Illustrations: Noah Bartel / Layout: manukapr.de

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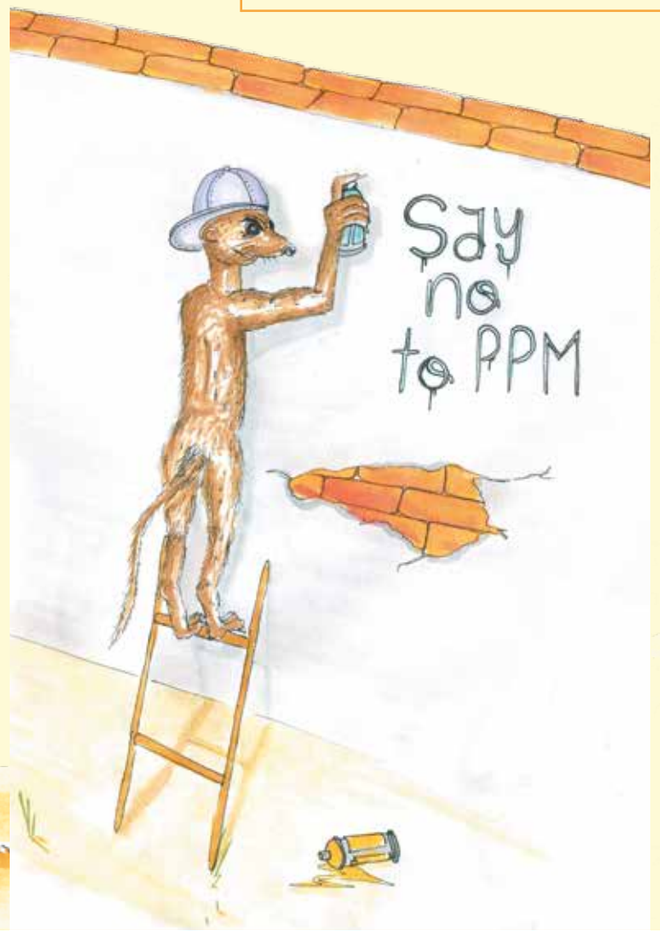
www.geoanalyst.org/glossary

Do you want to learn more about correct terminology in geochemistry? Then visit **www.geoanalyst.org/glossary** – a valuable resource.

µg/g is better

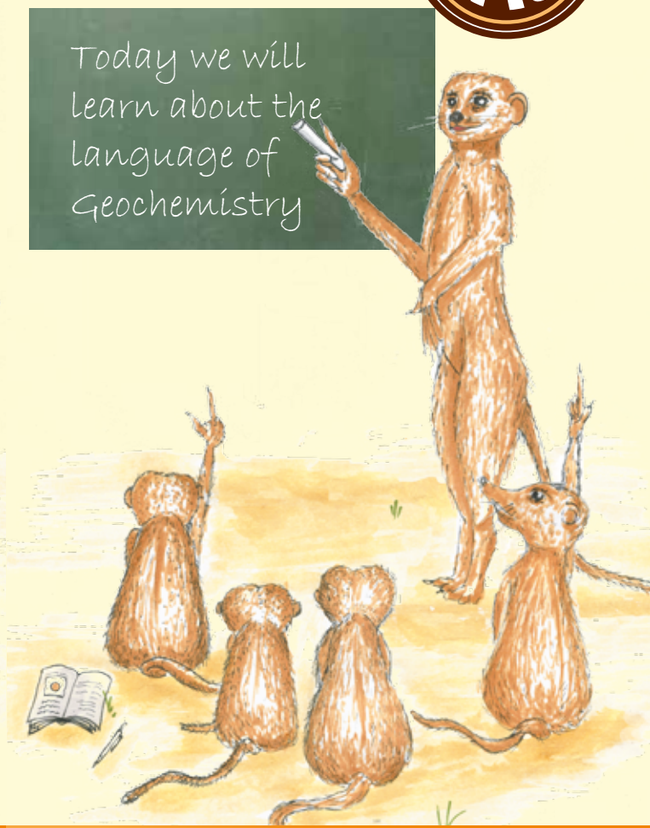


Avoid the term "ppm", as it is ambiguous. Though often indicating a mass ratio, "ppm" could also relate to volume of a liquid (mg/l), or atomic ratios, or even a volume ratio for fluids.

Standard Deviation is the way to go!

