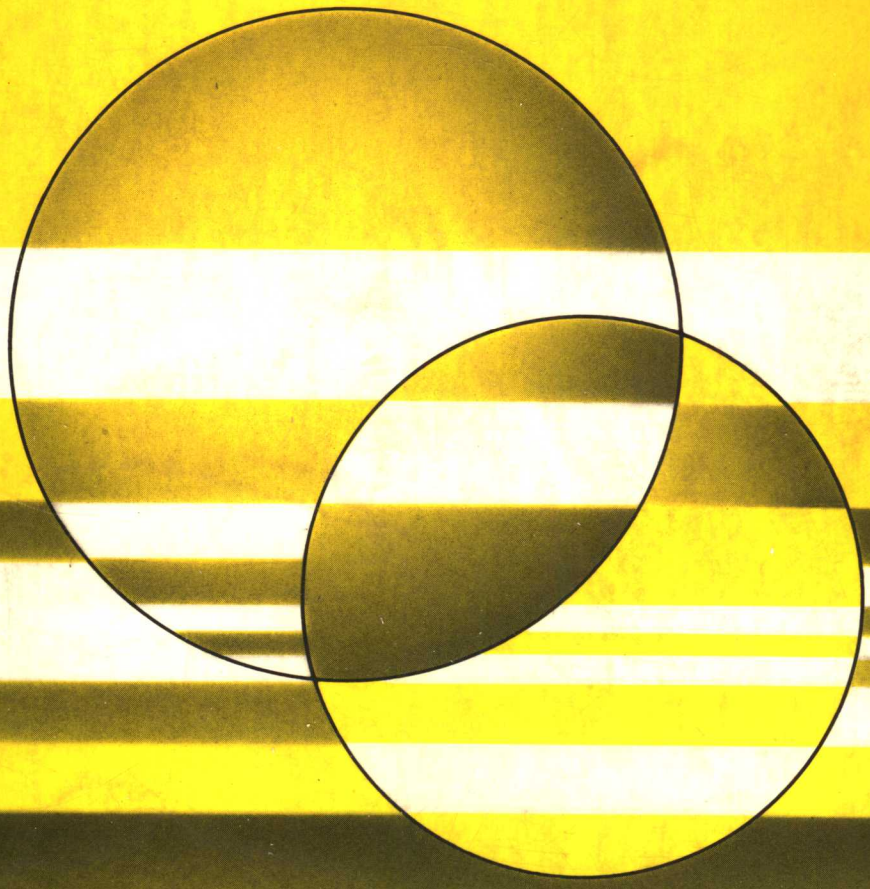
The McGraw-Hill College Workbook

John C. Bean/Richard Marius/Harvey S. Wiener



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Preface

Overview

The McGraw-Hill College Workbook combines features of a process-oriented and a product-oriented approach to writing. The assumptions about language in this workbook are rooted in a process approach to composing. This approach assumes that writing is a means of discovering and making meaning and that even the most seemingly product-oriented concerns, such as rules for punctuation or parallelism, should be explained to students in terms of the writer's intended meaning and audience. But the workbook also provides students the opportunity to study the rules and conventions of sentence structure, punctuation, and mechanics necessary to perform confidently at the revising and editing stages of writing when drafts written for oneself are gradually transformed into products ready for others.

The McGraw-Hill College Workbook has been designed to accompany *The McGraw-Hill College Handbook* and follows the handbook's organizational scheme, numbering system, and pedagogical philosophy. An answer key to the exercises in this workbook, with generous numbers of examples and illustrations, is available from McGraw-Hill.

Advantages of this workbook over competing texts

In comparing this workbook with others on the market, instructors will find noticeable differences. Among the advantages of *The McGraw-Hill College Workbook* are the following features:

- Initial exercises that guide students through the composing process (Chapters 1 and 2).
- A common-sense approach to grammar that combines the traditional system with insights from structural grammars (Chapter 3).
- Innovative exercises and explanations to teach students the concept of sentence completeness (Chapters 4 and 5).
- Plenty of open-ended exercises, including sentence-combining, that engage students as writers.
- A focus on rules, not as arbitrary points to be memorized but as conventions for enabling writers to control subtleties of meaning.
- A detailed answer key with numerous "model" solutions for open-ended exercises.

