

Sample form for guiding Peer Review

(This form was developed to help students evaluate the first draft of a research proposal, and can be easily modified for other purposes)

Writer's Name: _____ Reviewer's Name: _____ Date: _____

Introduction and Background

1. In one or two sentences, state what you think is the major question being addressed by the author. If you had trouble determining the specific question being addressed, can you indicate what caused the problem for you?
2. Are all statements of fact or opinion well supported by reference, data, or example? Give specific examples of cases in which you think the argument or point is not adequately supported, or where you can cite counter evidence that the author did not consider.
3. At the end of the introductory material, does the author of the proposal indicate specific hypotheses to be tested, or specific questions to be answered?
4. What do you find most interesting about the direction that this proposal is taking? Is there anything the author can do to increase its interest for you, or to better convince you of the study's value?
5. Is the Introduction well-organized? Do the ideas flow smoothly from sentence to sentence? Does any of the information seem excessive, or inadequate, or irrelevant?
6. Is there anything in the introduction that seems confusing or unclear?
7. What would you like to know more about? What questions do you still have?
8. Is the title appropriate? Is it suitably specific and instructive?
9. Any persistent, repeated spelling or other writing issues to note?

Proposed Methods

1. Will the proposed study fully address the questions posed in the Introduction and Background sections? Are controls adequate? Will the design of the study allow the author to distinguish between all competing hypotheses?
2. Are there important features missing, such as the names of species to be studied, locations to be sampled, the sizes of areas to be sampled, and so forth?
3. Are you clear about the numbers of individuals to be used in the study, and the numbers of replicates?
4. Do you understand the reasons for each step proposed? If not, what issues confuse you.
5. Do you think the proposed work can be accomplished in a single summer? Should the study be expanded or decreased in scope?
6. Do you understand how the data will be analyzed? If not, explain why.