

Writing a business report

WRITING

LEVEL
Intermediate

NUMBER
EN_BE_3807W

LANGUAGE
English





Goals

- Can explain how to structure a detailed business report and summarise my findings in a conclusion.
- Can summarise the ways to present facts clearly and objectively and discuss the importance of double-checking a report for clarity.



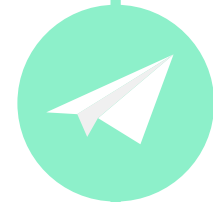
Which do you think is more persuasive?

Hey, boss!

We really need to get some ice lollies for the freezer – I swear I'd work so much better.

Or:

I would like to recommend stocking the freezer with iced treats as a proven way to improve the performance of workers on a warm day.





Preview and warm-up

- In this lesson you will learn how to write a **business report** by providing **facts** and **information** clearly.



This report is intended to show...



Writing a business report

- A **business report** is a **technical** piece of writing. It is written to **prove** something, to **identify a problem**, to **raise concerns** about something or to **present research** on a topic.
- Below are certain things you should bear in mind when writing a **business report**.

- **The reader:** Think about **who** is going to **read** the report and **how much** they **know** about the issue already.
- **Register:** A business report should be written in **formal language**. This means no contractions, no slang or idioms, and using **impersonal structures** such as the **passive voice**.
- **Presenting information:** A report is **fact-based** and **objective**. You can use **graphs** and **tables**. You should also use **bullet points** to make the report easy to read.



Writing a business report

- A **business report** should have a very **clear structure**, making it as **easy to read** as possible.
- Below are the things that a business report should always have.

title	The title should tell the reader exactly what the report is about.
headings	Each section should have a heading , indicating what it is about.
introduction	In the introduction, explain the problem and say what the purpose of the report is.
body	The body allows you to discuss the issue in more detail and show facts and results.
conclusion	A summary of the report's findings, perhaps advising of potential solutions, should be included in the conclusion .



Writing a business report

- As mentioned earlier, a **business report** should be written in **formal language**.
- Below are some **phrases** which you can use while writing.

introduction	presenting facts	conclusion
The purpose of this report is...	Interviews were conducted with...	To summarise...
The aim of this report is...	Tests were run by...	I have no hesitation in recommending...
This report is intended to show...	According to...	I would like to make the following recommendations:...



After writing

- Here are some **questions** that you should **ask yourself** after you have finished writing your **business report**.

Is all of the information relevant? A business report needs to be concise.

Does the report fulfil the purpose which was outlined in the beginning?

Is the report written clearly and is it easy to read?

Is everything in the report objective? If there is any subjective information, it must be eliminated.





Vocabulary review

to set a target

**to set a
precedent**

**to draw a
conclusion**

**to draw a
parallel
between**



to set a date for

**to draw
attention to**

to run tests

**to run the risk
of**



Vocabulary review



The company has **set a target** to reduce emissions by 20% by 2021.

Such an initiative will **set a precedent** within the firm.



We need to **set a date for** the implementation of the scheme.

We can **draw** several **conclusions** from the data.





Vocabulary review



I would like to **draw your attention to** the table on the right.

We can **draw a parallel** between this scheme and the transport scheme introduced by the government.



The company is going to **run tests** to check for pollution.

We **run the risk of** alienating our partners.





Fill in the gaps

Fill in the gaps with either *draw*, *set* or *run*.

1. The company should _____ a date for the meeting with shareholders.
2. The lab will _____ tests to check for contaminants.
3. Our competitors have _____ some ambitious targets for this quarter.
4. We can _____ some interesting conclusions from the data.
5. If we are too ambitious, we _____ the risk of bankrupting that sector of the company.





Writing

Write your answers to these questions and then share your answers with your teacher.

Have you ever **set a target** that you could not meet?

How often do the council **run tests** on traffic and pollution in your area?

Have you ever worked on a project which **set a precedent** for those to come?

A spiral-bound notebook with lined pages. The pages are white with light blue horizontal ruling. There are faint, large circular icons on the pages, including a pencil, a lightbulb, a magnifying glass, and a speech bubble. The notebook is shown from a slightly elevated angle, with the spiral binding visible on the left side.



Passive voice

- The passive voice is often used to create an **impersonal tone**. This is extremely useful in a business report as it needs to be **objective**.
- **Impersonal structures** also help to make the report more **formal**.



We **made** a mistake.
Mistakes **were made**.



Transform the sentences from active to passive

1. We have set a target to reduce emissions.



A target has been set to reduce emissions.

