

Writing a Report

Matthew Williams • English Language • April 21, 2026

Purpose

A report is a structured factual account written for a specific reader, usually a superior or authority figure.

Types

- 1. **Incident report** — documents an accident, crisis, or unexpected event
- 2. **Eye-witness report** — a first-hand account of something observed
- 3. **Newspaper report** — a factual account written for a general readership
- 4. **Investigative report** — presents findings from a formal inquiry or observation
- 5. **Statistical report** — analyses and interprets numerical data or survey results

Structure

- **Sender's Address** — your full postal address, top left
- **Date** — written in full below the sender's address
- **Recipient** — full name, title/position, institution, and address of the person receiving the report
- **Salutation** — Dear [Title] [Surname]: — use a colon in formal correspondence
- **Subject Line** — Re: [Brief description of the incident or event]
- **Introduction** — general overview: who, what, where, when — give the reader an immediate picture of the incident
- **Body** — one paragraph covering three distinct aspects of the incident in detail
- **Conclusion** — the outcome and any recommendations
- **Close** — complimentary close, signature, full name, title/position, and contact

A report is **three paragraphs** in total: introduction, body, conclusion. The body is a single paragraph — not three separate ones.

Key Conventions

- Written in formal, objective **third person**
- Subject line concisely identifies the incident or event
- Introduction answers the **five Ws**: who, what, where, when, and how
- Body covers three aspects of the incident but remains **one continuous paragraph**
- Avoid emotional language; state facts only

- **Do not use bullet points** — CSEC requires continuous prose throughout; bullet points will cost marks

DOCUMENT EXAMPLE

41 Grove Street Boiston Town St. Ann Jamaica

January 18, 2024

Mr. Fredrick Drayton The Principal Chilton Secondary School Hope Street, Sande Rio, St. Ann, Jamaica

Dear Mr. Drayton:

Re: Report on Fifth Form Field Trip Motor Vehicle Accident

On Friday, January 12, 2024, a motor vehicle accident occurred during the Fifth Form field trip to the Cranbrooke Sugar Estate in St. Ann. The class of twenty-eight students, accompanied by two teachers, was travelling along the Linstead main road when the school bus was struck from behind by a cargo truck. This report details the circumstances of the accident, the immediate medical response, and the findings of the subsequent investigation.

At approximately 10:15 a.m., the school bus — driven by Mr. Carl Bennett — was struck from behind by a cargo truck at the intersection of Linstead Main Road and Longville Avenue, causing moderate structural damage and throwing several students forward in their seats. Emergency services were contacted immediately by Mrs. Sandra Folkes; three students with minor injuries were transported to St. Ann's Bay Hospital and discharged by 3:00 p.m. Police from the St. Ann Traffic Division arrived within fifteen minutes, during which the truck driver admitted to brake failure; he was subsequently cited and his vehicle impounded pending inspection.

The accident was managed swiftly and all students have since returned to school in good health. The school's emergency protocol was followed effectively throughout the incident. It is recommended that all future field trips include a pre-journey vehicle safety check and that supervising teachers receive updated briefings on emergency procedures.

Yours truly, {sig}Anthony Reid Anthony Reid (Mr.) Form Teacher Chilton Secondary School
876-452-3371