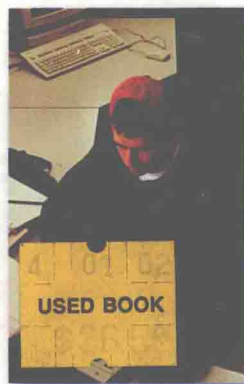


Writing First

PRACTICE IN CONTEXT

WITH READINGS



Laurie G. Kirszner ■ Stephen R. Mandell

Writing First

P R A C T I C E I N C O N T E X T

WITH READINGS

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Acknowledgments and copyrights are continued at the back of the book on pages 585–86, which constitute an extension of the copyright page.

Preface for Instructors

In college, writing comes first. As soon as students set foot in a classroom, they are asked to write—to take notes, to complete assignments, and to pass exams. But writing is also crucial outside the classroom, because it empowers students for life, enabling them to participate more fully in their communities and their workplaces. As our years in the classroom have taught us, students begin to value writing skills only when they see how mastering these skills transforms the writing they do every day at home, in school, and on the job.

For this reason, *Writing First: Practice in Context* puts writing first. When we wrote an earlier edition of this text, we called it *Windows on Writing* because we believed it could open windows for students by helping them gain confidence and skill as writers. Now that we have revised the text, we have come to realize that the original title, although accurate, did not really communicate what we have always seen as the book's central premise. We believe that the new title is consistent with our priorities as teachers as well as with the two central realities of writing in college—that writing comes first, and that students learn writing skills best in the context of their own writing.

In *Writing First*, writing is first chronologically: the book begins with thorough coverage of the writing process, and most chapters begin with writing prompts. Writing is also first in importance: extensive writing practice is central to the grammar chapters as well as to the writing process chapters. In addition to an abundance of practices and drills, each grammar chapter includes a unique three-step sequence of writing and editing prompts (Writing First/Flashback/Revising and Editing) that guides students in applying the chapter's concepts to a piece of their own writing. By moving from their own writing to workbook-style mastery exercises and back to their own work, students learn more effectively and more purposefully.

We wrote this book for adults—our own interested, concerned, hard-working students—and we tailored the book's approach and content to them. We have avoided exercises that present writing as a seemingly dull, pointless, and artificial activity, and we have chosen fresh, contemporary examples, writing assignments, and student passages. In the book's style and tone, we try to show respect for our audience (as well as for our subject matter), and we try to talk *to* our students, not at or down to them.

Our chief goal is still a simple one: to develop a text that will motivate students to improve their writing for college and everyday life, and that can give them the tools they need to do so. By practicing these skills in the context of their own writing, students will come to see writing as something at which they can succeed. We have tried to design a text flexible enough to complement a variety of teaching styles and to meet the needs of individual students. Most of all, we have tried to write a text that respects its audience—that treats college students as adults who can take responsibility for their own learning and for their development as writers.

Organization

Writing First: Practice in Context has a flexible organization that lets instructors teach various topics in the order that works best for them and their students. The book is divided into three sections: “Writing Paragraphs and Essays,” “Revising and Editing Your Writing,” and “Becoming a Critical Reader.” The first section provides a comprehensive discussion of the writing process. The second section presents a thorough review of sentence skills, grammar, punctuation, mechanics, and spelling. The third section introduces students to critical reading skills and includes nineteen professional essays, each illustrating a particular pattern of development. Finally, two appendixes—Appendix A, “Writing Paragraphs and Essays for Exams,” and Appendix B, “Writing a Research Paper”—provide help with skills that students will need in other courses. Appendix B gives a brief overview of the research process, illustrates and explains MLA documentation style, and includes an annotated, fully documented student research paper.

Features

Central to *Writing First* is our “student writing first” philosophy, supported by innovative features designed to make students’ writing practice meaningful, productive, and enjoyable.

The text’s process approach guides students step-by-step through the writing process, providing comprehensive coverage in a flexible format. Eleven chapters on paragraph development (Units 1 and 2) feature many examples of student and professional writing, with separate chapters on each method of paragraph development, giving instructors flexibility in planning the course. A comprehensive treatment of essay writing (Unit 3) starts with Chapter 12, “Writing an Essay”; Chapter 13, “Introductions and Conclusions,” offers guidance rarely found in developmental writing texts. In Chapter 14, “Patterns of Essay Development,” each pattern is illustrated by a student essay.

