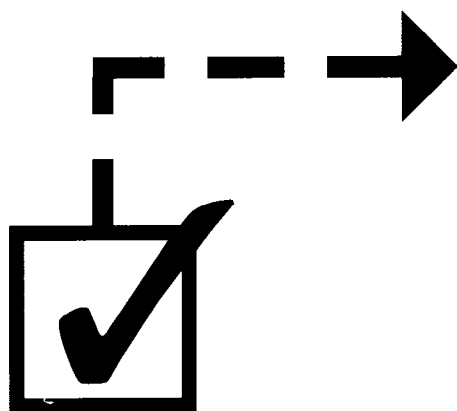


# Checkpoints

DEVELOPING COLLEGE ENGLISH SKILLS

**Jack Page**

**Third Edition**

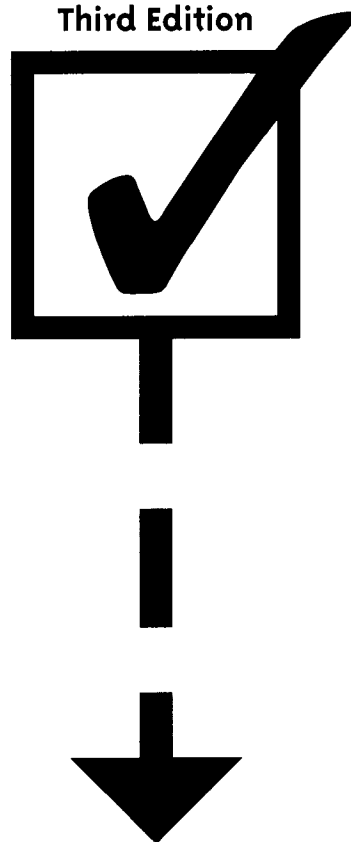


# **Checkpoints**

**Developing College English Skills**

**Jack Page**  
Merritt College

Third Edition



**LONGMAN**

An Imprint of Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.

New York • Reading, Massachusetts • Menlo Park, California • Harlow, England  
Don Mills, Ontario • Sydney • Mexico City • Madrid • Amsterdam

**Acquisitions Editor:** Ellen Schatz  
**Developmental Editor:** Melody Davies  
**Supplements Editor:** Donna Campion  
**Project Editor:** Brigitte Pelter  
**Design Manager:** Sandra Watanabe  
**Text and Cover Designer:** Sandra Watanabe  
**Production Manager:** Valerie A. Vargas  
**Manufacturing Manager:** Willie Lane  
**Electronic Page Makeup:** Carole Desnoes  
**Printer and Binder:** Courier/Kendallville  
**Cover Printer:** The Lehigh Press, Inc.

For permission to use copyrighted material, grateful acknowledgment is made to the copyright holders on pp. 293–294, which are hereby made part of this copyright page.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Page, Jack.

Checkpoints : developing college English skills / Jack Page.— 3rd ed.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 0-321-01214-3

1. English language—Rhetoric. 2. English language—Grammar. 3. College readers. 4. Report writing. I. Title

PE1408.P244 1997

808'.0427—dc21

97-11799

CIP

Copyright © 1998 by Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc.

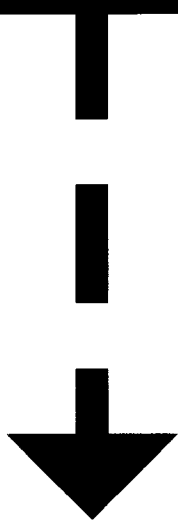
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher. Printed in the United States of America.

