

## Paper 2: Process Analysis Writing

Process analysis is a type of expository writing.

*What's the goal of process analysis writing?*

The goal of all process analysis writing is the same: to teach the reader **about a process**. Cookbooks, car repair books, computer manuals, sewing books, business books ... these are examples of process analysis writing. Directions for washing your new jeans, directions for putting together furniture, or a book about how to succeed in business are process analysis, too. In other words, process analysis examines a series of actions that bring about a particular result.

**There are two basic kinds of process analysis: *directional* and *informational*.**

The **directional type** explains *how to do something* (for example, how to get from one place to another or how to prepare for a job interview).

The **informational type** explains *how something works or happens* (for example, how a computer works, how oil is refined, how calculators are manufactured, or how a dictatorship was overthrown).

We are all familiar with the many forms of the **directional approach**. We see it in cookbooks, instruction manuals, handbooks, rule books, and textbooks of various sorts. The directional approach may be used for any subject that calls for how-to-do-it guidance: writing an essay, achieving success in business, coping with gadgets, managing personal finances, or putting an end to procrastination. In each case, we examine the situation carefully, clarify our purpose, and identify our audience. We also need to consider the kind and amount of information required to complete the process, being careful not to overestimate what our audience knows about the subject. We would then move on to establish as simple a sequence as possible for the process. The sequence could be *chronological* (by time) or *by importance*.

The **informational approach** provides readers with thorough understanding of a process that they would like to know about: how a friend settled on a particular college, how earthquakes get started, or how lasers are used in surgery. In informative process, the emphasis shifts from how-to-do-it instructions to how-it-is-done explanations.

**Topics.** First, consider some **bad topics**. A bad topic for this kind of writing could have any of these problems:

- ★ Too few steps: like “How to blink your eyes.”
- ★ Too many steps: like “How to design, build, paint, and decorate a new house.”
- ★ Not interesting enough: “How to turn off a computer.”
- ★ Too specific to one person: “How I get ready for bed every night.” (Notice, this could be a great topic for a personal essay – but the controlling idea of this topic is really “Information about me,” not “Teaching the reader how to do something.”)
- ★ Too directional: In Level 8, we want to truly **analyze** a process - break it down in detail and examine it. Let's move beyond simply stating directions. (In other words, absolutely NO cooking or repair topics!)

## There are several major topic types.

### Scientific or natural:

This style is often used in textbooks, of course. The goal is to teach us about a process in the world that may be invisible to us. It is almost always **chronological** in organization.

Examples of good topics for this type:

- How photosynthesis works
- How clouds form
- How global warming leads to ocean acidification
- How the modern horse evolved
- How medications help children with ADHD

### Historic:

Again, this style is common in textbooks, and we often see it in articles. Its goal is to explain how something happened - how a social change occurred, a law was passed or a war began. It is often **chronological**, but can often be organized by **importance**.

Examples of good topics for this type:

- How the battle at Antietam affected the outcome of the Civil War
- How the meltdown of Chernobyl affected the stock market
- How women's roles in American society have changes since the 1960's
- How the Crusades damaged Europe
- How American law changed after 9/11

### Advisory:

This style is often seen in "self-help" books. Unlike the other types, anyone with a clear opinion can write this well; you don't have to be an "expert." It is personal and it explores the feelings and values of the person giving advice. It can be **chronological**, but is usually organized by **importance**.

Examples of good topics for this type:

- How to be a good boyfriend
- How to end a bad relationship
- How to heal after the loss of a loved one
- How to be a supportive parent
- How to manage clashes in the home within a bi-cultural marriage
- How to deal with experiencing racism

Develop the **advisory** style with description, advice, examples, negation, and analysis.

**Organization.** Most topics should be organized by time: what happens **first** must be followed by the **next step**. However, some topics should be organized by **importance**.

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**Exercise 1.**

For each topic, decide: 1) Is it directional or informational? 2) Should the essay using this topic be organized by *time* or *importance*?

Writing a Good Paper

How to Approach a Shoplifter

How to Detect Counterfeit Money

How a Meeting Is Conducted

How I Selected a Mate

Balancing a Budget

Directional

Preparing for a Trip

How to Impress an Interviewer

How Lightning Kills

Reacting to Your First Kiss

Planning a Wedding

How to Avoid Academic “Burn-Out”

How an American President Is Elected

How to Train a Dog in Obedience

Getting Along with Your Mother-in-Law

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**Special Notes: Writing About an Interview**

Assignment 2 is a process analysis paper. You will use the Advisory style. This paper requires you to interview someone and determine THEIR advice for a topic that we approve in class.

