

The Random House Handbook

Fourth
Edition



FREDERICK CREWS



THE RANDOM HOUSE HANDBOOK

fourth edition

Fourth Edition

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PREFACE

From its first publication in 1974, *The Random House Handbook* has tried to perform two functions that are rarely found together. Like many other composition handbooks, it has offered substantial information about the grammar, usage, and punctuation of standard written English. Yet it has also attempted to guide the student writer through the composing process and to explain in detail how ideas can be sharpened and made rhetorically effective. By now many readers seem to agree that one book can serve as both a "handbook" and a "rhetoric." The three previous editions of this text have acquired a large body of friends—including friendly critics who have helped to make each edition more practical in the classroom than its predecessor.

As my book enters its second decade of existence, it continues to evolve in response to its users' needs. Instructors who have taught from the third edition will find that this text incorporates all the essential features of its predecessor, but they will also notice some major improvements:

- The college essay as a genre is more fully explained (Chapter 1), with due emphasis on the writer's options of voice and stance as well as tone.

- A new chapter (2) is devoted to description and narration as essay modes.
- Each of the modes that dominate college writing, explanation (exposition) and argument, now receives a full chapter of its own (3 and 4).
- A new chapter, "Getting Started," shows how to use such techniques of invention as freewriting, brainstorming, and the posing of reporters' questions (Chapter 5).
- A whole chapter (6) covers the drafting and revising of essays, and all aspects of revision—conceptual, organizational, and editorial—receive balanced treatment.
- A popular feature of the second edition, "One Essay from Start to Finish," has been revived, tracing a new student essay through the entire work of composing (Chapter 6).
- In the chapters on paragraph and sentence structure (7 and 8), terms and concepts have been made more accessible to the freshman writer.
- The chapter on library use (14) now covers such innovations as microfiche and on-line catalogs and computerized source materials, and it gives more attention to helpful research strategies.
- Chapter 15, on documentation, follows the MLA Advisory Committee on Documentation Style in offering a reference-list form of citation (that of the American Psychological Association) along with the traditional notes-and-bibliography form.
- Chapter 16 now contains *two* research papers that grew out of investigations discussed in the library chapter. The sample papers illustrate different modes (explanation and argument) and citation styles (MLA and APA).
- Two new chapters (18 and 19) explain how to write business letters and prepare résumés.
- Throughout the book readers will find many new and lively examples of essay prose, drawn from both professional and student writing.
- The number of exercise sets has been increased by more than 75 percent.

Since most composition students are asked to produce essays in the early weeks of a course, the *Handbook* begins by considering what college essays are like, how their modes differ, how they can be composed, and what stylistic resources they call upon. Chapters 1 through 9 can be assigned in order, with detours as necessary to the "handbook" chapters that follow. Many students and instructors, however, will want to begin with Chapters 10 through 12, which review the fundamentals of grammar, usage, and punctuation.

For this edition I have brought Ann Van Sant's helpful *Instructor's*

Manual up to date. The *Manual* offers advice about the day-to-day conduct of classes and includes model schedules for the teaching of key chapters. Professor Van Sant has also prepared the fourth, significantly reconceived, edition of *The Random House Workbook*, a supplementary text offering thorough exercises in those fundamentals of writing that prove most troublesome to students. Both the *Workbook* and Robert Atwan's *Random House Diagnostic Test of Composition*, a proven tool both for identifying student problems and for testing progress through a term or year, are keyed specifically to the *Handbook*. On request, Random House will provide instructors with all of these materials, including ditto masters for reproduction of the *Diagnostic Test* in its two versions, which can be used to measure students' progress in specific areas.

The Random House Handbook has long been indebted to such influential theorists as Francis Christensen, Mina Shaughnessy, E. D. Hirsch, Jr., Ken Macrorie, and Peter Elbow. To those names I must now add those of Linda Flower and Elaine Maimon, who have left their mark on this edition by means, respectively, of a fruitful conceptual framework and a wealth of generously proffered advice. I also want to thank Lois Pryor for essential research assistance. Within Random House, Steve Pensinger, Elisa Turner, and Jennifer Sutherland have been faithful and patient guides. For new advice and examples I am beholden to Mitchell Breitwieser, Alan MacGregor, Sandra Schor, Robert Shelton, Murray Sperber, and Beverly Voloshin, among others.