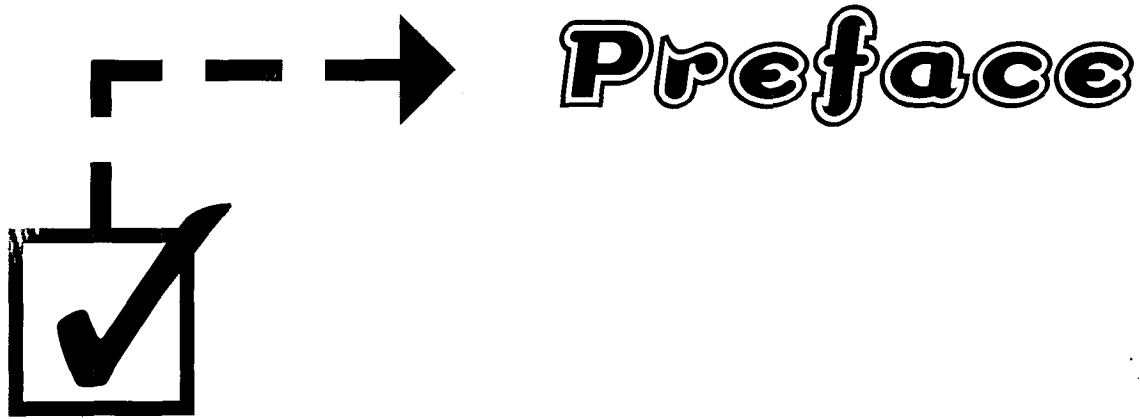
ISBN 0-321-01214-3

12345678910—CRK—00999897



***For Steven, Allison, Bradley, and Scott***





*Checkpoints* is designed to help students acquire the language skills they will need to succeed in all college courses that require the ability to write with clarity and precision and to read with critical understanding. Of course, these skills will continue to be valuable after college—both in the workplace and in social and family life.

Throughout, *Checkpoints* emphasizes the need to express ideas and present information in clear, well-organized paragraphs. Students usually find it more rewarding to develop their English skills through writing paragraphs rather than isolated sentences. With the accessible readings and abundant variety of high-interest exercises and writing assignments, the text guides students through the acquisition and application of skills. In the last four chapters, students learn to build on these paragraph skills in writing short essays.

### **Fundamentals Made Accessible**

A key feature of *Checkpoints* is its integration of a variety of interest-sustaining elements in each chapter. One of the most important of these is the reading that begins each one. The readings provide examples of writing strategies for students to emulate, as well as information and ideas that they may incorporate into their own writing. The follow-up questions under the headings Checking Meaning and Style and Checking Ideas lead students to develop critical thinking skills by relating the topics to their own experiences, ideas, and knowledge. In addition, the readings offer opportunities for improving oral communication skills through class discussions of significant contemporary issues.

The integrated coverage of grammar allows instructors to teach sentence-level skills in the context of the whole piece of writing. Each chapter covers a particular

area of grammar or mechanics and includes extensive exercises and quizzes. This instruction is designed to be accessible to students who need help with fundamentals and is presented concisely in a conversational, nontechnical way. Each brief unit of instruction is followed by a Spotcheck exercise to test understanding. Several related units are then reviewed in a Doublecheck exercise. An Editing Check at the end of each chapter provides an additional chance to apply the instruction in the chapter. Finally, a Checkpoint quiz tests mastery of the section. Further opportunities to reinforce this learning are afforded by the quizzes in a supplementary packet.

*Checkpoints* is a flexible text. An answer key for all Spotcheck and Doublecheck exercises permits independent work by students and opens up class time for freewriting, group writing, revision, and other activities. Five appendixes provide additional chances for classroom variety, with material on dictionary use, reading strategies, words often misused or misspelled, and sentence mechanics. Using the correction key on the inside front cover of the text, the instructor can easily direct students to appropriate pages for help with writing problems. Separate supplements include a set of overhead transparency masters; a set of two extra quizzes on grammar or mechanics for each chapter; and two diagnostic tests, one for the beginning and one for the end of the term.

## Features of the Third Edition

- *Increased attention to the reading/writing connection* Following each chapter selection, the writer's techniques are analyzed and connections are made to the chapter instruction. Questions before each reading ask students to think about their prior knowledge of the topic.
- *Additional focus on the writing process* Chapter 1 gives an overview of the writing process. The chapter writing assignments lead students through prewriting, drafting, and revising strategies so they will learn how to incorporate the writing process in their own paragraphs and essays. Coverage of journal writing as a way to generate ideas for writing assignments has been added to Chapter 2.
- *Revised exercises* To sustain student interest, the content of the sentences and paragraphs in the exercises has been updated, and more continuous discourse and paragraph formats have been provided. An editing exercise has been added to each chapter.
- *Updated readings* About half of the chapter selections have been replaced to make them more current, more relevant to students, or more effective models.
- *Summary writing* Coverage of this important writing skill, helpful in organizing information in other courses, has been added.
- *Coverage of modes* A chapter on the classification essay has been added, and a chapter on the persuasion essay has replaced the persuasion paragraph.
- An Instructor's Edition, Test Bank, and Transparency Masters are available to qualified adopters.

