



Getting Ready for the OSSLT

Writing the News Report: Some helpful tips

When writing the news report, present the information in the form of a news story.

Tips for writing the news report:

- Look closely at the headline and picture.
- Be creative and think of an event that relates to both the headline and the picture.
- In the space that is given for 'rough notes', brainstorm and plan the following details: **who, what, where, when, why, and how.**
- An effective way to start a news report is with the date and location; for example: "On March 20th, 2013 in Elmvale, Ontario...."
- Make sure that the 5 WH details are included in the first couple of paragraphs.
- Make sure that the ideas make sense and are convincing and effective.
- Add quotations from witnesses or people involved.
- Imagine being a writer for a newspaper, not for a radio or television station. Responses must sound like a newspaper report, not a broadcast.
- Make sure that the report is structured in short (2-3 sentences each) paragraphs.
- Do **NOT** write using the first person (Do **NOT** use "I", "me", "my", etc.).
- One full page will be given to write the report. Try to write as close to one page as possible.
- The news report will be assessed for topic development, organization, and use of conventions (spelling, grammar, and punctuation) so be sure to write in complete sentences using formal English.

Format for the news report:

Continue to the next page for more specific instructions on how to write the news report.

Writing the News Report: Instructions on Formatting and Structure

Headline: (6 words or fewer)

e.g. Elmvale Paralyzed by Snow

Lead: (what happened?)

- first sentence of the report
- clear, factual statement of what happened
- should answer “who”, “what”, “where” and “when”
- should be 25 words or less

e.g. “On March 20th, 2013 in Elmvale, Ontario, there was a record breaking storm that lasted over 48 hours.”

Does this report follow the inverted pyramid structure?

- Details of who, what, where and when go first
- Details of why and how are developed later in the report
- Quotations and less important details are included at the end of the report
- Are “paragraphs” only 1 or 2 sentences in length?
- Is the language simple, clear and specific?

e.g. “The storm was so heavy that the residents of Elmvale were shut in their homes while the snow fell. Over 18 inches of snow fell in 12 hours...”

Quotations to include:

“John Smith, a resident of Elmvale said: ‘There was so much snow that it was overwhelming to shovel. Luckily, teenagers helped the elderly clear their snow’...”

