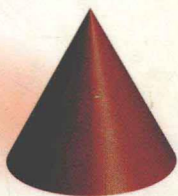


The



Little, Brown



Handbook

Includes  
1998  
MLA Guidelines

S  
E  
V  
E  
N  
T  
H  
E  
D  
I  
T  
I  
O  
N

Seventh  
Edition

# *The Little, Brown Handbook*



H. Ramsey Fowler  
Jane E. Aaron

*University of Memphis*  
*New York University*



**LONGMAN**

---

An imprint of Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.

New York • Reading, Massachusetts • Menlo Park, California • Harlow, England  
Don Mills, Ontario • Sydney • Mexico City • Madrid • Amsterdam

Senior Editor: Patricia Rossi  
Development Editor: Thomas Maeglin  
Supplements Editor: Donna Campion  
Project Editorial Manager: Robert Ginsberg  
Design Manager: John Callahan  
Cover Designer: Kay Petronio  
Text Designer: Dorothy Bungert/*EriBen Graphics*  
Art: Dorothy Bungert/*EriBen Graphics*  
Production Manager: Valerie A. Sawyer  
Desktop Administrator: Jim Sullivan  
Manufacturing Manager: Hilda Koparanian  
Electronic Page Makeup: Dorothy Bungert/*EriBen Graphics*  
and Carole Desnoes  
Printer and Binder: RR Donnelley & Sons Company  
Cover Printer: The Lehigh Press, Inc.

The authors and publisher are grateful to the many students who allowed their work to be reprinted here and to the copyright holders who are listed on pages 837–38. Those pages are hereby made an extension of this copyright page.

#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Fowler, H. Ramsey (Henry Ramsey)

The Little, Brown handbook / H. Ramsey Fowler, Jane E. Aaron.—  
7th ed.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 0-321-03797-9

1. English language—Grammar—Handbooks, manuals, etc. 2. English language—Rhetoric—Handbooks, manuals, etc. I. Aaron, Jane E.

II. Title.

PE1112.F64 1997

808'.042—dc21

97-12644

CIP

Copyright © 1998 by Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher. Printed in the United States.

ISBN 0-321-03797-9

345678910—DOC—009998

*The  
Little,  
Brown  
Handbook*

## Preface for Instructors



This seventh edition of *The Little, Brown Handbook* appears amid a sea change in writing instruction caused by computers. Electronic media are transforming classrooms, research methods, forms of presentation, even the writing process itself. Revising *The Little, Brown Handbook*, we faced a dual challenge: to revamp the book so that it serves computer-using students and teachers and yet to retain the handbook's strengths as a comprehensive, clear, and accessible reference guide and classroom text.

The list of changes in the seventh edition could run even more pages than it does. Here we hit the highlights.

### Computers in writing and research

We have woven computers into the cloth of the handbook:

- **Tips for computer use** appear throughout the chapters on thinking, writing, and research writing. Always signaled in the margin by the computer image shown here, these tips range from journal keeping to revising on a word processor to downloading sources. (See pp. 38, 67, and 576 for examples.)
- **Electronic research** is the focus of the book's most substantial additions. We provide extensive guidance on conducting electronic searches (p. 522), including discovering what's available, searching productively and efficiently, and evaluating a search. We also provide a thorough introduction to electronic sources, especially those available over the Internet (p. 535). The discussion ranges from electronic addresses to Web search engines to synchronous communication, and screen shots illustrate a student's Internet search.

- A new section on **evaluating electronic sources** gives students concrete, usable advice for separating the worthy from the worthless (p. 566).
- **Documenting electronic sources** receives special attention with each documentation style covered: MLA (p. 619), Chicago (p. 701), APA (p. 716), and CBE (p. 732).
- A new **sample MLA paper**, "The Information Superhighway: Toll Road or Public Way?" (p. 632), not only addresses a computer issue but also illustrates electronic research: 60 percent of its works cited are electronic sources (p. 658). The paper builds from examples of the student's work (for instance, pp. 520, 542, 587) and includes detailed facing-page annotations (pp. 639, 659).
- New material on **document design** includes advice about typefaces, illustrations, color, and other elements (p. 765). Examples include a report and a newsletter.
- For **computers in business writing**, we offer a contemporary résumé (p. 754) and extensive discussion of electronic mail (p. 757).
- A new appendix provides basic tips for **word processing** (p. 773), guidelines for **writing collaboratively on computers** (p. 775), and suggestions for **creating hypertext documents** (p. 778).