**Introduction:** Identify the Interviewee in the Intro. Give their full name and tell us something about your relationship to them.

**Body:** Focus on the Interviewee's ideas about "how to ..." achieve the process. Unlike a Summary paper, however, you are free to respond to the Interviewee's ideas.

**Conclusion:** Like the Summary Paper, you should respond with your opinion and reaction in the Conclusion.

**Grammar Tips.** Since you are giving general advice that will always be true, this writing will usually be written in simple present tense. It is also possible to write a personal essay about a process you completed. In that case, you will write in past tense.

However, part of your task as a writer is to accurately represent what your Interviewee says, so always pay attention to how the Interviewee expresses their thoughts.

**Transition words. Consider these words to introduce steps:**

For the first step, For the second step, (and so on) Next, Then, Following this, After_____, Afterwards, After this, Subsequently, At the same time,	Most importantly, Crucially, Furthermore, Additionally, Of secondary importance is _____ . Of equal importance is ____ . Simultaneously, Concurrently, While that is happening, During this time,	Finally, For the final step, Ultimately, Before you are done, One last point is _____.
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**Description.** Use descriptive language – what does something look like, sound like, smell like, feel like, taste like? Use adjectives. You will need this type of writing to really explain how to do each step. Ask the interviewee: "What does that sound / look/feel like?"

**Advice.** If you write only the steps of the process, you may end up with a very short paragraph. To add length, personality, and interest, include your advice. If you're writing about "How to get a job," one step might be "Dress appropriately." Here is a great place to add advice! Ask the interviewee: What kind of clothes? What colors? What should you NOT wear? How much money should you spend on a suit? How is it different for women and men?

**Examples.** Frequently use examples - short stories, true or not. Add your own examples, but also frequently ask the interviewee for **their** examples. (Ask, "Can you give me an example?") Notice that for a true story, you will name the participants: "For example, I once had to choose between a job I loved and taking care of my child." "For example, my brother suffered through a terrible divorce because he failed to get a prenuptial agreement." For an imaginary example (also called *an illustration*) you use generic pronouns. "For example, if a person doesn't sign a prenuptial agreement, they may suffer later."

**Negation.** A special kind of example that explores the opposite of the topic. "For example, a partner who habitually lies about their finances will destroy the trust needed in a good relationship."

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## Example Paper 1

### A Perfect Match

“How silver-sweet sound lover’s tongues by night, like the softest music to attending ears,” writes William Shakespeare in the fictional *Romeo and Juliet*. People believe that love often gives warm and sweet feelings. People always try to find the right partners. People also have different points of view about a great partner. To explore this idea, I interviewed Jeikell Suguitan, a twenty-four-year old woman in the conference room at the Student Success Center. Jeikell, who is one of my co-workers at the Student Success Center, states that to be a good boyfriend, a partner should demonstrate four important qualities: tolerance, sympathy, honesty, and consideration.

First of all, Jeikell said that a good boyfriend should respect her. She and her boyfriend are different races. She is Filipino, and he is American. Therefore, they sometimes may misunderstand each other about cultures and customs. She said, “When we have different points of view, he should understand where I am coming from.” She emphasizes that a good boyfriend should tolerate his girlfriend. He should respect her opinions and never force her to do anything she does not like; for example, Jeikell’s boyfriend never forces her to give up her culture to suit his norm. In addition, he always respects her culture, and he also tries to learn more about Filipino culture to understand her better.

Secondly, Jeikell added that a good boyfriend should sympathize with her. She believes that an ideal boyfriend should not hurt her. She said, “He should support me mentally, spiritually, and emotionally.” In addition, a good boyfriend should be with her when she needs some help. He should share bliss and sorrow with her. He should never go away when she encounters troubles. He should either encourage or help her overcome difficulties. For example, Jeikell’s boyfriend has been trying to help her overcome culture shock since she came to America. He tries his best to make her happy whenever she is sad. Moreover, she has many dreams to pursue, so she says that a good boyfriend should sympathize with her wishes. She believes that a perfect boyfriend should understand and listen to her feelings and desires.

