Title that hints at the underlying issue or question and is formatted in “sentence case” (*i.e.,* not in “Title Case” and not in “ALL CAPS”)

Your name(s) here

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Introduction

This is a Microsoft Powerpoint template that has column widths and font sizes optimized for printing a 36 x 56” poster—just replace the “tips” and “blah, blah, blah” repeat motifs with actual content. Try to keep your total word count under 1000 (yea, this suggestion applies to everyone, even you). More tips can be found at the companion site, “Advice on designing scientific posters,” at the Swarthmore College Biology Department web site.

This paragraph has “justified” margins, but be aware that simple left-justification (other paragraphs) is infinitely better if your font doesn’t “space” nicely when fully justified. Sometimes spacing difficulties can be fixed by manually inserting hyphens into longer words. (Powerpoint doesn’t automatically hyphenate, by the way.)

Your main text is easier to read if you use a “serif” font such as Palatino or Times (i.e., people have done experiments and found this to be the case). Use a non-serif font for your title and section headings.

Materials and methods

Be brief, and opt for photographs or drawings whenever possible to illustrate organism, protocol, or experimental design.

Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah.

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Figure 1. Photograph or drawing of organism, chemical structure, or whatever focus of study is. Don’t use graphics from the web (they look terrible when printed).

Figure 2. Illustration of important piece of equipment, or perhaps a flow chart summarizing experimental design. Scanned, hand-drawn illustrations are often preferable to computer-generated ones.

Results

The overall layout for this section can, and probably *should,* be modified from this template, depending on the size and number of charts and photographs your specific experiment generated. You might want a single, large column to accommodate a large map, or perhaps you could arrange 6 figures in a circle in the center of the poster: do whatever it takes to make your results *graphically* clear. To see examples of how others have abused this template to fit their presentation needs, perform a Google search for “powerpoint template for scientific posters.”

Paragraph format is fine, but sometimes a simple list of “bullet” points can communicate results more effectively:

- 9 out of 12 brainectomized rats survived
- Control rats completed maze faster, on average, than rats without brains **(Fig. 3b)** ($t = 9.84$, df = 21, $p = 0.032$)

(a) (b) (c)

Fig. 3. Make sure legends have enough detail to fully explain to the viewer what the results are. Note that for posters it is good to put *some* “Materials and methods” information within the figure legends or onto the figures themselves—it allows the M&m section to be shorter, and gives viewer a sense of the experiment(s) even if they have skipped directly to figures. Don’t be tempted to reduce font size in figure legends, axes labels, etc.—your viewers are probably *most* interested in reading your figures and legends!

Often you will have some more text-based results between your figures. This text should *explicitly* guide the reader through the figures.

Blah, blah, blah (**Figs. 4a,b**). Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah.

Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah (**Fig. 4c**). Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah (data not shown).

Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah (God, personal communication).

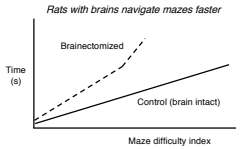

Figure 5. Avoid keys that force readers to labor through complicated graphs: just label all the lines (or bars) and then delete the silly key altogether. The above figure would also be greatly improved if I had the ability to draw mini rats with and without brains, with these illustrations resting next to the text labels.

Be sure to separate figures from other figures by generous use of white space. When figures are too cramped, viewers get confused about which figures to read first and which legend goes with which figure.

Figures are preferred but tables are sometimes unavoidable. A table looks best when it is first composed within Microsoft Word, then “Inserted” as an “Object.” If you can add small drawings or icons to your tables, do so!

Table 1. ANCOVA examining the effects of water treatment, parasite treatment, and initial height of nettle on nettle dry weight.

Source	df	Mean square	*F*-value	*p*-value
Water treatment	2	23.305	215.96	0.0001
Parasite treatment	1	0.049	0.455	0.5011
Nettle initial height	1	0.769	7.129	0.0084
Parasite treatment * nettle initial height	1	0.489	4.532	0.0348
Residual	163	0.108		

Put a figure here

This effect was explored graphically…

This is the gene of interest!

Fig. 6. You can use connector lines and arrows to visually guide the viewer through your results. Making logical points this way is much, much better than making it in the text section. These lines can help viewers read your poster even when you’re not present.

Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. However, blah, blah, blah.

Conclusions

You can, of course, start your conclusions in column three if your results section is “data light.”

Conclusions should not be mere reminders of your results. Instead, you want to guide the reader through what you have *concluded* from the results. What is the broader significance? Why should anyone care? This section should refer back, explicitly, to the “burning issue” mentioned in the introduction.

Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah.

Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah.

Remember: no period after journal name.

Literature cited

Bender, D.J., E.M Bayne, and R.M. Brigham. 1996. Lunar condition influences coyote (*Canis latrans*) howling. *American Midland Naturalist* 136:413-417.

Brooks, L.D. 1988. The evolution of recombination rates. Pages 87-105 in *The Evolution of Sex,* edited by R.E. Michod and B.R. Levin. Sinauer, Sunderland, MA.

Scott, E.C. 2005. *Evolution vs. Creationism: an Introduction*. University of California Press, Berkeley.

Society for the Study of Evolution. 2005. Statement on teaching evolution. < http://www.evolutionsociety.org/statements.html >. Accessed 2005 Aug 9.

Abutting sections can save you a little space, and subtly indicates to viewers that the contents are not *as* important to read.

Acknowledgments

We thank I. Güor for laboratory assistance, Mary Juana for seeds, Herb Isside for greenhouse care, and M.I. Menter for statistical advice and helpful discussions. Funding for this project was provided by the Swarthmore College Department of Biology and a Merck summer stipend. [Note that people’s titles are omitted.]

For further information

Please contact *email@swarthmore.edu*. More information on this and related projects can be obtained at *www.swarthmore…* (give the URL for general laboratory web site). A link to an online, PDF-version of the poster is nice, too.

If you just *must* include a pretentious logo, hide it down here.

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