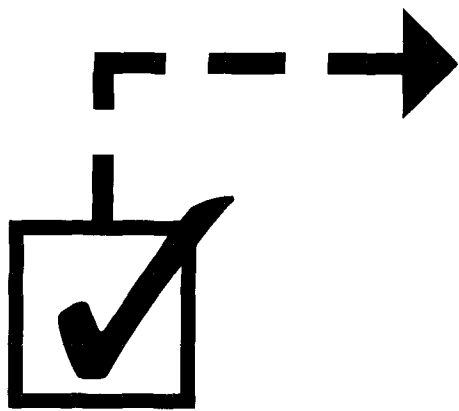
## Acknowledgments

My thanks go to Melody Davies for her many helpful suggestions for this third edition of *Checkpoints* and to Ellen Schatz for her support of the project. I continue to remember with gratitude and pleasure the help on the first edition given by Barbara Cinquegrani and Carla Samodulski.

Reviewers making important contributions to this edition were Neal Adams, Phillips Junior College; Andrea Aguilar, Consumnes River College; Debra Anderson; Indian River Community College; Michael Baehr, El Paso Community College; Marie Connelly; Cuyahoga Community College; John Covolo, Lakeland Community College; Jami A. Milliron; Pima Community College; Jane Parks, Dalton College; Joe Raia, Miami Dade Community College; Donald R. Stoddard, Anne Arundel Community College.

Finally, I would like to thank my students, who, in so many ways, made it all possible.

*Jack Page*



# Contents

Preface xv

## Chapter 1 | The Writing Process 1

"The Art of Eating Spaghetti" by Russell Baker 1

Writing as Process 3

Prewriting: Brainstorming 4

A Model Job Application Letter 5

Writing Assignment: A Job Application Letter 6

Spelling Troublemakers 7

Wordcheck: Definitions 13

## Chapter 2 | Paragraphs with Topic Sentences 15

"Names That Smell—and Sell" by Maxine Wilkie 15

Analyzing Paragraphs with Topic Sentences 17

Writing Paragraphs with Topic Sentences 17

Model Paragraphs with Topic Sentences 17

Prewriting: Keeping a Journal 23



**Writing Assignment:** A Paragraph with a Topic Sentence 24

Manuscript Preparation 25

**Sentence Sense:** Identifying Subjects and Verbs 26

Finding the Subject 27

Finding the Verb 28

**Wordcheck:** Pronunciation 34

### **Chapter 3 | Paragraphs with Specific Details 36**

"Nonnie" by Mary E. Mebane 36

Analyzing Writing That Uses Specific Details 38

**Prewriting:** Clustering 40

Model Paragraphs with Specific Details 41

**Writing Assignment:** A Portrait of a Person 41

**Writing Process:** Revising the Paper 42

**Sentence Sense:** Avoiding Fragments 43

Joining Sentence Parts 47

**Wordcheck:** Spelling 49

### **Chapter 4 | The Description Paragraph 50**

"Selling Off Pieces of Their Bodies" by Joan Ryan 50

Analyzing Descriptive Writing 52

Model Descriptive Paragraphs 53

**Writing Assignment:** A Descriptive Paragraph 53

**Writing Process:** Writing a Summary 54

Model Summary Paragraph 55

**Sentence Sense:** Avoiding Clause Fragments 55

Joining Up Fragments 58

*Who, Which, That* 59

**Wordcheck:** Spelling Compound Words 64

**Chapter 5 | The Narrative Paragraph 65**

"Down with the Forests" by Charles Kuralt	65
Analyzing Narrative Writing	67
Model Narrative Paragraphs	68
<b>Prewriting:</b> Nonstop Writing	68
<b>Writing Assignment:</b> A Narrative Paragraph	69
<b>Sentence Sense:</b> Avoiding Run-Together Sentences	70
<b>Wordcheck:</b> Word Origins	80

