How to write a news report

Holly King-Mand

Holly King-Mand is a writer, presenter and campaigner for literacy (the ability to read and write), and has inspired thousands of children to love English lessons. Holly enjoys all forms of writing but here she has gathered her top tips for writing a news report.

News reports communicate new information to readers who want to know what is happening in the world. News can be about global topics or very local issues, and should focus on facts rather than opinions. Newspapers and news websites do publish opinions, but these are usually called "columns", "opinion pieces" or "editorial".

News reports are written in the third person, so they use pronouns such as "he", "she", "it" or "they". That's because news reports aim to be as objective as possible (meaning not influenced by an individual's feelings).

Try writing your own news report using our tips below.

Whether it's serious or fun, news should be interesting.

GET PUBLISHED
Written a report? Send it to hello@theweekjunior.co.uk and get a roving reporter badge.

THE WEEK Junior Roving Reporter

What's the story?

Find a story to report on – something that people might not know about yet. Local events are a great place to start. What's happening around where you live? What might local people be interested in reading about? It could be the closure of a youth club or the announcement that a new skate park will be built. Maybe a new theatre show or café is opening in town. Look at the local paper or community newsletter or noticeboard for ideas.

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It's all in the headline

All good news reports have a great headline. This is usually in eye-catching large text across the top of the article. Headlines must be short and snappy, and should give the reader a quick overview of what the story is about to draw them in. Often, journalists use alliteration in their headlines to make them read well. This is when two or more words start with the same sound. For example: "Community cries at church closure". Aim to use as few words as possible.

UK news

The UK's voting system

HEIGHT OF SUMMER
This will be the first general election to take place in July since 1945.

GENERAL ELECTION 2024

PM announces general election

What is a general election?

Was the news a surprise?

What has been said?

Include the five "W"s

Who, what, when, where and why? These are the questions all good reporters ask and aim to answer in a news article. Gather this information before you start writing. These key facts should be included in the first part of your report. You can expand on them and include other details that readers may be interested in later on in the report. Stick to reporting on facts that you can prove, unless you are quoting others people's opinions.

Get someone on the record

If someone agrees to be put "on the record" it means they understand when they talk to you that what they say can be shared publicly. Before you interview someone, jot your questions on a notepad. To record their answers, you can write them down or use a voice recorder. To quote them in your report, use their full name and speech marks (""). For example, Ann Zarka, a local resident, said, "We loved the food stalls at the May Festival". Make sure your quotes are accurate.

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