

Topics for Directional Process

The following topic suggestions connect to p. 163 of *Acting on Words*, where discussion of directional process writing concludes.

Expository

1. Write a set of instructions for a simple, everyday task such as brushing your teeth, putting on a pair of jeans, taking a shower, tying your shoes, or making a pot of coffee. Assume that your reader is an intelligent adult who for strange and obscure reasons has never performed the task before.

2. Write a set of instructions for a specialized process that other people in your class might not know how to perform. Here are some appropriate topics:

- How to play a simple card game
- How to change a bicycle tire
- How to rescue a drowning person
- How to stretch after running
- How to make bread
- How to edit a video
- How to develop film

3. Write a letter persuading a friend or family member to perform a particular process or procedure. At least one paragraph should instruct your reader how to perform that procedure. Here are some possibilities:

- Persuade your grandmother, who insists she can't work her VCR, to tape a show for you.

- Persuade a friend to apply for a parking permit for you.
- Persuade your friend that she should try a new way of styling her hair.
- Persuade your technophobic brother to open an email account.
- Persuade your parents to start a compost bin.

Critical

1. Find a set of instructions in your house or school—the manual for programming your VCR, your school’s instructions for requesting tuition refunds, your telephone company’s instructions for setting up voice mail, etc. Evaluate the instructions. Could you follow them successfully? Why or why not? Identify specific strengths or weaknesses in them.

If possible, share your sample instructions with your classmates and instructors. Review the sample instructions brought in by classmates. Which set of instructions is the best of the lot, and which is the worst? Why?