

## Scientific Communication Writing Assignment Rubric – Peer Evaluation

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**assignment reviewed:** 48 – Yier Jin

Using the rubric below, please evaluate each of your assigned news articles in each of the areas shown, filling out a separate evaluation form for each news article. Please highlight the part of the rubric text that explains why you chose a specific assessment category. In the “General Feedback” section at the bottom of this form, please include more specific feedback, including things that you liked as well as things that you feel could be improved upon and suggestions on how to improve them.

	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement
<b>Content:</b> <b>Does the news article convey the writer’s understanding of a biological topic?</b>	The news article introduces a biological topic and clearly illustrates the writer’s understanding of the topic including what is known and not known about it and how understanding the biology associated with the topic helps us understand larger issues or concepts.	The news article introduces a biological topic and presents information about it, but the topic is not explained clearly or doesn’t distinguish between what is known vs. what is not known or doesn’t explain how understanding the biology associated with the topic helps us understand larger issues or concepts.	The news article does not illustrate the writers understanding of the topic and does not indicate what is known vs. what is not known or how understanding the biology associated with the topic helps us understand larger issues or concepts.
<b>Audience:</b> <b>Is the writing appropriate for the target audience?</b>	The news article avoids jargon and clearly defines terms and ideas for a non-expert audience.	The news article defines or explains some terms, but some key terms or ideas would be challenging for a non-expert audience.	The news article lacks definitions and explanations, making the topic inaccessible to a non-expert audience.
<b>Organization:</b> <b>Is the news article clearly organized?</b>	The news article is well organized and easy to follow with good transitions between the paragraphs.	The news article is generally organized and easy to follow but conceptual connections aren’t always clear.	The news article is disorganized, and the information presented doesn’t flow well.

Rubric continues on next page

	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement
<b>Format, spelling &amp; grammar:</b> <b>Does the news article follow the recommended format and is it free of writing errors?</b>	The news article follows guidelines for paper length and format and has been carefully proofread for spelling and grammatical mistakes.	The news article is outside the recommended length or does not conform to the formatting guidelines; the news article contains a small number of spelling and/or grammatical errors.	The news article is significantly outside the recommended length and does not conform to the formatting guidelines; the news article contains numerous spelling and/or grammatical errors.
<b>Citations:</b> <b>Are the citations presented appropriately?</b>	The news article contains appropriate in-text citations and a list of references for all source material.	The news article is missing either appropriate in-text citations or a list of references.	The news article is missing appropriate in-text citations and a list of references OR citations are missing for one or more sources.
<b>Rationale for choosing topic:</b> <b>Did the writer indicate why they chose the topic?</b>	The rationale for choosing the topic is clearly explained.		No rationale for the topic's choice is provided.

**General feedback (5 points):**

**Content** – The article clearly conveys the writers understanding of the environmental conditions that impact sex reversal in medaka fish, the particular organism of interest in the study discussed in this article. The article implies to me that the findings around how the presence or absence of pantothenate during incubation affects sex reversal can be applied to other species, but doesn't explicitly talk about how this is related to sex reversal research in general. The conclusion paragraph asks questions, directing us to research how these external environmental factors interact with internal organs. I would suggest instead of ending with questions, summarize the questions with a statement on how that future research would be helpful. I also suggest drawing a more clear connection between this study and the larger topic of sex reversal as it relates to gender and sex, since that seemed to be the topic introduced in the first paragraph.

**Audience** – The terms used in the article are simple and easy to understand. Writer defines all jargon like pantothenate.

**Organization** – The news article is organized into paragraphs with clear topics. I suggest adding more conceptual transitions between the paragraphs, especially the middle two paragraphs. I'm not sure what the conclusion of the study is based on both observations detailed in paragraphs 2 and 3, but that could be a good way to transition between them and into the conclusion paragraph as well.

**Format, spelling, and grammar** – The paper is two pages long as the guidelines require and all of the spelling is correct. The final paragraph has some grammatical errors. I would suggest only putting one line between paragraphs and indenting new paragraphs.

**Citations** – The reference list has the source on it, but there are no in text citations. I suggest citing the study source in the second paragraph, and being more specific about which study is being discussed and who the scientists are.

**Rationale** – Rationale is present and clearly explains how the writers interest started with questioning the science in the science fiction movie *Jurassic Park*.

**Overall assessment (excellent, good, needs improvement):** Good