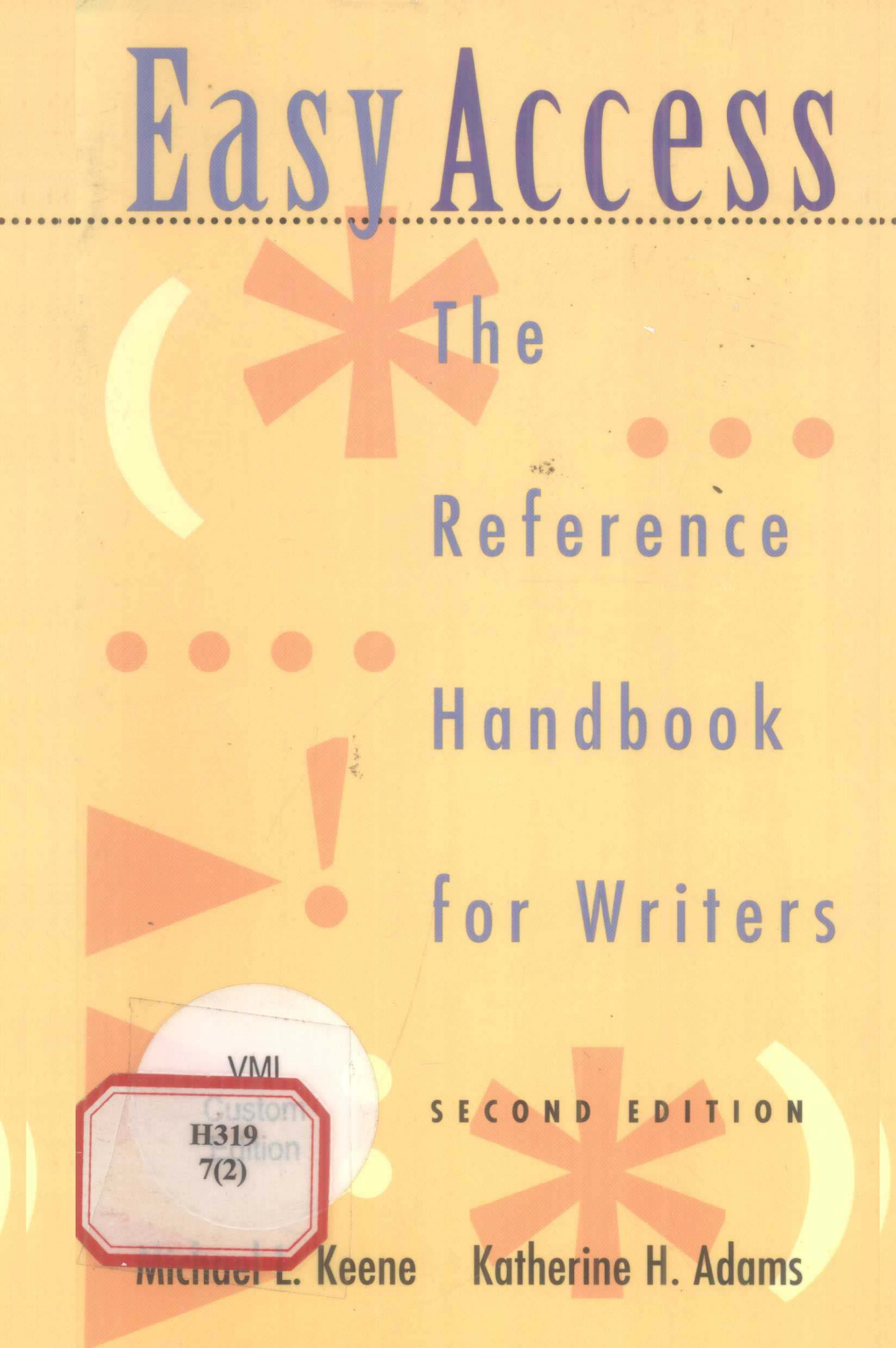# Easy Access

The

Reference

Handbook

for Writers

SECOND EDITION

Michael L. Keene   Katherine H. Adams

Easy Access

The Reference Handbook for Writers

SECOND EDITION

Michael L. Keene
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Katherine H. Adams
Loyola University New Orleans

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

Use the three-part structure and the tabbed dividers.

