Writing a “How To” Paragraph

ELA October 12, 2010

Look at this example of a “How To” paragraph:

If you have a guinea pig, you have to clean its cage or else it will get sick, it will get dirty, and it will stink! You will need two towels, the cage, guinea pig bedding, a hose, and a garbage can. First, you put one of the towels onto the floor out of the way, and then you put your guinea pig on the towel, and the top of the cage over the guinea pig so he will be safe. Next, you get the bottom part of the cage and dump the dirty bedding into the garbage can. If all the junk does not come off, get a stick and scrape it off. After that, lean the cage on something and spray it with the hose. Next, wipe it with the other towel until it is dry. Then put clean bedding on top, just enough so you can’t see the bottom of the cage. Put your guinea pig in the cage, put the top part on, make sure he has plenty of fresh food and water, and since he’s probably been such a good pig, give him a carrot and he will love you for the rest of his life.

Notice how the writer, Jenny, uses step-by-step instructions to tell the reader (you) how to accomplish this task. Also see how she uses transitional words like first, next, after that, then, etc.

Your assignment

Write a “how to” paragraph of your own! You can describe how to wash your dog, or the car; you could describe how to make a peanut butter sandwich, or even how to make a s’more!

The Rules

1. Your paragraph must be at least 5 sentences long.
2. Double-space.
3. Include a Key Word Outline.
4. Include a rough draft and show me that you’ve edited it!
5. Indent your paragraph.
6. Include two dress-ups: “ly” and “who/which”, and UNDERLINE them!