

Process Notes -- 075/110 A Process Paragraph/Essay

1. A process paragraph or essay explains how to do something--how to tune an engine, how to make junk sculpture, how to water ski, etc.
2. Apply some type of order to your process paragraph or essay.
 - A. One type of order which can be used is enumerative order. (Think in terms of division into steps, stages, phases, actions, procedures, etc.)

The first step (stage, procedure, etc.)
The second step (stage, procedure, etc.)
The third step (stage, procedure, etc.)

Used with a complicated process which requires precise division into steps.

- B. Another type of order which can be used is chronological or time order:

First	Soon
Next	Afterwards
Then	Meanwhile
Later	Finally (last)

Often used for a less complex process which does not require precise division into steps.

3. Notice how enumerative order and chronological order also provide clear, strong transition words. Other transitions may be used for emphasis and clarity throughout the process paragraph or essay.
4. Two basic approaches for a topic sentence or thesis statement in a process paragraph or essay:
 - A. A certain process is easier or harder than it looks.
 - B. Something worthwhile can be obtained or achieved by following a certain process.
5. Develop each of your steps (points) with an explanation and an example or two. Don't just "drop" each point after citing it. (Development of each step is especially important in an essay. In a paragraph it is often sufficient to follow each step with one sentence of explanation or one example. In an essay, however, each step must be developed as a complete paragraph.)

6. Avoid recipes as a topic. Also avoid writing in any style that sounds like a recipe, an inventory, or an instruction manual. Don't omit articles (a, an, the) and don't write in clipped (incomplete) sentences.

7. Avoid writing in second person: (you, your, yours, yourself, yourselves) unless your instructor indicates otherwise: Check with your instructor about using first (I, we) or third (he/she, one, it) person.

8. Pick a topic about which you have sufficient knowledge. Some samples are listed below:
 1. How to get a date.
 2. How to enter a contest.
 3. How to study for a test.
 4. How to trim a Christmas tree.
 5. How to clean a car, a bathroom, a floor, etc.
 6. How to begin a collection or hobby.
 7. How a historical event occurred.
 8. How to cure a cold or a hangover.
 9. How to lose or gain weight.
 10. How to vacation on five dollars a day.
 11. How to plan a perfect party, wedding, funeral, birthday.
 12. How to select a car, house, apartment.
 13. How to succeed or fail in a job interview.
 14. How to choose a wig.
 15. How to build a board fence, a birdhouse, etc....
 16. How to annoy a teacher, parent waiter, etc. (consider other humorous topics, too. They often make for creative paragraphs or essays.)