

The St. Martin's Handbook

sixth edition

Andrea A. Lunsford

sixth edition

The
St. Martin's
Handbook

For Bedford/St. Martin's

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Preface

For years now, I have been saying, “These are exciting times for writers and teachers of writing.” Sometimes I wonder just how much more excitement we can take! Writing teachers today find themselves working with a whole new range of media while still attending to the demands of teaching students to write and document traditional print texts. Vocabulary is changing before our very eyes, as are spelling, punctuation, and mechanics. Audiences on the Web call for new thinking about how to craft messages for worldwide audiences and how to work with others across long distances. In a time of such challenging possibilities, taking a rhetorical perspective is particularly important. Why? Because a rhetorical perspective rejects either/or, right/wrong, black/white approaches to writing in favor of asking what choices will be most appropriate, effective, and ethical in a given writing situation.

The St. Martin’s Handbook has always taken such a perspective, and the numerous changes to the sixth edition reflect this tradition. Throughout, this book invites student writers to take each choice they make as an opportunity for critical engagement with ideas, audiences, and texts. As I’ve incorporated new material, I’ve been careful not to lose sight of the mission of any handbook: to be an accessible reference to students and instructors alike.

Research for *The St. Martin’s Handbook*

From the beginning, *The St. Martin’s Handbook* has been informed by research on student writing. The late Robert J. Connors and I first began work on *The St. Martin’s Handbook* in 1983, when we realized that most college handbooks were based on research into student writing conducted almost fifty years earlier. Our own historical studies had convinced us that student writing and what teachers think of as “good” writing change over time, so we began by gathering a nationwide sample of more than 21,000

marked student essays and carefully analyzing a stratified sample to identify the twenty surface errors most characteristic of contemporary student writing. (You can find articles detailing this research study in *From Theory to Practice: A Selection of Essays* by Andrea A. Lunsford, available free from Bedford/St. Martin's.)

Our analysis of these student essays revealed the twenty errors that most troubled students and teachers in the 1980s (spelling was by far the most prevalent error then) as well as the organizational and other global issues of greatest concern to teachers. Our findings on the twenty most common errors led to sections in *The St. Martin's Handbook* that attempt to put error in its place, presenting the conventions of writing as rhetorical choices a writer must make rather than as a series of rules that writers must obey.

Every subsequent edition of *The St. Martin's Handbook* has been informed by research, from a national survey of student writers on how they are using technology to a series of intensive interviews with students and focus group sessions with first-year writing instructors. In preparing for the sixth edition of this text, I've had an opportunity to look back over twenty-plus years of research, all of which has emphasized my original historical understanding that writing conventions and notions of correctness can and do change. With this long view in mind, in 2004 I began to plan for a new research study, one that would replicate the study Bob Connors and I did some twenty years ago.

When Karen Lunsford and I undertook this study, we quickly found that more than student writing had changed in the last twenty years. What had been a fairly simple process of canvassing teachers and program directors twenty years ago had by 2004 turned into a nightmarish thicket of institutional review board regulations. The impediments led to a smaller sample of student writing, but with perseverance we were able to elicit well over 2,000 marked student essays and, from them, to select a stratified sample of roughly 900 essays that represented a strong national sample.

The results of our analysis of these essays inform this new edition and demonstrate the dramatic changes that have taken place in the last twenty years. As expected, all but a tiny number of these essays were word processed, but the changes run much deeper than this change in technology. Our study shows that writing assignments, which were dominated by personal narrative essays twenty years ago, have shifted to argument and research-based argument today. As a result, the errors that plague student writers have shifted as well, and today errors associated

with citation practices rank high on the list of most frequent errors. The *Handbook's* coverage of research and documentation has been updated and made more visual with these student challenges in mind. In addition, spelling — twenty years ago the number one error by some 300 percent — now is much less problematic, thanks in large part to spell checkers. Intriguingly, however, the new number one error — wrong word — may be related to students' placing too much confidence in spell checkers and allowing them to replace misspelled words with incorrect ones (such as *defiantly* for *definitely*).

Finally, this reading of a large national sample of student essays brings some good news for students and teachers of writing. First, students today are writing much more than they were twenty years ago (the average length in 1985 was 411 words; today, the average length is 1051, more than double). More important, they are tackling increasingly complex topics; they are also using more complicated structures that result, sometimes, in what might be called "faulty sentence structure" but that, on closer look, often reveal attempts to stretch syntactic muscles in new ways or to create a kind of special effect in writing.

