

Paper #2: Technical Descriptions - Assignment Sheet

Rough Draft due ____, printed copies for group members (including one for yourself) due at start of class

Final Draft due one week later, electronically (submitted via Blackboard under Assignments) as a PDF (to check for perfect MLA format this time)

Objectives:

- To learn to compose informative technical descriptions
- To learn how to communicate differently for varied audiences by adjusting tone, diction, level of detail, and utilizing different rhetorical devices

Assignment: As an expert in your field, a textbook publishing company has hired you to provide technical descriptions of **the same object/process** for **two different textbooks**: one for sixth grade level and one for college freshmen majoring in the subject. You will need to determine the type of diction, terminology, definitions, adaptation techniques, etc. that best suit each type of audience. For example, will you include graphics for your audience? Would a brief narrative or history at the beginning help? Is there a metaphor that would work well for your audience?

In this imaginary scenario, you are choosing the subject of the description: an **object** or a **process**, within the scientific and technical fields. For example, you may choose to write a description of the parts of a cell, or you may choose to write a description of the process of photosynthesis. Choose something that you know well, feel confident in describing, and that is complex enough to reach the minimum word count.

Examples of objects could include:

- The brain and its parts
- A specific part like the pituitary gland
- A laptop
- DNA
- A microwave
- A patient's medical chart
- A plane engine, etc.

Examples of processes:

- How vision works
- How a car runs
- Genetic heredity
- Diagnosing a patient
- How a chemical functions in the body
- The biochemistry of bipolar disorder, etc.

Requirements:

- 600-700 words total (can be unevenly divided between descriptions)
- MLA format (12pt Times New Roman, double spaced, with page numbers accompanied by your last name, and proper information and title on the first page)
- Bolded labels to identify your audience for each description and add an extra space between descriptions (see example on the next page)
- No first-person perspective, contractions, slang, or exclamation points; you may use second-person perspective as you find necessary

Student Name

Instructor Name

Course Name

Day Month Year

Title: Textbook Descriptions of a Basic Cell

Audience: Sixth Grade, *A Beginner's Guide to Biology*

Description: A cell is one of the most basic building blocks of every living thing. Think about a set of Legos...

Second paragraph about cells, if needed for organization and readability.

Audience: College Freshmen, *Biology and the Study of Life*

Description: Cells function together physiologically to create life. Prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells both serve a purpose...