more difficult task for teachers to facilitate. Students need to 'unlearn' the various

techniques they have been encouraged to develop in their creative writing and learn the skills of writing using evidence and an empirical approach.

Literature reviews, laboratory reports, position papers as well as discursive and argumentative essays all require a specific 'toolbox' and strict adherence to conventions that students may not fully understand the relevance of. The authors of this book provide an easy to follow and well-explained summary of all the things students and teachers need to be aware of when producing scientific literature. From the thorough explanation of the purpose of scientific writing, the particulars of the requisite vocabulary and sentence starters, the book provides a very practical guide on how to produce academic writing of a high standard.

The beauty of this text is its simplicity and honest appreciation of the fact that, if

we, as educators, are going to encourage secondary students to contribute to scientific literature, then they need to be equipped with the language to communicate their ideas in a way that the rest of the scientific community will be able to understand. The types of language use elaborated upon by the authors of this book include: the use of perfect past tense, degrees of modality (a set of words students seldom associate with explaining scientific findings) and the language specific to different parts of a report, such as the results, abstract and discussion sections.

In a college classroom, in which students may be learning these skills for the first time, and developing them over a two year period to a point where (hopefully) they may be able to publish their own work, this text would be extremely useful. At first glance, it could be likened to the APA Publication Manual (American Psychological Association)—the manual for all budding psychology researchers and writers. The difference with *How to write what you want to say in science* is that this text is far more than a referencing guide to make sure students acknowledge their sources of information and avoid plagiarism. It is an outstanding go-to guide to help improve the academic writing of students and provide something for teachers to help facilitate this process.

I highly recommend this resource.