**Chapter 6 | The Process Paragraph 81**

"The Jeaning of America—and the World" by Carin C. Quinn	81
Analyzing Process Writing	83
Model Process Paragraph	84
<b>Prewriting:</b> Asking How and Why	84
Model How-and-Why Paragraph	85
<b>Writing Assignment:</b> A Process Paragraph	85
<b>Sentence Sense:</b> Using Verbs Correctly	87
Past Participles as Adjectives	93
Three Verbs to Watch Out For ( <i>be, have, do</i> )	93
Verb Endings	94
<b>Wordcheck:</b> Verb Forms	98

**Chapter 7 | The Cause and Effect Paragraph 100**

"Road Warriors of the Freeways" by Lonnn Johnston	100
Analyzing Cause and Effect Writing	103
Model Cause and Effect Paragraphs	103
<b>Writing Assignment:</b> A Cause and Effect Paragraph	104
<i>Affect</i> and <i>Effect</i>	105
<b>Sentence Sense:</b> Making Subjects and Verbs Agree	105

Wordcheck: Plurals 113

Review Checkup 113

## **Chapter 8 | The Example Paragraph 115**

"Turning the Generations Upside Down" by Ellen Goodman 115

Analyzing Writing That Uses Examples 117

Model Example Paragraphs 118

**Writing Assignment:** An Example Paragraph 118

**Sentence Sense:** Using the Right Pronoun 119

Pronoun Case 119

*Who* and *Whom* 124

*Self* Pronouns 124

Wordcheck: Synonyms 128

## **Chapter 9 | The Comparison Paragraph 129**

"North Marries South" by Benton D. Brown 129

Analyzing Comparison Writing 131

Model Comparison Paragraphs 131

Comparison vs. Contrast 133

**Writing Assignment:** A Comparison Paragraph 133

**Sentence Sense:** Pronoun Agreement and Clear Reference 134

Avoiding Sex Bias 135

Group Noun Antecedents 136

Clear Pronoun Antecedents 138

Vague Pronoun Reference 139

Wordcheck: Usage Tips 145

## **Chapter 10 | The Definition Paragraph 146**

"Frugal vs. Cheap" by Erma Bombeck 146

Analyzing Definition Writing: Denotation and Connotation 148

Model Definition Paragraph	149
Writing Assignment: A Definition Paragraph	150
Sentence Sense: Using Commas Correctly	151
Unnecessary Commas	157
Wordcheck: Biographical Names	159

## **Chapter 11 | The Opinion Paragraph 160**

"A Lesson Taught on a Subway" by Mike Royko	160
Analyzing Opinion Writing	162
Model Opinion Paragraphs	163
Opinions and Facts	164
Writing Assignment: An Opinion Paragraph	165
Writing Process: Diction—Choosing the Right Word	166
Sentence Sense: Using Other Punctuation Marks	167
Ending the Sentence	167
Questions: Direct and Indirect	168
Using Quotation Marks	168
Using Quotation Marks and Italics with Titles	170
Apostrophes in Contractions	170
Apostrophes to Show Possession	171
Using Semicolons	173
Using Colons	174
Using Dashes and Parentheses	175
Wordcheck: Word Choice	178

## **Chapter 12 | Writing the Essay 179**

"Fatherhood—It Has Its Moments" by Winston F. Wong	179
Analyzing an Essay	180
Writing an Essay	181
Model Essay	182

