



the Kitchin, would, as often as she was bid to bring her Salt, or could else come at it, fill her Pockets therewith, and eat it, as other children doe Sugar : whence she was so dried up, and grown so stiff, that she could not stirre her limbs, and was thereby starved to death.

That Learned and Observing Doctor *John Beal*, upon the perusal of the forementioned *Numb, 6.* was pleased to communicate this Note

To your Observation, of Milk in Veines, I can add a *Phenomenon* of some resemblance to it, which I received above 20. years agoe from *Thomas Day*, an Apothecary in *Cambridge*; *vid.* That himself let a man blood in the arme, by order of Doctor *Eade*, a Physitian there. The mans blood was white as Milk, as it run out of his arme, it had a little dilute redness, but immediately, as it fell into the Vessel, it was presently white; and it continued like drops of Milk on the pavement, where ever it fell. The conjecture which the said Physitian had of the cause of this appearance, was, that the Patient had much fed on Fish; affirming withall, that he had soon been a Leper, if not prevented by Physick.

A way of preserving Ice and Snow by Chasse.

The Ingenious Mr. *William Ball* did communicate the relation hereof, as he had received it from his Brother, now residing at *Livorne*, as follows;

The Snow, or Ice-houses are here commonly built on the side of a steep hill, being only a deep hole in the ground, by which meanes, they easily make a passage out from the bottom of it, to carry away all the water, which, if it should remain stagnating therein, would melt the Ice and Snow: but they thatch it with straw, in the shape of a Saucepan-cover, that the rain may not come at it. The sides (supposing it dry) they line not with any thing. as is done in *St Jeames's Park*, by reason of the moistness of the ground. This Pit they fill
V
full

- letters or experimental reports
- single authored and written in a polite style
- addressed several subjects at the same time
- methods description approach was introduced during the era of Louis Pasteur (1730)
- this gradually changed to “theory-experiment-discussion” approach
- more formal IMRAD structure was gradually adopted in early 20th century and began to predominate after 1965

IMRAD structure

- introduction (what is the problem?)
- m & m (how did the researcher try and solve the problem?)
- results (what did the researcher find out?)
- discussion (what does it mean?)

general comments

- easiest to write.....do it first
- different headings for this section
- should allow your study to be duplicated

structure of methods section

- consult guidelines for authors as well as similar articles in the same journal
 - subheadings
 - how these are indicated
- paragraph format
- follow sequence of experiment
- clear and concise description of the material studied
 - which patients were included
 - how they were selected
 - exclusion criteria if any
 - did the selection process involve randomization
 - if so, how was it randomized

- followed by description of the laboratory experiments or clinical procedures performed on the study subjects
 - should be in sufficient detail for other scientists to repeat your work and verify your findings
 - subheadings (if allowed in the author guidelines) should be used if different techniques or experiments are performed on the study material
 - not necessary to describe a method in detail if it has been published before
 - *"Sections for flow cytometric analysis were prepared according to the modified Hedley method (6)"*... followed by a short description of the modified Hedley method. (It is good practice to refer to the original article where the method was published and not to later articles using the same method)
 - any change to the published method should be described in detail and identified as a modification/change to the published method

"new" methodology

- detailed information about the methods should be given if it has not been described before
 - only include the essential aspects needed to repeat the experiment
 - aspects such as the racial and sexual profile of humans in a study always carry some form of sensitivity and should not be mentioned if it has no specific bearing on the results of the study
 - in certain instances this has to be mentioned

only essential information

Antigen enhancement was performed by microwave heating of the sections in a microwave pressure cooker in citric acid buffer (pH 6)

Antigen enhancement was performed by immersing sections in a 10mM citric acid solution buffered to pH 6 with 1 M sodium hydroxide in a suitable Tissue-Tek staining dish. The slides were put into a microwave pressure cooker, the lid sealed and the sections were microwaved for three minutes

Slides were subsequently cooled for 20 min and then washed three times in phosphate buffer and treated with hydrogen peroxide for 5 min at 37°C to reduce endogenous peroxidase activity

After the pressure in the microwave had returned to 0 psi the Tissue-Tek staining dish with slides were removed and subsequently cooled for 20 min at room temperature by immersing the staining dish in cold water. The slides were washed in phosphate buffered saline and treated with a 3% aqueous hydrogen peroxide solution for 5 min at 37°C on a heating plate to reduce endogenous peroxidase activity

- it should not be written as a laboratory manual or in a prescriptive manner
 - do not write "Incubate the sections with the antibody for 60 min at room temperature," but rather "The sections were incubated with the antibody for 60 min at room temperature."
- metric system should be used for all measurements, time of day should be described using a 24-hour clock and temperatures should be given in centigrade. Standard abbreviations should be used where possible.
 - "The cDNA was amplified using RT- PCR with an annealing cycle at 50°C for 1 min" instead of "The complimentary deoxyribonucleic acid was amplified using reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction with an annealing cycle at 50 degree centigrade for 1 minute."

