

WRITING GUIDE

A report

A report sums up the main information from a presentation, a survey, a meeting or perhaps some kind of incident such as an accident. It is usually written for somebody in authority (your boss, the head of a school, ...).

(1) layout:

recipient (To: ...)

author (From: ...)

date

subject

paragraphs with sub-headings

(2) The subject line clearly describes what the report is about.

(3) Introduction:

Sum up the background of the report, its purpose and the source of information.

(4) Paragraphs for each main point with a clear subheading that explains what the paragraph is about.

(5) style: formal and impersonal

no short forms, no colloquial expressions

Avoid the use of the first person (*I think, ...*) and make use of passive constructions (*It is recommended that ...*)

Don't address the reader! (*no "you"*)

To: World Bank Youth Fund

From: Lukas Meier

Date: 5 May 20..

Subject: The future of e-learning in schools

Introduction

The source of this report is a 2011 survey of 1398 US high school students. They were asked to rate a range of e-learning devices on a scale of 0–5 for various learning tasks. The devices were a desktop PC, a notebook computer, a tablet computer and a smartphone.

Findings

The key findings were that the tablet and the notebook were considered the best tools for most of the tasks, although the desktop PC was rated highest for writing and editing assignments and scored highly for Internet research. The smartphone received the lowest overall rating.

The tablet was rated highest or joint-highest for three out of the five tasks: note taking, Internet research, working together and reading e-textbooks.

Possible reasons

The survey report did not include the reasons for the ratings, but the tablet has many clear advantages for e-learning: it is convenient to carry around and use anywhere; it has a large screen suitable for reading large amounts of text; it is relatively inexpensive and it is perfectly designed for using with interactive e-books.

Although the smartphone is versatile and convenient, its screen is small for reading long texts, it has small keys and perhaps students associate it with free time rather than school work.

Recommendations

If schools are to be given World Bank funding to buy e-learning devices, then tablets should be considered the best option, with notebooks the next best option.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it has been shown that each of the e-learning devices has its strengths and weaknesses, but that overall the tablet is the most promising device for the future of e-learning in schools. It should therefore be considered for World Bank funding.

PHRASE BANK

Introduction:

As requested, this report is to

The purpose of this report is to ...

This report aims to give the reader an idea of ...

The aim of this report is to

- present the findings of
- answer the question if
- provide an overall picture of
- point out that
- analyse
- recommend
- discuss

The report is based on a survey among ...

The source of this report is

The survey was conducted/carried out by ...

The period under review is from ... to ...

Findings:

Always begin with the extremes (the highest/the lowest figures). Mention any trends you find particularly interesting or surprising.

The statistics on suggest/ say that

The data show/suggest that ...

The most significant fact is that ...

The key findings were/are ...

The majority	of the people questioned	thinks/believes that ...
The minority	of the people asked	says that
	of the people surveyed	is of the opinion that ...
	of the respondents	
	of the interviewees	

25 percent	feel that
More than / Less than 40 percent	claim that ...
	believe that ...

A survey conducted by ... found that the vast majority (98%) agree that ...

The number of ... is rather high/low.

In the year ... there was a peak/a rise/a decrease of ... percent.

In ... the number of declined/rose/remained stable.

There are considerable differences/similarities between ...

Looking at it can be observed that ...

Comparing and ... it can be said that ...

In comparison, more than/less than ...

The number of ... is rather high/low.

Possible sub-headings:

General information

Findings

Positive points

Negative points

Recommendations

Conclusion/Recommendations:

In spite of the disadvantages, it is recommended ...

It would be advisable to ...

It would be advantageous to ...

It seems reasonable to ...

Finally, it can be said that ..

Summing up, it can be said ...