How to Motivate Students to Write Science Labs

1. Anticipatory Set – The following are some ways to introduce the lab:
   
a) Demos (should not more exciting than the lab - save exciting demos as a reward and as another form of assessment after everyone has turned in their lab).

b) Science Songs

c) Reading a selection that you can ask the following question: “How can we prove what we just read?”

d) Videos – Bill Nye Videos, Synthetic Seas (California Coastal Commission)

e) PowerPoint – Channel Islands Marine Sanctuary

2. First 2-3 labs model how to list the materials and write the procedures. Give them the standards and walk them through on how to write a hypothesis. Let them write their results and conclusion on their own. This is a good way to assess what they know before you teach them what you are looking for in a conclusion. What you will notice is that most of them will mix up their tenses.

3. Not all labs require a complete write up. You may just want to focus on writing the hypothesis or writing the conclusion.

4. The best lab write ups are the ones that have 4 students or less in a group.

5. First do the lab yourself (at home or after school) and write down the words you would use to describe what you observed.

6. Analyze the verbs that the students will need to know in the imperative and past tense form.

7. Preview the words in the science standard or standards you are covering with the lab.

8. Pull-out science words required for the lab and play bingo as a review.