## English as a second language

As before, the material for nonnative English speakers is thoroughly integrated into the main text, so that students do not have to distinguish between ESL problems and those they share with native speakers. At the same time, a small color block ( ESL ) highlights the material so that it can be easily consulted or easily skipped. (See pp. 243 and 259 for examples.)

Much ESL material is new to this edition:

- An **ESL guide** inside the back cover provides a ready reference to all the ESL material so that it can be taught or consulted as a unit.
- **Forty-two new ESL notes** (for a total of fifty-five) deal with issues of process and rhetoric as well as grammar. For instance, see the notes on thesis sentences (p. 48), transitional expressions (p. 101), subordinating conjunctions (p. 183), and originality in research writing (p. 563).
- **Three new sections** (for a total of fourteen) treat ESL grammar issues in detail. See, for instance, modal verbs (p. 216) and adverb placement (p. 301).

## Critical thinking and the writing process

The book's Introduction and Chapters 1–2 have seen important additions besides those dealing with computers:

- The Introduction, “Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing,” includes a new discussion and illustration of a **reading journal** (pp. 4, 7); a new **text for critical reading**, Thomas Sowell’s essay “Student Loans” (p. 8); and a new **annotated student critique** of Sowell’s essay (p. 19).
- A much longer section on **journals** details the uses of a journal, offers encouragement, and provides four examples (p. 37).
- New material on the **thesis sentence** (p. 48) and **organization** (p. 52) makes these key topics more accessible and practical for students.
- A new **checklist for revision** (p. 69) stresses key concerns (purpose, thesis, and so on), and a new **checklist for editing** (p. 74) highlights the most common errors.
- A new section on **writing portfolios** discusses the purposes of a portfolio and offers tips for preparing one (p. 82).
- Throughout the discussion of the writing process, we continue to show a student’s **work in progress**, signaled by the notebook image shown here.



## Research writing

In addition to the changes addressing electronic research, the chapters on research writing have been strengthened in several ways:

- **Evaluating and synthesizing sources** receive more attention (p. 563), including a procedure for synthesis (p. 567) and, as mentioned earlier, tips for evaluating electronic sources (p. 566).
- The expanded discussion of **integrating quotations**, with additional examples, now focuses more on alterations in quotations and placement of signal phrases (p. 591).
- A new **general introduction to documenting sources** discusses academic standards and styles (p. 598).
- Besides a thorough treatment of electronic sources, coverage of **MLA documentation** includes new models of in-text citations (p. 600), an expanded discussion of placing in-text citations (p. 605), and new models of works-cited entries (p. 607).
- For **other disciplines**, the expansions are similar. The handbook adds new documentation models and sample page formats for all three styles (Chicago, p. 696; APA, p. 707; CBE, p. 729). Further, each style has its own colored page borders for easy reference.

## Other additions

Several further improvements increase the handbook’s usefulness for students both in and out of English courses:

- The chapter on **writing about literature**, contributed by Sylvan Barnet, now includes a discussion of critical approaches to literature (p. 673) and a new student paper on drama (p. 687) to complement the papers on fiction and poetry.
- The chapter on **essay exams** includes two annotated sample essays on the same question, one a successful answer and one not (p. 742).
- A new appendix on **oral presentations** offers advice for preparing and delivering a talk or speech (p. 784).
- We have added or expanded discussions of many key topics, such as **transitions** (pp. 99, 123, 373), **comma splices** (p. 274), **shifts** in form of quotation and question (p. 294), **misuse of a comma after a conjunction** (p. 384), and the trickier uses of the **ellipsis mark** (p. 424).
- We have greatly expanded the coverage of **biased language** to emphasize not just sexist language but also stereotypes of race, age, religion, and other characteristics (p. 459).

