

Put it in Writing

PUT IT IN WRITING

Second Edition

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Put It in Writing, Second Edition

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and

To the memory of Charles A. Curran

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INTRODUCTION

This second edition of *Put It in Writing*, undertaken some seven years after the original publication, seeks to respond to three major concerns of teachers and administrators who have used and evaluated the book. First, it expands the range of use, providing more controlled writing exercises for high-beginning and low-intermediate students. This will give easier entry into the book for those students who may have completed a first ESL course, but who need additional work with a fair degree of control. There is also a new section, entitled "Moving On," designed to provide a transition for the advanced-intermediate student from the predominantly descriptive/narrative mode to expository writing. This last section seeks to involve students in thought and discussion about some larger social issues, and to help them bridge the thinking and writing gap between personal experiences and issues and those that affect a greater number of people.

A second concern was the need for more oral preparation for writing. This has been accomplished by the inclusion of exercises in which students can interact with both the material presented and their classmates, thereby developing ideas and gaining oral practice with words and structures that can facilitate a sounder and more satisfying writing experience. While this was the intent of the original edition, it has been made more explicit by the inclusion of sharing activities, such as retelling, interviewing, and guided group discussion at the start of virtually every selection.

Finally, the authors have responded to the concerns of those who appreciate the goals and content of the book but who, through lack of teaching experience and/or familiarity with the Counseling-Learning/Community Language Learning model, feel unable to use it effectively. In addition to the clarification of oral activities described above, an appendix entitled "From Teacher to Teacher" suggests ways to use the book, how to overcome potential difficulties, and ways to evaluate students' writing. With the use of guidelines and examples, we trust it will make *Put It in Writing* more accessible to more teachers.

In addition, the authors hope that "From Teacher to Teacher" will facilitate a two-way line of communication and welcome comments and questions regarding any aspect of the book.

Put It in Writing came into being as a result of the authors' work with college level ESL students at Bronx Community College and also their experience with Charles A. Curran's Counseling-Learning/Community Language Learning model.

The activities in the book go beyond being "high interest" materials. They encourage student investment because they each contain some idea, experience, or situation that students value. Students invest themselves because the activity somehow touches them and their lives.

Students write better when the "I" is involved, for example, as when (1) the student writes about him/herself in response to "My Life" or "Chi Lin's Escape to Freedom"; (2) the student writes about another person or an event but shows the relationship of that person or event to him/herself, as in "Uncle Carmine" or "The Grocery Store"; (3) the student writes about a person, situation, or event that he or she has no relationship to but gets personally involved with because of the inherent values. For example, with "Anna and Martin," a student may not be married or, if married, may not be facing the conflict that Anna and Martin are facing; nonetheless, a female student can value Anna's desire for more independence while a male student can value, or at least understand, Martin's feelings about being head of the household.

In the appendix, "From Teacher to Teacher," we explain in some detail how to use this book. We make just one fundamental point here: The teaching of grammar should be subordinate to the writing activity. If students begin with writing, then engage in a combination of correction and follow-up grammar, spelling, and vocabulary activities as needed, they are more likely to learn from their mistakes and to retain what they learn. In other words, the starting point is self-invested students entering into the writing activity. Their engagement causes them to be more open to, and to pay more attention to, the help the teacher gives them during and after the writing. They are more open because they value what they are writing and want to do the best they can.

To use this book as the authors intended, the writing must not be perceived by the students as their response to the teacher's grammar lesson; rather the grammar, spelling, and vocabulary activities must be seen as the teacher's response, after the fact, to the students' original investment in the writing. Proceeding this way frees the teacher to truly meet student needs.

The materials in *Put It in Writing* have been used with excellent results for more than ten years now in a variety of settings throughout the United States and abroad. Experience tells us that the book is most appropriate for older teenagers and adults whose abilities range from low-intermediate to low-advanced. *Put It in Writing* has become a standard text in certain high school ESL programs, adult ESL community programs, EFL courses, and a number of two- and four-year colleges. We hope that this second edition will continue to meet the needs of those programs as well as find a wider audience as a result of its substantial additions and revisions. We welcome your response to our efforts.