So today, well over twenty years after I began working on *The St. Martin's Handbook*, I am optimistic about students and student writing. As always, this book seeks to serve students as a ready reference that will help them make appropriate grammatical and rhetorical choices. Beyond this immediate goal, though, I hope to guide students in understanding and experiencing for themselves the multiple ways in which truly good writing always means more than just following the rules. Truly good writing, I believe, means applying those rules in specific rhetorical situations for specific purposes and with specific audiences in ways that will bring readers and writers, teachers and students, to spirited conversation as well as to mutual understanding and respect.

Features of *The St. Martin's Handbook*

A FOCUS ON GOOD WRITING, NOT JUST CORRECTNESS. To write rhetorically effective texts, students must understand how to follow conventions that depend on their audience, situation, and discipline.

DETAILED COVERAGE OF CRITICAL THINKING AND ARGUMENT. Research conducted for this edition reveals that assignments in first-year writing

classes today call primarily for argument. *The St. Martin's Handbook* provides the information student writers need to respond most effectively to their contemporary writing assignments, including practical advice for analyzing and composing verbal and visual arguments *and* two complete student essays.

UP-TO-DATE ADVICE ON RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION. With the once-clear distinction between print and electronic sources growing increasingly blurred, *The St. Martin's Handbook* includes completely revised and updated coverage of library, Internet, and field research, along with chapters on working with sources and avoiding plagiarism and full coverage of MLA, APA, *Chicago*, and CSE styles.

ESSENTIAL HELP FOR WRITING IN THE DISCIPLINES. Student writers will find strategies for understanding discipline-specific assignments, vocabulary, style, and use of evidence, along with complete student writing assignments by real students: research papers in MLA, APA, *Chicago*, and CSE styles; first-year writing assignments in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences; and business documents.

THOROUGH ATTENTION TO WRITING IN ANY MEDIUM. With advice on netiquette, document design, online texts, and oral and multimedia presentations — and real-life student samples including poster and PowerPoint presentations, print and electronic portfolio cover letters, and email — *The St. Martin's Handbook* shows students how writing in electronic and multimedia environments does (and doesn't) differ from writing for traditional print genres.

UNIQUE COVERAGE OF LANGUAGE. Practical advice helps students communicate effectively across languages and cultures — and shows how to use varieties of language both wisely and well. Extra help for multilingual writers appears in five chapters and in boxed tips throughout the book.

A USER-FRIENDLY INDEX. Entries include everyday words (such as *that* or *which*) as well as grammatical terms (such as *relative pronoun*), so students can find information even if they don't know grammatical terminology.

New to This Edition

Handbook coverage based on new research into student writing patterns

As noted above, to update *The St. Martin's Handbook's* 1986 research into student writers' twenty most common errors, Karen Lunsford and I completed a new study of writing from first-year composition courses nationwide. New coverage in the sixth edition addresses the issues we found.

More help with research and documentation

- With the results of the study showing new kinds of common problems related to documentation, the sixth edition of the *Handbook* includes step-by-step, visual advice on evaluating sources and on documenting print and online sources in all four documentation styles.

SOURCE MAP: Citing articles from databases using APA style

Libraries pay for services—such as InfoTrac, EBSCOhost, ProQuest, and LexisNexis—that provide access to large databases of electronic articles.

- Author.** If available, include the author's name as you would for a print source. List all authors' last names first, and use only initials for first and middle names. Separate the names of multiple authors with commas, and use an ampersand (&) before the last author's name.
- Publication date.** Enclose the date in parentheses. For journals, use only the year. For magazines and newspapers, use the year, a comma, the month (spelled out), and the day of the month if given.
- Article title.** Do not italicize or enclose article titles in quotation marks. Capitalize only the first word of the article title and the subtitle and any proper nouns or proper adjectives.
- Periodical title.** Italicize the periodical title (and subtitle, if any), and capitalize all major words.
- Publication information.** Follow the periodical title with a comma, and then give the volume number (italicized) and, without a space in between, the issue number (if given) in parentheses.
- Page numbers.** Give inclusive page numbers of the article. For newspapers, include abbreviation p. ("page") or pp. ("pages") before the page numbers.
- Retrieval information.** Type the word *Retrieved* (or *Abstract retrieved*, for abstracts), followed by the date you retrieved the article and the name of the database.
- Document number.** Provide a document number (sometimes called an article or accession number), if available, and end the citation with a period.