### Continuing features

We want to put in a word for what has *not* changed in this seventh edition:

- **Text explanations** are clear and practical, assuming little or no knowledge of terms and concepts and emphasizing the essentials of writing.
- **Examples** represent subjects from across the curriculum, reflect students' diverse backgrounds, and, above all, illustrate concepts clearly. **Annotations** on the examples demonstrate concepts with more immediacy than do text explanations (pp. 111, 243).
- **Plentiful exercises** encourage students to tackle writing from many angles. Sentence exercises are always in **connected discourse** so that students work at the level of the paragraph rather than the isolated sentence (pp. 245, 250). **End-of-part revision exercises** ask students to revise brief essays containing a range of errors, not just one type (pp. 264, 316).
- *The Little, Brown Handbook* is **accessible**. **Endpapers** provide a complete contents (front), an ESL guide (back left), a list of editing symbols (back right), and an index of useful lists and summaries (just before the back endpapers). The uncluttered **design** invites students in and clarifies the relationship of elements. More than 140 **boxes** highlight important information (pp. 139, 579). **Cross-references** give page numbers, not code numbers (pp. 266, 365). Two extensive **glossaries** before the index answer usage questions and define terms (pp. 793, 812).



And the **index** itself is the most comprehensive available, listing not only terms but problem expressions (p. 839).

## Supplements

An extensive package of supplements accompanies *The Little, Brown Handbook*, some for instructors and some for students. An asterisk (\*) precedes any item or items that are complimentary to qualified adopters of the handbook.

### FOR INSTRUCTORS

- **\*The Instructor's Annotated Edition**, revised and updated by Rebecca Brittenham, Rutgers University, combines essays and annotations for instructors with the text of the student edition in one convenient volume. This edition includes "Using Computers to Teach Writing," an essay by Susan Lang of Southern Illinois University, which describes how computers can enrich the composition classroom and details how *The Little, Brown Handbook* supports the uses of computers for teaching writing. This edition also annotates the student text's exercises with ideas for completing them collaboratively or with computers. As before, the IAE contains answers to all exercises (adjacent to the exercises), scores of classroom discussion topics and activities, extensive reading suggestions, and helpful essays for both new and experienced teachers.
- **\*Several supplements reproduce parts of the text or IAE for classroom use or portability:** a set of **transparency masters** with key boxes and lists from the text; a separate **answer key** containing all exercise answers; and a **correction chart** duplicating the book's endpapers.
- ***Teaching Online: Internet Research, Conversation, and Composition*** is an accessible introduction to Internet resources for teaching writing. Written by Daniel Anderson, Bret Benjamin, Chris Busiel, and Bill Paredes-Holt of the University of Texas at Austin, the book offers basic definitions and information on Internet access and shows how to integrate a variety of Internet tools in writing courses.
- **\*An extensive assessment package** includes diagnostic tests and TASP and CLAST exams. All tests are keyed to the handbook, and all are available both in print and on computer software. In addition, the software versions can be customized and used on a network for online testing.
- **\*Two books contain photo-reproducible material that can be distributed to students:** *Eighty Practices*, a collection of grammar and usage exercises, and *Model Research Papers from*

*Across the Disciplines*, a collection of student papers in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences.

- \*The series **Longman Resources for Instructors** includes five valuable works: *Teaching in Progress: Theories, Practices, and Scenarios*, by Josephine Koster Tarvers; *Teaching Writing to the Non-Native Speaker*, by Jocelyn Steer; the videos *Writing, Teaching, and Learning*, by David Jolliffe, and *Writing Across the Curriculum: Making It Work*, produced by Robert Morris College and the Public Broadcasting System.

#### FOR STUDENTS

- *The Little, Brown Workbook*, Seventh Edition, by Donna Gorrell, St. Cloud University, parallels the handbook's organization but provides briefer text and many more exercises. This edition includes a new sample research paper.
- *ESL Worksheets*, by Jocelyn Steer, provides nonnative speakers with extra practice in the areas that tend to be most troublesome for them.
- \*A new guide for students, *Researching Online and Off*, combines research and documentation information from *The Little, Brown Handbook* with information on Internet access and resources from *Teaching Online* in a handy format.
- \**The Writer's Workshop*, keyed to the handbook, is a heuristics program that helps students explore, form, and express their ideas while writing arguments, research papers, and literary analyses. A new feature, Paper-in-Progress, follows one paper through successive stages to show how one student drafted and revised in response to peer and instructor comments. Also included is a tool for formatting source citations (MLA or APA documentation style) and an online version of *The Little, Brown Handbook*, Seventh Edition. (IBM and Macintosh.)
- A CD-ROM, *Electric Library*, co-produced by Longman and Infonautics, gives access to full-text electronic sources from a large collection of newspapers, magazines, and books available online through Prodigy. This powerful and easy-to-use researching tool allows keyword searching on the daily-updated database. With the purchase of *Electric Library* comes one free month of Prodigy.
- \**Supershell* provides a self-paced grammar and usage tutorial for IBM-compatible computers.
- \**Reading Critically: Text, Charts, and Graphs*, Second Edition, by Judith Olson-Fallon, complements the handbook's Introduction. It provides a framework for developing critical reading questions and gives detailed information on preparing reading notes, study summaries, and graphic organizers.

