

# THE — WORKING — WRITER —



TOBY FULWILER



# THE WORKING WRITER



TOBY FULWILER  
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

A BLAIR PRESS BOOK



Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632

**Library of Congress Cataloguing-in-Publication Data**

Fulwiler, Toby

The Working Writer / Toby Fulwiler

Includes Index.

ISBN 0-13-307372-6

1. English language — Rhetoric. I. Title

PE1408. F82 1994

808'.042 — dc20

94-23915

CIP

*Interior design:* Anna George

*Cover design:* Wendy Alling Judy

*Cover photo:* Jan Riley, Tony Stone Images, Inc.

*Buyer:* Robert Anderson

*Editorial, production, and design supervision:* John Svatek

A BLAIR PRESS BOOK



©1995 by Prentice-Hall, Inc.

A Simon & Schuster Company

Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

**ISBN: 0-13-307372-6**

Prentice Hall International, (UK) Limited, *London*

Prentice-Hall of Australia Pty., Limited, *Sydney*

Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., *Toronto*

Prentice-Hall Hispanoamericana, S.A., *Mexico*

Prentice-Hall of India Private Limited, *New Delhi*

Prentice-Hall of Japan, Inc., *Tokyo*

Simon & Schuster Asia Pte., Ltd., *Singapore*

Editora Prentice-Hall do Brasil, Ltda., *Rio de Janeiro*

THE  
WORKING  
WRITER



This is dedicated to  
the one I love.

## Preface

---

---

---

This is the best book I've ever written. It's based on the opening rhetorical chapters of *The Blair Handbook*, a 1994 work I coauthored with Alan Hayakawa. The four years it took to write the *Handbook* forced me to articulate clearly—sometimes for the first time—what I most believed about teaching writing. When that collaborative book was done, however, I realized that, in spite of its merits as a comprehensive reference work, it was not a book for everyone. Many instructors, myself included, prefer briefer rhetorics for classroom instruction because briefer works are more portable, personal, and, perhaps, less intimidating to first-year college writers.

So I rethought, rewrote, retitled, and rearranged the rhetorical chapters from *The Blair Handbook* and then reshaped them into the briefer 27-chapter rhetoric now in your hands. And, as you might expect, this reworking has pushed these chapters toward still further clarity. *The Working Writer* includes personal elements not appropriate to a coauthored handbook: more of my own voice, more student voices, more sample papers, more unusual assignments, more encouragement to experiment.

At the same time, this book isn't for all teachers. It is a composing-process book that includes numerous student samples in every chapter, that treats research—including field research—as a regular part of the composing process, that features collaborative and expressive writing assignments, and that emphasizes revision as the secret to better writing. In other words, *The Working Writer* is aimed at instructors who believe student writers profit from a generous amount of ungraded writing; who be-

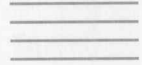
lieve writing is an unpredictable, messy process that can be brought under control by thoughtful revision; who believe that students need to take risks with form, style, and convention in order to grow and develop as writers. Many of the ideas that inform this book come from the current practices of fiction and nonfiction writers alike, whose prose contains careful research on the one hand and lively voices and provocative formats on the other.

In sum, you may find *The Working Writer* especially useful if you ask students to keep journals and to work in collaborative groups; if you teach writing as rewriting, encourage field as well as library research, center your class around student writing, assess the results with portfolios, and have some sense of humor. That, at least, is how I teach and how I have structured this book.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge those who helped make *The Working Writer* work: first, of course, Nancy Perry, my tough-love editor at Blair Press. Next those who reviewed the manuscript with careful and critical eyes: Gay Lynn Crossley, Kansas State University; Ernest H. Johansson, Ohio State University; Fred Kemp, Texas Technical University; and Ronald Shook, Utah State University. And, as always, Laura, Megan, and Annie for their encouragement, patience, and support.