The following knowledgeable teachers of composition helped me by preparing critiques of the third edition or commenting on my draft chapters: Gary L. Aho, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; John D. Bencich, Brevard Community College, Cocoa Campus; Portia Brown, University of Delaware; Santi V. Buscemi, Middlesex County College; James V. Catano, Tulane University; Bill Connelly, Middle Tennessee State University; John Cooke, University of New Orleans; Mary Jane Dickerson, University of Vermont; Russell M. Griffin, University of Bridgeport; Richard Hannaford, University of Idaho; Constance W. Hassett, Fordham University; Maj. William C. Jeffries, United States Military Academy; William Monday, Mount Royal College, Alberta; Judith Moore, State University of New York at Oswego; Al Nicolai, Middlesex County College; Mary Cathryne Park, Brevard Community College, Cocoa Campus; Linda Peterson, Yale University; Kenneth C. Risdon, University of Minnesota; Art Simpson, University of Wyoming; Craig Snow, University of Arizona; Stephen J. Spector, University of Bridgeport; John Spradley, Metropolitan State College; Ruth Warden, University of Arizona; and Nancy T. Zuercher, University of South Dakota. They all have my deepest gratitude.

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CONTENTS

PART I ESSAYS AND THEIR MODES

1

1 THE COLLEGE ESSAY

2

Looking Ahead	2
Writing for an Audience and a Purpose	4
EXERCISE	7
Confronting the Essay	7
Essay Modes	9
Voice, Tone, Stance	11
• Voice	11
• Tone	13
• Stance	13
EXERCISES	14
The Middle Way	16
EXERCISES	19

2 DESCRIPTION AND NARRATION 22

Description			22
• Vividness	22		
• Descriptive Order	29		
EXERCISES	30		
Narration			32
• Means of Telling	32		
• Order of Telling	35		
• The Implied Narrative Thesis	37		
EXERCISES	40		

3 EXPLANATION 42

Defining			43
EXERCISES	45		
Dividing			45
EXERCISES	47		
Illustrating			48
EXERCISES	49		
Analyzing a Process			49
EXERCISES	51		
Comparing and Contrasting			52
EXERCISES	54		
Analogizing			54
EXERCISES	56		
Showing Causes and Effects			56
EXERCISES	58		

4 ARGUMENT 60

Elements of Persuasion			60
Argumentative Thesis			62
• Avoiding the Unfair Thesis	63		
EXERCISES	65		
Concession and Refutation			66
EXERCISES	68		
Argumentative Evidence			69
• Forms of Evidence	69		
EXERCISES	73		

Argumentative Tone	74
EXERCISES	76
A Complete Argument	77
EXERCISES	79

PART II COMPOSING 81

5 GETTING STARTED 82

Composing: An Overview	82
• Essential Terms	82
• The Composing Process	84
EXERCISE	86
Ways of Beginning	86
• Starting from Experience	86
• Freewriting	87
• Brainstorming	89
• Taking Notes	89
EXERCISES	91
Choosing a Topic and Thesis	92
• Exploring Possible Topics	92
• Trying Out Theses	96
EXERCISES	99
Developing a Thesis Statement	100
EXERCISES	103
Organizing	103
• Ordering an Explanation or Argument	103
• Outlining	105
EXERCISES	109

6 DRAFTING AND REVISING 112

Toward Readable Prose	112
• Writer- and Reader-Based Prose	114
EXERCISES	115
The First Draft	115
• Overcoming Inertia	115
• Planning versus Improvising	116
The Revising Process	116
Three Kinds of Revision	118
EXERCISES	124

Beginnings, Transitions, Endings	124
• Arousing Curiosity in the First Paragraph	125
• Linking Paragraphs	128
• Ending Strongly	130
EXERCISES	132
Choosing a Title	133
A Checklist for Revision	133
EXERCISE	134
The Final Copy	135
One Essay from Start to Finish	136