- **\*Two guides to collaborative learning**, both by Tori Haring-Smith, help students work together in groups: *Learning Together* discusses the advantages and varieties of collaborative work; and *Student Manual for Peer Evaluation*, with a new introduction by Helon Raines, contains forms to guide students' peer editing.
- *Eighty Readings*, Second Edition, is a versatile collection of professional and student essays organized thematically, with an alternate rhetorical table of contents. The new edition raises the issues that confront today's students.
- A dictionary can be packaged with the handbook: *The New American Webster Handy Dictionary*, Third Edition.
- Two guides to **writing with a word processor**, *Using WordPerfect in Composition* and *Using Microsoft Word in Composition*, help students master word-processing functions while they develop their own writing processes.

## Acknowledgments

Over the life of *The Little, Brown Handbook*, thousands of teachers have talked with sales representatives and editors, answered questionnaires, participated in focus groups, sent us personal notes, and written detailed reviews. The handbook remains fresh and useful because of this communication, and we are grateful for it.

For the seventh edition, the following instructors offered welcome insights from their rich experience with students: Joseph A. Alvarez, Central Piedmont Community College; Crystal Bacon, Gloucester County College; Cynthia Bates, University of California, Davis; Russell Bignano, Pennsylvania State University, Beaver; Nancy Blattner, Southeast Missouri State University; Kay Bosgraaf, Montgomery College; Phyllis Brotemarkle, Frostburg State University; Larry Brunner, Hardin-Simmons University; Ellen Burke, Casper College; Terrence Burke, Cuyahoga Community College; Peggy Cole, Arapahoe Community College; Geraldine DeLuca, Brooklyn College; Nancy Enright, Seton Hall University; Tom Ezzy, Dawson College; Richard Fabrizio, Pace University; Stuart Foreman, Millersville University; Rob Friedman, New Jersey Institute of Technology; Judith Gallagher, Tarrant County Junior College; Barbara Granger, Thomas Nelson Community College; Ida Hagman, College of DuPage; Marcia Halio, University of Delaware; Carol Hammond, Yavapai College; Judy Hemmington, San Joaquin Delta College; Maurice Hunt, Baylor University; Peggy Jolly, University of Alabama, Birmingham; Michael Keller, South Dakota State University; Malcolm Kiniry, Rutgers University, Newark; James Scott King, Delaware State University; Paul Kleinpoppen, Florida Community College at Jacksonville, South Campus; Richard N. Lewis,

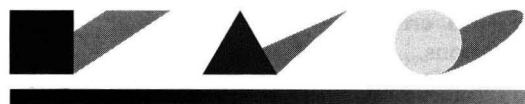
Jr., Sandhills Community College; Rob Little, Rend Lake College; Dara Llewellyn, Florida Atlantic University; Mike Matthews, Tarrant County Junior College; Patricia M. Medeiros, Scottsdale Community College; Troy D. Nordman, Butler County Community College; George Redman, Benedict College; Ken Risdon, University of Minnesota, Duluth; Joan K. Robertson, North Central Technical College; Jan Schmidt, SUNY, New Paltz; Jeff Schonberg, Hardin-Simmons University; Marilyn Schultz, Lincoln University; Eileen Schwartz, Purdue University, Calumet; Richard Sisk, Mount San Jacinto College; Paul Sladky, Augusta College; Frances Smith, Grand Canyon University; Linda Tappmeyer, Southwest Baptist University; Patricia Terry, Gonzaga University; Donald Tighe, Valencia Community College; Warren Westcott, Francis Marion University; Sherri Winans, Whatcom Community College.

A number of instructors also gave very useful comments on the Instructor's Annotated Edition: Jane Allwardt, North Central Technical College; Jan Anderson, Clackamas Community College; Jerrie Callan, Baylor University; Susan Lang, Southern Illinois University; Lynn Langer Meeks, Utah State University; Leonard Sanazaro, City College of San Francisco; Bruce W. Speck, University of Memphis; Alison Warriner, Sacred Heart University.

