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Writers for Engineers
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Introduction:

Video games, often not the first image when talking about anything scientific, and much less being the subject of a detailed lab report. These lab reports specifically analyze the effect modern video games have on youth behavior and assess if it is good or bad. This usually leads to lab reports that are pages long as they need to explain all aspects of the study. Three specific articles have been chosen to see how well do they convey their information. What are the differences between the reports “Do Video Games Promote Positive Youth Development?”, “The Effect of Video Game Violence on Physiological Desensitization to Real-Life Violence.”, and “Computer Gaming and ADHD: Potential Positive Influences on Behavior .” These lab reports vary in effective communication while following standards with the second lab report mentioned being the best, followed by the first-mentioned lab report with the third lab report being the worse one out of the three.

Abstract:

The abstract of any report is one of the most important aspects that needs to be thought about and written carefully as it can usually make or break any connection with the reader. This is due to how short abstracts are and how it must get the reader’s attention and get the main point of the report across. The question arises, how well do these lab reports accomplish these goals and if they accomplish them in the most effective way. The first lab report I will discuss is “Computer Gaming and ADHD: Potential Positive Influences on Behavior.” The abstract for this report is one that accomplishes the goal in spades when compared to the other two lab reports. It starts off with a good hook by mentioning who relates to the idea of the article. It specifically says “Parents often express concerns about that technology, particularly video has on their children.” The very first sentences introduces the reader to who the target audience is, the subject of the report, and what specifically about the subject will it focus on. This acts as the foundation for the rest of the abstract and the lab report while not sounding too technical or unnatural.

This is not seen with the other two lab reports where they do not achieve the same level as the “Computer Gaming and ADHD...” article. While the other two lab reports do get across what are the contents, it does not try to grab the reader’s attention and just tell information. This may cause the reader to lose interest in the rest of the report and just search for another. This is seen in the lab report titled, “The effect of video game violence on physiological desensitization to real-life violence” where the very first sentence “Past research shows that violent video game exposure increases aggressive thoughts, angry feelings, physiological arousal...” It does not mention who this is supposed to target and gives no context on why this report matter unless the reader is really interested in the subject. This is also seen in the abstract for the next article, “Do Video Games Promote Positive Youth Development?” where it suffers the same way as the previous article. There is no real sense of connection and was just written for no real reason. In its first sentence, it mentions what video games mention in youth development and if it has a more positive or negative impact. But the abstract is not the sole reason to keep get a reader’s attention in a lab report.

Data and Results:

Arguably, the most important part of any lab report is the data and results it has produced as it acts as a cornerstone of sorts for each report. The results of the data is determined through many factors such as where and how it was obtained, and if it is reliable because not all data is true or relevant for a particular report. The report that meets this expectation most effectively is the “The effects of video game...” for many reasons. First, the presentation of the data is the strongest as it provides graphs and visuals about the information which can show how two or more seemingly unrelated aspects are connected to each other. Next, it discussed how the efforts of the authors lead to the obtained information. It talked about the process and how the authors followed the scientific method where they did a “...causal test of the hypothesis...four experiment characteristics are necessary...” Then the lab report talks about what the data obtained from all the test conducted by the authors meant to them and how it the question of the report could be answered scientifically.

The next two lab reports fall very short in this section, when compared to the “...effects of video games...” articles for many individual reasons. The second best lab report, “Computer Gaming and ADHD: Potential Positive Influences on Behavior.” is the runner up for best data and results section as it followed the same procedure of the best article, but the problem arises in the presentation of the information. All of it was explained in words that overwhelms the reader as they have to keep track of many terms and ideas. This isn’t helped by the fact that it is hard to know when the information mentioned, matters to the experiments due to not being clear on what sections end and when a new one starts. The lab report titled “Do Video Games Promote Positive Youth Development?” has one major flaw that makes it the worse out of the three articles which is it did not conduct it’s own research but instead used information from different studies. This nullified the validity of the report as the reader cannot really trust an article that did not conduct its own research, instead of relying on others which could have their own problems. Even if the information is presented in the best manner with proper diction and sentence structure, all of it is countered due to this fact.

Discussions:

Once all the data has been gathered and analyzed, what does that mean for authors who wrote them and potential future research? The discussion portion of a lab report includes ways of improving research and what other factors to look at that were not looked at in the original report. This leads to how these specific lab reports were able to reflect on itself and help future scientists write more effective lab reports. The best report to do this was “The effect of ... real-life violence.” This is due to how clear it was made to the reader on where this section started, through subtitles in the report, and starting off by saying “Numerous important theoretical questions remain for future research.” This immediately tells the reader that this report was not meant to answer the question definitively, but instead serve as a platform to work off. It looks at other analyzes other factors that make this report flawed like the different types of media available such as movies or television changes or original results. Finally, what makes this lab report the most effective on reflection is realizing the failure to include any counter-arguments that could be made about the results of the data. It comes to the conclusion that video games do desensitize the people who play them but then asks “Can we help medical students become comfortable with the types of physical and emotional trauma they will experience...” It presents other ideas that can be explored for future research and acknowledges other arguments instead of ignoring them or not really exploring such ideas. How does the other lab reports fair then?

While the next two lab reports follow a similar format like the first, they both have shortcomings with one being a bit more noticeable than others. The first one to be talked about is the

Conclusion:

Lab Report Sources: (APA)

1. Adachi, Paul J.C., and Teena Willoughby. "Do Video Games Promote Positive Youth Development?" , 2 Nov. 2012,
<https://journals-sagepub-com.ccnny-proxy1.libr.ccnny.cuny.edu/doi/10.1177/0743558412464522>.
2. Carnagey, Nicholas L, et al. "The Effect of Video Game Violence on Physiological Desensitization to Real-Life Violence." *Science Direct*, 17 June 2006,
<https://www-sciencedirect-com.ccnny-proxy1.libr.ccnny.cuny.edu/science/article/pii/S0022103106000825>.
3. Johnstone, Stuart. "Computer Gaming and ADHD: Potential Positive Influences on Behavior ." *IEE Xplore Digital Library*, IEE, 13 Mar. 2013,
<https://ieeexplore-ieee-org.ccnny-proxy1.libr.ccnny.cuny.edu/document/6479437/citations#citations>