

EIGHTH EDITION

The Brief Bedford Reader



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THE BRIEF BEDFORD READER

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PREFACE FOR INSTRUCTORS

“A writer,” says Saul Bellow, “is a reader moved to emulate.” In a nutshell, the aim of *The Brief Bedford Reader* is to move students to be writers, through reading and emulating the good writing of others.

Like its predecessor, this eighth edition of *The Brief Bedford Reader* works toward its aim both rhetorically and thematically. We present the rhetorical methods realistically, as we ourselves use them—as natural forms that assist invention and fruition and as flexible forms that mix easily for any purpose a writer may have. Further, we forge scores of thematic connections among selections, both in paired selections in each rhetorical chapter and in writing topics after all the selections.

Filling in this outline is a wealth of features, new and old.

NEW VISUAL DIMENSION. Dramatically extending its range, the new *Brief Bedford Reader* adds an element that will be obvious to anyone thumbing the pages: an emphasis on the visual. The purpose is far from cosmetic, for reading visual images is often just as important as reading words.

In Chapter 1, *The Brief Bedford Reader* provides a short course in thinking critically about the visual, with an advertisement serving as a case study. Then a range of visuals—ads, cartoons, photographs, paintings—open the ten rhetorical chapters. Along with accompanying text and questions, these openers

invite students' own critical reading and show how the rhetorical methods work visually.

VARIED SELECTIONS BY WELL-KNOWN AUTHORS. The selections in *The Brief Bedford Reader* vary in authorship, topics, even length. We offer clear models of the methods of development by noted writers such as Amy Tan, Joan Didion, E. B. White, and Dave Barry. Half the selections are by women, and a quarter touch on cultural diversity. They range in subject from family to science, from language to disability.

As always, freshening the book's selections engrossed us. Thirteen new selections include works by Sherman Alexie, Jhumpa Lahiri, Bill Bryson, Shelby Steele, and George F. Will. And two new student essays increase student contributions to sixteen, including the case studies discussed below.

UNIQUE COMMENTS BY WRITERS ON WRITING. After their essays, poems, or stories, thirty-six of the book's writers offer comments on everything from grammar to revision to how they developed the reprinted piece. Besides providing rock-solid advice, these comments also prove that for the pros, too, writing is usually a challenge. Ten Writers on Writing are new to this edition.

For easy access, the Writers on Writing are listed in the book's index under the topics they address. Look up "Revision," for instance, and find that Dave Barry, Russell Baker, and Maxine Hong Kingston, among others, have something to say about this crucial stage of the writing process.

REALISTIC TREATMENT OF THE RHETORICAL METHODS. At the core of *The Brief Bedford Reader*, ten chapters treat ten methods of development not as boxes to be stuffed full of verbiage but as tools for inventing, for shaping, and, ultimately, for accomplishing a purpose. Clear, practical chapter introductions link the methods to the range of purposes they can serve and give step-by-step guidance for writing and revising in the method. (For quick reference, the purpose-method links also appear inside the book's front cover.) In addition, a case study in every rhetorical chapter, appearing on gray-bordered pages, shows how a student arrived at the method to achieve a practical writing goal, such as reporting an accident, crafting a résumé, or advertising an apartment for sublet.

Taking this realistic approach to the methods even further, we show how writers freely combine the methods to achieve their purposes: Each rhetorical introduction discusses how that method might work with others, and at least one "Other Methods" question after every selection helps students analyze how methods work together. Most significantly, Part Three provides an anthology of classic works by well-known writers that specifically illustrate

mixed methods. The headnotes for these selections point to where each method comes into play.

EXTENSIVE THEMATIC CONNECTIONS. *The Brief Bedford Reader* provides substantial topics for class discussion and writing. A pair of essays in each rhetorical chapter addresses the same subject, from the ordinary (housekeeping) to the controversial (the death penalty). At least one “Connections” writing topic after every selection suggests links to other selections. And an alternate thematic table of contents arranges the book’s selections under more than two dozen topics.

