Writing conclusion paragraphs in a science lab report

A conclusion paragraph contains a description of the purpose of the experiment, a discussion of your major findings, an explanation of your findings, and improvements to the experiment.

Address the following points in paragraph form (don’t just number off and answer each question)

1. Restate the overall purpose of the experiment (include Independent Variable and Dependent Variable in this sentence.)

   One format: The purpose of the experiment was to investigate the effect of the (IV) on the (DV)

   Example: The purpose of the experiment was to investigate the effect of stress on the growth of bean plants by comparing the growth of bean plants subjected to stress for 15 days with a control (non-stressed plants.)

2. What were the major findings? (Summarize your data and graph results)

   Example: No significant difference existed between the height of stressed plants and non-stressed plants. As the graph shows above, the average height of all the stressed plants was 10.2 cm and the average height of all the non-stressed plants was 10.4 cm.

3. Was the hypothesis supported by the data?

   One format: The hypothesis that (insert your hypothesis) was (supported, partially supported, or not supported.) Please do not ever use the word “prove” – we do NOT prove hypotheses true in science.

   Example: The hypothesis that stressed plants would have a dramatically lower mean height was not supported.

4. How could this experiment be improved?

   Example: This experiment relied on a very artificial source of stress – just digging out the plants at one time and replanting them. Perhaps this experiment could be improved by simulating real-life stressors, including drought and lack of nutrients in soil.

   NOT acceptable: This experiment would have been better if we had done it correctly – we did sloppy work and made careless measurements.

   NOT acceptable: This experiment would have been better if we had more time to do more trials.