

Goal • Practise designing inquiries to test scientific relationships.

Introduction

In a controlled experiment, the independent variable is changed intentionally, and the researcher observes other variables to see how they change.

For example, if a climatologist wants to use weather balloons for an inquiry, the climatologist may test several different sizes of balloons to see how each size reacts. The size of balloon is changed intentionally and the researcher observes the reaction of each one.

What to Do

As the climatologist's assistant, you have been asked to design a controlled experiment to test changes to the speed of different sizes of weather balloons.

- Use steps 1 to 4 to help you plan this experiment.
- Use steps 1 to 7 to plan an experiment of your own.

Outline

1. Title your experiment.

2. Do either part a. or part b.

- a. Develop a hypothesis using the following format.

If _____

then _____

because _____

- b. Predict what will happen using the following format.

If _____

then _____

3. Identify the independent variable, and explain how it will be measured.

4. Identify other variables (the dependent variables), and explain how each will be measured.

Experimental Design Worksheet

5. Do either part a. or part b.

a. Identify what observations to take, and how they will be taken.

b. i. Identify what different treatments will be done. Provide an outline describing each treatment.

ii. Describe what observations will be taken after each treatment, and how the observations will be recorded.

6. After you have done your trials, list each of your key findings. Provide supporting data for each one.

Key Finding #1: _____

Supporting Data: _____

Key Finding #2: _____

Supporting Data: _____

Key Finding #3: _____

Supporting Data: _____

Key Finding #4: _____

Supporting Data: _____

DATE:

NAME:

CLASS:

GENERAL
SCIENCE INQUIRY

Experimental Design Worksheet

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(continued)

Key Finding #5: _____

Supporting Data: _____

7. Consider whether or not your experiment should be repeated. Choose either part a. or part b.

a. If you do not think that the experiment needs to be repeated, explain why not.

b. If you think that the experiment does need to be repeated, explain why you think it should be repeated, then explain what method you think should be used. If you recommend major changes to the method, explain why these changes should be made.