- Refer to **Part One, Processes and Products** (dark blue tabs), for step-by-step help with writing essays, research papers (including MLA and APA documentation styles), argumentative papers, essay exams, oral presentations, and various kinds of professional communication.

- Turn to **Part Two, Common Writing Problems** (medium blue tabs), to find Quick View Guides and helpful mini-chapters on the most common grammatical errors and problems, including those for ESL writers.

- Flip to **Part Three, The Basics from A to Z** (light blue tabs), for concise coverage of the various aspects of grammar, mechanics, and punctuation, including definitions of important terms—all presented in alphabetical order.

Refer to the Contents Overview (inside front cover).

This at-a-glance outline presents a "snapshot" of the book's contents.

Use the Quick Views to review common writing problems.

Each section in Part Two begins with a Quick View (blue pages) that briefly defines and shows how to fix a common error or grammatical problem.

Look up grammar, punctuation, and mechanics terms in The Basics from A to Z (Part Three).

Like a dictionary, Part Three is alphabetically organized to give you easy access to explanations of the rules, conventions, and exceptions you might have questions about while writing. Many entries in Part Three also contain cross-references to fuller coverage in Parts One and Two.

Check the index (pages 449–476).

The index tells you where to find the most complete discussion of every topic covered in *Easy Access*.

(continued)

Use the reference resources on the back cover, inside back cover, and back cover flap.

Here you'll find Quick View, Box, and Figure Locators (inside back cover); Revision and Correction Symbols (inside back cover flap); A Checklist for Finishing Your Paper (back cover flap); and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) (back cover).

Use the Easy Access Features.

1. **Tabbed dividers** mark key sections in Part One (dark blue), Part Two (medium blue), and Part Three (light blue).

2. **Margin tabs** (along pages' outer edges) in Part Two identify each common writing problem.

3. **Part contents pages** provide an overview of the contents of just that part.

4. **Running heads** at the top of each page identify the section or chapter.

5. **Explanations and examples with handwritten corrections** make writing and grammar concepts clear.

6. **Quick Views** in Part Two provide concise reviews of the most common writing problems.

130–132

ESL icons with cross-references highlight points of special concern to ESL writers.

www.

Internet icons signal information about on-line writing and research.

(6)

VERB ERRORS

QUICK VIEW

294–304 This Quick View shows the most common problems with verbs: subject-verb agreement, form, tense, and mood errors. The pages that follow explain these problems in more detail. (For a complete discussion of verbs, see *Verbs*, pages 416–27.)

Subject-Verb Agreement Errors

Subjects and verbs must agree in *number*—both singular or both plural. The subject always determines whether the verb should be singular or plural.

(5)

helps
The design of the new cars help their gas mileage.

[A prepositional phrase (*of the new cars*) separating the subject (*design*) from the verb (*help*) has fooled the writer into making the verb agree with the plural object of the prepositional phrase (*cars*) instead of the singular subject (*design*).]

were
At the front of the procession was the president of the college and

the dean of students.

[The inverted sentence order, in which the verb preced[...] ject, has fooled the writer into using a singular verb, [...] plural (compound) subject, the *president* of the college ar[...] of students.]

Form Errors

Verbs change form to indicate time (tense) and conv[...] other information. *Regular verbs* change only their end[...] talked), whereas *irregular verbs* change internally (*sing, s* go, went, gone). Most verb form errors involve the wrong[...] irregular verbs (especially *lie* and *lay* and *sit* and *set*) o[...] endings (*s, es, d, ed*). The most common irregular verbs [...] under *Verbs*, pages 418–21. Beyond that, a dictionary i[...] guide to verb forms.

swam
Irina had never swam that fast before.