- instruments, chemicals and specialised apparatus that were used, especially those not commonly found in most laboratories, should be listed and their vendor name supplied
 - "Sample purity was further enhanced with the PALM® Microlaser System (P.A.L.M. Microlaser Technologies AG, Bernried, Germany), which allowed the non-contact harvesting of individually selected cells."
- results should correspond directly with the methods described in this section of the manuscript
 - important to ensure that methods are described for all the experimental results reported in in the study
- be careful not to include any results in this section or to justify/discuss your methodology
 - forms part of the Discussion section

grammar

- should be written in past tense as it described the work you have already done
 - in contrast to the Methodology section of a research protocol where techniques to be used in the proposed project are described

grammar

- a tendency towards the use of the first person and active voice in scientific writing
 - writing in passive voice is supportive of objectivity and together with writing in the third person place the emphasis on the experiment and less on the person performing the study
 - it should be compulsory in the Methodology section to use the third person and passive voice
 - do not use: *"I have plotted the DNA histograms of at least 10 000 cells,"* but rather *"DNA histograms of at least 10 000 cells were plotted."*

ethical considerations

- ethical approval is an important aspect of the majority of scientific studies. The ethical approval number and the specific committee that granted the ethical approval should be supplied. This can be done in a single sentence or paragraph.
 - Patients attending the antiretroviral clinic at the Pretoria Academic Hospital for initiation of antiretroviral treatment were screened for the presence of oral lesions by an oral pathologist. All mucosal abnormalities and infections were recorded. Patient consent, as approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria (EC 234/10) was obtained.

ethical considerations

- if the study is of a clinical nature and involves patients directly, various ethical issues should be addressed:
 - way of obtaining informed consent
 - how patient anonymity was ensured throughout the study
 - how procedures were explained to both the child and the parent/ guardian should be described
- editor/readers should be assured that patients and their families were treated with dignity and respect
- similar questions about care and treatment during the duration of the project should be addressed if animals have been used in the experiments
 - if termination is applicable, the exact method thereof should be described

stats

- describe how data was summarised and the data analysis techniques used
- specific statistical test used and the reason for choosing it should be mentioned
 - "The factors evaluated were related to the nodal status in 2X2 contingency tables. The Chi square with Yates correction and Fischer's exact tests were used for the analysis of the categorical data. Correlations with a $p < 0.05$ were considered statistically significant."

common mistakes

- results are reported in this section
- problems encountered during the project are alluded to in this section
- tedious description of aspects that was either published before or for which acknowledged/ internationally accepted abbreviations could have been used
- description of aspects of the methods that does not necessarily relate to the results reported to
 - when the author prepares more than one manuscript on different aspects of the Master or PhD study but copies the Methodology from the thesis/ dissertation and pastes it directly into the Methodology section of the manuscript

checklist

- section is written in past tense, in passive voice and in third person
- patient/study material description
- methods are included for all results described later in the manuscript
- methods are described in the correct and exactly the same sequence as performed during the study
- data analysis
- ethics approval

back to your work!

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important rules with publishing

- decide what you want to say
- say it
- stop when you have said it
- give it a good title

Juan Rossai

Will Rogers 1920s and '30s

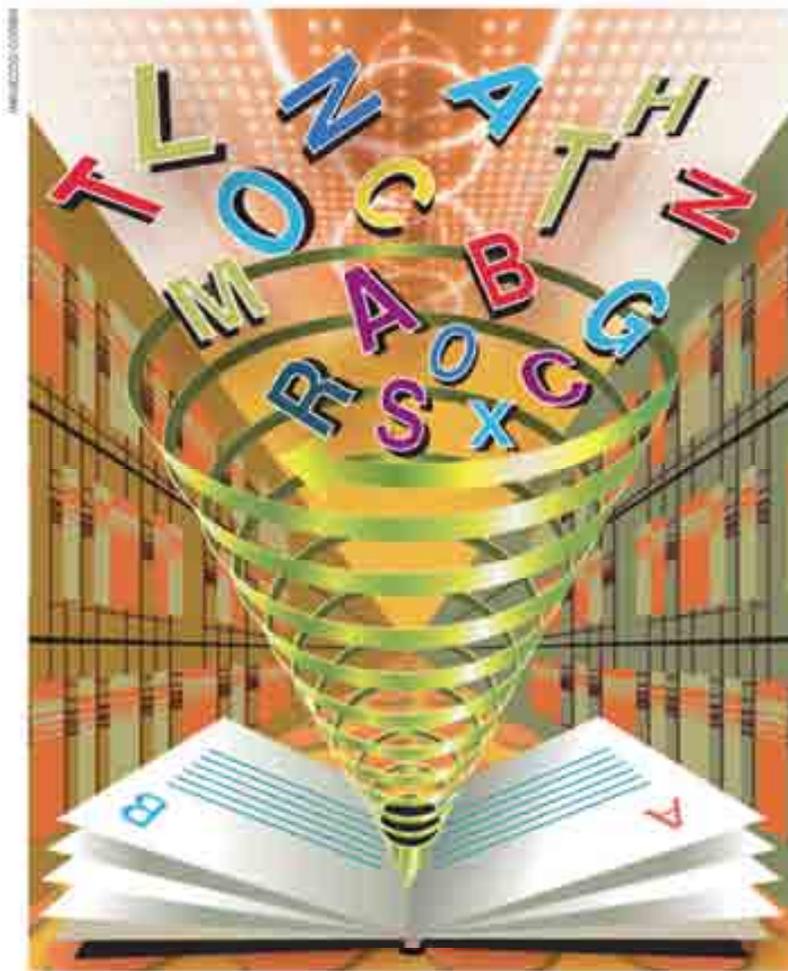
- “there is nothing worse than doing something well which never should have been done at all”

