Your teacher wants a written report on the beluga whale. Not to worry. Use these organizational tools so you can stay afloat while writing a report.

**STEPS TO SUCCESS:** Your report will follow the format of a descriptive or expository essay and should consist of a main idea, followed by supporting details and a conclusion. Use this basic structure for each paragraph as well as the whole report, and you’ll be on the right track.

1. **Introduction**
   State your main idea.
   The beluga whale is a common and important species of whale.

2. **Body**
   Provide supporting points for your main idea.
   The beluga whale is one of the smallest whale species.
   It is also known as the “white whale” because of its distinctive coloring.
   These whales are common in the Arctic Ocean’s coastal waters.

   Then expand on those points with further description, explanation, or discussion.
   The beluga whale is one of the smallest whale species.
   Belugas range in size from 13 to 20 feet (4 to 6.1 m) in length.
   It is also known as the “white whale” because of its distinctive coloring.
   Belugas are born gray or brown. They fade to white at around five years old.
   These whales are common in the Arctic Ocean’s coastal waters.
   Some Arctic belugas migrate south in large herds when sea ice freezes over.

3. **Conclusion**
   Wrap it up with a summary of your whole paper.
   Because of its unique coloring and unusual features, belugas are among the most familiar and easily distinguishable of all the whales.

**KEY INFORMATION**

Here are some things you should consider including in your report:

- What does your animal look like?
- To what other species is it related?
- How does it move?
- Where does it live?
- What does it eat?
- What are its predators?
- How long does it live?
- Is it endangered?
- Why do you find it interesting?

**SEPARATE FACT FROM FICTION:** Your animal may have been featured in a movie or in myths and legends. Compare and contrast how the animal has been portrayed with how it behaves in reality. For example, penguins can’t dance the way they do in Happy Feet.

**PROOFREAD AND REVISE:** As with any great essay, when you’re finished, check for misspellings, grammatical mistakes, and punctuation errors. It often helps to have someone else proofread your work, too, as he or she may catch things you have missed. Also, look for ways to make your sentences and paragraphs even better. Add more descriptive language, choosing just the right verbs, adverbs, and adjectives to make your writing come alive.

**BE CREATIVE:** Use visual aids to make your report come to life. Include an animal photo file with interesting images found in magazines or printed from websites. Or draw your own! You can also build a miniature animal habitat diorama. Use creativity to help communicate your passion for the subject.

**THE FINAL RESULT:** Put it all together in one final, polished draft. Make it neat and clean, and remember to cite your references.