

Tips for Writing an Article or Report

Structure

- * A title is required to entice the reader to find out more;
- * Introduction – sets out what you will be focusing on;
- * Main body with supporting facts;
- * Any sources should be cited with correct referencing;
- * Structure: bullet points, subheadings and paragraphs help to organise points;
- * Clear and concise;
- * Conclusion – should include a brief summary of your article/report. It should neatly wrap up the points you have made in your article or report.

The difference between an article and a report

In general the audience and the content are different.

You generally write an article for the public and usually you put in interesting facts and information that will appeal to the readers who are not familiar with the subject. You are often trying to promote something and it can have a persuasive element. If you are writing about a place of interest, details about where to find out more information or who to contact, perhaps opening times, entry prices or how to find the attraction should be included. If you have included quotes or information from other sources, these should be clearly referenced. You are more likely to find opinions and individual's beliefs in an article. Examples include newspaper or magazine articles and newsletters.

A report is more informative and greater knowledge is required by the writer on the specific subject. More details in the content are required but the overall layout can be similar (see above tips). The information must be factual and accurate and not include personal beliefs and opinions. Make sure unnecessary words are not used so as to keep it clear and concise. There should be clear development of the points being made, setting out the arguments for and against/pros and cons if appropriate so that the report is not biased. Generally, reports are written in the third person (not 'I' – e.g. 'A lot of information can be found on the internet' rather than 'I found a lot of information on the internet'). Direct quotes should be used sparingly, reports generally summarise what has been read elsewhere (so that it is in the learner's own words). If short elements are copied from other sources, they should be referenced so that someone else can revisit that article and see where the work has been copied from and to avoid plagiarism. The language is generally more formal and may include technical terms or jargon. Examples can include police or accident reports and medical or scientific reports.

When writing an accident report, there are generally some key points which can be included:

- * What was the accident?
- * Where and when did it occur?
- * Who was involved?
- * What caused the accident?
- * Who reported the accident?
- * Was any injury sustained?
- * What medical treatment was applied - when and by whom?