

Biology 155a
Project Laboratory in Genetics and Genomics
Writing Assignment 6

The Research Paper: Introduction

Now that we have a clear question in mind, it is time to go back and write an introduction for our research paper. An Introduction should provide background for the reader so that her or she can understand the question being asked. It should describe other relevant studies that helped to lead to the question. In this way, the Introduction should not only provide background, but build to the question being asked. Toward the end of the Introduction, you should clearly state your question and hypothesis.

Note that the Introduction differs from a Review of a particular topic. While a Review typically covers a topic in detail, the goal of the Introduction is to provide context to understand the question you are asking or the system you are studying. In essence, the Introduction should build to your experimental question. This can be done by describing what is known about a particular topic, to be sure that the reader understands the system, but also considers what is not known or where there is room for additional work.

Useful background reading can be found on the course website. This should help you get started. You will also need to find additional sources on your own. Because you will be using outside sources and other published research here, you will need to be sure you cite them correctly. Please see the handout on "Finding and Using References." We will use APA format in citing references for this class.