How to Do Well on Your CPR Assignment

Number 1 - Be aware of the deadlines and don't miss them. It is very important to your score. If you miss the deadline for Part 1, you cannot continue and you will miss 80% of your score! The times are given as Pacific Time, so you have essentially two more hours than is written.

(Note: The grading criteria vary from course to course. The scoring presented here is what we are using in the First Year Chemistry Program at TAMU)

There are 4 parts to a CPR Assignment (You are given about 1 week to complete Part A (1) and about 1 week to complete Part B (2,3,4) - see your schedule.)

Part A: Part 1 (20 pts) - Writing your paragraph
Part B: Part 2 (30 pts) - Calibrating your skills as a reviewer
Part C: Part 3 (30 pts) - Reviewing your peers
Part D: Part 4 (20 pts) - Reviewing your own paragraph

Part 1: Writing your paragraph (20 pts).
- DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST HOUR - you may experience technical problems and then it may be too late to fix them.
- If you have any technical problems, contact Ms. Traci Zaragoza (Rm 413 HELD) at tzaragoza@mail.chem.tamu.edu - she works 8-5 Monday - Friday.
- Read the information and go to the links - DO THE RESEARCH BEFORE WRITING.
- Your writing should be similar in level to a chemistry textbook written for AP or college chemistry, unless otherwise specified.
- You can resubmit your paragraph as many times as you wish up until the deadline.
- Write in a word-processing program - then paste it into the block. If you take too long writing your paragraph directly on the website, you might be timed out and have problems submitting your text. Keep a copy, so that if there is a problem, you can resubmit.
- Include ALL the answers to the Guiding Questions in your paragraph, but be sure that your paragraph reads smoothly.
- Make sure you have an introductory sentence.
- Make your sentences "tighter" to get within the word limits. Scientists do not use unnecessary words. It is a real skill to be able to write a summary or abstract. Pick your words carefully. Instead of long sentences with lots of prepositional phrases, use adjectives.
- For example: The reaction occurring between acids and bases involves the formation of a salt and sometimes water is also formed.
- Rewritten: Acid-base reactions form salt and sometimes water.
- Always check your paragraph using spell and grammar check. The process is not always perfect since most spellcheckers are not set up to read scientific explanations but it helps. Make sure you use complete sentences and that the subject agrees with the verb - plural subjects require the plural form of the verb. Also, if a word is used incorrectly but is spelled correctly, spell check won't find it, but it is still considered to be a misspelling.
- For example: The main principal used in equilibria is LeChatelier's Principle.
- Problem: “Principal” is the person in charge of a school, the word required here is “principle.”
- Ask your TA or instructor to give you some pointers to help guide you.
- Visit the University Writing Center in Evans Library, UWC is located on the second floor of the Evans Library in Room 1.210 B. It is open Monday-Thursday 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. or online at http://uwc.tamu.edu/. Appointments are recommended, but the consultants will take walk-ins as time allows. You can even submit your paragraph on-line for advice. For more information call (979) 458-1455 or send questions by e-mail to uwc@tamu.edu. They are aware of CPR and how it is handled.
- Use a minimum of html tags in your paragraph - they count as words if there is a space between the tag and a word. See other sheet for listing of appropriate html tags.
- Beware: If you do NOT submit your paragraph on time, you CANNOT do the rest of the assignment and you lose 80 out of 100 points! If you do miss the deadline - contact ASAP Ms Traci at tzaragoza@mail.chem.tamu.edu. Sometimes, but not always, we can submit your paragraph for you.
- Your grade will depend on your peer's evaluation of your work, but if you think your peers were in error, please contact Dr. Wendy Keeney-Kennicutt at kennisutt@mail.chem.tamu.edu.
- Be a fair reviewer. Don't think you are doing a favor by grading easy - you will only hurt yourself.
- Ask your TA or instructor to give you some pointers to help guide you.
- Content is more important than grammar, spelling and style. It is a good rule of thumb to deduct a maximum of 2 - 3 points for bad style, which includes bad grammar, spelling errors, absence of an introductory sentence, etc.