For a journal article retrieved from a database, use the following format:

Last name, first initial, (Year). Title of article. *Title of Journal*, Volume number (Issue number), Page number(s). Retrieved Month day, year, from Database name (Document number, if available).

A citation for the article on p. 367 would look like this:

Chory-Assad, R. M., & Tamborini, R. (2004). Television sitcom exposure and aggressive communication: A priming perspective. *North American Journal of Psychology*, 6(3), 415–422. Retrieved August 8, 2005, from Academic Search Premier (15630823).

DOUBLE-SPACE, INDENT ONE-HALF INCH OR FIVE SPACES

1 By: Chory-Assad, Rebecca M., Tamborini, Ron

2 2004

3 North American Journal of Psychology

4 Vol. 6, Issue 3

5 Academic Search Premier

6 p415, 8p

7 15630823

For more on using APA style to cite articles retrieved from databases, see 1843. (For guidelines and models for using MLA style, see 1843; for Chicago style, see 2003; for CSE style, see 2103.)

- Thoroughly revised coverage of research includes up-to-the-minute advice on using databases and the other electronic sources that today’s students turn to first.

A new Top Twenty

- The Top Twenty lists the problems that occur most often in student writing today. Students can find editing their papers an overwhelming task; the Top Twenty helps them set priorities. A quick-reference section on the orange pages at the front of the book offers a brief look at each common problem and cross-references to more detailed information elsewhere in *The St. Martin’s Handbook*.

top 30

2

1

THE TOP TWENTY

What else has changed? For starters, wrong-word errors are by far the most common errors among first-year student writers today. Twenty years ago, spelling errors were most common by a factor of more than three to one. The use of spell checkers has reduced the number of spelling errors in student writing—but spell checkers’ suggestions may also be responsible for some (or many) of the wrong words students are using.

To help you in producing writing that is conventionally correct, we became familiar with the twenty most common error patterns among U.S. college students today, listed below in order of frequency. Those twenty errors are the ones most likely to result in negative responses from your instructors and other readers. A brief explanation and examples of each error are provided in the following sections, and each error pattern is cross-referenced to other places in this book where you can find more detailed information and additional examples.

1

Wrong word

Religious texts, for them, take ^{precedence} precedence over other kinds of sources.

Precedence means “foresight,” and precedence means “priority of importance.”

The child suffered from a severe ^{allergy} allergy to peanuts.

Allergy, which refers to a symbolic meaning, is a spell checker’s replacement for a misspelling of *allegory*.

The panel discussed the ethical implications ^{of} of the situation.

Wrong-word errors can involve using a word with the wrong shade of meaning, a word with a completely wrong meaning, or a wrong preposition or word in an idiom. Selecting a word from a thesaurus without being certain of its meaning or allowing a spell checker to correct your spelling automatically can lead to wrong-word errors, so use these tools with care. If you have trouble with prepositions and idioms, memorize the standard usage. (See Chapter 29 on choosing the correct word, Chapter 30 on using spell checkers wisely, and Chapter 60 on using prepositions and idioms.)

THE TOP TWENTY

2

3

The top twenty

1. Wrong word

2. Missing comma after an introductory element

3. Incomplete or missing documentation

4. Vague pronoun reference

5. Spelling (including homonyms)

6. Mechanical error with a quotation

7. Unnecessary comma

8. Unnecessary capitalization

9. Missing word

10. Faulty sentence structure

11. Missing comma with a nonrestrictive element

12. Unnecessary shift in verb tense

13. Missing comma in a compound sentence

14. Unnecessary or missing apostrophe (including *its/its’*)

15. Fused (run-on) sentence

16. Comma splice

17. Lack of pronoun-antecedent agreement

18. Poorly integrated quotations

19. Unnecessary or missing hyphen

20. Sentence fragment

2

Missing comma after an introductory element

Determined to get the job done, we worked all weekend.

In German, nouns are always capitalized.

Readers usually need a small pause between an introductory word, phrase, or clause and the main part of the sentence; a pause most often

- Expanded coverage of the surface errors students struggle with most helps students understand and avoid common mistakes.

- **A NEW CHAPTER ON THINKING VISUALLY.** Chapter 4 encourages students to consider the visual impact of their work through every step of the writing process.

- **MORE VISUAL EXPLANATIONS OF ACADEMIC CONCEPTS.** Research strategies, design analysis, peer review, and other important ideas and skills are explained visually throughout *The St. Martin's Handbook*.