Toby Fulwiler  
Essex Junction, Vermont

# Brief Contents



Preface      vii

---

## PART ONE    WRITING AND LEARNING      1

- 1   College Writing      3
- 2   College Reading    11

---

## PART TWO    THE WORK OF WRITERS      27

- 3   How Writers Write      29
- 4   The Writer's Purpose    39
- 5   The Writer's Audience    51
- 6   The Writer's Voice      61

---

## PART THREE   GETTING STARTED, GETTING HELP      71

- 7   Inventing and Discovering    73
- 8   Keeping a Journal      83
- 9   Sharing and Responding    95



**PART FOUR     WRITING ESSAYS**

**103**

- 
- |    |                         |     |
|----|-------------------------|-----|
| 10 | Recounting Experience   | 105 |
| 11 | Profiling People        | 121 |
| 12 | Explaining Things       | 135 |
| 13 | Arguing For and Against | 149 |
| 14 | Interpreting Texts      | 167 |
| 15 | Reflecting on the World | 183 |

**PART FIVE     CONDUCTING RESEARCH**

**195**

- 
- |    |                             |     |
|----|-----------------------------|-----|
| 16 | How Writers Research        | 197 |
| 17 | Conducting Field Research   | 213 |
| 18 | Conducting Library Research | 221 |
| 19 | Writing With Sources        | 243 |
| 20 | Documenting Sources: MLA    | 257 |
| 21 | Research Essays: A Sampler  | 273 |

**PART SIX     REVISING**

**307**

- 
- |    |                            |     |
|----|----------------------------|-----|
| 22 | How Writers Revise         | 309 |
| 23 | Limiting and Adding        | 319 |
| 24 | Switching and Transforming | 329 |

**PART SEVEN     EDITING**

**341**

- 
- |    |                     |     |
|----|---------------------|-----|
| 25 | Working Paragraphs  | 343 |
| 26 | Opening and Closing | 351 |
| 27 | Working Sentences   | 359 |

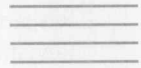
**PART EIGHT     WRITER'S REFERENCES**

**369**

- 
- |   |                              |     |
|---|------------------------------|-----|
| 1 | Writing Portfolios           | 371 |
| 2 | Publishing Your Writing      | 373 |
| 3 | Writing Essay Examinations   | 375 |
| 4 | A Brief Guide to Punctuation | 301 |

Index     387

# Contents



Preface      vii

---

## PART ONE    WRITING AND LEARNING

1

### 1    College Writing      3

What Is So Difficult About Writing?	4
What Do You Enjoy About Writing?	4
What Surprises Are in Store?	5
Why Is Writing so Important?	6
What Can You Learn From The Advanced Writers?	7
What Else Do You Want to Learn About Writing?	8
Suggestions for Writing and Research	9

### 2    College Reading      11

Reading to Understand	12
Reading Critically	16
Reading and Writing	24
Suggestions for Writing and Research	25

**PART TWO THE WORK OF WRITERS****27****3 How Writers Write 29**

Describing Writing as a Process	29
Invention and Discovery	30
Drafting	32
Researching	33
Revising	34
Editing	35
A Strategy for Thinking About Writing: WASPS	37
Suggestions for Writing and Research	38

**4 The Writer's Purpose 39**

Writing to Discover	40
Writing to Communicate	42
Writing to Create	43
Approaching College Writing Assignments	46
Suggestions for Writing and Research	49

**5 The Writer's Audience 51**

Understanding College Audiences	52
Writing to Different Audiences	53
Suggestions for Writing and Research	58

**6 The Writer's Voice 61**

Defining Voice	61
Analyzing the Elements of Voice	62
Hearing a Range of Voices	64
Hearing the Range of One Voice	66
Suggestions for Writing and Research	69

**PART THREE GETTING STARTED, GETTING HELP****71****7 Inventing and Discovering 73**

Brainstorming	74
Freewriting	74

Invisible Writing	76
Looping	76
Asking a Reporter's Questions	77
Making Outlines	77
Clustering	78
Collaborating	80
Suggestions for Writing and Research	80
<b>8 Keeping a Journal</b>	<b>83</b>
Characteristics of Journals	83
Using Journals in College	85
Experimenting With Journals	89
Suggestions for Writing and Research	94
<b>9 Sharing and Responding</b>	<b>95</b>
Sharing Your Writing	95
Giving Helpful Responses	97
Responding in Writing	98
Responding Through Conferences	99
Responding in Writing Groups	100
Suggestions for Writing and Research	101

## PART FOUR WRITING ESSAYS

103

---

<b>10 Recounting Experience</b>	<b>105</b>
Telling Personal Stories	105
Finding a Subject (What?)	106
Delineating Character (Who?)	108
Establishing Perspective (How?)	110
Describing the Setting (Where?)	112
Narrating a Sequence of Events (When?)	113
Developing a Theme (Why?)	114
Shaping the Whole Paper	116
Suggestions for Writing and Research	118
<b>11 Profiling People</b>	<b>121</b>
Writing a Profile	121
Finding a Subject	122

