

How Not to Write a Lab Report

Can this lab report be saved? What needs to happen?

GEOLOGY Experiment #6

Introduction: Me and my lab partner John walked around campus looking for rocks in which to identify for the professor to grade us on. We found quite a few, but many of them looked like one another which sucked. I brought the samples back to the lab so that we could do hardness tests and acidity tests on them to prove if they could be effected. Some of them were and some of them were not as this report will show.

Methods: We walked the parking lot and the shoreline hoping to find a bunch of different rocks for tests. There weren't too many differences because this campus is small and I am transferring to Storrs in the Fall anyway. We tried to find rocks of different colors because that would show they were formed differently and at different Paleozoic Eras. In this we were somewhat successful.

The lab tests showed that rocks scraped with chalk usually left a white line except for this one tan rock which caused the chalk to snap so we had to stop with the hardness part there. None of them had a hardness rating/factor or diamond so we can assume that a diamond would easily cut them in two. A lot of the samples seemed to be granite so John threw out those rocks that appeared to be granite leaving us with one sample that stood for the rest.

John was in charge of the dripping a mild acid (boric, I think) on top of the rocks to see if they would fizz like soda. Only the granite and the white stone which might or might not be calcium or marble fizzled a little bit which is good for our reports. Some of the other groups had no luck with fizzing at all.

Results: It is clear to anyone that some of the samples were granite or other kinds of metamorphic rocks. There were no obvious igneous rocks because they would have fizzled quite a bit according to my lab partner. These rocks would be good to make statues out of as they would last a long time. Harder to identify were sedimentary rocks because there was not a lot of sand during the earlier geographic eras in this area and thus we didn't find any. The decision to use acid to try and find out which rocks were which was a good one as the chalk broke and forced us to stop experimenting too early. Future students might want to get a piece of thicker sidewalk chalk and try that.

No graphs were needed for this short, easy experiment.

Discussion: We had thought there would not be a large sampling of different types of rocks and we were kind of right—this area just does not support them geologically. Of the 4 different types of rocks positively identified, 2 fizzled and 2 did not. 3 were harder than the chalk and 1 was not (as it broke the chalk). This leads us to conclude that the rocks when they formed in the area were under great heat and pressure, forcing them to become harder in order to survive the



hostile environments that existed in the Jurassic era. We tried to find similar examples of our experiment on Google, but were unable to get any, leading us to believe that we 2 are the first to come up with this kind of hardness experiment. Further results would better expand our conclusions.

A way to make this a better lab would be to let us bring in rocks that we had already identified so that it would make the lab easier and cut down on identification time.

References: Since John couldn't find any, we have nothing to cite here. We went all the way to 5 O's in Google too.

