General Lab Report Instructions

Purpose: State what you are trying to measure, the hypothesis you are trying to test, or the problem you are trying to solve. The purpose may also be to practice data collection or to test formulas in real lab situations.

Hypothesis State what you think will happen during the experiment.

Note: not every problem necessarily needs a hypothesis; you may just do the experiment to find out a number, not to prove yourself right or wrong.

Materials: State all the materials that are needed to do the lab, and the quantity of each material. You do not need to list people, just stuff.

2 meter sticks 1 stopwatch

1 metal ramp (2.3 meters long)

5 6-cm pieces masking tape

Procedure:

- 1. It is very helpful to use the automatic numbered list feature in Microsoft Word. If you don't see the icon for this, go to View > Toolbars > Formatting.
- 2. Give instructions, not a story! Do not describe what you did, just tell someone else what to do.
- 3. State precisely what you did, but phrase it in the form of instructions to another student to do the same lab you did. Each step should usually start with a verb.
- 4. This is the place to put diagrams. These can either be drawn by hand, or drawn using the Drawing Toolbar on Word. Be sure to highlight the whole drawing and Draw > Group. This makes it easier to paste in and have the words flow around the diagram. (Format > Object >Layout > Square)
- 5. Diagrams can help save a lot of writing. It is much easier to draw some setups than it is to explain them. Just state in the Procedure, "Set up X as shown in Diagram 1."

Data/ Calculations and Results: Insert your data table, with units, in this section. This can be copied from Microsoft Excel, or entered directly. The calculations and results may be put in the same table, or you can put those in a separate table. Graphs may be entered here, or printed separately (with a title and your name!) and stapled into the report later.

Data: numbers you measure directly				Results: Numbers you need to calculate		
Object	Distance (m)	Time 1 (s)	Time 2 (s)	Avg Time (s)	Avg. Speed (m/s)	
Large Steel Ball	1.84	4.34	4.45	4.40	0.42	
Small Steel Ball	1.84	4.47	4.29	4.38	0.42	

Conclusion/Summary:

In this section, you explain the meaning of the results, and whether your hypothesis was correct. Include problems you encountered, suggestions for improvements or further experiments, and any other ideas that show how well you understood the lab.

You also should answer all questions which are given to you in the lab directions from the teacher. Put time into this section, be specific in your answers, and use proper terms.

2 steel balls, different sizes