THOROUGH COVERAGE OF CRITICAL READING AND WRITING. *The Brief Bedford Reader* offers detailed advice on the kinds of reading and writing that students are expected to do in college and beyond. We have broken the long general introduction into smaller, more accessible chapters. Chapter 1 covers critical reading, including a sample of a student’s annotations on a text and practical guidelines for summarizing, analyzing, and interpreting texts. The new introduction to reading visual images also appears in this chapter. Then Chapter 2 covers writing, from ideas through editing, illustrated with a student work-in-progress.

EXPANDED TREATMENT OF RESEARCH WRITING. A new Chapter 3, “Using and Documenting Sources,” greatly expands the appendix of former editions. The chapter offers advice on evaluating sources (including online sources), summarizing and paraphrasing, avoiding plagiarism, integrating sources, and documenting sources in MLA style. A new student research paper, with marginal annotations, provides a model.

ABUNDANT EDITORIAL APPARATUS. As always, we’ve surrounded the selections with a wealth of material designed to get students reading, thinking, and writing. To help structure students’ critical approach to the selections, each one comes with two headnotes (on the author and the selection itself), three sets of questions (on meaning, writing strategy, and language), and at least four writing topics. One writing topic, now immediately following the selection, encourages students to explore their responses in their journals. Another topic then suggests how to develop the journal writing into an essay, while two others emphasize critical writing and draw connections to other selections.

Besides the aids with every selection, the book also includes additional writing topics for every rhetorical chapter, a glossary (“Useful Terms”) that defines all terms used in the book (including all those printed in SMALL CAPITAL

LETTERS), and an index that alphabetizes authors and titles and important topics (including, as noted earlier, those covered in the Writers on Writing).

INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL AND COMPANION WEB SITE. Bound into the Instructor's Edition, *Notes and Resources for Teaching The Brief Bedford Reader* suggests ways to integrate journal writing and collaboration into writing classes, ways to use the book's Chapters 1 and 2 on reading and writing (including the new material on visual literacy), and ways to work the student case studies into a course. In addition, *Notes and Resources* discusses every method, every selection (with possible answers to all questions), and every Writer on Writing.

Instructors and students have access to a range of resources at the companion Web site for *The Brief Bedford Reader* (<http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/briefbedfordreader>). Annotated links direct students to further reading on authors in the book and on topics covered by the book's selections. In addition, direct links lead to two Bedford/St. Martin's sites—*The English Research Room* and *Research and Documentation Online*—that provide advice on research writing and documentation, practice tutorials, and links to Internet research sources.

TWO VERSIONS. *The Brief Bedford Reader* has a sibling. A longer edition, *The Bedford Reader*, features seventy-three selections instead of forty-eight, including fifteen rather than five essays in Part Three.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Hundreds of the teachers and students using *The Bedford Reader* and *The Brief Bedford Reader* over the years have helped us shape the two books. For the newest edition of *The Bedford Reader*, the following teachers offered insights from their experiences that encouraged worthy changes: Christopher Baker, Armstrong Atlantic State University; Kelly R. Bober, Elgin Community College; Ellen Burke, Casper College; Mary Paniccia Carden, Southeastern Oklahoma State University; Elisabeth Cobb, Chapman University; Kathryn Cowan, Cabrillo College; Sarah T. Coyne, West Liberty State University; Pamela Cross, Stockton College; Dana B. Crotwell, El Camino College; Christine Cucciarre, Lakeland Community College; Natalie S. Daley, Linn-Benton Community College; Maria Dintino, Keene State College; Teresa Dunn, Clemson University; J. Arthur Faber, Wittenberg University; Mary E. Fakler, Mount St. Mary College; Jolly Kay Faught, Cumberland College; Kathy Griffith Fish, Cumberland College; Thomas E. Fish, Cumberland College; Jefferson Hancock, Cabrillo College; Frederick Jeffrey Karem, Cleve-

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