



Writer's Guide and Index to English

Wilma R. Ebbitt
David R. Ebbitt

Sixth Edition

H315
EWR
(-6)

Writer's Guide and Index to English

Sixth Edition

Wilma R. Ebbitt

The Pennsylvania State University

David R. Ebbitt

Scott, Foresman and Company

Glenview, Ill.

Dallas, Tex.

Oakland, N.J.

Palo Alto, Cal.

Tucker, Ga.

London

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Ebbitt, Wilma R

Writer's guide and index to English.

Fifth ed. by P. G. Perrin.

1. English language—Rhetoric. I. Ebbitt, David R., joint author. II. Perrin, Porter Gale, 1896–1962. Writer's guide and index to English. III. Title.

PE1411.E22 1978

808'.042

77–21370

ISBN 0-673-15109-3

Copyright © 1978, 1977, 1972, 1968, 1965, 1959, 1950, 1942, 1939
Scott, Foresman and Company.

All Rights Reserved.

Printed in the United States of America.

Acknowledgments of sources granting permission to reprint
copyrighted material appear on pp. 689 ff.

2 3 4 5 6 7 8-RRC-86 85 84 83 82 81 80 79 78

Preface

Writer's Guide and Index to English combines a rhetoric, *Writer's Guide*, with a comprehensive handbook, *Index to English*. In this sixth edition we have made a special effort to render both parts accessible to a broader range of students. Recognizing the rhetorical situation (as we urge students to do in all their papers) has meant, not omitting and oversimplifying, but writing in a style freshmen will find readable and using illustrative material they will be interested in. Sources of such material are by no means limited to popular journalism. *Sports Illustrated* and *Newsweek* are represented here, but so are *The New York Review of Books* and *The American Scholar*.

In both parts of the book, we have offered practical instruction and realistic advice. We have told students the truth—that writing well requires concentrated effort—but we have also reminded them now and again that it needn't be a grim ordeal, that college papers can give pleasure to the writer as well as to the reader.

We encourage students to take responsibility for their own progress in writing. From the first pages of the *Guide*, we insist that at the heart of the composing process must lie a sense of personal commitment, personal engagement, personal responsibility. At the same time, we give most attention to practical problems of execution—problems that recur in drafting and redrafting papers, in revising and rewriting. Like the earlier editions, the sixth proceeds on the assumption that writing can be most satisfactorily discussed and practiced in the context of a range of choices—rhetorical, syntactic, and lexical.

Both *Guide* and *Index* have been largely rewritten. The *Guide* has also been reorganized. Chapter One, "Getting

Started," introduces the student to the concept of the rhetorical situation: the combination of writer, subject, purpose, and audience that determines what methods and what style will be most appropriate in a particular paper. As long-time users of *Writer's Guide and Index to English* are aware, appropriateness is the key principle that Porter G. Perrin recommended in the early editions of this textbook.

Chapter One deals with prewriting and writing and re-writing. It gets the student started by offering an overview of the whole process of writing papers in college—deciding on a manageable topic, arriving at a statement of purpose, gathering material, choosing methods of developing ideas (and in the process generating content), writing drafts, revising, and editing. All through the text the need for rewriting and revising is repeatedly emphasized. Chapter One suggests steps and procedures, but it does not present a procedure, a formula for writing. Instead, it urges students to experiment, to find out what works for *them*.

In both *Guide* and *Index* the labels "general," "formal," and "informal" are applied not only to words and phrases but to punctuation, to sentence patterns, to transitions, and to the styles that are the end result of the countless choices every writer makes, deliberately or intuitively. For writing—certainly good writing—is all of a piece, and even worse than the categorical separation of words into "right" words and "wrong" is the separation of usage from style and of style from rhetoric. Thus while the varieties of usage are treated in detail in Chapter Nine, "Choosing Words," the broad differences among general, informal, and formal styles are introduced in Chapter One in connection with the rhetorical situation and are appealed to throughout the text as a basic element in rhetorical choice.