Unique “practice in context” activities let students apply each new concept to their own writing. Most chapters begin with a *Writing First* activity that asks students to write a response to a specific prompt. Then, a series of *Flashback* exercises encourages students to practice skills introduced in

the chapter in the context of their Writing First response. At the end of the chapter, a *Revising and Editing* activity guides students through a final look at their Writing First responses.

Writing First makes information easy to find and use. The engaging full-color design supports the text's pedagogy and helps students find information quickly. *Focus boxes* highlight key concepts and important information, *quick-reference corner tabs* make the book easy to navigate, and *marginal cross-references* to other parts of the text help students find and review key information. *Writing Tips* in the margins provide additional information, address common problem areas, and make connections between academic and everyday writing situations. *Computer Tips* give helpful advice for students writing with computers.

Both native and nonnative writers get the grammar help they need. Thorough, accessible grammar explanations are complemented by clear, helpful examples. Chapter 30, "Grammar and Usage Issues for ESL Writers," discusses concerns of special interest to nonnative writers. *ESL Tips* in the *Instructor's Annotated Edition* guide instructors in helping ESL students get the most out of the text.

Each chapter offers numerous opportunities for practice and review. Easy-to-grade *Practices* following each section of each chapter form a strand of workbook-style mastery exercises that let students hone specific skills. (These Practices can supplement or replace the Writing First strand, depending on an instructor's preference.) *Visual writing prompts* in many of the essay assignments serve as additional sources of inspiration for writing. *Self-Assessment Checklists* in the paragraph and essay chapters show students how to revise and edit their own writing. Three kinds of *Chapter Review* activities provide additional practice opportunities: an *Editing Practice* featuring a passage of student writing gives students an opportunity to edit to eliminate a specific writing problem; *Collaborative Activities* offer creative options for student-centered classroom learning; and a *Review Checklist* recaps the main points of each chapter for quick review. Finally, *Answers to Odd-Numbered Exercises* at the end of the book let students check their own work as they practice and review.

Writing First helps students make the connection between reading and writing. Chapter 35, "Reading Critically," guides students step by step through the reading process and includes a sample annotated reading. Chapter 36, "Readings for Writers," contains nineteen professional readings that illustrate the patterns of development covered in the paragraph and essay chapters of the book. Questions following each reading test comprehension, help build vocabulary skills, and offer topics for student writing.

Writing First respects students as serious writers. The text has more student writing than any other developmental textbook: numerous paragraph-length examples as well as thirty-three complete essays provide realistic models. *Student Voices* in the margins evoke the experiences of actual students working to master the topic at hand. The tone and level of explanatory material, as well as the subject matter of examples and exercises, acknowledge the diverse interests, ages, and experiences of developmental writers.

Two appendixes cover skills that students can also use in other courses. Appendix A, "Writing Paragraphs and Essays for Exams," gives students

practical strategies they can use in a variety of subject areas. Appendix B, “Writing a Research Paper,” teaches students the basics of researching and writing a paper and citing and documenting sources. The chapter includes an annotated sample student paper in MLA style.

Ancillaries

Writing First is accompanied by a comprehensive teaching support package that includes the following items:

- **The *Instructor’s Annotated Edition*** includes answers to the Practice exercises as well as numerous teaching tips and ESL tips in the margins.
- ***Classroom Resources for Instructors Using Writing First*** includes helpful teaching suggestions, sample syllabi, and additional teaching materials.
- ***Background Readings for Instructors Using Writing First*** offers more than two dozen professional articles on topics of interest to developmental writing instructors, accompanied by suggestions for practical applications to the classroom.
- **Exercise Central**, the largest collection of grammar exercises available with any writing text, includes multiple-exercise sets on every grammar topic to give students all the practice they need. This software can be accessed via the World Wide Web at <bedfordstmartins.com/composition/exercises>.
- ***Exercises and Tests to Accompany Writing First*** contains grammar exercises and diagnostic and mastery tests (including material from Exercise Central) in a book with perforated pages that allow instructors to copy the material and distribute it to students.
- ***Interactive Writing Software to Accompany Writing First*** supports students as they work on paragraph and essay assignments. This software is available for Windows and Macintosh platforms.
- ***Transparency Masters to Accompany Writing First***, including editable student writing samples from the text, are available as a printed package and as files downloadable from the Web site.
- **The *Writing First* Web site** <<http://bedfordstmartins.com/writingfirst>> offers downloadable teaching aids and links to other useful materials.

