

Writing L3WLO5

An Incident Report

Learning Outcome 5: Write a report of an incident with appropriate discourse markers using at least 150 words

EXPLORING WRITTEN ENGLISH

LANGUAGE FOR WRITING Reporting Incidents

Incidents are a series of events that happen. These are usually unusual events or events that can cause problems. When we write reports of incidents, we usually start by summarizing what happened. Then we use past tenses (the simple past, past continuous and past perfect) to describe the events in the correct order and say when they happened. Finally, we usually explain the effects of the incident and what action people should take to learn from it or stop it happening again.

A Read a report of an incident. Answer the questions below.

Last week, we experienced a sandstorm in our town. The storm lasted about 20 minutes and the wind was very strong. My sister and I hadn't expected a sandstorm to happen that day, so we were walking to a store when it started. Suddenly, we realized what was happening and we felt quite scared. We stayed under the roof of a nearby store, but we could see other people struggling to move and falling over in the street. Finally, the storm stopped. Instead of going to the store, we decided to go home because being in the storm had been really unpleasant. From that day, I have always checked the weather forecast to find out if there will be a sandstorm in advance so I don't have the same experience again.

1. What type of incident is the writer reporting? _____
2. What were the effects of the incident on the writer while it was happening? _____
3. What change did the writer decide to make because of the incident after it had happened? _____

B Read the report in exercise A again. Underline the words and phrases for:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. giving the time when the incident happened. | 4. saying that something happens quickly. |
| 2. saying how long the incident was. | 5. saying the last thing that happened. |
| 3. saying what the writer was doing when the incident started. | 6. introducing the effects of the incident. |

EDITING PRACTICE Checking That you Have Used Past Tenses Correctly

You use past tenses to report incidents that happened in the past. However, you need to check your writing to make sure that you used the correct past tenses in your sentences.

Remember to use:

- the past continuous to give background information about what was happening at the time when the incident started.
- the simple past for single events in the past.
- the past perfect simple for an event in the past that happened before another event in the past when you are talking about more than one past event.

C Read the report in exercise A again. **Circle** all the verbs in past tenses. Notice the situation or event that they describe.

WRITING TASK

GOAL You are going to write an incident report.

PLANNING A Choose something unusual, surprising or difficult that has happened to you, or invent something. Make notes on the most important facts about the incident.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

- ☐ Did you include all the important events that occurred?
- ☐ Did you use the correct structure for an incident report?
- ☐ Did you use the words and phrases for reporting incidents correctly?
- ☐ Did you use past tenses correctly?