

## Teaching Tip: Giving Instructions

Here is a truly practical teaching tip. Give simple instructions. This is as basic and as fruitful as putting your car into drive before driving down the street. So simple; so effective.

Make sure that when you give instructions they are simple. Wordy instructions are hard to follow. Simple instructions are easy to follow so people are more likely to follow them. Here is an example of instructions given in a wordy way. After you have read them, reword them in less than thirty words (it is currently 178 words).

“Okay friends. I have put a whole bunch of papers around the room. I used blue paper this week. Remember last week when we had yellow paper ‘cause we were doing that thing with Star Wars and Kyle picked his nose and ate it. That was so funny and take your marker that I am going to give out. Wait. I’ll give it out now. And then go around. Wait don’t use the markers yet. Come back. Go around and on each paper there will be one questions and you have to answer it. For example, if the question is how tall are you, I would say that I am 5’3” because even though we use the metric system for measuring stuff, I don’t know how tall I am in centimetres but it doesn’t matter. Just answer the question. Don’t think about it that much ‘cause we’re not going to be using your answers any way. I don’t actually care what you say. And don’t talk while you are doing it because you don’t need to. Okay. Go.”

My answer is on page 175.