CRITICAL THINKING AND ARGUMENT • Thinking Critically about Visuals

via arg

16c

171

A child is not a target.

Face is second largest circle — and the first thing that draws this is a child. Big round eyes — black and empty? scared?

Circle is large because of the top contradiction: what the picture shows — a child who looks like a target.

Colors are warm skin tones emphasize that this is a person.

But it says girls' attention — target to what? danger? wants to notice

Circles for girls and boys make child look like a dot or mannequin.

"Cycle" — like a circle — ordered to what the image shows "the cycle of domestic violence" assumption is that abusers observe after female abusers attack.

Comparison says nothing but circles. They look contradictory and friendly.

Stop the cycle of domestic violence.

Considered a controversial image, this cartoon depicts a child's mouth and hands, which, despite conveying something about the cycle of domestic violence, is highly offensive to some. After 100,000 visitors, comments and e-mails were posted.

TurnAround can help: (410) 372-8111

Photo by: Andrew Schacht

Reference: J. David Ferrelle, "Critical Reason: Women's Violence: Is a Child Really

New advice on academic writing — with help for every college writer

- A NEW INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER ON EXPECTATIONS FOR COLLEGE WRITERS.** Chapter 1 shows students the ropes of college writing, giving them the information they need to master academic conventions, including the conventions for responding effectively to instructors’ written comments.
- NEW “TALKING THE TALK” BOXES.** Answers to real student questions clarify common misconceptions about academic work — from how to distinguish between collaborating and cheating to when to use the first person.
- UNIQUE COVERAGE OF PEER REVIEW.** With a focus on peer review as a key part of the writing process, *The St. Martin’s Handbook* helps students benefit from comments, and offer useful comments, during every stage of the writing process, for any kind of project — including a research project.
- MORE THAN THIRTY-FIVE REAL, COMPLETE STUDENT WRITING SAMPLES.** Twenty models of arguments, research projects, presentations, disciplinary writing, portfolios, and presentations appear in the book — with many more on the Web site.

coll exp

20

18

WRITING • Expectations for College Writing

Instructor Comment	Possible Meaning(s)	Actions to Take in Response
"hard to follow" "not logical" "incoherent" "jumps around" "parts not connected" "transition"	The writing is not clearly or not logically organized, or the writing lacks transitions, explanations, or other signals the reader needs to understand.	If overall organization is unclear, try mapping or outlining and rearranging your work. (17b2) See if transitions and signals (7d4) or additional explanation will solve the problem.
"too general" "vague"	You make general statements when specific ones are needed.	Use concrete language and details, and make sure that you have something specific and interesting to say. (29c) If not, reconsider your topic.
"underdeveloped" "thin" "sparse"	You do not give enough information, examples, or details about the material, or you have not considered the topic from enough angles.	Add examples and details, and be as specific as possible. (29c) You may need to do more research. (Chapters 12–14)
"what about the opposition?" "one-sided" "condescending" "overbearing"	You do not include information on opposing arguments; you misrepresent them, or you imply that your opinion is the only reasonable one to hold.	Add information on why some people disagree with you, and represent their views fairly and completely before you relate them. Recognize that reasonable people may hold views that differ

multimedia

496

25d

PRIVILEGE, ELECTRONIC, AND OTHER MEDIA • Oral and Multimedia Presentations

The Child’s Voice through Visual Style: Repetition




Fig. 4.6. From *Marjane Satrapi, Persepolis*. © 2003 by Marjane Satrapi. Reproduced by permission of Pantheon Books.

Fig. 4.6. From *Marjane Satrapi, Persepolis*. © 2003 by Marjane Satrapi. Reproduced by permission of Pantheon Books.

and speaking directly to the reader to make an emphatic point. The repetition throughout *Persepolis* makes it look and feel more like a child’s book. [slide 4] In addition to simplification through repetition, there’s a second simplifying process, that of filtering. *Persepolis* is filled with violent elements. One good example is the torture and execution of guerrilla fighter Ahmad. Marjane recounts, “In the end he was cut to pieces.” The dismemberment is one of the most violent images that we see in the book. However, Satrapi’s representation filters the horror. [point to illustration] This figure doesn’t seem real — it looks neatly sectioned and hollow, like a doll. We see the image presented as a child might imagine it.