THE WRITING PROCESS

(1)

THE WRITING PROCESS

(3)

(4)

(5)

268   PROBLEMS WITH MODIFIERS

the plane was bound to have
With ice one-inch thick on its wings, an accident was inevitable.

the students on the team had to cut corners
To take the tournament championship, corners had to be cut when it

came to schoolwork.
Because I was
Being a high school senior, my parents didn't want to move until the

school year ended.

Exception: One construction looks like a dangling modifier, but it is in fact acceptable. An *absolute modifier* is a word or a phrase that modifies a whole sentence:

Jack being an honest person, there was nothing else for him to say.

[The opening phrase places a condition on the rest of the sentence; it follows an earlier discussion of his honesty.]

The judge having considered the circumstances, she ruled that the forensic pathologist's testimony should be allowed.

[An earlier discussion describes the circumstances; the opening phrase modifies the whole sentence.]

That being said, the trial moved on.

[Presumably, the words that were said are cited in the preceding sentence.]

(For more on absolute phrases, see *Phrases*, page 377.)

SQUINTING MODIFIERS

A *squinting modifier* is unclear because it could modify more than one thing in the sentence—usually the word or phrase before it as well as the word or phrase after it:

(2) Problems with Modifiers

w
Tom told the bank *with great difficulty* he could get the money.

[Was it hard for Tom to tell them, or hard to get the money?]

or

Tom told the bank *with great difficulty* he could get the money. *w*

(5)

If you find you have written a sentence with a squinting modifier in it, rewrite the sentence to make clear exactly what the modifier refers to.

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

When we wrote the first edition of *Easy Access,* we asked ourselves how we could make a reference handbook that would be as easy as possible to use. Such a book's contents, we realized, should be divided so that students could decide which *general* part of the book (more general than chapters or sections) to access. We wanted to create a handbook structure that helped students quickly grasp the book's internal logic and—most importantly—decide which general part of the book to go to for the *kind* of information (not the specific *topic*) they needed.

It was then that we conceived of *Easy Access,* which has a unique three-part structure. Students who have used the first edition of *Easy Access* resoundingly agree that its structure automatically narrows their search to just a part of the book. Now, in the second edition, *Easy Access'* three-part structure is even more apparent because the tabs are color coded. Students can always know at a glance which of the book's three parts they're in.

Part One: Processes and Products (five dark blue tabs) contains all writing process instruction, including guides to specific types of writing—research papers, arguments, essay exams, professional documents and oral presentations.

Part Two: Common Writing Problems (two medium blue tabs) first covers the top ten most common writing problems for all students and then the most persistent writing problems for ESL students. Our colleagues and our students tell us that, because of its concentration on common problems and its inclusion of "Quick View" guides (carefully focused two-page tutorials), Part Two is the section of the book to which students most often return.

Part Three: The Basics From A to Z (one light blue tab) is an alphabetically organized quick-reference section that provides concise coverage of grammar, mechanics, usage, and punctuation. Instead of confusing or overwhelming students, our tabs and the three-part structure of *Easy Access* encourage students to find the information they need and want.

CHANGES TO THE BOOK'S CONTENTS

Extensive coverage of Internet research. This new material covers the use of search engines; the crucial task of evaluating Internet sources; and current methods of documenting these sources, in both MLA and APA styles. A sample student paper that uses both online (including an image from a Web site) and print sources serves as a reliable model. A World Wide Web glossary follows the Glossary of Usage at the end of Part Three.

A new chapter on argumentation. Offering a solid introduction to the principles and elements of argument, the chapter covers argumentative theses and assertions, types of appeals and support, refutation, logical fallacies, and the Toulmin method. We also provide a sample student paper in this section.

A new chapter on professional communication. With guidelines and models for writing e-mail, faxes, memos, direct-request letters, persuasive letters, job-application letters, and résumés, this chapter will prepare students to write outside of school. Use of the Internet to search for scholarships, internships, and jobs is also covered.

A new chapter on oral presentations. This chapter shows students how to adapt their writing for oral presentations. As preparation for either participating in class discussion or delivering a speech, this section will help students confidently make the transition from written to oral communication.