PART III UNITS OF EXPRESSION 149

7 PARAGRAPHS 150

What Makes a Paragraph?	150
EXERCISES	153
Patterns of Development	153
• The Direct Pattern	153
• The Pivoting Pattern	156
• The Suspended Pattern	158
EXERCISES	160
Unity	161
• Options Within Unity	161
• Tests for Unity	162
EXERCISES	164
Continuity	165
• Signs of Continuity	165
EXERCISES	170
Length	171
EXERCISES	174

8 SENTENCES 176

Distinct Assertion	177
• Recognize Your Main Assertion	177
EXERCISES	178
• Align Your Meaning with Grammatically Important Words	178
EXERCISES	182
Subordination	184
• Subordinate to Highlight Your Main Assertion	185

• Avoid Vague Subordination	188	
EXERCISES	189	
Matching		191
• Pair Two Elements That Belong Together	192	
• Make Your Series Consistent and Climactic	196	
EXERCISES	197	
Variety		198
• Include Significant Pauses	198	
• Experiment with Sentence Patterns	201	
• Listen for Sentence Rhythm	204	
EXERCISES	206	
9 WORDS		208
Meaning		208
• Keep a Vocabulary List	208	
• Avoid Common Confusions of Meaning	212	
EXERCISES	216	
Appropriateness		217
• Control Connotations	217	
• Use Words in Established Senses	218	
• Prefer Middle Diction	218	
• Avoid Offensive Language	219	
EXERCISES	221	
Conciseness		222
• Avoid Redundancy and Circumlocution	222	
• Prune Intensifiers	224	
• Put Statements in Positive Form	224	
EXERCISES	225	
Liveliness		225
• Revise Toward Concreteness	225	
• Avoid Formulaic Language	227	
• Sharpen Your Figurative Language	230	
• Watch for Sound Patterns	233	
EXERCISES	234	

PART IV CONVENTIONS 239

10 A REVIEW OF GRAMMAR 240

Sentence Elements		242
EXERCISE	244	

Parts of Speech	245
• Verbs	245
• Nouns	254
• Pronouns	256
• Prepositions	260
• Conjunctions	260
• Adjectives	263
• Adverbs	264
• Interjections	266
• Articles	266
• Expletives	267
EXERCISES	267
Verbals	268
• Infinitives	268
• Participles	270
• Gerunds	271
EXERCISE	271
Phrases and Clauses	272
• Phrase versus Clause	272
• Independent versus Subordinate Clause	272
• Phrases and Clauses as Sentence Elements	273
• Restrictive versus Nonrestrictive Elements	276
EXERCISES	276

11 PROBLEMS OF USAGE 278

Complete Sentences	279
EXERCISE	280
Predication	281
EXERCISE	282
Agreement of Subject and Verb	283
• Collective Nouns	283
• Quantities	283
• Troublesome Terms	284
• Subject Following Verb	285
• Subjects Consisting of Phrases or Clauses	286
• Subject Pronouns with Plural Antecedents	286
EXERCISE	286
Pronoun Problems	287
• Shift of Person	287
• Choice of Case	287
• Pronoun Reference	289
EXERCISES	291
Modifiers	291
• Emphatic Placement of Adverbs	291

• Misrelated Modifiers	292	
• Dangling Modifiers	293	
EXERCISE	294	
Possessives		294
• Double Possessives	294	
• Subjects of Gerunds and Gerund Phrases		295
EXERCISE	295	
Parallelism		295
• Inconsistent Parallelism	296	
• Invaded Parallelism	297	
• Incomplete Parallelism	298	
EXERCISE	299	
Comparisons		299
• Missing Term	300	
• Comparing the Incomparable	300	
• Comparison of Absolutes	300	
• Faulty Suspended Comparison		301
• Use of <i>Like</i> for <i>As</i>	301	
• Inconsistent Comparison	301	
• Misuse of the Superlative	302	
EXERCISE	302	
Sequence of Tenses		303
• Verbs	303	
• Verbals	306	
EXERCISE	307	
Double Negatives		308
EXERCISE	308	