Writing Assignment: An Essay 185

Sentence Sense: Being Consistent 186

Consistent Time (Tense) 186

Consistent "Person" 188

Consistent Tone 190

Wordcheck: Places and Things 192

## Chapter 13 | The Classification Essay 193

"Hollywood's 3 Big Lies" by Michael Medved 193

Analyzing Writing That Uses Classification 196

Model Classification Essay 196

Writing Assignment: A Classification Essay 197

Sentence Sense: Achieving Variety 199

Sentence Patterns 199

Building Effective Sentences 203

Wordcheck: Foreign Words 208

## Chapter 14 | The Persuasion Essay 209

"Americans Work Too Hard" by Juliet B. Schor 209

Analyzing a Persuasion Essay 211

Model Persuasion Essay 212

Writing Assignment: A Persuasion Essay 213

Sentence Sense: Solving Sentence Problems 214

Misplaced Modifiers 214

Dangling Modifiers 215

Parallel Construction 217

Mixed Constructions 218

Faulty Comparisons 218

Active vs. Passive Voice 219

Wordcheck: Abbreviations 223

**Chapter 15 | An Essay Using Mixed Modes 224**

"What Really Makes Us Happy?" by George R. Plagenz 224

Analyzing an Essay with Mixed Modes 226

Model Mixed Mode Essay 226

**Writing Assignment:** An Essay on Life 227

**Sentence Sense:** Revising to Add Polish 228

Wordiness 228

Adjectives and Adverbs 229

Adverbs 231

Faulty Logic 233

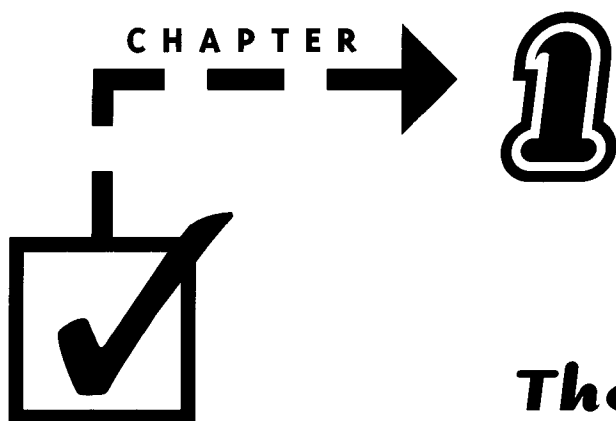
**Wordcheck:** Miscellaneous Facts 239

**Appendix A: Dictionary Overview 241****Appendix B: Reading in College 244****Appendix C: Words Often Misused 246****Appendix D: Spelling Tips and List 250****Appendix E: Capitals, Numbers, Abbreviations 254**

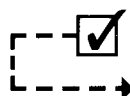
**Answer Key 259**

**Acknowledgments 293**

**Index 295**



## The Writing Process



### READING PRECHECK

Russell Baker had a low opinion of the writing assignments he was given in his high school English classes. But one day he wrote an essay on how to eat spaghetti without making a mess. His teacher, Mr. Fleagle, praised it, and young Russell found himself on the path to becoming a widely admired writer. The story told here is from Baker's autobiography, *Growing Up*, which won a Pulitzer Prize.

**JOURNAL TOPIC:** Think of your own English class experiences that influenced your feelings about writing.

### The Art of Eating Spaghetti

—Russell Baker

primly in a stuffy manner

[Mr. Fleagle] constantly sprinkled his sentences with “don’t you see.” It wasn’t a question but an exclamation of mild surprise at our ignorance. “Your pronoun needs an antecedent, don’t you see,” he would say, very primly. “The purpose of the porter’s scene,<sup>1</sup> boys, is to provide comic relief from the horror, don’t you see.”

<sup>1</sup>From Shakespeare’s play *Macbeth*

**dawdled** wasted time

Late in the year we tackled the informal essay. “The essay, don’t you see, is the . . .” My mind went numb. Of all the forms of writing, none seemed so boring as the essay. Naturally we would have to write informal essays. Mr. Fleagle distributed a homework sheet offering us a choice of topics. None was quite so simpleminded as “What I did on my summer vacation,” but most seemed to be almost as dull. I took the list home and dawdled until the night before the essay was due. Sprawled on the sofa, I finally faced up to the grim task, took the list out of my notebook, and scanned it. The topic on which my eye fell was “The Art of Eating Spaghetti.” 2