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*Laurie G. Kirsznner
Stephen R. Mandell*

A Student's Guide to Using Writing First

What *Writing First* Can Do for You

As you look through *Writing First*, you may be wondering, “What can this book do for me?” To answer this question, you might start by thinking about the title. It’s no secret that writing will be very important in most of the courses you take in college. Whether you write lab reports or English papers, midterms or final exams, your ability to organize your thoughts and express them in writing will affect how well you do. In other words, succeeding at writing is the first step toward succeeding in college. Even more important, writing is a key to success outside the classroom. On the job and in everyday life, if you can express yourself clearly and effectively, you will stand a better chance of achieving your goals and influencing the world around you.

Whether you write as a student, as an employee, as a parent, or as a concerned citizen, your writing almost always has a specific purpose. When you write an essay, a memo, a letter, or a research paper, you are writing not just to complete an exercise but to give other people information or to tell them your ideas or opinions. That is why, in this book, we don’t ask you simply to do grammar exercises and fill in blanks; in each chapter, we also ask you to apply the skills you are learning to a piece of your own writing.

As teachers—and former students—we know how demanding college can be and how hard it is to juggle assignments with work and family responsibilities. We also know that you don’t want to waste your time or money. That is why in *Writing First* we make information easy to find and use and provide many different features to help you become a better writer.

The following sections describe the key features of *Writing First*. If you take the time now to familiarize yourself with these features, you will be able to use the book more effectively later on.

Brief table of contents Inside the front cover is a brief table of contents that summarizes the topics covered in this book. The brief contents can help you find a particular chapter quickly.

Detailed table of contents The table of contents that starts on page xi provides a detailed breakdown of the book's topics. Use this table of contents to find a specific part of a particular chapter.

Index The index, which appears at the back of the book starting on page 587, lets you find all the available information about a particular topic. The topics appear in alphabetical order, so, for example, if you wanted to find out how to use commas, you would find the *C* section and look up the word *comma*. (If the page number following a word is **bold-faced**, then on that page you can find a definition of the word.)

List of Self-Assessment Checklists On page xxviii is a list of checklists designed to help you write, revise, and fine-tune the paragraphs and essays you write. Use this list to find the checklist that is most useful for the particular writing assignment you are working on.

A handy cross-referencing system Often, an *italicized marginal cross-reference* will point you to another section of the book (for example, “See 28A and 28B”). At the tops of most pages of *Writing First*, you’ll find *quick-reference corner tabs* consisting of green-and-blue boxes, each containing a number and a letter. This information tells you which chapter you have turned to and which section of that chapter you are looking at. Together, the cross-references and the tabs help you find information quickly. For example, if a note in the text suggested, “See 10A for more on classification,” you could use the tabs to locate section 10A.

298

SOLVING
COMMON SENTENCE
PROBLEMS

23 A

ANSWERS
TO ODD-NUMBERED
QUESTIONS

For information on identifying plural noun and pronoun subjects, see 28A and 28B.

● **Writing Tip**
Subject-verb agreement presents special problems with the irregular verb *be*. (See 23B.)

S

She

V

watches

the eleven o'clock news. (singular pronoun subject *she* takes singular verb *watches*)

S

They

V

watch

the eleven o'clock news. (plural pronoun subject *they* takes plural verb *watch*)

Most subject-verb agreement problems occur in the present tense, where third-person singular subjects require special verb forms. Regular verbs form the *third-person singular* by adding *-s* or *-es* to the base form (the form of the verb used with *I*).

INCORRECT

He go to the store.

CORRECT

He goes to the store.