12 PUNCTUATION

310

Period		311
• End of Sentence	311	
• Indirect Questions	311	
• Abbreviations	312	
Question Mark		312
• Direct Questions	312	
• Indications of Doubt	312	
• Questions Within Questions		313
EXERCISE	313	
Exclamation Point		313
Comma		313
• Independent Clauses	313	
• Members of a Series	316	
• Coordinate Modifiers	317	
• Modifying Clauses and Phrases		317

• Restrictive versus Nonrestrictive Elements	319
• Parenthetical Elements	320
• Conjunctions versus Sentence Adverbs	321
• Unnecessary Separation of Sentence Elements	321
• Separation of Compound Elements	323
• Comparisons and Statements of Preference	323
• Appositives	324
• Conventional Uses	324
EXERCISES	325
Semicolon	327
• To Join Independent Statements	327
• To Show Main Divisions in a Series	327
Colon	328
• To Introduce a Statement or Figure	328
• Other Uses	329
EXERCISE	329
Dash	329
Parentheses	330
Brackets	331
Ellipses	332
EXERCISE	333
Apostrophe	333
EXERCISE	334
Quotation Marks	334
• Dialogue	334
• Incorporated versus Extracted Quotations	335
• Introducing a Quotation	335
• Quotation Marks Within a Quotation	336
• Omitting Material Within a Quotation	337
• Certain Titles	338
• Definitions and Translations	338
• Special Emphasis	338
• Quotation Marks Combined with Other Punctuation	339
EXERCISE	341
Slash	341
Punctuating by Typewriter	342

13 SPELLING AND OTHER CONVENTIONS

344

Spelling	344
• The Spelling List	344
• Common Errors	345
• Plurals	348
• Possessives	350

• Hyphenation	353	
EXERCISES	356	
Capitals		358
EXERCISE	363	
Italics		364
Abbreviations		366
Numbers and Figures		368
EXERCISES	370	

PART V RESEARCH 373

14 USING THE LIBRARY 374

Getting Acquainted		374
Parts of the Library		375
Searching for Books		377
• Subject Catalogs	377	
• Author-Title Catalog	379	
EXERCISES	381	
Searching for Articles and Reviews		382
• Newspapers	382	
• Magazines	383	
• Journals	384	
• Book Reviews	385	
• On-Line Searching	386	
EXERCISES	387	
Background Sources		387
• Booksellers' Bibliographies	387	
• Guides to Reference Works	388	
• General Encyclopedias	388	
• Special Encyclopedias, Reference Works, Handbooks, and General Histories	389	
• Almanacs, Yearbooks, and Compilations of Facts	393	
• Atlases and Gazetteers (Geographical Dictionaries)	394	
• Dictionaries and Thesauri	394	
• Biography	394	
• Quotations	395	
EXERCISES	395	
Taking Notes from Reading		396
EXERCISE	399	
Completing the Project		399

15 DOCUMENTATION 404

Acknowledging Your Sources	404
• The Obligation to Document	404
• What to Acknowledge	407
• How to Document	407
• Substantive Notes	408
• Styles of Documentation	408
EXERCISE	409
MLA Citation Form	410
• Placement and Numbering of Notes	410
• First Notes	412
• Subsequent Notes and Parenthetical Citations	419
• Bibliographies	420
EXERCISES	423
APA Citation Form	423
• Citations	424
• The Reference List	425
EXERCISES	427

16 SAMPLE RESEARCH PAPERS 428

An Argumentative Research Paper on UFOs	429
EXERCISES	447
An Explanatory Research Paper on Computer Crime	448
EXERCISES	457

PART VI PRACTICAL WRITING

459

17 THE EXAMINATION ESSAY 460

18 THE BUSINESS LETTER 464

Conventions	464
• Customary Elements	464
• Alternative Formats	467
• The Envelope	468
Purposes	468
• Asking for Information	468

- Ordering Merchandise 468
- Stating a Claim 469
- Making an Application 469

19 THE RÉSUMÉ	472
----------------------	------------

Standard Features	472
-------------------	-----

GLOSSARY OF TERMS	475
--------------------------	------------

INDEX	501
--------------	------------