	Providing Background Information	123
	Describing Physical Appearance	124
	Describing the Setting	125
	Letting People Talk	126
	Selecting a Point of View	128
	Developing a Theme	129
	Shaping the Whole Paper	129
	Suggestions for Writing and Research	132
<b>12</b>	<b>Explaining Things</b>	135
	Writing to Explain	135
	Finding a Topic	136
	Developing a Thesis	137
	Using Strategies to Explain	138
	Organizing with Logic	143
	Maintaining a Neutral Perspective	144
	Shaping the Whole Paper	145
	Suggestions for Writing and Research	147
<b>13</b>	<b>Arguing For and Against</b>	149
	Writing to Change People's Minds	149
	Finding an Issue	152
	Analyzing an Issue	153
	Taking a Position	157
	Developing an Argument	157
	Organizing a Position Paper	160
	Shaping the Whole Paper	161
	Suggestions for Writing and Research	165
<b>14</b>	<b>Interpreting Texts</b>	167
	Writing to Interpret	167
	Exploring a Topic	171
	Explaining a Text	173
	Taking a Stand	175
	Shaping the Whole Paper	178
	Suggestions for Writing and Research	181
<b>15</b>	<b>Reflecting on the World</b>	183
	Writing to Reflect	183
	Finding and Describing a Subject	185

Making the Point	190
Shaping the Whole Paper	191
Suggestions for Writing and Research	194

## PART FIVE CONDUCTING RESEARCH

195

<b>16</b>	<b>How Writers Research</b>	197
	Understanding Research	198
	Preparing for Research	201
	Collaborative Research Projects	209
	Suggestions for Writing and Research	210
<b>17</b>	<b>Conducting Field Research</b>	213
	Planning Field Research	213
	Interviewing	214
	Observing	217
	Thinking Critically About Field Sources	218
<b>18</b>	<b>Conducting Library Research</b>	221
	Planning Library Research	221
	Finding Sources of Information	223
	Bibliographies, Indexes, and Databases	227
	Evaluating Library Sources	237
	Taking Notes	235
<b>19</b>	<b>Writing With Sources</b>	243
	Controlling Your Resources	243
	Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing	245
	Using Documentation and Avoiding Plagiarism	253
<b>20</b>	<b>Documenting Sources: MLA</b>	257
	MLA Guidelines	257
<b>21</b>	<b>Research Essays: A Sampler</b>	273
	Personal Research: MLA Style	273
	Literary Research Essay: MLA Style	279

Collaborative Field Research Essay: MLA Style	285
Collaborative Library Research Essay: APA Style	297

---

**PART SIX REVISING**

307

<b>22 How Writers Revise</b>	309
Understanding Revision	309
Asking Revision Questions	310
Using Revision Strategies	312
Revising With a Computer	316
Suggestions for Writing and Research	317
<b>23 Limiting and Adding</b>	319
Recognizing Overgeneralization	319
Limiting Scope	321
Limiting Time and Place	322
Adding Details	324
Adding Quotations	324
Suggestions for Writing and Research	327
<b>24 Switching and Transforming</b>	329
Switching Tense	330
Switching Point of View	332
Transforming Experience Papers	334
Transforming Research Papers	336
Suggestions for Writing and Research	339

---

**PART SEVEN EDITING**

341

<b>25 Working Paragraphs</b>	343
The Work of Paragraphs	343
Writing Well-Organized Paragraphs	344
Helping the Reader	348
Transitions Between Paragraphs	348
Paragraphs and the Essay Exam	350

<b>26</b>	<b>Opening and Closing</b>	<b>351</b>
	Openings	351
	Closings	354
	Finding the Title	357
<b>27</b>	<b>Working Sentences</b>	<b>359</b>
	Editing for Clarity, Style, and Grace	359
	The Work of Sentences	360

---

## **PART EIGHT WRITER'S REFERENCES**

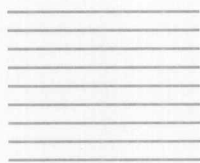
369

<b>1</b>	Writing Portfolios	371
<b>2</b>	Publishing Your Writing	373
<b>3</b>	Writing Essay Examinations	375
<b>4</b>	A Brief Guide to Punctuation	381
	Index	387



PART ONE

# WRITING AND LEARNING



1. College Writing
2. College Reading