Chapter Two consolidates into one long chapter what was spread over three chapters and part of a fourth in the last edition. Description and narration are presented not as separate modes of discourse but as methods of developing expository and argumentative papers, along with division, comparison and contrast, classification, cause and effect, and definition.

Chapter Three takes up the organizing of papers, and Chapter Four the building of paragraphs—not only single paragraphs but paragraph sequences. Chapter Five deals with persuasive writing—with argument, with general fallacies, and with refutation. In the earlier chapters explanatory and persuasive writing are treated together;

here the special rhetorical techniques and the ethical dimension of persuasion are examined.

Chapter Six, "Testing Logical Relationships," is restricted to formal logic. Those instructors who approved the coverage of induction and syllogistic reasoning in the fifth edition will find it much the same in this one. Those who lack the time or don't feel the need to take up formal logic will be able to introduce their students to the general fallacies and to refutation in Chapter Five.

Chapter Seven, on sentences, takes the place of two chapters in the fifth edition. The reduction in space has been achieved largely by omitting any comprehensive treatment of grammar. Students who need to review particular grammatical problems are led by a self-test to the item-by-item coverage in the *Index*. The material in "Shaping Sentences" has been reordered so that revising for clarity is separate from and precedes revising for style. Chapter Eight, a brief review of punctuation, is keyed to correction articles in the *Index*.

Chapter Nine deals with words, their use and their misuse. Again, the material moves from the elementary to the more sophisticated, from finding out what a word means to using words with precision or with originality and flair.

Chapter Ten, "Doing a Close Reading," describes, with an example, a single, specific approach to an extremely broad subject—writing about literature. Chapter Eleven, "Writing the Research Paper," has been carried over from the fifth edition but expanded, revised, and reorganized.

In every chapter of *Writer's Guide* students are offered frequent opportunities to test their mastery of the principles of invention, structure, development, and style that are discussed in the text. Sometimes writing tasks are sharply focused; sometimes students are invited to discover and shape their own topics, establish their own rhetorical situations. In addition, they are regularly asked to analyze and sometimes to revise the writing of others, both amateurs and professionals, so that they can develop criteria for judging their own work as they expand their rhetorical horizons. Revising the work of others is the quickest way for students to acquire the objectivity they must have in order to revise their own work intelligently. And, as instructors and students alike must recognize, revising is an indispensable part of the process of writing. While spontaneity has its virtues, for the most part writing that meets college standards is rewritten writing.

Supplementary material for class assignments, as well as suggestions for using the *Guide*, will be found in

A Teacher's Guide to the Writer's Guide, available from the publishers.

In the *Index to English* we have retained the alphabetical arrangement of articles and the extensive system of cross references that permit users of this handbook to find what they want quickly and easily. The introduction, addressed to the student, describes the book and tells how it can be used—for course work, for individual reference, for browsing.

To help students write so that what they have to say will be understood, respected, even enjoyed by readers, we provide them with some rules, remind them of certain conventions, and suggest some of the uses that can be made of both highly formal and decidedly informal English. Recognizing, however, that the practical functions of formal and informal are sharply limited for undergraduates, we recommend that they set out to master general American English, the variety of English that all educated Americans read and that all need to be able to write. The great majority of the illustrative passages in the *Index*—whether taken from books, learned journals, popular magazines, and newspapers or adapted from the writing of students—represent this most useful and versatile variety.

On the issue of standards, we endorse neither anarchy nor absolutism. We don't believe that college students, or college graduates, should be encouraged to think that just any rush of words on paper necessarily has value. Nor do we believe that students should be misled into thinking that there is only one Good English—least of all the Good English that demands observance of rules embalmed in prescriptive handbooks and guides to linguistic etiquette.