2. We are going to run tests on traffic noise.



3. We should set a precedent for others in the industry.



4. We must draw a parallel between what is happening now and what happened 5 years ago.



5. We have to set a date for the next meeting.





Vocabulary review

to put into
context

in isolation

to provide
grounds for

on account of

to clarify

owing to

to be a
consequence
of

therefore



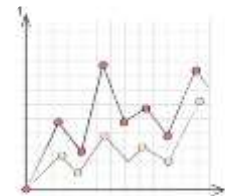


Vocabulary review



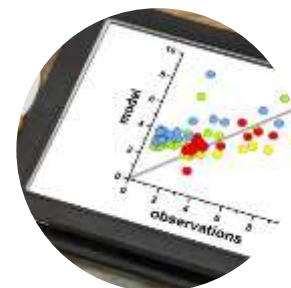
This report **puts** the data **into context**.

We cannot understand this data **in isolation**.



The table on the right helps to **clarify** the issue.

The data **provides grounds for** expanding the scheme.



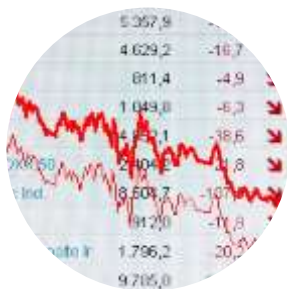


Vocabulary review



Owing to our initiative, productivity has risen by 7%.

On account of objections from the neighbourhood, the scheme is delayed.



It is a consequence of years of fiscal mismanagement.

Therefore, I suggest implementing the scheme as soon as possible.





Fill in the gaps

Fill in the gaps with the words from the previous pages.

1. The meeting was delayed _____ account of the manager being late.
2. We really need to _____ that chart into context, _____ isolation it means very little.
3. The rollout of the scheme will be delayed owing _____ a problem in our plant.
4. The enthusiasm for the scheme provides _____ for its early implementation.





Writing

Think about a current problem you have at work. Using some of the words below, describe the problem.

owing to

a consequence
of

in isolation

on account of

put into context

clarify

A spiral-bound notebook with lined pages and faint circular patterns.



Brainstorm

Now share your problem with your teacher.
Have you ever been in a similar situation?
Come up with some solutions together.





Example of a business report

Here is a short example of a business report so that you are familiar with the structure of such a piece of writing.

Report on creating more parking spaces at Fairfax Ltd.

Introduction

The aim of this report is to explore whether the company needs to create more parking spaces.

The current situation

As the chart shows, at present more than 70% of employees drive to work.

Conclusion

I would like to make the following recommendations:

- The company should not create any more parking spaces.



Example of a business report

Here is a longer example of the main body of the previous business report.

The current transportation situation

As the chart shows, at present more than 70% of employees drive to work, and over 50% of those questioned said that they had had a problem parking onsite in the past month. 20% of people take public transport to work and 10% of employees walk or cycle. Of those questioned, around a quarter of car drivers said they would consider taking the bus or cycling to work if conditions were improved.



Example of a business report

Results of the team investigation

Of those who cycle to work, over 75% complained that there are not adequate places to leave bikes onsite. They also said that there are not enough changing facilities in the workplace to allow them to change clothes on arrival and before leaving. There were also complaints about the lack of cycle lanes surrounding the office.

The team also found that there were several cars in the car park which did not belong either to employees or visitors to the site.

What would your recommendations for this report be?



Example of a business report

**Now read the recommendations.
Are they similar to what you thought?**

Conclusion

I would like to make the following recommendations:

- The company should not create any more parking spaces, but should ensure that no unauthorised parking takes place onsite.
- The company needs to create more places to leave bikes securely. We should set a target of an increase of 30%.
- The company must invest in facilities to allow employees to shower and change at work.
- The company must work in parallel with the local council to create more cycle lanes around the site.



Write a report

Now, write a report outlining a change you would like to see at your workplace. For the purposes of this class, you will need to invent data to back up your claims.

A rectangular box containing a series of horizontal lines for writing a report. The lines are arranged in a structured manner, with a single line at the top right, followed by a group of lines on the left side, and another single line at the bottom left.



Feedback

Now read your report to your teacher and classmates.
Your teacher will give you constructive feedback.
Do you have any feedback or questions for your classmates?





Reflect on the goals

Go back to the second slide of the lesson and check if you have achieved all the goals of the lesson.

yes

no





Reflect on this lesson

Think about everything you have seen in this lesson.
What were the most difficult activities or words? The easiest?



