Today we’ll practice identifying and eliminating fluffy stuff in scientific writing.
Which technical writing flaw is not fluff?*

a) wordy expressions
b) pointless modifiers
c) run-on sentences
d) tautologies

*as defined by Celia
Which technical writing flaw is not fluff?*

a) wordy expressions
b) pointless modifiers
c) run-on sentences
d) tautologies

*as defined by Celia
Which is your obligation as a careful science writer*

a) accurately conveying the maximum meaning in the fewest number of words

b) qualifying all statements

c) using rich and descriptive adjectives

d) sounding erudite and authoritative

*according to Celia
Which is your obligation as a careful science writer*

- a) accurately conveying the maximum meaning in the fewest number of words
- b) qualifying all statements
- c) using rich and descriptive adjectives
- d) sounding very erudite and authoritative

*according to Celia
Which example does not contain redundant words?

a) The Si particles were 10 nm in size.

b) The Si particles were 10 nm in diameter.

c) The Si particles fluoresced green in color when excited by the laser.

d) The Si particles were produced by a combination of etching and sonification processes.
Which example does **not** contain redundant words?

a) The Si particles were 10 nm in size.

b) The Si particles were 10 nm in diameter.

c) The Si particles fluoresced green in color when excited by the laser.

d) The Si particles were produced by a combination of etching and sonification processes.

Why the other answers are incorrect:

a) “in size” is redundant; the 10 nm gives the size.

c) “in color” is redundant; green is a color.

d) etching and sonification are processes.
Which example is **not** introductory fluff?

a) It is well known that...

b) It was discovered that...

c) It was concluded that...

d) It* may be attributable to...

*the effect described in the previous sentence*
Which example is **not** introductory fluff?

a) It is well known that...
b) It was discovered that...
c) It was concluded that...
d) It* may be attributable to...

*the effect described in the previous sentence

Note that a), b), and c) are all variations on the indirect “there are...” construction. They add nothing to the sentence and merely delay getting to the point. Simply tell the reader immediately what is known, discovered, or concluded.

In d), the “it” is not an indirect construction, it is a pronoun for the effect described in the preceding sentence.
Which phrase does not include a pointless modifier?

a) careful sample alignment  
b) rigorous clean-room protocols  
c) inconclusive results  
d) large temperature fluctuations
Which phrase does not include a pointless modifier?

a) careful sample alignment
b) rigorous clean-room protocols
c) inconclusive results
   \[\text{inconclusive results}\]
d) large temperature fluctuations

Why the other answers are incorrect:
a) Is careless alignment really an alternative? Quantify.
b) Are lackadaisical protocols an alternative? What does “rigorous” mean?
c) How big is “large”? Quantify.
Which is not a tautology?

a) Separation of isotopes by laser excitation (SILEX) is a process for isotope separation that is used to produce enriched uranium using lasers.*

b) The excitation mechanism of a laser is used to excite the lasing medium.†

c) Raman spectroscopy requires laser sources with spectral purity and wavelength stability.

†http://oregonstate.edu/ehs/laser/training/how-laser-works
‡http://oceanoptics.com
Which is not a tautology?

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Now is a good time to review the Ms. P ukase for using *with* to mean *having* or *using*; q.v. http://people.physics.illinois.edu/Celia/MsP/With.pdf.
To recap,

No apostrophes were harmed in the making of this presentation.

No fluff. Never.