On certain matters, students need, and will find, unequivocal advice. In the articles keyed to the correction chart we have made the *Index* as prescriptive as honesty and realism permit. The correction articles answer directly and explicitly such questions as "What mark of punctuation do I need here?" "Should this verb be singular or plural?" "What can I do to improve the continuity of this paragraph?" But they also take into account appropriateness to the writer's subject and purpose and audience and to the writer's self. And in most of the articles relating to usage, style, and rhetorical strategies, appropriateness is the primary criterion students are urged to apply.

In usage articles, after identifying the current status of a locution—standard or nonstandard; if standard, formal,

informal, or general—we often include the alternatives: the “*pretty good time*” of informal and the “*fairly good time*” of general; the formal *arising* and the general *getting up*. The student who has read the *Guide* knows that the varieties overlap and that on occasion good writers deliberately shift from one variety to another. In a paper that is predominantly in general English, then, the informal *about* may be used instead of *almost* (“I was about done”) as a means of moving a bit closer to the reader. Here and elsewhere we neither deny students a choice nor simply list alternatives and invite them to take their pick. What we try to do is guide them toward making intelligent choices that reflect their awareness of the rhetorical context in which they are writing.

Discussion in *Index to English* is not limited to small writing problems that can be safely detached from the context in which they occur. Many of the articles bear on the composing of whole essays—on prewriting and getting started, on the choice of details, on the means of achieving logical sequence, on the organization and development of special kinds of papers, on how to stop. And many articles, like those on grammar, linguistics, usage, the English language, and the origin of words, introduce readers to broad areas of scholarship. From these as well as from many of the shorter articles, references open the door to further study.

Here, then, is a rhetoric that guides the student, by a choice of routes, through the process of writing papers for college courses. And here is a handbook he can turn to, as he writes and revises and as he goes over papers that have been corrected and returned, to find solutions to particular problems and answers to specific questions. A general index coordinates the two. The sixth edition of *Writer's Guide and Index to English* is, we hope, a book worth keeping, a resource for writers not just for the duration of a composition course but through college and after. In looking for new ways to help today's college students of writing develop confidence and gain competence, we were guided by the principles of Porter G. Perrin, who made *Writer's Guide and Index to English* a resource for generations of teachers as well as students.

Before work was begun on this sixth edition, an undertaking initiated by Richard Welna of Scott, Foresman and Company, the *Guide* chapters of the fifth edition were reviewed by Mark Ashin of the University of Chicago,

x Preface

Douglas B. Park of The Pennsylvania State University, William D. Payne of the University of Illinois, Mina P. Shaughnessy of the City University of New York, William B. Stone of the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle, and Gary Tate of Texas Christian University. We thank all of them for their criticisms and advice. We are particularly grateful to Professors Payne and Tate, who read the copy for the new edition as well and made many helpful suggestions.

Among the teachers whose comments influenced the revision of the *Index* were Julia A. Alexander of the Colorado School of Mines, Ronald E. Buckalew and Martha Kolln of The Pennsylvania State University, Don Norton of Brigham Young University, and William H. Pixton of Troy State University. Again, as in the fifth edition, we warmly acknowledge the contributions to the *Index* of James Fitzpatrick of Masonite Corporation, Jay Robinson of the University of Michigan, James Sledd of the University of Texas, and Joseph M. Williams of the University of Chicago.

Our thanks to Margaret A. Martin and Robert C. Gruen for their care and patience in seeing the manuscripts of the *Guide* and the *Index* through the press.

Wilma R. Ebbitt
David R. Ebbitt

Contents

Writer's Guide

1 Chapter One Getting Started

2 The Rhetorical Situation

4 Prewriting

Your Resources Settling on a Topic Defining Your Purpose
Exposition and Persuasion *Statement of Purpose and Thesis Statement*
A Reminder Building Content

