

MANUAL AND MODELS

FOR

COLLEGE COMPOSITION

BY

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A NOTE TO THE INSTRUCTOR

A representative survey of English composition in required college courses has recently shown that the usual practice is the use of reference handbook and prose models. This book attempts to satisfy that need, and in a way apparently not before tried; namely, by combining in one volume a full-length handbook with a large and varied body of prose specimens.

The purpose of this combination is double: (1) that the student (and the instructor) may be inconvenienced by having these two most useful "scholar's companions" merged in one volume; (2) but more specially that the handbook may thereby become an instrument of positive, affirmative, constructive help, through reference at every strategic point to the best possible forms to be found among the models. The psychology of displaying many bad examples is always questionable; the emphasis is discouragingly on "thou shalt not." Here the attempt is to overlay that negative instruction with affirmation, and to surround the student with counsels of encouragement by sending him on all occasions to specimens of first-rate literature, which, partly for that purpose, are put immediately under his hand for instant and persistent guidance.

The "Manual" in this volume tries to supply all matters of technical information which college use may reasonably ask of such a handbook of reference, and also to supply instructor and class with such drill material as experience has shown us we are likely to need. It ought also to be emphasized that this opportunity for group drill, suggested here and there by exercises, may even more helpfully be used for the technical study of the "Models."

The arrangement of the "Manual" is optimistic. Those fortunate instructors whose students need little or no review of grammar, spelling principles, and the other more elementary

matters, will be aware of them only as relegated to an appendix. Those instructors whose students must have their technical fences rather carefully gone over and mended can easily rearrange the schedule of assignments to fit their needs. Such a rearrangement might take this form:

	PAGES
1. Note-taking	129 f.
2. Composition Notebook	130 ff.
3. Manuscript Rules	125-129
4. Borrowing Ideas	132 ff.
5. Review of Grammar	180-219
6. Capitals	219 f.
7. Numbers	220 f.
8. Abbreviations	221 f.
9. Punctuation	88-124
10. Spelling	171-179
11. Pronunciation	163-171
12. Sentences	37-63
13. Paragraphs	64-78
14. Words	3-37
15. Larger Units	78-88
16. Speaking (Oral Composition)	134-138
17. Oral Reading	139 f.
18. A Reading List	144-157
19. Written Examinations	140-144
20. Books Useful to Writers	158-161

Though the fullness and variety of material in the "Manual" is such as to give it, the author hopes, the greatest possible value as a handbook for reference and drill, yet it does not profess to be a rhetoric, and only mentions the finer matters of rhetorical principle; its exercises, therefore, are primarily technical rather than rhetorical and structural. And this mention of the larger matters of style and composition is naturally placed in the "Models," in immediate contact with the illustrations of the various kinds of prose writing.

The "Models" are commented upon as a group and analyzed in some detail on pages 225 to 232, to which the instructor is especially directed. As there explained, the usual terms are so modified as to suggest to the student the *purpose* of each sort of prose. In order that the student may be unprejudiced in his appreciation, only serial numbers and titles are given: the

writer's name is not printed with the piece. An index of those titles, with author, source, and full credit, follows the "Models." The analysis (pages 229-232) is chiefly an attempt to supply the instructor with a key which may save him the preliminary reading of such pieces as may be unfamiliar to him; but there would seem no good reason that the student should not use it too.

The dominant purpose of the author has been to make such a combination text as he has more and more wanted for his own teaching, and such as he hopes may be of real service to his confrères in their high and difficult calling.

H. R. S.

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

FOR THE STUDENT

Students are not supposed to read prefaces; but if you get a chance, I hope you'll read this one.

This book was made for you rather than for your instructor; with constant thought of what would be of help and of use, and possibly even of interest, to you.

If you are one of those who already enjoy working out the problems of language, and have even now some skill in doing it, you will go merrily on without need of much more than an opportunity and a Godspeed.

But if you are like most of us, and have to work pretty hard for such half-successes as you get, you may find some real help in this book. For whether the composition course you are taking in college is compulsory or not does n't matter — it will soon be over anyway; but your language "course" in life won't be over until you are through using language.

The language problem, though, is not only lifelong; it is continuous. Language is an instrument we use all the time; for all our speaking, for all our writing, and even (I believe) for all our thinking. We seem to have no way of separating these activities; and really use the same language throughout. Hence the poverty of one is the poverty of all; but, fortunately, the richness and skill of one — power gained in thought, or speech, or writing — spreads to the others. This is why it has been said that we should — and do — write as we speak, and speak as we think, and think as well as we can; and that "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

Two other interesting truths apply to this matter of language: (1) it forces us to take the other person's point of view; (2) and it is a rather miraculous process.

(1) You hear much these days about "sales talk"; but the salesman is merely trying to do what all of us try when we use

language — to be unmistakable: to whom? to the other fellow. And the salesman starves if he does n't succeed; therefore he does everything he can to make his language effective. The fact is the same for all of us: all our use of language is aimed at some one else; we must above everything else be clear (and if we care very much, unmistakable) not merely to ourselves but to the persons we are trying to reach.

(2) Language is so universal that we easily forget its really miraculous quality. Yet when we look thoughtfully at the effects we achieve with these curious marks on paper and sounds in the air, — at the height, the depth, and the breadth of feeling and of thought that we convey by means of them, — rather successfully and easily too, — to other souls whom we thus discover to be surprisingly like ourselves; and when we pause long enough to remember what helpless and hopeless prisoners we should be, shut up (as Helen Keller was) each in his separate cell, without this enfranchisement that language brings us, — we have to admit that the process is not much less miraculous, apparently, than such other common but unexplained phenomena as radio and flowers.

As you read around among the "Models" in the second part of this book, among good things written by other students like yourself, as well as those by famous persons, you will catch yourself wishing you could do as well. *You do not know that you can't*, — unless you *prove* that you can't: by trying every means that you know, to match or surpass this good work. The "Models" are here to give you suggestions, material, and technique to think about, imitate, and practice with. The "Manual" is here to answer the technical questions which those writers, as well as you and I and all of us, have to answer as we work at this vastly fine and delicate art of self-expression, in language, for others: questions whose answers all come, not from the grammars and handbooks, but really from good writing itself. The book as a whole exists, as I began by saying, to be of use to you; and this is my chief hope for it.

THE AUTHOR

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The anthologist puts himself in the debt of many, and has decent need of making his acknowledgments as public as his borrowings. Not decently only, but gladly, I would announce my debt, in the second part of this book, to the many gracious persons and publishers who have allowed me to use their property : to each of whom I have made specific acknowledgment elsewhere.

Particularly do I wish to record my obligation to those friends who in special ways have lightened my labors with wise counsel : Professor Sophie M. Hart, of Wellesley College ; Dr. Kenneth C. R. White, of Western Reserve University ; Mr. Rollo Walter Brown and Dr. Stewart Macdonald, of Cambridge, Massachusetts.

H. R. S.

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