

# Non-chronological report



## Definition

Non-chronological reports give a reader information about something or somewhere. They are usually about a group of things, e.g. dinosaurs, not one thing in particular, e.g. Dilly the dinosaur. Facts about the subject are organised into paragraphs.

## Purpose

To give information.



## Text plan

- 1 Title
- 2 Introduction
- 3 Series of paragraphs about various aspects of the subject
- 4 Rounding off statement

Usually the subject of the report.

Definition of the subject.

Could be an unusual fact about the subject.



Paragraphs are the key to writing non-chronological reports. Try to use at least two paragraphs after the introduction and before the rounding off statement. Decide what each paragraph is going to be about and only have that information in there.

## LANGUAGE FEATURES

Use the **PRESENT TENSE** if the subject still exists, e.g. *Crocoraffes have scaly skin*. Write in the **PAST TENSE** if the subject does not still exist, e.g. *Dinosaurs had scaly skin*.

Use **TECHNICAL VOCABULARY** (language about the subject), e.g. *Crocoraffes are omnivores*.

Use **ADJECTIVES** to give more information about a fact, e.g. *They also have very sharp teeth and strong jaws*.

## TYPICAL STYLE

Use an **IMPERSONAL VOICE**. Don't say what you think or give your opinions. So, don't write *Crocoraffes are large scary animals* because using the word 'scary' gives your opinion away. You could write *Crocoraffes are large animals* because then you are just stating the facts.

## ★ Tip

Reports can be in the form of letters, encyclopedia entries, information posters or leaflets, as well as a straightforward piece of writing. A non-chronological report on a school might include headings such as: Number of pupils; After school clubs; Location.



## Text example

### Crocoraffes

Crocoraffes are large animals. They can breathe and eat, both in and out of water. They were discovered on April 1st 2000 by the explorer Sir Humbert Bumbert whilst he was trekking through dense jungle.

Crocoraffes are about the size of a large horse. They have scaly skin that has a slightly mottled effect. They have long necks, which they use to reach up into the highest branches for leaves. They also have very sharp teeth and strong jaws in order to catch their prey when swimming underwater. The animal's broad

muscular legs push it quickly through the water.

Crocoraffes are omnivores. This means that they eat both leaves and meat. They are attracted by the tender new shoots of the honey tree and can often cause considerable damage to these trees. In the water, crocoraffes will catch and eat up to fifty large fish in a day.

The jungles of South America appear to be the only place where crocoraffes can be found. They keep to the thickest part of the jungle that is rarely, if ever, visited by man. They make large nests

from jungle creepers and line them with mud from the river bank. This then hardens to create a sturdy home for a pair of crocoraffes and their offspring.

They can live for as long as forty to fifty years and mate for life. During this partnership a couple can produce as many as a hundred offspring, known as crocoraffettes.



## Practice questions

- 1 Sir Humbert Bumbert has found another rare animal on his travels. He has brought it back to display in his own zoo. Write a leaflet that will be on display outside the animal's enclosure at the zoo.  
  
This is a long writing task, so you have 45 minutes to plan, write and check your writing.
- 2 Astronauts have discovered a new planet. Write a short letter from one astronaut to his children telling them what the planet is like.  
  
This is a short writing task, so you have 20 minutes to plan, write and check your writing.

Check your writing against the text plan and key language features checklist on page 16.

See page 62 for an example answer.

This task was to write a report in the form of a brief letter. The audience was the astronaut's children so you could have used a chatty, informal style. But, you should still have sorted the facts into paragraphs. The paragraphs could have been about what the planet looks like, what the aliens who live there do and what is grown on the planet.

This task was to write a report in the form of a leaflet. The leaflet will be on display at a zoo, so the audience would be the general public. This means that you need to write in a formal style. You should have introduced and defined the animal, then written another two or three paragraphs. Each paragraph should be about a particular aspect of the animal. You should not have included very much about the discovery of the animal, otherwise it will turn into a recount before your very eyes!