Expanded coverage of run-on sentences and comma splices. Because these common writing problems arise for different reasons, we cover them separately in Part Two.

More help for ESL writers. In response to teachers' suggestions, this section of Part Two now contains additional topics: direct and indirect quotations and questions, participles used as adjectives, and the use of *no* and *not*. We also revised the Quick View for clarity and increased the number of exercises.

Improved cross-referencing. Cross-references now describe the nature of the additional information located elsewhere in the

book. We've also added icons to indicate cross-referenced ESL and Internet material.

Various smaller improvements. Reviewers helpfully directed our attention to the need for more information on the rhetorical situation, paragraph development, critical reading, and nonstandard forms of English.

CHANGES TO THE BOOK'S DESIGN

Tabbed section dividers. We have retained the plastic comb binding from the first edition (so that the book lies flat and stays open) and added tabbed section dividers (which indicate the section's contents) so that students can get to the information they're seeking even more easily.

Examples with handwritten corrections and improvements. This new example format allows students to see at a glance what's been changed in the sentence without having to compare different versions. The new format also reinforces the importance of editing and proofreading.

More "quick reference" guides at the back of the book. These guides now appear after the index, on the back cover, and on the back cover's inside and flap: Quick View, Box, and Figure Locators; Revision Symbols; A Checklist for Finishing Your Paper; and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

EASY ACCESS HIGHLIGHTS

- Color-coded, tabbed section dividers that reflect the book's three-part structure *and* direct students to the chapters and subsections they are likely to need most often
- Quick View chapter openers in Part Two
- Comb binding that lets the book lie flat for easy reference
- Contents Overview on inside front cover and first page, as well as full contents on pages ix–xxv
- Contents repeated within the book by part, chapter, and tabbed section

- "How to Use this Book" guide on pages v–vii
- Icons indicating coverage that pertains to ESL writers and to the Internet

ANCILLARY MATERIALS AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

- An electronic hypertext version (Windows and Macintosh formats) is available on CD-ROM (fully networkable)
- *Mayfield's Quick View Guide to the Internet for Students of English* (by Jennifer Campbell and Michael Keene, both of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville) goes into more detail about many of the Internet topics introduced in *Easy Access* and presents more advanced topics, such as the Internet's history, design, and function; listservs; and FTP. This valuable resource is free when shrink-wrapped with *Easy Access*.
- *Additional Exercises to Accompany Easy Access, Second Edition* (by Timothy Miank of Lansing Community College), is available in a print workbook, on disk, and via the World Wide Web.
- *Developmental Exercises to Accompany Easy Access, Second Edition* (by Mary Alice Hardy of Southwestern Michigan College), is available in a print workbook, on disk, and via the World Wide Web.
- *Research Across the Disciplines* (by Kristin R. Woolever and Tiane K. Donahue, of Northeastern University) discusses in detail the role of research across the curriculum, lists the major journals in various disciplines, explains the documentation formats used by different disciplines, suggests research topics, and provides annotated research papers.
- The *Easy Access* Web Site (for students) provides a "Using the Web" tutorial and numerous links to relevant WWW sites.

ANCILLARY MATERIALS AND RESOURCES FOR INSTRUCTORS

- The Instructor's Comprehensive *Easy Access* CD-ROM conveniently provides, in electronic format, transparency masters, PowerPoint files, diagnostic tests, quizzes, the additional exercises, developmental exercises, and the book's instructor's manual, which includes answers to the exercises in Part Two as well as the answers to the additional and developmental exercises.

- The *Easy Access* Web Site (for instructors) provides the same content as the instructor's CD-ROM, as well as the "Using the Web" tutorial for students, student links, and numerous professional links.

- An Instructor's Manual provides assignments for Part One, answers to the exercises in Part Two of the text and in the supplementary workbooks, additional exercises with answers, advice on teaching grammar and writing, and bibliographies on teaching writing.

- Transparency masters
- PowerPoint masters
- Diagnostic tests
- Quizzes

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Michael L. Keene
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Katherine H. Adams
Loyola University New Orleans

CONTENTS