Part 2: Calibrating Your Skills As a Reviewer (30 pts - 10 pts per calibration).
- There will be 3 calibrations. You will be given a good paragraph, a fair paragraph and a poor paragraph on the topic (not necessarily in that order). To pass a calibration, you must (a) get most of the style questions correct (65%), (b) get most of the content questions correct (65%), and (c) your overall score of the paragraph must be within ±2.5 of the rating given by the composer of the assignment. To pass the calibration, you must do well on (a), (b) and (c). You will have 2 chances for each calibration. If you do a good job on your second try, you will get 5 out of 10 points.
- Be a fair reviewer. Don't think you are doing a favor by grading easy - you will only hurt yourself.
- Content is more important than grammar, spelling and style. It is a good rule of thumb to deduct a maximum of 2 - 3 only on the overall score for bad style, which includes bad grammar, spelling errors, absence of an introductory sentence, etc.
- To check for spelling errors and grammar problems, copy the paragraph into a word-processing program and do a grammar/spell check. The program will catch most of the problems. You can also visit the Writing Center.
- Ask your TA or instructor to give you some pointers to help guide you.
- To check for spelling errors and grammar problems, copy the paragraph into a word-processing program and do a grammar/spell check. The program will catch most of the problems. You can also visit the Writing Center.
- You will be reviewing 3 of your peers, just like you did the calibrations. In this class, for you to get the full 10 points per review, the score you give your peer's paragraph (out of 10 points), must be within ±2.5 of the weighted average rating given by all the reviewers. The scorings made by reviewers who did well on their calibrations will be weighted heavier; the scorings made by reviewers who did poorly on their calibrations will not be given much weight at all. If your rating lies outside ±2.5 of the average, you will get a 0.
- Be a fair reviewer. Don't think you are doing a favor by grading easy - you will only hurt yourself. On the other hand, don't give someone a terrible grade undeservedly because somehow you think that will help you or the class curve. That person will likely complain about your review to Dr. Keeney-Kennicutt, have the scoring changed and you will lose all your reviewing points.
- Content is more important than grammar and style. It is a good rule of thumb to deduct a maximum of 2 - 3 points for bad style, which includes bad grammar, spelling errors, absence of an introductory sentence, etc.
- To check for spelling errors and grammar problems, copy the paragraph into a word-processing program and do a grammar/spell check. The program will catch most of the problems. You can also visit the University Writing Center.
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- Be a fair reviewer. Don't think you are doing a favor by grading easy - you will only hurt yourself. On the other hand, don't give someone a terrible grade undeservedly because somehow you think that will help you or the class curve. That person will likely complain about your review to Dr. Keeney-Kennicutt, have the scoring changed and you will lose all your reviewing points.
- Content is more important than grammar and style. It is a good rule of thumb to deduct a maximum of 2 - 3 points for bad style, which includes bad grammar, spelling errors, absence of an introductory sentence, etc.
- To check for spelling errors and grammar problems, copy the paragraph into a word-processing program and do a grammar/spell check. The program will catch most of the problems. You can also visit the University Writing Center.
- Your grade will depend on your peer's evaluation of your work, but if you think your peers were in error, please contact Dr. Wendy Keeney-Kennicutt at kennisutt@mail.chem.tamu.edu.

Part 4: Reviewing Your Own Paragraph (20 pts).
- To get a full 20 points, your self-assessment must be ±1.5 of the weighted average given by your peers. To get 10 points, you must be ±2.5 of your peers' assessment. So, for example, if you wrote a poor paragraph, judged to be a 3.5 by your peers, if you gave yourself a 5.0, you are ±1.5 of the judgment of your peers and you get 10 points. If you gave yourself a 6.0, you are ±2.5 of the peers' assessment and you get 10 points. However if you give yourself a 7.0, you get 0 points for your self-assessment.
- Be a fair reviewer of yourself. Many times a person will give themselves a 10, even if they have obvious spelling mistakes. To check for spelling errors and grammar problems, copy the paragraph into a word-processing program and do a grammar/spell check. The program will catch most of the problems. You can also visit the University Writing Center. Of course, you should have done this before your paragraph was submitted!
- Your grade will depend on your peer's evaluation of your work, but if you think your peers were in error, please contact Dr. Wendy Keeney-Kennicutt at kennisutt@mail.chem.tamu.edu.