How *Writing First* Can Help You Become a Better Writer

Preview boxes Each chapter starts with a list of key terms and concepts that will be discussed in the chapter. Looking at these boxes before you skim the chapter will help you get an overview of the chapter.

PREVIEW

In this chapter, you will learn

- to recognize parallel structure (19A)
- to use parallel structure (19B)

■ WRITING FIRST

Discuss three things you would like to change about your school, workplace, or community. Identify the changes you are going to discuss; then, explain why you would make each change. Support your statements with specific examples.

A Recognizing Parallel Structure

▼ Student Voices

When I write a list of points,

Parallelism is the use of matching grammatical structures to present comparable or equivalent ideas. For example, nouns are used with nouns, verbs with verbs, adjectives with adjectives, and phrases with phrases, and

Writing First activities Most chapters include a three-part writing activity that helps you apply specific skills to your own writing. Each chapter starts with a *Writing First* exercise that asks you to write about a particular topic. Throughout the chapter, *Flashback* exercises help you analyze your Writing First response so you can identify and correct specific writing problems. Finally, a *Revising and Editing* exercise asks you to fine-tune your writing. (See, for example, pages 197, 198, and 204 in Chapter 15.)

Focus boxes Throughout the book, boxes with the word *Focus* in a red banner highlight useful information, identify key points, and explain difficult concepts.

FOCUS *There Is and There Are*

In a sentence that begins with *there is* or *there are*, the subject comes after the form of the verb *be*. (*There* can never be the subject.)

v s

There are nine justices on the Supreme Court.

v s

There is one chief justice presiding over the Court.

Self-Assessment Checklists Chapters 1, 3–12, and 14 include Self-Assessment Checklists that give you a handy way to check your work and

measure your progress. Use these checklists to revise your writing before you hand it in.

 **SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST:**
Writing an Exemplification Paragraph

Unity

Does your topic sentence focus on an idea that can be developed in a single paragraph?

Is your topic sentence specifically worded?

Does your topic sentence clearly express what the rest of the paragraph is about?

Do all your examples support your topic sentence?

Marginal notes In the margins of *Writing First*, you'll find several kinds of notes that give you additional information in an easy-to-read format. *Writing Tips* offer practical information and helpful hints, including definitions and examples. *Computer Tips* help you make effective use of your computer as you write. *Student Voices* present the words of real students telling what works and doesn't work for them when they write.

 **Writing Tip**

Use a transitional phrase such as *for instance* or *for example* to tell readers you're going to use an example. (See 2C.)

 **Computer Tip**

Try boldfacing or underscoring the topic sentence of a paragraph before you start to revise the paragraph. (See 2C.)

 **Student Voices**

At my job, I often have to write paragraphs telling people how to do something.

Lis Bare

Review Checklists Each chapter ends with a summary of the most important information in the chapter. Use these checklists to review material for quizzes or to remind yourself of the main points in the chapter you've been studying.

 **REVIEW CHECKLIST:**
Achieving Sentence Variety

Vary sentence types, using an occasional question or exclamation. (See 18A.)

Vary sentence openings. (See 18B.)

Combine sentences. (See 18C.)

Vary sentence length. (See 18D.)

Answers to Odd-Numbered Exercises Starting on page 577, you'll find answers for some of the Practice items in the book. When you need to study a topic independently or when your instructor has you complete a Practice but not hand it in, you can consult these answers to see if you're on the right track.

How *Writing First* Can Help You Succeed in Other Courses

In a sense, this whole book is all about succeeding in other courses. After all, as we said earlier, writing is the key to success in college. But *Writing First* also includes sections (at the end of the book) that you may find especially useful in courses you take later on in college. We have designed these sections so you can use them either on your own or with your instructor's help.

Appendix A, "Writing Paragraphs and Essays for Exams" This practical guide shows you how to study effectively for written exams and how to write successful answers to essay questions when you are under time pressure.

Appendix B, "Writing a Research Paper" This appendix gives a short overview of the research process and shows how to document sources and create a list of works cited. A student paper complete with helpful marginal notes is also included.

List of correction symbols The chart inside the back cover lists marks that many instructors use when evaluating and marking student papers. Becoming familiar with these symbols will help you get the most out of your instructor's comments on your work.

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