



How to Write the Discussion

Some students write good labs except for the most important part: the **discussion**. This document will help you decide what to include in the discussion of your lab report.

DISCUSSION ABOUT A DATA TABLE

Look for important trends within the table and discuss that in your discussion.

"When time was increased, the velocity increased."
"As time increased, the temperature remained constant."

If percentage errors are part of your table, talk about them in your discussion.

"For all six trials, the percentage errors were less than 10%. The low percentage errors seem to suggest that..."

DISCUSSION ABOUT A DATA TABLE WITH A GRAPH

Since the graph was plotted using the data from the data table, the graph is the more important item to be discussed.

Mention what variables were plotted to obtain the graph.

"A graph of distance versus time was plotted."
"Velocity was plotted against time squared."

What type of graph resulted?

"The graph of distance versus time was linear."
"The temperature-versus-time graph was a decreasing curve."

Interpret the shape of the curve.

"The line expresses the direct proportionality between distance and time."
"When time increased, the velocity decreased."

If the graph was linear, state the slope. Also, state what the slope represents in your experiment.

"The value of the slope was determined to be 23.4 m/s. This represents the constant velocity of the cart."