

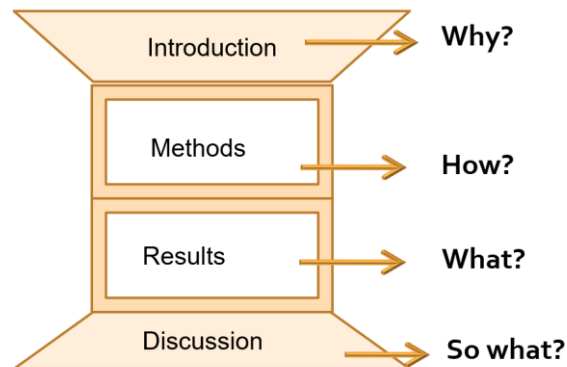
IMRaD Structure

This handout will guide you through the IMRaD format. IMRaD refers to a paper organised into four main sections: **I**ntroduction, **M**ethods, **R**esults, and **D**iscussion. This format is commonly used for lab reports and research in disciplines such as social sciences, natural sciences, engineering, and computer sciences.

Figure 1
The structure of an IMRaD Report

General to specific

Specific to general



Introduction – Why does your paper matter?

The introduction explains why your research is important or necessary. As can be seen in the figure above, the introduction is funnel-shaped because it starts with broad, general information and gradually narrows down to the specific focus or thesis of your paper. Cover the following in the introduction:

- Describe the problem or situation that motivates the research;
- Discuss the current state of research in the field;
- Identify a gap of knowledge or problem in the field and explain how your research addresses it;
- Indicate the aims;
- End with a research question or hypothesis.

Methods – How did you address answering the research question or prove your hypothesis?

The methods section explains how your study was conducted. The explanation should be clear enough for other researchers to repeat your research and achieve the same results. Cover the following in this section:

- Present the experimental design by including information about your population, sample, methods, and equipment;
- Provide enough information for others to replicate your study.

Results – What did you find?

Typically, the results section contains only the findings without any explanation or commentary. Here, you should:

- Report findings without comment, bias or interpretation;
- Present all relevant results.

This section often contains tables and graphs that reflect the measurements that were made. Make sure all tables and figures are labeled and numbered separately. Captions should be placed above tables and below figures.

Discussion – So what do the findings mean?

As can be seen in Figure 1, the discussion has a triangular shape because it begins with specific results or points, expands to consider broader implications and interpretations, and concludes by linking these to the larger context and initial research question. In this section you should:

- Provide a summary of the key findings;
- Offer commentary on those findings, and relate them to other research;
- Discuss the limitations of the study and propose directions for future research.

Resources:

Scientific (IMRAD) Research Reports - Overview. (n.d.). The Writing Center.

<https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/writing-resources/imrad/writing-an-imrad-report>