

Informational Writing: The Report

Goal:

To research, develop and write a research report. The report will eventually be presented to the class. You will be evaluated on both the written report (Writing Strand) and the oral presentation (Oral Strand).

Method:

Once your proposal has been approved...

STEP 1:

Draft a research plan. Use the table below to develop a timeline to complete the project. Feel free to add any rows that you feel you might need (this is just a suggested template¹):

Research Tasks	Planned Completion Date	Actual Completion Date	Comments
Assignment received	October 3		
Locate and collect information in the library	October 7		
Choose the best sources of information			
Acknowledge all sources used			
Due Date	Wednesday October 22		

STEP 2:

Use questions to focus your research.

Topic	What I Know	What I Would Like to Know
Insert your approved topic here.	Insert the information that you already know about the topic in this column	Ask questions to help focus your research. Use Who/What/Where/When/Why questions to dig deeper into your topic

Once you have completed this task, find a partner and edit each other's questions. See how many you can gather!

¹ Template adapted from: [Communicate!](#) by Dom Saliani.

STEP 3:

Find a variety of sources to help answer your question. Your research should include at LEAST FIVE different sources (e.g. website, research from a database at the library, journal article, newspaper article, book/reference text). You may not use one medium exclusively (all your research can not come from the web).

STEP 4:

Evaluate the information you have found. All information is not created equal. You must decide which resources provide the best information. Use the following criteria to evaluate each source of information you have gathered:

Relevance: Does the information relate to your research topic and questions?

Currency: Is the information up-to-date? Look at the date of publication for print and web-based materials.

Accuracy: Is the information true? Check the information against facts presented in other sources.

Reliability: Can you trust the author/supplier of the information? What is the author's education and experience? What other books/publications have they written? Is the author an expert in the field? What organization is behind the website? What are the organization's objectives?

Objectivity: What is the author's purpose for writing? Does the author have an interest in presenting a particular point of view (financial, ideological, etc)? Make sure you choose information from authors who present both sides of issues fairly.

Remember our lessons on bias when evaluating your sources. They will come in handy!

STEP 5:

Take notes. Use an organizer (see the library resource) to take notes on your topic from your selected sources. Be sure to include bibliographical information, as you will need to cite ALL of your research in the report.

STEP 6:

Write your report. Use the following template to structure your report:

Introduction: Give an overview of what your report is about. Use proper paragraph structure.

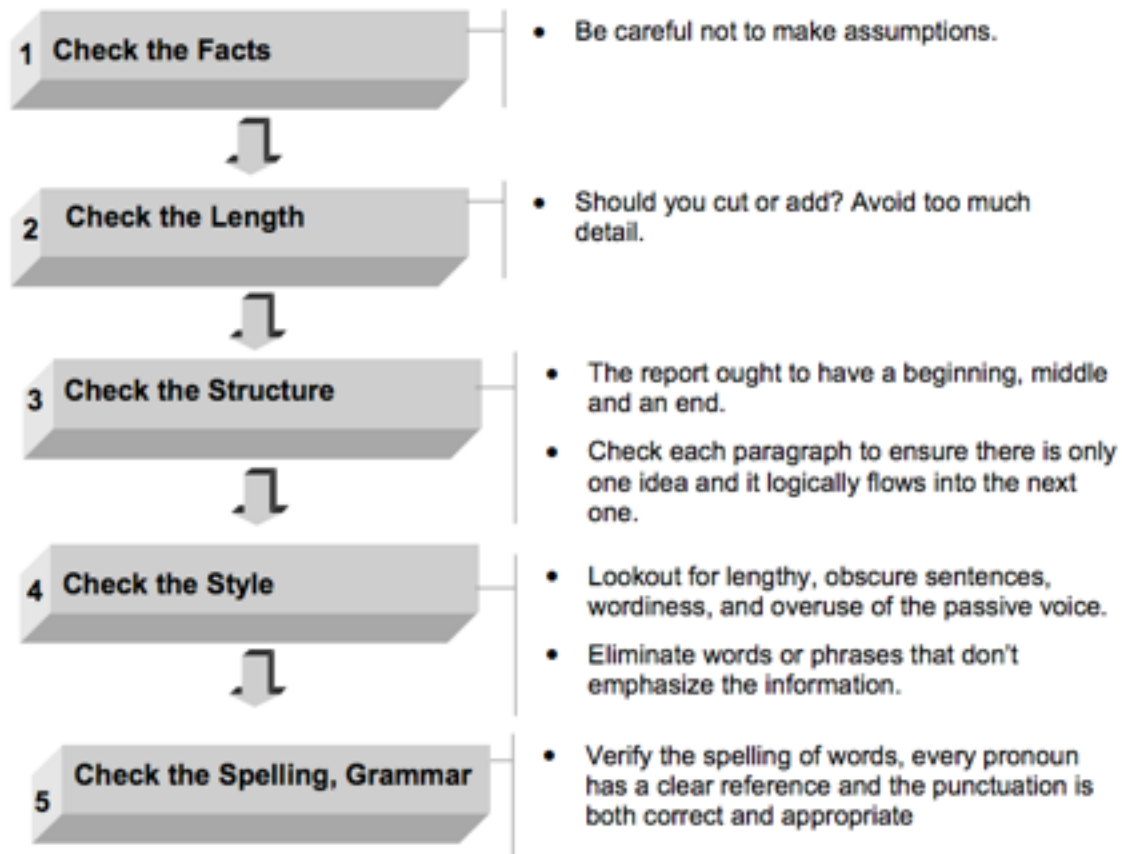
Body: The body should be written using proper paragraphs (topic sentence, points/proofs/explanations, conclusion). The first paragraph should be background on your topic. After that, include all of the relevant information using paragraph form. Be sure to state your findings with the evidence and to include an analysis of those findings.

Conclusions: Remind us of the important ideas in your report. Use proper paragraph structure.

References: Give the precise details of all the authors that have been referenced in the report. This should be in the form of an annotated bibliography/works cited (see the library document for details).

IMPORTANT

- Begin with a rough draft.
- Use headings to organize your report (you can add subheadings into the body of the report to organize the information you find). Headings should be as descriptive as possible.
- Be clear about your purpose: You are trying to inform.
- Present the facts in an OBJECTIVE way.
- Know your audience: Your peers in the class and your teacher.
- Order the material logically. Usually the most important information comes first. However, if a different order makes sense, for example, chronological, you may use it.
- Use bullets, bold and italics where appropriate.
- Use a formal style and tone (no first/second person, use third person only).
- Be sure to present ALL sides of an issue. Avoid exaggerations or emotional appeals.

STEP 7:

Revise your report. Give yourself some time between the initial writing and the revision. Fresh eyes are always best. Use the method below² to proofread your work:

² From: "Report and Proposal Writing: Self-Learning Guide" by, University of Victoria - Learning and Development. <https://www.uvic.ca/hr/assets/docs/ld/self-learning-guides/report-proposal-writing.pdf>

STEP 8:

Peer Edit your report. Bring the report at this stage to class, typed and ready to edit on **October 20, 2014**.

STEP 9:

Write the final draft, incorporating any edits from class. Be sure to include a title page with the title of the report, your name, course code and the date.

STEP 10:

Hand in your report, with all supporting materials on the due date - **October 22, 2014**.