



NEW!

Survival Writing Skills for the Workplace

by Carl Perrin

Students who learn to write effectively will be better prepared than their peers for a successful future in the world of work. You can help prepare your students with the strong writing skills they need by guiding them through the real-life assignments in *Survival Writing Skills for the Workplace*. This book leads students through the writing process step by step, from generating ideas and producing a first draft to shaping their writing for a specific audience and making final revisions. In the process, students learn about basic writing mechanics, word use, spelling, and punctuation. Each assignment is based on relevant, work-related activities, such as creating reports and documenting equipment failure. The challenging assignments in *Survival Writing Skills for the Workplace* will help make your students better writers, improving their outlook for successful academic and professional futures.

Key Benefits

- Students are guided step by step through the writing process with challenging, real-life assignments from the world of work.
- As they write, students learn about basic writing mechanics, word use, spelling, and punctuation.
- Projects give students practice in the different kinds of writing needed for various purposes and target audiences.

Program Components

STUDENT ACTIVITY TEXT

- Activities and instruction cover such major topics as grammar, spelling, punctuation, creating an outline, revising and editing, targeting a specific

audience, and identifying with the reader.

- Students are first given step-by-step guidance through the writing process as they develop a first draft and then shape it to target a specific audience.
- Next, students progress from writing instructions for simple everyday tasks to creating sections of an employee manual, writing directions for a job, and producing company and job descriptions.
- Finally, students apply their writing and grammar skills to longer, more practical tasks. These include maintaining a log, documenting equipment failure, recording the minutes of a meeting, and creating an incident report.
- A peer assessment review element is also included.

Level: Grade 9-Adult

**Target subject areas: Business, Adult/Vocational,
English/Language Arts**

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1. Writing Clear Instructions

Welcome to the real world! It's a world in which communication is an important key to success. The activities in this chapter may not turn you into a famous author like Mary Higgins Clark or Stephen King, but they will teach you how to survive in the written world. In fact, you will encounter the types of writing assignments that you may find on your next job.

Sometimes you might have to write instructions to tell other people how to do your job. Once you learn how to do something, you can do that job without thinking about it. You may forget how hard it might have been to learn the job when first beginning.

However, if you are going to teach that job to another person, you need to put yourself in that person's place. You need to spell everything out and to be especially careful to explain things that you have learned to do without thinking.

In the next few pages, you will learn to clarify each step in your own mind. Making the steps clear in your own mind will help you to explain them to others.

To do that, you have to go back in your own mind to the time when you were learning the skill. Then form a mental picture of the person who will be reading the directions and aim your writing for that reader.

- Step 1:** Make a list of the major steps.
- Step 2:** Gather enough facts to get your directions across, but do not include too many extra details that might confuse the reader.
- Step 3:** Put the list in order.
- Step 4:** Put yourself in the reader's place. Does the reader have the knowledge or expertise to understand the directions?
- Step 5:** Revise your list to fit the reader. What steps will need further explanation or clarification to be sure the reader understands the directions?
- Step 6:** Rewrite the list of major steps.

You are always learning new ways of doing things and learning how to run new equipment. Once you become skillful with the new methods or new equipment, you might be asked to write a set of instructions so other people can do the same job.

To write instructions, you will make a list, gather more facts, put the list in order, and write a first draft. You will put yourself in the reader's place, clarify your ideas and your plan, revise, and finally edit your instructions.

You're going to start with a simple process: sewing a button on a shirt. If you have never done this, you probably have seen someone else do it.

Look at the directions for sewing a button on a shirt.

How to Sew a Button on a Shirt

1. Thread the needle.
2. Put the button in place.
3. Push the needle through the shirt from underneath the button.
4. Push the needle back down through the button and the shirt.
5. Tie the thread underneath the button.
6. Continue pushing the needle and thread up through one of the holes in the button and down through another.
7. When you have finished sewing the button to the shirt, tie the end of the thread and cut it.

When you try to explain the "simple" job of sewing a button on a shirt, you begin to realize how much is involved in this "simple" job. You're probably not at all satisfied with your list. For example, the list starts with the direction, "Thread the needle." Now, if someone doesn't know how to sew a button, that person probably doesn't know how to thread a needle either.

TIP Write down any of the steps in the list that might need further explanation.