David Sharp

- “all prospective researchers and potential contributors would be well advised to consider the 'six honest serving men' identified by Rudyard Kipling within each aspect of the IMRAD framework:”

'I keep six honest serving men
(They taught me all I knew)
Their names are What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who”

The Elephant's Child, by Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)



COLUMN

Turbocharge your writing today

Before you can tackle the overwhelming task of huge writing projects, you must first put aside some widely held myths, say **Maria Gardiner** and **Hugh Kearns**.

As a graduate student, you might find yourself well on the way with your education and 'ABD' (all but dissertation). Day after day, you tell yourself that you really, really intend to start writing your paper. After all, you've collected all the data, analysed them many times and entered them into tables.

But then, you start thinking that maybe you need just a few more data. Perhaps, too, you should try a different analysis technique. And what if the tables you used aren't the right ones, or need to be formatted differently?

Many of the thousands of researchers we have worked with are constantly being tripped up by finicky, niggling details that keep them from writing up their research. Every day, they mean to start, but every day, something gets in their way or seems more important — and this can go on for years. Some very common obstacles get in the way of high-quality, high-quantity scholarly writing, but powerful, evidence-based techniques can help researchers to overcome repetitive and unhelpful habits and get moving (see 'How to get out of a dissertation-writing rut').

WRITING MYTHS

The biggest impediments to scholarly writing are long-held myths that seem to get passed down through the academic ranks like precious but unhelpful ancient wisdom. The first is the Readiness Myth — "I should write when I feel ready, and I don't feel ready yet". The secret to high output is that you have to write before you feel ready, because you might never reach that point. Researchers read endlessly and conduct countless experiments in the belief that it will eventually make them feel ready to write — we call these habits *readitis* and *experimentitis*. But ironically, all that reading and experimenting often makes them less likely to write, and more confused. So the first way to speed up your writing is to stop waiting, stop reading and experimenting, and start writing. You won't feel ready, but you have to do it anyway.

This brings us to the second myth, the Clarity Myth — "I should get it all clear in my head first, and then write it down". This isn't how writing works in practice. You have probably had the experience in which you were sure about how a paper would go until you started to write it. Then you discovered that there were inconsistencies, or it didn't flow well or the links didn't make sense. This tells you that it wasn't all that coherent in your head, after all. In fact, writing clarifies your thinking. Writing is not recording — you don't just take

how to start writing

- **several myths:**
 - readiness myth
 - “I will write when I’m good and ready, and I’m not ready yet ‘
 - want to keep on reading and doing experiments until they feel ready
 - habits readitis and experimentitis
 - is a myth because it is only when you’re writing up work that you can actually tell whether you are ready
 - clarity myth
 - “I will write when I’ve got it all clear in my head first”
 - writing up is actually necessary in order to get things clear in your head
- **writing is not just recording of what is in your head**
 - far more creative and interactive
 - equals rigorous thinking

how to start writing

- researchers often declare that they can't possibly write anything unless they have a whole day or week to do it in
- because they don't have that amount of time, they conclude that there is no point in starting
- call this 'binge writing'
 - isn't inherently wrong
 - for busy people, it can greatly reduce the amount of writing they do
- alternative is 'snack writing'
 - short — but regular — writing sessions
 - 1-2 hours a day for writing a dissertation
 - 45-90 minutes a day for researchers trying to increase their publication output
- researchers say that they couldn't possibly get anything useful written in that amount of time
 - studies show that academics who write for 30 minutes a day produce, on average, more peer-reviewed publications than academics who write for big blocks of time
 - 'snacks' have to be regular — 45 minutes once a week doesn't work, but 45 minutes a day 5 days a week does wonders
 - try snack writing first thing in the morning
 - for snack writing to lead to really high-quality results, you also need to write in a very specific way

how to start snack writing

- **snack writing isn't editing**
 - do not try to find the perfect word or getting your grammar right
 - let it flow
- **snack writing isn't reading journal articles for research**
 - write first and read afterwards, so that your writing shows you what you need to read or vice versa
- **snack writing isn't referencing**
 - when you make an argument and want to reference, don't stop and look it up
 - keep going, you can look up the reference later
- **snack writing is not formatting, literature searching, photocopying, e-mailing or nosing around**
- **when do you do all the editing etc?**
 - any time in the other 23 hours and 15 minutes of the day
 - **just not during your snack-writing time!**