

Young Reporters' Scotland

Tips for Reporting ~Writing~



Everyone has their own unique writing style and there are a few general guidelines which will help you create a fantastic report

It's all in the Planning:

- ◆ Plan your article before you start writing. Look at all the information you have gathered in your investigation and decide what you want to use and the points you want to share with your reader.
- ◆ Who is your audience? Always keep this in mind when writing your article. Keep your article simple, structured and your writing clear.
- ◆ Often the easiest and quickest way to capture a story as a journalist is through audio. If you are carrying out interviews for your report, using your smartphone to record interviews is a great way to make sure that you recall the right information through your written report and that you don't misquote.

Standing Out from the Crowd:

- ◆ Make your article stand out! Start your article with a catchy title and a clear introduction that highlights the main points of the story. Try to make it interesting and engaging so that people want to continue reading.
- ◆ Make sure your article has structure. Make sure the most important information is at the start of your article and you can provide more detailed information as you go on.
- ◆ If you have carried out any interviews as part of your investigation, you may wish to include some quotes. Try to pick one from your interview which stands out and adds to your story.

Keep Yourself Right:

- ◆ Make sure you always ask permission from interviewees to use their quote and that you credit them properly.
- ◆ If you are using information in your article which has been sourced from elsewhere, make sure this information is factual and not of any bias.

- ◆ If you have photos that you would like to add to your written piece, make sure they are relevant and complement your written work and always make sure you have permission to use them especially if the photo contains images of people.
- ◆ Check your article carefully to make sure there are no spelling or grammar mistakes. Asking someone else to read over your work can often highlight things you have missed.
- ◆ Reports with descriptions saying “we/I did this and that” should be avoided. Try always to write articles as a third person narrator.
- ◆ A list of sources is highly encouraged.

Getting Started with Writing:

Creating a blog or an article is a really good starting point. Think about what you have been doing in school these past two weeks and create a blog or article about something specific, perhaps a highlight or covering your whole week, school through your own eyes.

Starting With Blogs:

Creating a blog is a great way to start thinking about writing with an audience in mind. You may already subscribe to a blog, following people that have similar interests to you. A blog can be short or long, it's entirely up to you. The main thing is to keep it reflective, like a diary and quite informal.

As a starting point, you can create a blog that is roughly 300-500 words. Think about the following: What does your school mean to you? Your answer to this might be positive, negative or a mix of both. That's ok. The aim is to reflect and really think about this question, share with your reader, give them an insight into your world.

Starting with Articles:

As a young reporter, when creating an article about something, it's important to be objective. Make sure you provide the audience with the facts. You should think about an article as something that is more formal.

Create a 1 page article about your school. Your audience is potential visitors to the school and potential new pupils. What can you tell them about your school? It would be really good to include an interview or two. Practice interviewing with a couple of teachers or the Headteacher. Create a list of 5 questions (max) and think about asking questions that will form the basis of your article.

Remember all of the tips provided to keep you on track!