**Instructions**

**Score 4 Benchmark Paper** The writing is focused on the topic and purpose given in the prompt. The essay conveys a sense of completeness, and its strong organizational structure makes it easy to follow. The introduction and conclusion are engaging, and order words connect ideas. All the steps are included, given in order, and well supported with exact details (Recreation departments, park rangers, maps, and travel books; a roll-up sandwich loaded with spinach, cheese, and tomatoes). A mature command of language is evidenced by the writer’s vivid word choice (energized, steep, rugged, estimate, destination, soaked, cooperates), use of an apt simile (like a ravenous bear), and fluency with complex sentences (If you are tired of school routines, a hike may be just what you need. Consider these questions as you talk about possible choices.). The effective use of questions and variation of sentence kinds and structures help create a conversational tone and the essay’s strong voice.

**Score 3 Benchmark Paper** The paper is focused on the topic and purpose given in the prompt. The paper has some minor organizational problems—the sentences in paragraph 5 belong in paragraph 2, and the last two sentences in paragraph 6 wander off topic. The steps are given in order, and a paragraph discusses each one. The introduction is not interesting, and the conclusion is very brief. Some steps in the instructions are well supported with details that give exact positioning for the headstand, but other steps lack support (paragraphs 7 and 9). Some word choice is interesting (lace the fingers together, Your hands will make a little cradle). There are enough order words. Most sentences are varied, but a few are choppy. The writer’s voice is fairly strong.

**Score 2 Benchmark Paper** The writer has attempted to focus on the topic and purpose given in the prompt but has been only partially successful. Paragraph 5 is completely off topic; other paragraphs are only vaguely related to instructions. Steps are given in no particular order. Some steps (such as paragraph 6) only hint at what is meant. The paper lacks an introduction and conclusion. There are far too few order words. Supporting details for the steps are vague (There are special ways to do it. There is still a lot to do. Then you have to take care of everything.) or absent. Word choice is bland and sometimes confusing. All sentences are simple and quite choppy. The writer’s voice does not come through.
Instructions (continued)

Score 1  Benchmark Paper  The paper is only minimally focused on the topic and purpose given in the prompt. The paper lacks steps, support for steps, an introduction, a conclusion, and a list of materials. There are no order words. Sentences are poorly developed, and word choice is immature.