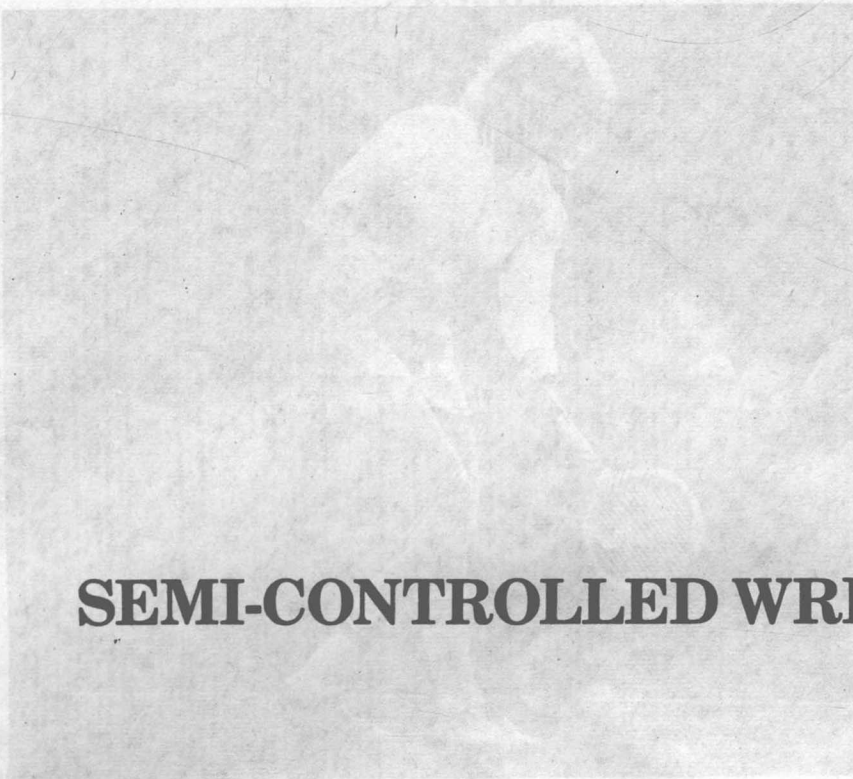
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SEMI-CONTROLLED WRITING

PROFILE

MELANIE WINSTONE

HOME: Sydney, Australia; Beverly Hills, California; New York City; and wherever work and relationships take her.

AGE: 34

PROFESSION: Television actress.

HOBBIES: Sports, travel, reading, helping others, and enjoying good food.

LAST BOOK READ: Jane Fonda's Workout Book.

LATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Organized a tennis tournament for poor kids in Los Angeles.

WHY I DO WHAT I DO: Because life is for living and giving.

PERSONALITY: Enthusiastic, enterprising, communicative. Has a real talent for getting other people to enjoy and help themselves.

HER FAVORITE PUBLICATION: MS Magazine. "Ultimately, it may be the feminine outlook that saves the world."



PROFILE

MELANIE WINSOME

HOME: Sydney, Australia; Beverly Hills, California; New York City; and wherever work and relationships take me.

AGE: 24

PROFESSION: Television actress.

HOBBIES: Sports, travel, reading, helping others, and enjoying good food.

LAST BOOK READ: *Jane Fonda's Workout Book*.

LATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Organized a tennis tournament for poor kids in Los Angeles.

WHY I DO WHAT I DO: Because life is for living and giving.

PERSONALITY: Enthusiastic, enterprising, communicative. Has a real talent for getting other people to enjoy and help themselves.

HER FAVORITE PUBLICATION: *MS Magazine*. "Ultimately, it may be the feminine outlook that saves the world."

PROFILE

ACTIVITIES

1. *With a partner.* Tell about yourself using the following categories. Then, write out your own profile.

My home:

My age:

My profession:

My hobby:

Last book that I read:

Last movie that I saw:

My latest accomplishment:

Why I am going to school:

Brief description of my personality:

My favorite newspaper or magazine and a comment about it:

2. *By yourself.* Using the information above, write a paragraph about yourself.
3. *With your partner or group.* Tell how you would like to be ten years from now, using the following categories. Then, *by yourself*, fill in the profile.

My home:

My age:

My profession:

My hobby:

My family:

Brief description of my personality:

4. *By yourself.* Pretend it is ten years from now. Using the information above, write a composition about yourself and tell how you are different from the way you were ten years ago. Also answer the following questions: What has been the biggest change in your life in the past ten years? Are you happier now? What helped you to change?



