How to write reports

A report is a formal piece of writing where specific information and evidence are presented, analysed and applied to a particular problem or issue. The information is presented in a clearly structured format making use of sections and headings so that the information is easy to follow. Finally it presents a number of recommendations.

When you write a report here are the top things you need to think about:
- You need to write 4 or 5 paragraphs, including an introduction and recommendation.
- The first paragraph should state the “aim of the report”+ where you got the information
- Use headings to make it easier to read.
- Use points under each heading with “bullet points” or numbers. You can also use percentages
- Avoid your personal opinion and “I” , “my”, “We” etc. Use the passive voice.
- Use formal language and generalising functions.
- Sum up the report’s possible recommendations and suggest the best one(s).

This is some useful language to use in reports

Introduction
- This report is intended to
- The objective/aim of this report is to..
- A number of … were interviewed…
- A survey was carried out among …..
- This report is based on a survey of …… People between the ages of …

Reporting results
- Many of those interviewed stated that….
- Others pointed out that….
- Several people thought that..
- Some people are saying…
- Many people complained, suggested, recommended
- Another option that was mentioned was…
- The majority of students mentioned that …whereas others expressed …
Presenting a list

- The following items should be taken into account
- Some people gave the following reasons:
- They made the following points:

Presenting conclusions

- Both/All the ideas seemed interesting but....
- Taking all the points into consideration....
- Some of the ideas have benefits,
- In the light of the above,
- All things considered,

Making recommendations

- Therefore, I would recommend that..
- It would be advisable....
- On balance then, I feel that....
- Without a doubt the first option was....
- It would seem that... is the best idea.

EXAMPLE of a task for a report

“You have a part-time job at a pet shop. The manager wants to have more clients and has asked you to write a report making some recommendations”.

- Write a draft with some useful sentences and your main ideas:

How to get more clients for the pet shop "Meow"

Introduction
The aim of this report is to find ways to get more clients for the pet shop "Meow".

What the clients say
The interviewed clients said the following:
- They did not like the veterinarian.
- They could not find products.
- Some products, were too expensive.
**My observations**
I observed that three clients left the shop without buying. Also, there were a couple of clients who did not like our policies.

**Recommendations**
I would recommend writing and implementing some shop guidelines.

**This is the final report:**

**How to get more clients for the pet shop "Meow" (1)**

**Introduction (2)**
The aim of this report is to find ways to get more clients for the pet shop "Meow". I have kept a record of relevant facts that I have seen during a two-week period and I have asked some clients their opinion on the shop.

**What the clients say (3)**
The interviewed clients said the following:

- They did not like the veterinarian because he was sometimes rude to them.
- They could not find certain products for their dogs.
- Some products, like puppy-food, were much more expensive than in other pet shops.

**My observations (4)**
I observed that three clients left the shop without buying anything because I could not answer their questions about some of the new products. Also, there were a couple of clients who did not like our policy of not returning their money when the fish they had just bought died.

**Recommendations (5)**
In light of the above, I recommend writing and implementing some shop guidelines for all the employees. These guidelines should, at least, include the following items:

- **Protocol with clients**: How to greet them, offer information, apologise, call them when the product they want gets to the shop, etc.
- **Shop organization**: How to display the products, information about new products.
- **Returning policies regarding fish and other animals**.
- **Prices**: Compare prices with shops around the area to offer better deals.
Here is another task for a report: “Write a report suggesting improvements to classes at Today School”.

Introduction

The aim of this report is to compare different ideas to make classes in Today School more enjoyable for students while learning at the same time. A large number of students were interviewed to find out differing opinions.

Classroom Activities

Some of the students suggested using more videos and songs during the classes and some even mentioned that parties with alcohol would be a good idea. A few of them gave reasons why they preferred these activities:

- Pop music and films are interesting and topical
- Alcohol makes people relax and talk more.

Outside Class

The majority of students mentioned that homework should be reduced drastically whereas others expressed a preference for doing excursions in English, giving the following reasons:

- Too much homework makes students stressed.
- Excursions are a fun way of putting into practice what is learnt.

Recommendations

Some of the ideas have benefits; however, suggestions to allow alcohol and reduce homework should be immediately discarded. On the other hand, it is felt the majority of students would take advantage of more pop videos and excursions and so these suggestions are recommendable.

Taken from:

http://todayschool.es/blog/first-certificate-writing-part-2-get-it-right-a-report/
Another Model Report (taken from Helen Collins, EFL Teacher at ELI Seville)

**Task:** “The school where you study English has decided to spend some money on either buy more computers or improving the library. You have been asked to write a report for the school director describing the benefits to the school of both these things, and saying which one you think should be chosen and why”.

**Use of Money for School Improvements**

**Introduction**

The aim of this report is to compare the advantages of additional computers and of improving the library, and to suggest which of these would be best. I interviewed a number of students to find out their views.

**Buying more computers**

Some of the students thought this was a good idea, saying computers were useful for:

- practicing writing
- using the Internet
- playing games

However, other students said that they preferred to use their own computers at home.

**Improving the Library**

Most of the students preferred this suggestion, giving the following reasons:

1. Many students do not have a quiet place to study at home. The library would be a good place for private study, but at present there are not enough tables and chairs there.
2. They feel that up-to-date dictionaries and reference books are needed
3. They want to be able to read modern books written for young people.

**Recommendations**

Both ideas have benefits, but the majority of students felt that improving the library would be more useful. I would therefore recommend this.