

Report Writing Style Guide

Purpose

A report is a succinct summary of the progress a student has made over a semester of work. As a report is published and distributed to the wider community, it may also serve as a marketing tool for the school, and a reflection on the services we provide.

Audience

We write reports for parents, students, the community, other teachers (including leadership), and the education system.

Language

Due to the diversity in our readership, we must aim to make our expression formal and clear. We must appear to be professional, especially in the eyes of our more academic audiences, and we must be easily understood, avoiding technical jargon and convoluted syntax.

Content

We can use the following elements in our reports:

- student achievements
- suggestions for further improvement (student and parent)
- assistance provided by our school

In the comments, do not include:

- a summary of content studied (this is done in the subject description already)
- simple 'task completed' sentences (describe the performance)
- simple 'can do better' sentences (explain how)

Basic Language Standards for Reporting

1. Write mainly from the third person perspective.

'You should work on improving your neatness...' becomes *'Alfred should work on improving his neatness...'*

2. Use past tense when referring to student achievement.

'Harold completes his work with fury and vigour' becomes *'Harold completed his work with fury and vigour'*

3. Use past tense when referring to student skill.

'Sigmund is adept at psychoanalysis' becomes *'Sigmund exhibited adept skill in psychoanalytic practice'*

4. Use future tense when giving advice.

'Sampson should not have cut his hair' becomes *'Sampson should not cut his hair'*

5. Keep your audience consistent.

'Alfred did not complete the swimming challenge. Better luck next time Alfred!' becomes *'Alfred did not complete the swimming challenge. Alfred is a capable swimmer, but needs to complete his tasks thoroughly'*

6. Formal language avoids contractions.

'Herr Kohler didn't perform well in the examination' becomes *'Herr Kohler did not perform well in the examination'*

7. Formal language avoids abbreviations.

'Minsk's exam grade reflects poor study habits' becomes *'Minsk's examination grade reflects poor study habits''*

8. Formal language avoids acronyms.

'Yazz surpassed all VELs age-appropriate standards' becomes *'Yazz surpassed all VELs age-appropriate standards'*

9. No apostrophe is needed when making a noun plural.

'Daffid's skill's are many year's below his peer's' becomes *'Daffid's skills are many years below his peers'*

10. Only use a capital letter for names and the start of sentences.

'Jarvis completed the appropriate Mathematical equations to a Scientific standard this Semester' becomes *'Jarvis completed the appropriate mathematical equations to a scientific standard this semester'*

11. Use full sentences, rather than dot points disguised as a paragraph.

'Rorschach struggled with: essays, spelling, meaninglessness...' becomes *'Rorschach struggled with writing essays this semester, specifically in regard to structure...'*

12. Stick to a single paragraph.

'Tolstoy demonstrated a working knowledge of ants.

His ant project was excellent.'

becomes

'Tolstoy demonstrated a working knowledge of ants. His ant project was excellent.'

13. Use pronouns as well as the student's name.

'Marx wrote an excellent report. Marx demonstrated solid knowledge. Marx's efforts...' becomes *'Marx wrote an excellent report, in which he demonstrated solid knowledge. His efforts...'*

14. Don't end sentences with prepositions.

'Legolas should find some friends to work with' becomes *'Legolas should find a peer group with which to work'*