

Literature-Based scientific communication assignment (R H Reed):

- 1 Select an appropriate, current paper (published in the last few months) from the primary scientific literature. Choose something interesting, but don't opt for the same paper as your friends – there are thousands of papers to choose from, so make sure it is a suitable topic for an article in a scientific magazine.
- 2 Take a single photocopy of your selected article (you'll need to hand in this photocopy later in the module, as part of the assignment and you'll find it easier to work with a photocopy than with the original journal).
- 3 Prepare a brief article, in the style of the 'This Week' section of 'New Scientist' - your article must be 400-500 words . *Include a word count at the end.* The article should conform in title, general style, & approach to the examples found in any copy of New Scientist – the major difference is that you need to give full citation of your source. Your article should be typed (word-processed) double-spaced (i.e. *two 'line spaces' between each row of text* – you'll find the Word™ command under "Format" "Paragraph" "line spacing") & it should be no more than two A4 pages long.
- 4 Identify another student who you can work with in the second part of this exercise, which involves 'peer reviewing' each other's work (NB: in some cases, it may be necessary to have 3 per group, but two is simpler).
- 5 Exchange your article and the photocopy of the original paper with your 'partner', who will (i) read your article, (ii) read the original paper, (iii) make any *specific* suggestions for changes or corrections to the text of your article, by writing directly on one of the copies (iv) complete a short evaluation of the article, giving *general* feedback and *specific* comments (using the 'peer reviewer's evaluation sheet' provided).
- 6 You will then consider your response to this 'peer review', during which time you can (i) modify your article as and where you feel this is appropriate (you should also re-read your own article, to see whether you can improve on any aspect) and (ii) prepare a written response to your partner's evaluation of your original article (using the 'response sheet' provided).
- 7 When handing in your work, make sure you hand in all of the items listed on the checklist inside a single plastic wallet (so they don't go astray).