If you have time, go over
the most difficult slides again



Answer key

Exercise p. 19

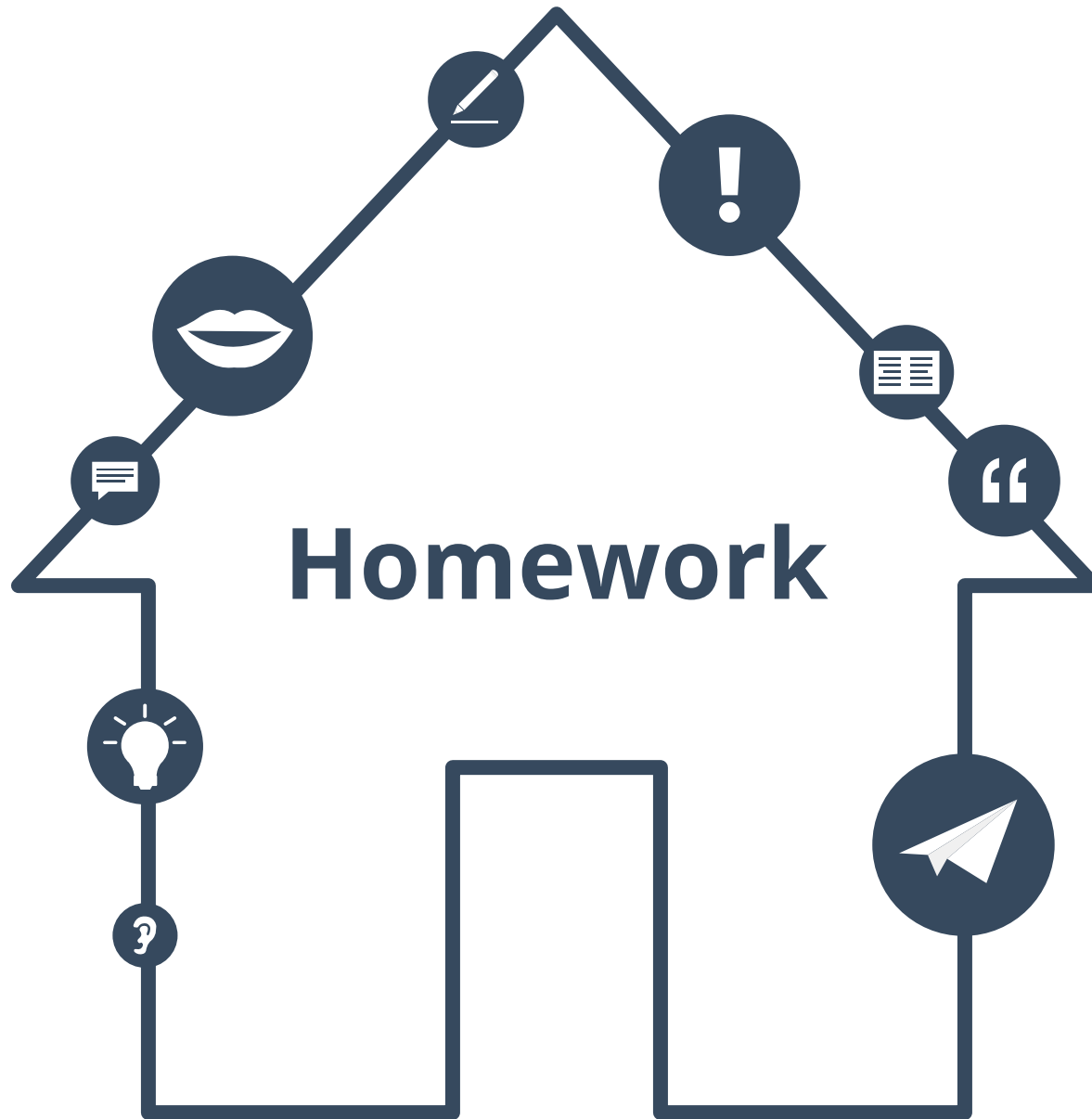
1. on, 2. put/in, 3. to, 4. grounds

Exercise p. 15

2. Tests are going to be run on traffic noise. 3. A precedent should be set for others in the industry. 4. A parallel must be drawn between what is happening now and what happened five years ago. 5. A date has to be set for the next meeting.

Exercise p. 12

1. set, 2. run, 3. set, 4. draw, 5. run





Use this page to plan your ideas for a report which suggests such a course to your boss.

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