

Write On! This is What I Saw

Writing About an Accident or Crime

When you wrote about your favorite piece of clothing, did you mention the color? The fabric? You probably described your favorite piece of clothing in detail. It is that same detail that someone would want if he was asking you about an accident. Have you ever had an accident? Maybe you fell off a bike or a skateboard. Maybe you hit a deer or a telephone pole with your car. You were probably asked several questions about what happened. Perhaps you have never had an accident, but have seen one. Or maybe you have witnessed a crime. It is important to give a clear report of what happened. In situations like this, we may be scared or in shock. It is easy to forget what happened or what we saw. In this lesson, you will learn to create a list of important information that you will be able to share.

If you see an accident, you should grab a pen or pencil and a piece of paper, even a napkin, and make a list of what you remember. Some of the things you can list include the following:

- color of clothing or vehicles
- gender of people involved
- what was said
- which direction participants may have left in
- time of day
- weather conditions
- anything you think may be helpful



Check it Out!

Evidence vs. Emotions in the Reading on the Move lesson series may also help you with writing your account.

Find it on the Internet at

www.migrant.net/migrant/publications/index.htm

It is important that you do NOT talk to other witnesses until you have made your list. When we talk to other people, sometimes it can make us think we are wrong about what we think happened.

Write On! This is What I Saw



Let's Give It a Try

You witness the following scene. You may read this passage only **ONE** time, so read it carefully.

You are in a restaurant eating lunch and looking out the window. It is raining. A woman in a pink sweater and blue jeans is walking down Main Street carrying an umbrella. A blue car passes her. It has a little boy in a green rain jacket yelling out the window. His brown teddy bear drops out the window and falls into the street. A gray pick-up truck drives over the teddy bear and hits a puddle. The water splashes the woman in the pink sweater. She yells at the driver of the truck who is a young man with brown hair wearing a red hoodie. A black limo passes the woman and pulls up in front of the hotel she is walking past. A man in a black suit gets out and puts his red umbrella up. He has a brown paper bag in his hand. It has a store name on it. The woman in the pink sweater walks past the hotel and sees the gray pick-up parked on the street. She puts her umbrella down and drags it along the side of the truck. When she gets to the front of the truck she hits the hood with her umbrella. She crosses the street and walks around the corner. The blue car comes back and screeches to a stop in the street. A woman in a blue shirt and pink leggings gets out and grabs the teddy bear. She looks angry. She gets back in the car and slams the door, then speeds off. The man in the gray pick-up comes out of the hotel and sees that his truck is damaged. He sees you looking out the window and comes over to ask what you saw.

Write On! This is What I Saw

Let's look at the list of details we could have given the man or the police.

- The lady was wearing a pink sweater and blue jeans.
- She had an umbrella.
- She was walking on the street.
- A gray truck drove past her.
- The driver hit a puddle that splashed her.
- She yelled at the driver.
- The driver was a young man.
- He had brown hair.
- He wore a red hoodie.
- The woman saw his truck on the street.
- She ran her umbrella along the side of the truck.
- She hit the truck hood with her umbrella.
- She crossed the street and went around the corner.



This is a lot of information that the police could use to catch the woman who committed the crime. When making a list, you should include as much as you can remember. It is better to have too much information.

Was that fun?

How did you do?

Would you like to try that again?

Let's Try It Again



Next we are going to learn about point of view. Everyone sees an accident differently. Below is the scene of an accident. You may only read the paragraph **ONCE**. After that, make a list of the important information as it was experienced by the different people involved.

A young man in a yellow tee shirt and blue jeans is riding a black bike along a country road toward a big farm. He is going to work. There is a large, green tractor coming toward him down the road. The driver has overalls on, but no shirt. He has a bale fork on the front of his tractor. There is a brown dog running beside the tractor. The dog darts out. The tractor swerves to miss the dog. The tractor does not hit the boy on the bike, but it scares him. The boy steers his bike off the road. The tire hits a rut and the bike and rider are thrown into the ditch. He is lying face down in the ditch. A woman in white shorts and a blue top driving a truck was behind the bike rider. She sees the accident. She slams on her brakes. She jumps out of her truck and runs to the boy in the ditch. The tractor hasn't come back onto his side of the road completely. When he passes the truck, a tine of the bale fork scrapes the door. It catches in the bed of the truck and drags the truck ten feet. The woman in the truck is checking on the boy. No one is injured. She calls for an ambulance. The medics and the police arrive and talk to everyone at the scene.

If you were the boy on the bike, what would you tell them?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Remember:
You can only report
what the boy
would have seen.

Write On! This is What I Saw

If you were the tractor driver, what would you tell them?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



Do you see that there is a difference in the information each person could give? This is called **point of view**. As the bike rider, you must leave out any information about the tractor hitting the truck. You didn't see that. You were lying in a ditch.

As the tractor driver, you could give a lot more information. You saw everything that happened. The tractor driver had the best point of view, but because the accident was his fault, he may not be truthful.

After the police talked to all three people, they made a report. This is how investigators can figure out what really happened.

Police and investigators are not the only people who are good at solving mysteries. Many parents have that talent. When you were a child, did you ever try to blame your brother or sister for something they didn't do? Did *you* ever get blamed for something you didn't do? Parents will do investigations of their own to figure out who is telling the truth. You have probably done this yourself. It is important to get all the information before making decisions.



Check it Out!

A Different Point of View in the **Reading on the Move** lesson series may also help you with writing your account.

Find it on the Internet at

www.migrant.net/migrant/publications/index.htm

Report-writing Checklist

- I wrote a list of information about an accident.
- I understand what point of view means.
- I tried to include all important information.

Writing Traits Scored in this Lesson

	Great Job 5 points	Almost There 3 points	Keep Working 1 point
Sentence Fluency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences start in different ways. • Sentence length varies. • The piece flows smoothly when read aloud. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some sentences start in different ways. • Most of the sentences vary in length. • Most of the paper flows smoothly when read aloud. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are too many short sentences. • All sentences start the same way. • The writing does not flow smoothly.
Conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences are complete. • Punctuation and capitalization are used correctly. • Spelling is correct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences are complete. • Capital letters and periods are used. • Spelling is mostly correct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences run together. • Punctuation and capitalization are inconsistent. • Several words are misspelled.

Words to Know

details: specific individual parts or aspects of an item or event

point of view: a position from which something is observed