Writing as process

This workbook has been designed to facilitate a process approach to composing. The first two chapters of the workbook focus specifically on the writing process. Chapter 1, "Planning, Developing, and Revising Papers," guides students stage by stage through the process of composing an essay of their own. Instructors can ask students to do the exercises in Chapter 1 while drafting their first essays for the course. Then

students can repeat the sequence for subsequent essays, seeking to adapt and modify the exercises to meet their own thinking styles.

Chapter 2, "Building Paragraphs," also takes a process approach to writing. Several exercises, particularly the paragraph assignments on the death rate table or the letters of recommendation (Exercise 2-3), help students learn how a writer's intended meaning controls both the shape of a paragraph and the writer's selection of details.

Writing as product

In addition to a concern for process, many instructors will want to help students learn the rules and conventions of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. To this end *The McGraw-Hill College Workbook* provides numerous exercises suitable either for class discussion or for submission to the instructor for marking.[1] Even here, however, the approach taken is consistent with a process view of writing. Many exercises are open-ended, in which students are asked to compose or revise text, thereby using language to discover or make meaning. And even the more restrictive "drill and practice" exercises guide the student to choose solutions according to the intended meaning to be conveyed.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Richard Marius, Harvard University, and Harvey S. Wiener, LaGuardia Community College, for inviting me to join them in producing a state-of-the-art handbook and workbook aimed at meeting the needs of contemporary writers. I wish also to thank the capable editors at McGraw-Hill who encouraged me to try out new ideas for the workbook, especially Phillip Butcher, Annette Hall, and Allan Forsyth. For marshaling an unusually complex set of exercises through production, David Dunham of McGraw-Hill also deserves special thanks, as do the following reviewers who gave me valuable insights into how to improve the exercises and explanations: Marilyn M. Cleland, Northern Illinois University; John Huxhold, St. Louis Community College at Meramec; Philip Keith, St. Cloud State University; Elizabeth Rorschach, New York University; Jay S. Vanatta, University of Southern California.

Finally, I would like to thank my son Matt for typing the manuscript, along with endless revisions, into the family computer, and my wife Kit, who rescued me from a missed deadline by writing the instructor's answer key for the traditional format version of the workbook. And to Andrew, Stephen, and Sarah, thanks for putting up with a grouchy dad.

John C. Bean

[1] For instructors who would like students to be able to study sentence-level concerns on their own, without the need for the instructor to mark and return numerous tear-out sheets, an alternate version of the workbook, called *The McGraw-Hill Self-Study College Workbook,* is also available. This version has self-study exercises with answers and supplemental explanations provided, thus enabling students to study the material at their own pace, focusing specifically on errors that recur in their own writing.

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1
Planning, Developing, and Revising Papers

Beginning writers sometimes think that experienced writers put a piece of paper in the typewriter and type out finished essays on the first try. This is a serious misconception. Experienced writers go through a long process of thinking about a topic, jotting down ideas, thinking some more, imagining their audience, considering their purpose, trying out a quick sketch of a first draft (often regarding it as an exploration or trial run rather than as a fleshed-out essay), "re-seeing" their ideas (*revision* means literally "re-vision" or "re-seeing), writing a new draft, deciding on an organizational structure (which they often map out in a sketch outline, but seldom in a formal outline), drafting again, patiently revising, showing their drafts to trusted colleagues for feedback, patiently revising some more, editing their later drafts for sentence-level mistakes, checking spelling, and finally producing a neat, finished copy following the manuscript form appropriate for their purpose and audience. This final copy—the very copy that beginning writers think comes full-blown out of the typewriter on first try—is thus the result of a long, often arduous process.

Writing teachers have learned that students do a better job of writing in college if they practice following the processes used by experienced writers. The exercises in this chapter of the workbook are designed to guide you through the writing process, taking you stage by stage through the actual production of an essay of your own.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE EXERCISES IN THIS CHAPTER

The exercises in this chapter will guide you through the writing of an essay: the initial exploration of a variety of possible topics, the decision about a single topic, the discovery of a purpose and stance for your essay, the formulation of a tentative thesis statement, early decisions about the shape of your essay, the initial drafting, the later revising, and finally the editing and preparation of your polished manuscript.

