

# Writing and Following Instructions

## Teacher Instructions Page

Getting students to understand the importance of following instructions is not always an easy task, but it is definitely worth the effort. What's the best way to teach such an important skill? To teach this lesson it may simply be better to show than to tell.

### Preparation:

- Bring a jacket or coat to class.
- Make copies of the worksheets on pages 74 and 75.
- Pass out copies of the worksheet on page 74; read the material on this page to the class.
- Pass out copies of the worksheet on page 75.
- Follow the directions given for Section A of Part 2 on page 75.

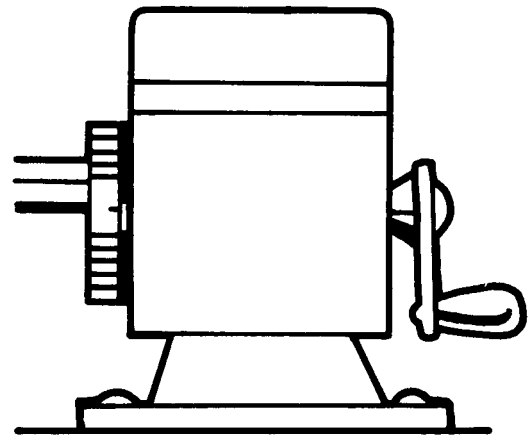


When everyone has finished writing instructions for how to put on a jacket, ask for a volunteer to read his or her paper out loud. As the student reads his instructions, try to put on the jacket.

The task will be nearly impossible because most students do not even begin with the most basic instruction: pick up the jacket. It is hard to put on something that is not in your hands.

After two or three students have read their instructions, discuss what changes are needed for the instructions to be correct.

Now tell the students to work on Section B of the worksheet and to write instructions, for sharpening a pencil. When everyone has finished, ask for a volunteer to go to the pencil sharpener. Next, have someone read his or her instructions. Instructions this time should be more accurate as students should begin to understand the importance of detail when writing directions. Be sure and point out that following and listening to instructions is as important as giving good instructions. Even a good explanation will not work if the other person doesn't pay attention to the details.



# Writing and Following Instructions *(cont.)*

## Part 1

Read the following conversation between a teacher and a student:

**Teacher:** Write your name in the upper right-hand corner of your paper and then place your paper in the basket.

**Student:** Where do I write my name again?

**Teacher:** The same place you've written it every day, all year long.

**Student:** Do I have to write my last name, too?

**Teacher:** If your last name is Slammerkowinjowskinovinski, then no. Everyone else, yes.

**Student:** Where did you say to write our names again?

**Teacher:** In the upper right-hand corner. No, that's the left-hand corner.

**Student:** I can't find my pencil. Do you have one I can borrow?

**Teacher:** I'm not a bookstore.

**Student:** Well, I don't see how you expect me to write my name without a pencil.

**Teacher:** Just write your name in the upper right-hand corner of your paper!

**Student:** I don't have a pencil. This isn't fair!

**Teacher:** Fair is where you go to get a ribbon for your hog.

**Student:** Did she just call me a hog?

**Teacher:** Please give me strength.

**Student:** Was that the bell? I know what that means. Hey, what is it I'm supposed to do with this paper?

**Teacher:** Everyone should learn how to give and follow directions.

Some helpful hints on giving instructions or directions are as follows:

- Keep the instructions simple.
- Tell or write the instructions in a specific order.
- Use visuals when needed.
- Go back over the instructions for clarity.

The best way to follow directions is by learning to listen. Follow the instructions exactly as they are given. How do you accomplish this? Practice. Practice. Practice.

# Writing and Following Instructions *(cont.)*

## Part 2

### Section A

**Directions:** Imagine your friend from the Bahamas has never before worn a coat. He is about to go on a cruise to Alaska, so he will need to wear one when he goes on his trip.

In the space provided, write directions to your friend so he will know how to put on his new coat.

**Note:** Work on Section A only. Do not complete Section B until your teacher asks you to begin.

### Instructions for How to Put on a Coat

### Section B

**Directions:** Your best friend always uses a mechanical pencil, but she is out of lead, and she had to purchase a nonmechanical pencil from the bookstore to use during math class. There's only one small problem: your friend doesn't know how use the pencil sharpener.

In the space provided, write instructions for your friend on how to use the pencil sharpener.

### Instructions for Using a Pencil Sharpener