

Identify the Audience and Purpose

Reports are a type of informative writing, so it is important to think about who you are informing (the audience) and what information they want to find out (the purpose). This will help ensure your report is focused and relevant.

Some possible answers can be found at the end of this document.

For each of the following report briefs, identify:

- Who the audience is
- Why the report is needed
- What the audience want to find out

Report Briefs:

1. Write a report for the Students Union of your university on students' attitudes to binge drinking.
2. Report on the medical effects of binge drinking on university students in the UK for a major alcopop manufacturer.
3. Conduct the experiment into the elasticity of chewing gum, and hand in your lab report to your lecturer by 20th November.
4. After carrying out the experiment into the elasticity of chewing gum, write up your findings in a report for a children's magazine.
5. Report for the charity "Greenpeace" on the use of Facebook amongst 18-25 year olds as a means of social action and protest.
6. Investigate the use of Facebook as a means of social action and protest by 18-25 year olds. This report has been commissioned by the Metropolitan police.

Identify the Audience and Purpose Answers

Note that these are only suggested interpretations of the briefs - your answers may differ.

1) Write a report for the Students Union of your university on students' attitudes to binge drinking.

Audience: Students Union - e.g. sabbatical and other union officers, maybe also union bar managers and staff

Why report is needed: More students are drinking heavily, causing health and social problems at universities. Also possibly problems for bar staff.

What they want to find out: Are students worried or unconcerned about their drinking? Does the Union need to run awareness campaigns, cut happy hours, and offer alternatives to drinking?

2) Report on the medical effects of binge drinking on university students in the UK for a major alcopop manufacturer.

Audience: Alcopop manufacture - e.g. marketing managers, senior managers.

Why the report is needed: Growing pressure on drinks companies to promote responsible drinking.

What they want to find out: What the medical dangers of binge drinking are and how the company can adjust their advertising to avoid accusations of promoting irresponsible drinking.

3) Conduct the experiment into the elasticity of chewing gum, and hand in your lab report to your lecturer by 20th November.

Audience: Your lecturer - e.g. a professional science researcher.

Why the report is needed: To demonstrate that the experiment has been conducted accurately.

What they want to find out: Whether you have understood the experiment, including the methods and the theory behind it, and can interpret the results.

4) After carrying out the experiment into the elasticity of chewing gum, write up your findings in a report for a children's magazine.

Audience: Juvenile readers of the magazine.

Why the report is needed: To show children how a science experiment can be fun and relevant to them.

What they want to find out: What is the most stretchy chewing gum, and how can they do similar experiments themselves.

5) Report for the charity "Greenpeace" on the use of Facebook amongst 18-25 year olds as a means of social action and protest.

Audience: Greenpeace - e.g. campaign officers, fundraisers.

Why the report is needed: More young people are using social networking sites as a way to organise campaigns and social action.

What they want to find out: Can Greenpeace use Facebook as a tool to reach young people and involve them in the charity?

6) Investigate the use of Facebook as a means of social action and protest by 18-25 year olds. This report has been commissioned by the Metropolitan police.

Audience: Metropolitan Police - especially managerial staff concerned with public order, technology staff.

Why the report is needed: More young people are using social networking sites as a way of organising protests and demonstrations.

What they want to find out: How changes in technology result in changes in the way protest groups organise themselves. Can the police anticipate protests by monitoring sites like Facebook?