16 Writing

Writing and Rewriting A Word About Style Revising and Editing
A Checklist

22 Self-Analysis and Evaluation

■ For Analysis and Writing 4, 8, 12, 15, 20, 23

27 Chapter Two Developing Papers

27 Generalizations and Particulars

Generalizations Examples Details

34 Describing: Showing How It Looks

Selecting Details Arranging Details Dominant Impression

41 Narrating: Telling What Happened

Point of View Personal Narrative Pace The Process Paper

56 Dividing: Finding the Parts

Purpose in Dividing Dividing to Organize

61 Comparing and Contrasting: Finding Likenesses and Differences

Points of Comparison Structuring a Comparison

72 Classifying: Making Groups

Consistency Completeness

76 Analyzing Causes and Effects: Finding Out Why and What Then

Discovering Causes Attributing Effects

81 Defining: Telling What It Is

Extended Definitions The Center of the Definition

■ For Analysis and Writing 31, 38, 48, 55, 61, 63, 70, 74, 76, 81, 88

90 Chapter Three Organizing Papers

90 Types of Order

Chronological or Spatial Order Logical Order *Support Structure*
Discovery Structure Pro-and-Con, or Exploratory, Structure
Choosing a Structure Associational Order

106 Strategies of Ordering

Announcing and Disclosing Choosing a Strategy
Parts and Paragraph Sequences

109 Signals of Transition

Explicit Signals Implicit Signals

113 Beginnings and Endings

123 Proportion and Emphasis

124 Aids to Organizing: Outlines

Types of Outlines Testing Organization

■ **For Analysis and Writing** 100, 109, 112, 120, 128, 130

131 Chapter Four Building Paragraphs

131 Function and Length

133 Unity and Development

Topic Sentences and Pointers Expanding the Core

139 Paragraph Structure

Functional Units The General Plan

149 Paragraph Coherence

Repetition and Parallelism Transitions

157 Development and Coherence in Paragraph Sequences

■ **For Analysis and Writing** 133, 138, 140, 147, 154, 157, 160

163 | Chapter Five **Persuading Readers**

163 | The Ends and the Means of Persuasion

Issue, Thesis, Proof Working Within the Rhetorical Situation
The "I" of Argument The "You" of Argument
The Limits of Accommodation

171 | Discovering Proof

Internal Sources of Argument *Argument from the Nature of the Thing*
Argument from Causal Relations Argument from Likenesses and
Differences External Sources of Argument Argument from Authority
Use of Statistics

192 | General Fallacies

195 | Refuting Arguments

■ **For Analysis and Writing** 170, 175, 181, 184, 191, 195, 198

204 | Chapter Six **Testing Logical Relationships**

204 | Testing Induction

Establishing Inductive Generalizations Establishing Causes Analogies

210 | Testing Deduction

Hypothetical Syllogisms Either-Or Syllogisms Categorical Syllogisms

■ **For Analysis and Writing** 208, 215, 217, 225

228 | **Chapter Seven** **Shaping Sentences**

229 | **Combining Sentences**

Coordinating and Subordinating *Making Choices* *Placing Clauses*
Embedding Words and Phrases

238 | **Breaking Up Sentences**

241 | **Emphasis, Directness, Economy**

Achieving Emphasis *Separating for Emphasis* *Ordering for Emphasis*
Mechanical Devices and Word Choice *Repetition*
Long and Short Sentences Achieving Directness

252 | **Parallelism and Order**

Using Parallelism *Grammatical Uses* *Rhetorical Uses*
Composing Cumulative Sentences Shaping Periodic Sentences

■ **For Analysis and Writing** **237, 241, 250, 258**

262 | **Self-Test**

266 | **Chapter Eight** **Punctuating Sentences**

266 | **Convention and Choice**

267 | **A Review of Punctuation**

At Ends of Sentences Between Main Elements
Between Coordinate Clauses After and Before Subordinate Elements
Around Interrupting Elements In Series For Clarity
With Quotation Marks

