Step 1: Describe Your Big Question

What are you investigating?
Define your topic.
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Why did you choose this topic?
Explain what made you interested to find out more.
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What did you expect the outcome to be?
Give your “best” guess — or hypothesis — based on your observations of the subject and the beginning research you did after you picked your question.
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Step 2: Explain the Hows and Whys

How did you test your hypothesis?
Demonstrate how you went about proving or disproving your initial best guess.
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Why did you test it that way?
Briefly explain why you made the choices you did — and also why you chose not to do other kinds of tests or research.
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Step 3: Present Your Information

What did you find out?
Show your results with words and visual aids.

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What might your results mean?
Present your analysis of the data.

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Step 4: Conclude with New Questions

What was it all about?
Review what you explored.
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Should you keep going?
Explain what further investigating you could do to continue to learn more about your topic.
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What new questions do you have?
Include new questions you are interested to ask based on what you’ve learned.
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If you did it again, what would you do differently?
Reflect on what you learned from the experience and what you might have done differently knowing what you know now.
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Step 5: Show Your Sources
Record your outside sources with a bibliography.

Here are examples of how to show your sources:

BOOKS

By a single author:

By two authors:

By three authors:

By more than three authors:

By an unknown author:

By an editor:

ENCYCLOPEDIAS


MAGAZINES

NEWSPAPERS

JOURNAL ARTICLES

WEB SITE ARTICLES

PERSONAL INTERVIEW

Bibliography examples care of the American Museum of Natural History's Young Naturalist Awards.