

Frustrating Instructions:

Give everyone a small index card. Tell students they are not allowed to talk or ask questions no matter what! (They will still begin asking questions, so tell them they are to just follow your directions as you say...NO QUESTIONS.) Read the following instructions to them and tell them to follow your directions by drawing on the index card.

- Draw a vertical rectangle.
- On the top of the rectangle, draw a triangle.
- Inside the rectangle, draw a smaller rectangle.
- Color the rectangle blue.
- Put a star in it.
- Draw a circle.
- Draw a large polygon next to the circle.
- Color it yellow.

Comments: Some students will go crazy because they won't know vertical or polygon. Others will say how big or how small. Others will wonder which rectangle to color blue. Where do they put the star? What is the "it" they color yellow? Etc.- Just continue telling them NO QUESTIONS...Just follow the directions. To capture the moment you can write a few of their comments down and read them back at the end.

Teacher: You should draw this picture the way you would follow the instructions. Show your picture at the end. Ask students if all of their pictures look like yours. Have them compare pictures with other students. Then ask them why they do not all look alike if everyone followed the same instructions. You will then discuss with them the important parts you need if you are to tell someone "how to" do something. This will also include materials because many students will say they shouldn't color blue or yellow because they didn't know to have those colors on their desk. Talk about the importance of direction words (location, size, etc.) and time order words.