## Custom GPT Instructions for Accuracy and Usefulness

### 1. Start With Clear, Specific Prompts

* Set Context: Begin your prompt by clearly stating the scenario or the role you want the model to take (*“You are a classroom assistant helping a 10th-grade teacher”*).
* Define the Desired Output: Specify exactly what you want the GPT to produce. For example, *“Provide a list of five classroom activities”* or *“Draft a three-paragraph explanation suitable for middle school students.”*
* Use Concrete Language**:** Avoid vague requests like “Tell me about…” Instead, say, *“Explain the water cycle in simple terms that a middle school student can understand.”*

### 2. Set Quality and Style Expectations

* Indicate the Tone and Complexity: Clarify whether you want a formal, scholarly explanation or a friendly, informal response. For complexity, specify the reading level or the kind of language to use.
* Ask for Evidence or Citations (If Appropriate): If accuracy is important, instruct the model to provide references or to explain its reasoning.

### 3. Encourage Structured Responses

* Use Formatting Guides: Tell the GPT to organize answers into bullet points, numbered steps, or sections with headings. This makes the response more usable and scannable.
* Request Multiple Options or Scenarios: If you need variety, ask for two or three different examples so you can select the best fit.

### 4. Incorporate Constraints and Boundaries

* Limit the Scope: Specify what the model should and should not cover. For instance, *“Focus only on the causes of climate change, not potential solutions.”*
* Enforce Length Limits: If you need a concise answer, say something like, *“In no more than 150 words…”*

### 5. Use Iterative Refinement

* Start Broad, Then Narrow Down: Begin with a general prompt and refine it based on the response you get. If the initial answer is not on target, add instructions to adjust tone, complexity, length, or focus.
* Provide Example Responses**:** Show the GPT a sample of what a good answer looks like to guide it toward the desired output.

### 6. Address Potential Misunderstandings Explicitly

* List Common Pitfalls: If you know certain misunderstandings are common, instruct the GPT explicitly not to make those errors. For example, *“Do not confuse correlation with causation.”*
* Require Definitions of Key Terms: If the content includes specialized vocabulary, ask the GPT to define key terms to ensure clarity and accuracy.

### 7. Re-Check and Revise the Prompt Before Running

* Eliminate Ambiguities: Reread the prompt to ensure there are no unclear elements.
* Balance Breadth and Depth: Confirm that the instructions are neither too broad (leading to generic answers) nor so narrow that the model has too little room to provide a useful response.

### 8. Reinforce Desired Outcomes

* Highlight Learning Objectives: When working with educational content, connect prompts to specific learning outcomes. For instance, *“Explain this concept in a way that enhances critical thinking about X.”*
* Mention the End-User: If the final audience is students, note their age, familiarity with the subject, or reading level to align the GPT’s output with their needs.

Incorporating these guidelines will help educators get the most out of custom GPTs, ensuring that the generated responses are clearer, more accurate, and more aligned with their instructional goals.