Dear Family,

Our class is starting a unit called Writing Instructions. Students will read and discuss a published model, “Build a Bird Feeder.” They will also read a student model about how to build a snowman. These models will help students learn the characteristics of well-written instructions. Then students will use the writing process to write their own instructions. They will list all needed materials, include all steps in the correct order, and give details that make each step clear. They will also revise sentences to improve their writing. Here are some ways for you to help your child develop these skills.

Homework

Have your child complete the exercise below and return it to his or her teacher on ____________________.

Help your child practice choosing a topic. Have your child look around the house for three or four things that he or she has made, such as a pencil holder, a mobile, a clay animal, or a bookmark. Have your child list the items on a separate sheet of paper. Read through the list and discuss whether or not each item would be a fun or interesting topic for writing instructions. Ask your child to circle his or her favorite topic.

Activities

Home Cooking Share a favorite recipe with your child. It can be as simple as a sandwich or a salad recipe. Help your child write ingredients and step-by-step directions on an index card.

Getting There With your child, walk from one area of your home to another. As you walk, have your child say directions that tell what you are doing. For example, From the kitchen, turn left. Walk nine steps. Next, turn left into the hallway . . . . Continue with this activity, making longer trips around your house, yard, and neighborhood.

Reading Tip

Here are some books that your child might enjoy.

Play and Find Out About Science by Janice VanCleave
Peas and Honey! Recipes for Kids (With a Pinch of Poetry) by Kimberly Colen

Check out Kids’ Place Houghton Mifflin English! www.eduplace.com/kids/hme/