■ **For Punctuating** **269, 272, 277**

279 | Chapter Nine Choosing Words

280 | Using Dictionaries

Entries *Spelling and Division of Words*

Pronunciation Linguistic Information Definitions Labels

Synonyms Unabridged and Specialized Dictionaries

Unabridged Dictionaries Historical Dictionaries Dialect Dictionaries

Dictionaries in Special Subjects

286 | Connotation

289 | The Varieties of English

Standard and Nonstandard Formal Informal General

296 | Barriers to Communication

Pretentiousness Triteness Jargon Euphemism and Overkill

306 | Renewing Words

Metaphor *Functions of Metaphor Controlling Metaphor Allusion*

■ For Analysis and Writing 285, 289, 304, 311

314 | Chapter Ten Doing a Close Reading

314 | Reading the Work

315 | Writing the Paper

317 | A Close Reading

■ For Analysis and Writing 316, 320

321 | Chapter Eleven **Writing the Research Paper**

321 The Nature of the Research Paper

Research and Writing Procedures The Focus of the Research

326 Gathering Material

Sources of References *The Card Catalog Periodical Indexes*
Indexes to Books, Pamphlets, and Collections General Reference Works
Special Reference Works Yearbooks and Almanacs
The Working Bibliography Evaluating Sources Taking Notes on Reading
Form of Notes Suggestions for Note-Taking The Summarizing Note

348 Writing the Paper

Planning and Writing *The Outline The Writing Process*
Use of Quotation and Paraphrase Style and Point of View
Beginning and Ending the Paper Proofreading Footnotes
Placing Footnotes Form for the First Reference
Form for Later Reference Split Note Informational Footnote
Common Abbreviations The Final Bibliography

363 Sample Research Paper

■ **For Analysis and Writing 325, 347, 351, 361, 365, 380**

Contents

Index to English

The Index, pp. 381–685, contains articles in alphabetical arrangement that fall roughly into six categories:

Articles on particular words and constructions, like *among*, *between*; *definitely*; *like*, *as*; *not about to*; *who*, *whom*.

Articles to be used in correcting and revising papers, indicated by longhand abbreviations.

Articles on composition, such as Prewriting, Thesis statement, Transition; rhetoric, such as Argument, Cause and effect, Comparison and contrast; and style, such as Diction, Figurative language, Periodic sentence.

Articles offering information and advice on a range of topics that are useful in special writing situations, such as Research papers (and the related articles Bibliographical form and Footnote form), Business letters, and Technical writing.

Articles on grammar, offering definitions and discussions of standard grammatical terms and concepts, such as Collective nouns, Parts of speech, Relative clauses, Subjunctive mood.

Articles about language and language study, such as British English, English language, Linguistics, Sexist language, and Usage.

689 | Acknowledgments

697 | General Index

Chapter One

Getting Started

What's my subject? What do I want to say about it? Do I have enough information, or do I need to look for more? Can I depend on what's in my head — my mind, my memory — or should I turn to outside sources?

Who will my readers be? What kind of people are they? What are their tastes, values, prejudices? What common ground is there between us? What assumptions do we share?

How much do my readers know about my subject? How do they feel about it? Can I expect them to be interested in what I have to say? What will they be willing to take for granted, and what will I have to prove?

How can I make them see what I want them to see, think the way I want them to think, do what I want them to do?

Do I need to make my style more personal, more relaxed, or does my relationship with my readers call for a more formal style, one that keeps more distance between us?

Is this the fact to be emphasized, or is that the one? Where should I place it to give it the most emphasis?

How can I make this sentence say exactly what I mean? How can I phrase this idea to make it both clear and persuasive?

Will *this* phrase, *this* word, *this* punctuation mark work with *this* audience?

Questions like these, which range from large matters to small, need to be faced up to whenever you set about writing a paper. Essentially, they're questions of rhetoric — how to gather, organize, and present your facts, ideas, feelings, and impressions so as to achieve a specific purpose as you address a specific audience on a specific topic. Good writing doesn't just happen. It comes about because a person who is interested in a subject wants to communicate something about it. Before you begin to write, you should have clearly in mind the particular circumstances in which you're writing — the rhetorical situation.