You will begin these exercises by exploring three broad subjects: "education," "families," and a subject of your own choice. By a long-standing tradition among writing teachers, *subject* is the word used for broad, sweeping areas such as "education," "families," "love," or "crime." However, to write an actual essay you will eventually need to limit your subject to a much narrower area that is then called a *topic*—for example, "instituting merit pay at our high school" (instead of "education"), "my uncle Sam's love of practical jokes" (instead of "families"), my love/hate relationship with my father" (instead of "love"), or "the time my brother got arrested for shoplifting" (instead of "crime"). Obviously, within every broad subject there are

hundreds of topics. How you can find your own narrow topics within a broad subject will be one of the things you will learn in this chapter.

The first subject you will explore is "education." Throughout this chapter you will watch a fellow student writer, Gail, do her own exploration of the subject "education"; her explorations will be used as examples throughout this chapter to illustrate the writing process.

The second subject you will explore is "families," a subject that will let you think both about your own family (what your childhood was like; your relationship with members of your own family; problems related to your own family life; your trials, tribulations, and triumphs as a family member) and also about issues relating to families in general (the decline of the traditional family, the effect of the economy on families, changing patterns of family recreation, and so forth). Since all of you using this workbook will be exploring "education" and "families" in common, you will be able to compare notes and share ideas with your classmates.

Finally you will choose a subject of your own, something that you think you would especially enjoy exploring. Here is a possible list of subjects. You can choose one of these or anything else that you would like to explore.

fishing	America's volunteer army
alcohol	urban pollution
college life	gun control
television	contact sports
advertising	pornography
fads	outdoor life
religion	emotion

Eventually you will write an essay on a very small piece of one of these subjects and will therefore necessarily choose *not* to write about dozens and dozens of other ideas you will have explored along the way. However, you may be able to use many of your other ideas for later essays in your college writing courses.

YOUR TASK FOR NOW

Write your choice for subject three in the space at the right.

Subject one: Education

Subject two: Families

Subject three: _____

1A Use prewriting techniques to explore what you know, believe, or feel about a subject before you write about it.

Prewriting covers all the time you spend thinking, jotting down ideas, and otherwise exploring your subject or topic before you write an actual first draft. Because many persons' first drafts are really more like intense explorations than attempts to compose a piece of writing for readers, some teachers even include first drafts as part of the prewriting process. The prewriting techniques you will practice in this chapter are thinking to yourself, discussing, making lists, questioning, writing nonstop, making clusters or subject trees, and doing library research. Some of these techniques, such as thinking to yourself, you will obviously be doing all the time with any essay. Other techniques work especially well for some people but not for others. Some writers, for example, find that list-making and nonstop writing are especially effective for them, while others prefer more visual techniques such as clustering and treeing. Try to discover what works best for you.

1 Think about your subject to yourself.

This may seem obvious, but many beginning writers sit down to write a draft without doing much prior thinking. Try this experiment. Get up from wherever you are now reading and walk around for five minutes thinking about one of your three subjects. What ideas about "education" or "families" or your own subject particularly interest you? What personal experiences come to mind? What might you like to write about and why? Get in the habit of thinking about ideas for essays as you walk around campus or take a shower. Each of the following prewriting techniques will stimulate your thinking. Keep playing with your subject.

2 Discuss your subject with other people; also watch for ideas about your subject while you read or watch television or movies in order to gather information and ideas.

Good writers are always on the prowl for ideas. Start noticing anything you see or hear about your subjects. Be on the lookout for newspaper and magazine articles, or for ideas from movies and TV and from dorm room bull sessions and other conversations. Strike up discussions about your subjects with your friends. For "families," try conversation starters like these: "Parents shouldn't spank their kids." "Most old people prefer living in nursing homes." "Kids who spend their early childhood in day-care centers are better adjusted than those whose mothers stay home." "There should be a law against couples having more than two children." Make up your own conversation starters for your other subjects. The more you discuss your topics with others, the more you will be encouraged to think about them while walking to class or taking a shower and the more you will notice ideas about them when you read or watch movies or TV.