So, let me conclude by emphasizing why Satrapi’s visual style is so effective. Remember, she is connecting to the world of childhood through comics. Her story seems very grim and adult — too grim for children. But it is a child’s story, or rather the story of a character standing on the threshold of the adult world. So the graphic novel is an ideal way to reveal both the conflicting aspects of the child’s voice and the balance between these aspects. For the author to explain the child Marjane’s particular, slightly uncomfortable vantage point, the tri-balance genre of the graphic novel is a perfect fit. [slide 5] Thanks! Are there any questions?

New, more inclusive coverage for multilingual writers

Two new contributors, leading second-language experts Paul Kei Matsuda (University of New Hampshire) and Christine M. Tardy (DePaul University), address the wide-ranging needs of today's multilingual students — whether international students, recent immigrants, or Generation 1.5 student who have grown up in the United States.

- **A NEW CHAPTER ON STRATEGIES FOR ADAPTING TO UNFAMILIAR GENRES AND CONTEXTS.** Creative tips, both visual and textual, help multilingual students tackle academic writing in any discipline.

acad
56d
787

FOR MULTILINGUAL WRITERS • Writing in U.S. Academic Contexts

<p>Original Abstract from a Social Science Paper</p> <p>Using the interpersonal communications research of J. K. Brihart and G. J. Galanes, and W. Wilmet and J. Hocker, along with T. Hartman's personality assessment, I observed and analyzed the leadership roles and group dynamics of my project collaborators in a communications course. Based on results of the Hartman personality assessment, I predicted that a single leader would emerge. However, complementary individual strengths and gender differences encouraged a distributed leadership style, in which the group experienced little confrontation and conflict. Conflict, because it was handled positively, was crucial to the group's progress.</p>	<p>Inappropriate Borrowing of Ideas and Sentences</p> <p>Using the interpersonal communications research of J. K. Brihart and G. J. Galanes, and W. Wilmet and J. Hocker, along with T. Hartman's personality assessment, I observed and analyzed the leadership roles and group dynamics of my peers in a communications course. Based on findings of the Hartman personality assessment, I predicted that one leader of the group would appear. However, complementary individual strengths and differences in gender resulted in a distributed leadership style, in which there was little confrontation and conflict. Because it was handled positively, conflict was crucial to the group's progress.</p>
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copy the whole sentence or sentence structure verbatim, however, or your borrowed sentences may seem plagiarized (Chapter 16 and 18c).

The first example on the previous page illustrates effective borrowing. The student writer borrows phrases that are commonly used in academic writing in the social sciences to perform particular functions. Notice how the student also modifies these phrases to suit his or her needs.

The next example above illustrates poor borrowing practices. The student plagiarizes both ideas and whole sentences from the original text.

56d **Strategies for learning from search engines**

To multilingual writers, Internet search engines such as Google offer more than a tool for finding information. They also provide a useful way of developing vocabulary or checking sentence structure and word usage. A number of common strategies can help. For example, you can include a wildcard in a keyword search to find all the forms of a word; a wildcard search using *reciproce* will yield *reciprocate*, *reciprocating*, *reciprocated*,

- **PRACTICAL TIPS FOR SUCCESS IN U.S. COLLEGE WORK.** Advice appears in a unique section and in boxed tips throughout the book. See a complete list of “For Multilingual Writers” boxes on p. I-30.

A Wide Array of Ancillaries

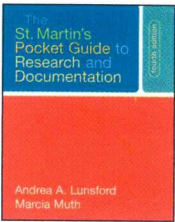
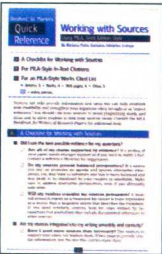
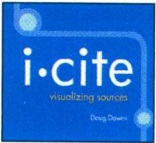
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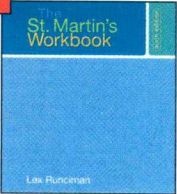
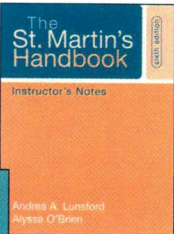
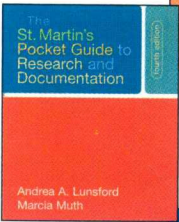
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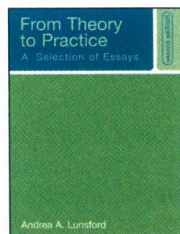
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New media resources

The St. Martin's Handbook Book Companion Site

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The St. Martin's Handbook Sixth Edition
Andrea A. Lunsford
Stanford University

Welcome
This Web site offers additional coverage of key topics from *The St. Martin's Handbook*, including doing research, documenting research, recognizing common writing errors, and avoiding errors.
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