## HOW DID YOU DO?

# Theme

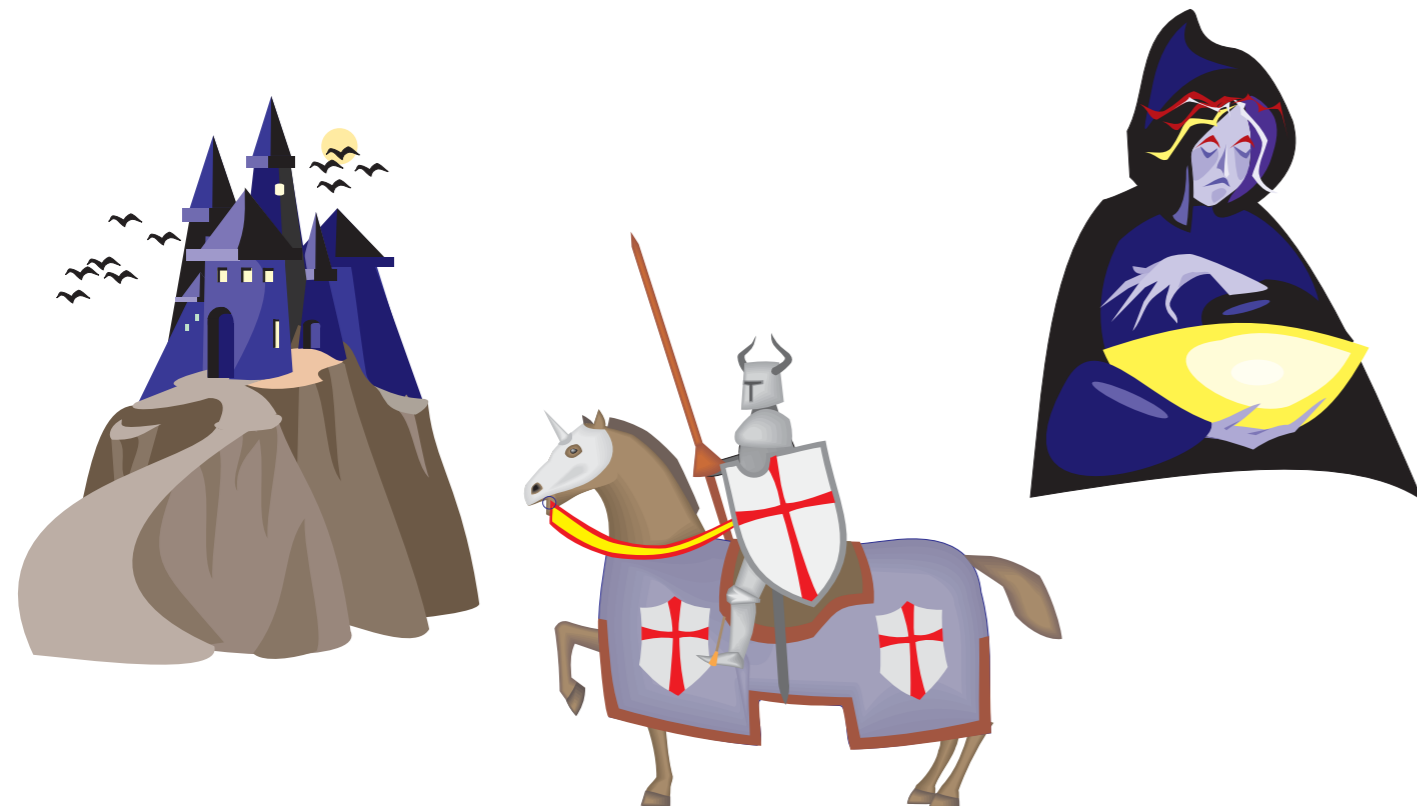
Here we are looking at just a few story themes. You could try writing each of them or really concentrating on perhaps two. Make sure that you have the structure of each theme really clear in your head.

## Good overcomes evil

What stories can you think of where this is the theme? Snow White and Jack the Giant Killer are examples. So are the Harry Potter stories. But you don't have time in the National Tests to write a Harry Potter! The basic structure goes something like this:

<b>BEGINNING</b>	Two main characters are introduced – one good and one evil. Setting is established.
<b>BUILD UP</b>	Good character is innocently going about normal life. Evil character is plotting and scheming.
<b>PROBLEM</b>	Evil character tricks and threatens to harm good character.
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	Good character outwits evil character.
<b>ENDING</b>	Everything is OK. The characters reflect or think about what happened.

Once you've got the hang of the structure you can start to experiment. You might write a story about a person overcoming a fear or a bully. It's still a similar structure.



## Lost or found

Again, think of stories that you know where the main character either loses or finds something or somebody, e.g. The Lord of the Rings. This type of story might look like this:

<b>BEGINNING</b>	Introduce one main character and establish the setting.
<b>BUILD UP</b>	The story gets going – the character starts to do something quite normal.
<b>PROBLEM</b>	The character finds or loses something or someone (could be the second main character).
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	The lost thing/person is returned. The found thing/person turns out to be not quite what it seemed.
<b>ENDING</b>	Everything is OK. The characters reflect or think about what happened.

How could you use this structure and theme in a slightly different way? A story about someone dying or losing their sight is pretty serious stuff but it's still the same basic structure.

## Wishing or wanting

Traditional tales often have these themes, e.g. Cinderella. But you could write modern versions.

<b>BEGINNING</b>	Introduce the main character and establish the setting. Identify what the main character is wishing for or wanting.
<b>BUILD UP</b>	The character goes in search of their wish.
<b>PROBLEM</b>	The character is stopped from getting what they want, perhaps by a second character.
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	The character gets what they want.
<b>ENDING</b>	The character reflects on whether getting their wish was really worth it.