In addition to these thoughtful critics, a group of creative people helped substantially with parts of the book. Andrew Christensen, David Gibbs, and Deborah A. Person contributed ideas and research support. Isa Engleberg, Prince George's Community College, offered advice for oral presentations, drawing on her text *The Principles of Public Presentation*. Kathleen Shine Cain, Merrimack College, provided crucial material for the research-writing chapters. Susan Lang, Southern Illinois University, advised us on electronic composition and research. And Sylvan Barnet, Tufts University, helped us revise his chapter, "Reading and Writing About Literature," adapted from his *Short Guide to Writing About Literature* and *Introduction to Literature* (with Morton Berman, William Burto, and William E. Cain). We are grateful to all these contributors.

From Longman, the publisher, we had not only support but camaraderie. Patricia Rossi, the editor and captain, was, as always, clever, patient, and true. Her assistant, Lynne Cattafi, apparently found no request too urgent or tiresome. Thomas Maeglin, assisted by Reka Simonsen, led the authors through development with keen intelligence and gentle strength. Robert Ginsberg deftly managed the myriad details and challenges of production. Kathryn Graehl copyedited with precision and tact. And Dorothy Bungert yet again provided creative solutions in design and page make-up. To all, our deep thanks.

# Preface for Students: Using This Book



*The Little, Brown Handbook* is a basic resource that will answer almost any question you have about writing. Here you can find out how to get ideas, punctuate quotations, search the Internet, cite sources, or write a résumé. The handbook can help you not only in writing courses but in other courses and beyond school.

Don't let the size of the handbook put you off. You need not read the whole book to get something out of it, and no one expects you to know everything included. Primarily a reference tool, the handbook is written and arranged to help you find the answers you need when you need them, quickly and easily.

Using this book will not by itself make you a good writer; for that, you need to care about your work at every level, from finding a subject to spelling words. But learning how to use the handbook and the information in it can give you the means to write *what* you want in the *way* you want.

## Organization and content

An overview of the handbook appears inside the front cover. Briefly, the book divides into the following sections:

- The Introduction lays a foundation with the essential skills of critical thinking, reading, and writing.
- Chapters 1–4 deal with the big picture: the writing process, paragraphs, and argument.
- Chapters 5–19 cover sentence basics: the system of English grammar and its conventions, errors that affect clarity, and techniques of effective sentences.

## **xiv** Preface for students: Using this book

- Chapters 20–30 treat two technical elements of sentences and words: punctuation and mechanics (meaning capital letters, underlining, and the like).
- Chapters 31–34 move to words—how to choose them, look them up, learn them, spell them.
- Chapters 35–38 cover research writing from planning through revising, with a complete guide to citing sources.
- Chapters 39 and 40 introduce writing about literature and writing in the other academic disciplines.
- Chapters 41 and 42 contain practical information on taking essay exams and writing business letters and job applications.
- Appendixes A, B, and C provide information on formatting and designing documents, writing with a computer (word processing, collaborating, and creating hypertext documents), and making oral presentations.
- Two glossaries—one of problem words and expressions, the other of terms—and a detailed index finish the book.

### **Finding information**

How you use the handbook will depend on your instructor's wishes and your own inclinations. Your instructor may assign whole sections of the book and discuss them in class or may use comments on your papers to direct you to particular sections. He or she will certainly encourage you to look things up on your own whenever you have a question. To help you do that, the handbook provides many ways of finding information quickly. Some of these surround the main text:

- The **Plan of the Book**, inside the front cover, displays the book's entire contents in abbreviated form. This plan also shows the system of coded headings (explained opposite).
- The **Contents**, immediately after this preface, gives a more detailed version of the book's plan.
- The **ESL Guide**, inside the back cover, indexes the book's topics for students using English as a second language.
- The list of **Editing Symbols**, also inside the back cover, gives the abbreviations often used to mark papers (see p. xvi).
- The list of **Useful Lists and Summaries**, just before the back endpapers, indexes topics that students frequently ask about.
- The **Index**, on the last pages of the book, lists every term and concept and every problem word or expression mentioned in the book. It is very detailed so that you can locate the precise point you seek and the page number where the point is discussed.