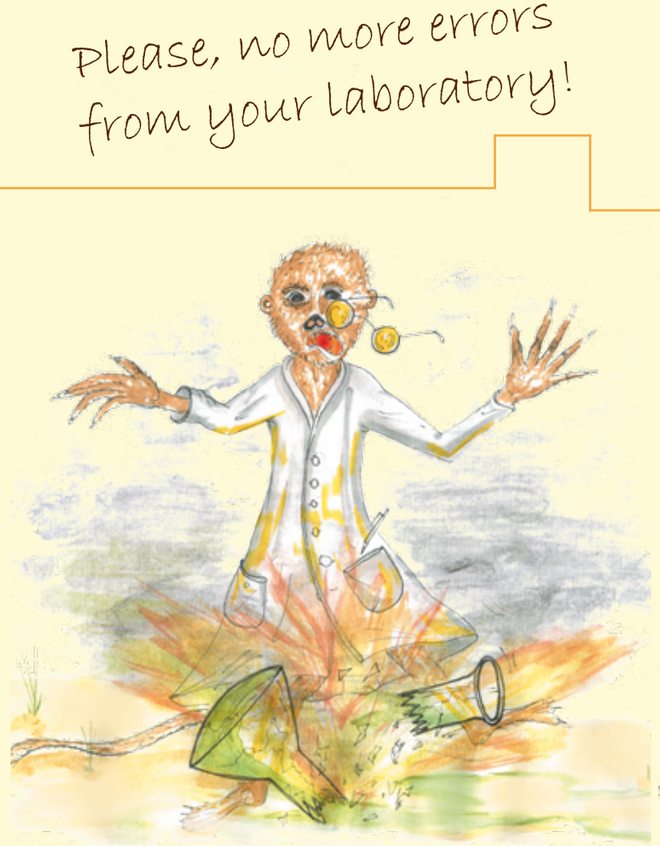
In most geochemical contexts the term "sigma" is wrong. **The correct term is "s"**, which is an estimate of the standard deviation based on repeated measurements on a single sample.

The International Association of Geoanalysts

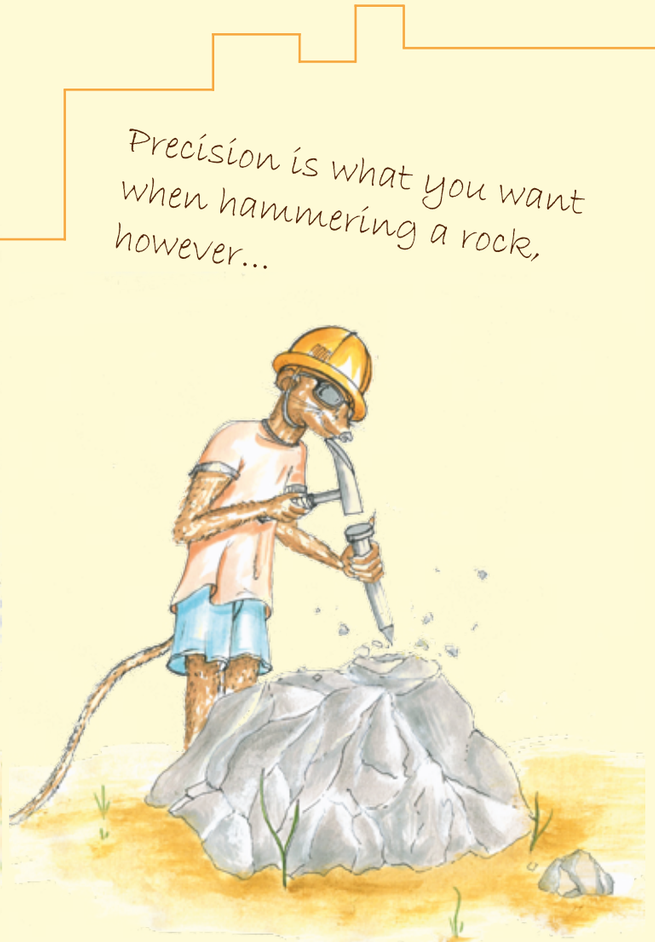


An introductory guide from:
www.geoanalyst.org

The calibration of an instrument usually involves a **Reference Material**. A reference material is a well characterized, homogeneous material. The term "standard" can mean something totally different.



In most cases the term "error" is not correct for the plus-or-minus value associated with a measurement result, rather one should speak of "**measurement uncertainty".**



Precision is always associated with a measurement result. Hence, **a method cannot be precise**, but a result can be.

In metrology, when results are believed to be close to the "true" value, then one speaks of an accurate method that has a small **"measurement uncertainty"**.