Furthermore, Jeikell admitted that a good boyfriend should be honest with her. He should not hide his personality because it may help her understand him better. He should not hide his difficulties because she can share these problems with him. In addition, she stated that he should not hide his life in the past because she believes that his honesty will help them to communicate with each other better. She thinks that his honesty will keep their relationship growing. She said that he should never have an affair with another girl after he has chosen her (Jeikell) as his girlfriend. He should also not consider his relationship with her as a game. He had better be truthful and love her as much as he loves himself.

Finally, Jeikell mentioned that a good boyfriend should take care of her. Her boyfriend is often busy with his studies and job, but he tries to save his free time to drive her to some exotic places to enjoy the fresh air after a busy week. In addition, he usually buys a bunch of roses to present to her on specific occasions, such as her birthday, and when she won her scholarship award. He takes care of her so carefully that he is willing to sacrifice his valuable time to be with her whenever she needs his help. She is so happy that she whispered in her soft voice, “Love gives me the strength to go through obstacles.” Although Jeikell’s boyfriend is American, he knows well his responsibilities to his Filipino girlfriend. For example, he cooks or buys some food, such as soup or rice gruel when she is sick. “I am proud to have him at my side,” Jeikell concluded.

Overall, Jeikell emphasized that a perfect boyfriend should have crucial characteristics: tolerance, sympathy, honesty and consideration. In my points of view about a good boyfriend, I totally agree with her all points. Besides, I think that a good boyfriend should not only know how to keep and develop a deep and romantic love, but also have to take care of it in order to make a gorgeous love forever. In addition, I think that a great boyfriend should show a kind heart. He should be willing to forgive for his girlfriend’s mistakes. Last but not least, I believe that a good boyfriend only performs his

great role when his girlfriend collaborates and understands well what he does for her. She had better know how to satisfy herself, and she should also honor her responsibilities to him.

## Example Paper 2

### Pick Carefully!

“Marriage is an eternal job with three free meals and a nap a day.” This idea is from women’s point of view in the past in Japan. About 30-40 years ago, most couples did not divorce, and housework was getting lighter and easier than before because the size of the family became smaller, and appliances like washing machines and rice cookers had spread throughout Japan. However, nowadays, the rate of divorce has been increasing and some wives work outside their home because their lifestyles and the economic situation have changed. Personally, I thought marriage was romantic in my teens and early twenties, but I have changed my idea about marriage through my experience. Recently, I had a chance of talking with Anna Smith, my friend, about marriage. She is a married American in her 40’s, so we are the same generation. Anna has some of the same ideas as me about how to make a strong marriage, even though we are from different countries and cultures.

“A good marriage is a place where people feel safe to be themselves,” Anna says, so she thinks couples should be tolerant. At home, people don’t have to pretend and can express their own feelings honestly. A good marriage provides them with a home, which is a place to relax and feel comfortable. I agree with her. Lovers sometimes put on masks so that they look better than themselves. It is difficult to keep their mask on after getting married. If the partner feels stressed because of their work, they can feel relieved when they get back home if there is an understanding partner at home. A home like that is desirable.

Anna’s second idea is “A couple should grow with each other.” Each partner is independent mentally. Some couples are insecure and stuck. If their partner wants to do something new without them, they don’t allow it easily. A relationship like that would disturb their partner’s growth. I have an idea close to this one; “Each should have his or her own world.” Of course, it is precious to spend time together and share, but also to have our own work, hobbies, and relationships with others. One half of the couple should not work for the other. Some people are willing to devote their time and life to their partner and family. If they feel satisfied, that’s okay. However, if they don’t want to do that, and have other desires, the partner should support the other partner pleasantly. That leads to their growth. Denying oneself might cause an explosive ending in divorce.

Finally, “A marriage partner makes up for the parts each lacks.” These words were sent to me by my friend when I was looking for my partner. Nobody is perfect, and there is not a perfect partner. After marriage, we have to make our own way and live our lives. We need to help each other mutually, and we need to respect our partners who have the part that fill our weak points. For example, I sometimes stick to my ideas and get stuck on the little things and can’t go ahead. In contrast to me, my husband has a broad outlook and advises me. Sometimes we have different ideas from each other, but we iron them out. So far, it seems to work well.

Anna and I agree with each other’s idea mutually. Our basic point about marriage is to respect and help our partner. In addition, we agree with the point that when people decide to marry, “Don’t be emotional! Pick carefully!” Our lives are so long, but it is difficult to keep romantic emotions. As we are growing up, the relationship with the partner is also maturing through our experiences. The energy that we get from our marriage makes it possible for us to do things we could not do by ourselves. That is my ideal marriage.