3 Jot down ideas in an informal list.

Any time an idea about your subject strikes you, write it down quickly so you won't forget it. Another way to stimulate thinking is to force yourself to jot down ideas in a list. Here is a list that one student, Gail, made while thinking about "education."

- Teachers, why do I like some of them and not others?
- Am I a good student? I used to be a good student in grade school, and then I kind of got out of being interested in being a good student until I got into my senior year of high school.
- Mr. Brown, what a jerk of a teacher. Maybe I could write a paper describing all the bad teachers I have had. I hated him with his boring lectures and his stupid pictures of his family up there on his desk. He must have put his kids to sleep at the dinner table if he was as exciting at supper as he was in class.
- Basketball games. I loved to go to basketball games and sit in the cheering section eating popcorn and yelling for the team. Sam Kreyler could dunk the basketball and he wasn't much taller than my brother. I also liked to watch the cheerleaders do their routines even though I think it is dumb to be a cheerleader. Why was cheerleading still popular at my school since women's liberation was getting stronger? Are cheerleaders women's libbers? Think about Molly.
- Expenses of going to college. My parents are paying through the nose.
- Should I get a work-study job?
- My adviser seemed pretty nice on registration day. I wonder if she likes working with freshmen?
- Will I do all right in college?

- Are grades really important in later life? I wonder if grades really screw up our educational system. Are the best students the ones who get the best grades?
- The special ed. kids at our high school. I remember the first time I saw Kathy, the mongoloid girl, when she came into the lunchroom. Everyone moved to another table when she sat down. They didn't exactly do it too rudely. They just ate faster and left or suddenly noticed a friend at another table. Remember the witch episode.
- I wonder how much mentally retarded kids are aware of how others are reacting to them. I wonder what they are really thinking.
- Are education requirements too low for high school students? The debates at the school board when those national reports criticizing education in America came out.
- Why don't kids study very much? You know who studies around here? The Oriental students. Why do they study harder than most other students? Have I stereotyped them?

Exercise 1-1 Making an informal list

Choose one of your three subjects and spend twenty minutes making an informal list of ideas. (Or choose two of your subjects and spend ten minutes listing ideas for each one.) Time yourself with a watch and try to get into a mood of intense concentration, jotting down ideas as fast as they come to you. Use your own paper.

4 Ask yourself questions about your subject.

This is one of the most powerful techniques you can practice for generating ideas on a subject. Not only does a series of questions set your mind thinking about a topic and cause you to look for information, but a question can also help you focus an essay because your answer to a question can serve as your thesis statement (more on this later).

A good way to ask questions is simply to list them on a sheet of paper, leaving some space to jot down later notes about possible answers to your questions. Here is a series of questions Gail asked about "education":

- Is our present grading system a good one?
- Is the curriculum at this college a good one?
- What is the best way to teach writing?
- Do these prewriting techniques really work?
- My comp. teacher said we won't be studying much grammar. Is that a good idea?
- Why do so many people oppose women's sports? (Note: remember the volleyball incident!)
- Do I really like school?
- Should teachers get merit pay?
- Who is my favorite teacher?
- What makes a good teacher? (I like that question.)
- Should retarded kids be mainstreamed in the school?
- Why do they have to have drug searches at dances?
- Why are some kids better spellers than others?
- Why don't the high schools know what to do with computers?

NAME _____ DATE _____

Exercise 1-2 Generating questions about your subjects

Make a list of questions (at least ten) for each of your three subjects. If you have trouble thinking of questions at first, try stimulating your thinking by using the journalists' questions *who? what? where? when? how?* and *why?* Try asking questions that begin with each of those words.

A. Ten questions about "education":

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

B. Ten questions about "families":

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

C. Ten questions about your third subject: _____

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

NAME _____ DATE _____

8.

9.

10.

D. Choosing your favorite questions:

Now go back over your list and pick out three or four questions you think it would be interesting or informative to explore in an essay for this course. If you think of your essays as answers to questions or as attempts to answer questions, you can often best visualize the focus or purpose for an essay. Write below your three or four favorite questions.

1.

2.

3.

4.