Many of the handbook's reference and learning aids appear on the text pages themselves, as illustrated by the reduced samples opposite. On these pages notice especially the heading code in

- 1 Running head (header): the topic being discussed on this page.
- 2 Section heading in blue-green. The boxed code (8b) consists of the chapter number (8) and section letter (b).
- 3 Page tab in blue-green, containing the nearest section code (8b) and the editing symbol for the topic being discussed (agr).
- 4 Examples, always indented, often showing revision.
- 5 Box in pale yellow, containing a summary or checklist.
- 6 Pointer for students using English as a second language, flagged with a small yellow box.
- 7 Subsection heading in red, with heading number in triangle.
- 8 Exercise with yellow vertical line.

**agr**

**8b**

**246** Agreement

**2 8b** Make pronouns and their antecedents agree in person, number, and gender.

The antecedent of a pronoun is the noun or other pronoun it refers to.

**3**

**4**

*Homeowners fret over their tax bills.*

antecedent      pronoun

*Its constant increases make the tax bill a dreaded document.*

pronoun      antecedent

Since a pronoun derives its meaning from its antecedent, the two must agree in person, number, and gender.

---

**Person, number, and gender in pronoun-antecedent agreement**

PERSON	NUMBER	
	Singular	Plural
First	I	we
Second	you	you
Third	he, she, it	they
	indefinite pronouns	plural nouns
	singular nouns	

GENDER	
Masculine	he, nouns naming males
Feminine	she, nouns naming females
Neuter	it, all other nouns

---

**6** ESL The gender of a pronoun should match its antecedent, not a noun that the pronoun may modify: *President Clinton appointed his [not her] wife to redesign health care.* Also, nouns in English have only neuter gender unless they specifically refer to males or females. Thus nouns such as *book, table, sun,* and *earth* take the pronoun *it*.

**7** **1** Antecedents joined by *and* usually take plural pronouns.

Two or more antecedents joined by *and* usually take a plural pronoun.

The old group have gone *their* separate ways.

In the last example, note that the verb and pronoun are consistent in number (see also p. 243).

**4** INCONSISTENT The old group *has* gone *their* separate ways.  
CONSISTENT The old group *have* gone *their* separate ways.

**8** Exercise 2

**Revising: Pronoun-antecedent agreement**

Revise the following sentences so that pronouns and their antecedents agree in person and number. Some items have more than one possible answer. Try to avoid the generic *he* (see the previous page). If you change the subject of a sentence, be sure to change verbs as necessary for agreement. If the sentence is already correct as given, circle the number preceding it.

*Example:*

Each of the Boudreaus' children brought their laundry home at Thanksgiving.

Each of the Boudreaus' children brought *his or her* laundry home at Thanksgiving. Or: All of the Boudreaus' children brought *their* laundry home at Thanksgiving.

1. Each girl raised in a Mexican American family in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas hopes that one day they will be given a *quinceañera* party for their fifteenth birthday.

both blue-green boxes (**8b** in the samples) and the symbol in the marginal box (**agr** in the samples). Your instructor may use either or both of these to mark specific weaknesses in your papers—for instance, either **8b** or **agr** on your paper would indicate an agreement problem. To discover just what the problem is and how to revise it, you can consult the plan of the book or the list of editing symbols, or you can thumb the book. (A sample student paper marked by an instructor with some codes and symbols appears on pp. 77–79.)

The handbook's reference aids are meant to speed your work, but you need not use any or all of them. You may of course browse or read this book like any other, with no particular goal in mind but seeing what you can learn.

### Special symbols

Frequently throughout the handbook, you'll see the following symbols:



- The computer shown here signals tips for using computers productively for all kinds of writing activity, from discovering ideas through citing sources.
- The notebook shown here marks examples from students' work-in-progress, applications of the text's principles in specific writing situations.
- The symbol **ESL** flags material for students using English as a second language, which is integrated throughout the handbook. A guide to the ESL topics appears inside the back cover.



### Recommended usage

The conventions described and illustrated in this handbook are those of standard written English—the label given the language of business and the professions. (See also p. 454.) Written English is more conservative than spoken English in matters of grammar and usage, and a great many words and constructions that are widely spoken remain unaccepted in careful writing.

When clear distinctions exist between the language of conversation and that of careful writing, the handbook provides examples of each and labels them *spoken* and *written*. When usage in writing itself varies with the level of formality intended, the handbook labels examples *formal* and *informal*. When usage is mixed or currently changing, the handbook recommends that you choose the more conservative usage because it will be acceptable to all readers.



*The  
Little,  
Brown  
Handbook*