THE PERSON WHO TAKES CARE OF YOUR BUILDING

This is a story about the person who takes care of a house or building where more than one family lives.

ACTIVITY

With a partner. Write about the person who takes care of your (or someone else's) building or house. You may give additional information and examples.

Begin your story this way:

The person who takes care of our building/house
is called the * His/Her name is

Is the person who takes care of your building a man or a woman? How old is he/she? Is he/she married or single? Does he/she live in the basement or on one of the floors of the building or house? Does he/she speak English or some other language? Is he/she a friendly or an unfriendly person?

Does the * keep the building or house clean, or does he/she let it get dirty? Does he/she allow children to play near the building? In winter, does he/she provide enough heat? When something is broken, does he/she fix it or does he/she call someone in to repair it? Does he/she take care of the garbage or does he/she let it pile up?

Do the tenants like the * or not? Do they give him/her gifts on holidays?

*super
superintendent
janitor
landlord
concierge

MARIE CASTELLI

ACTIVITIES

1. *With a partner.* Write about Marie Castelli. You and your partner decide what details you want to include in the first and second paragraphs of your story. Both of you write exactly the same thing on your papers. When you have finished, check each other's papers to make sure that you have written the same thing and that there are no errors.
2. *By yourself.* Write your own ending to the story (third paragraph). Compare this ending with your partner's. Tell your partner why you decided to end the story this way.

Marie Castelli: Born Naples, Italy, May 14, 1968.

Her parents: poor; father—a baker; mother—a housewife with _____ children.

1st para.

What kind of neighborhood did she live in? She liked her neighborhood. Why? Where did she play? Whom did she play with?

What kind of elementary school did she go to? Her teachers—good or bad? Classmates—friendly or unfriendly? What were her favorite subjects?

2nd para.

September 1982. Marie—high school. What was her major subject? Why? Who was her best friend? What did they do together?

Marie's mother died in 1983. What did Marie's father ask her to do? What did Marie decide to do? Was she happy or unhappy with her decision? Why?

3rd para. [What happened to Marie when she was 19?

A DIFFICULT DECISION

This is a story about Edward, a young man who had to make a very difficult decision.

ACTIVITIES

1. *With a partner.* Write about Edward. You and your partner decide what details you want to include in the first and second paragraphs of your story. Both of you write exactly the same thing on your papers. When you have finished, check each other's papers to make sure that you have written the same thing and that there are no errors.
2. *By yourself.* Write your own ending to the story (third and fourth paragraphs). Compare your ending with your partner's. Tell your partner why you decided to end the story this way.

1st para.	<div style="margin-bottom: 20px;">Where does Edward come from?</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 20px;">How old is he?</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 20px;">When did he come to the United States?</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 20px;">Why did he come to the United States?</div> <div>Edward was doing well in this country. Why?</div>	<div style="margin-bottom: 20px;"> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="font-size: 3em; margin-right: 5px;">{</div> <div> Greece Colombia Japan Puerto Rico <hr style="width: 100%;"/> </div> </div> </div> <div style="margin-bottom: 20px;"> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="font-size: 3em; margin-right: 5px;">{</div> <div> four years ago eight months ago when he was eighteen <hr style="width: 100%;"/> </div> </div> </div> <div style="margin-bottom: 20px;"> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="font-size: 3em; margin-right: 5px;">{</div> <div> He wanted to study. He wanted a better life. He wanted to make a lot of money. He wanted to escape oppression in his own country. He wanted to find a wife. <hr style="width: 100%;"/> </div> </div> </div> <div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="font-size: 3em; margin-right: 5px;">{</div> <div> He was studying at a good college and was going to graduate in one year. He had a high-paying job with a chance for promotion. He was planning to marry a wonderful American woman. <hr style="width: 100%;"/> </div> </div> </div>
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But then something happened.

When did Edward receive a phone call?

2nd para.

Who was the phone call from?

his father

his mother

his sister

his fiancée

What did this person tell him?

that his mother was very sick and needed his help

that his father had cancer and needed his help

that his fiancée was going to marry another man

3rd para.

What did this person want Edward to do?

What did Edward decide to do?

Why was this decision difficult for him?

What did he do after he made the decision?

4th para.

How do you feel about Edward's situation?

What do you think? Did he make the right decision? Why or why not?