**exotic** uncommon or foreign

This title produced an extraordinary sequence of mental images. Surging up out of the depths of memory came a vivid recollection of a night in Belleville when all of us were seated around the supper table—Uncle Allen, my mother, Uncle Charlie, Doris, Uncle Hal—and Aunt Pat served spaghetti for supper. Spaghetti was an exotic treat in those days. Neither Doris nor I had ever eaten spaghetti, and none of the adults had enough experience to be good at it. All the good humor of Uncle Allen’s house reawoke in my mind as I recalled the laughing arguments we had that night about the socially respectable method for moving spaghetti from plate to mouth. 3

Suddenly I wanted to write about that, about the warmth and good feeling of it, but I wanted to put it down simply for my own joy, not for Mr. Fleagle. It was a moment I wanted to recapture and hold for myself. I wanted to relive the pleasure of an evening at New Street. To write it as I wanted, however, would violate all the rules of formal composition I’d learned in school, and Mr. Fleagle would surely give it a failing grade. Never mind, I would write something else for Mr. Fleagle after I had written this thing for myself. 4

**reminiscence** memory

When I finished it the night was half gone and there was no time left to compose a proper, respectable essay for Mr. Fleagle. There was no choice next morning but to turn in my private reminiscence of Belleville. Two days passed before Mr. Fleagle returned the graded papers, and he returned everyone’s but mine. I was bracing myself for a command to report to Mr. Fleagle immediately after school for discipline when I saw him lift my paper from his desk and rap for the class’s attention. 5

**repress** hold back

“Now, boys,” he said, “I want to read you an essay. This is titled ‘The Art of Eating Spaghetti.’” And he started to read. My words! He was reading my words out loud to the entire class. What’s more, the entire class was listening. Listening attentively. Then somebody laughed, the entire class was laughing, and not in contempt and ridicule, but with openhearted enjoyment. Even Mr. Fleagle stopped two or three times to repress a small prim smile. 6

**calling** life’s work, profession

I did my best to avoid showing pleasure, but what I was feeling was pure ecstasy at this startling demonstration that my words had the power to make people laugh. In the eleventh grade, at the eleventh hour, as it were, I had discovered my calling. It was the happiest moment of my entire school career. When Mr. Fleagle finished he put the final seal on my happiness by saying, “Now that, boys, is an essay, don’t you see. It’s—don’t you see—it’s of the very essence of the essay, don’t you see. Congratulations, Mr. Baker.” 7



## Checking Meaning and Style

1. In Russell Baker's story, he has Mr. Fleagle saying "don't you see" again and again. What is the effect of this repetition? Does the expression fit in with the description of Mr. Fleagle as "prim"?
2. Young Russell didn't intend to use his essay on spaghetti in his English class. Why did he write it? (Paragraph 4) Why did he end up turning it in? (Paragraph 5)
3. What experience did he base the essay on? (Paragraphs 3-4)
4. Would you say the style of this selection is easy or hard? Are most of the words everyday words or uncommon words? Does this match your idea of "good writing"?

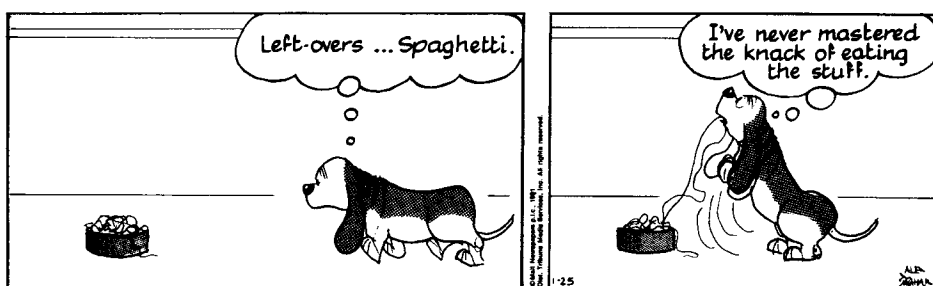
## Checking Ideas

1. How often did you write essays in high school? What were some of your favorite topics?
2. Did you ever write something, in school or out, "for your own joy"? Explain.
3. Baker wanted to become a professional writer. Why should other people—you, for example—bother to improve writing skills?
4. Many government agencies and large corporations provide their employees with classes in writing skills. What does that suggest about American schools and about job success?

## Writing as Process

This text is designed to help you acquire the writing skills necessary for success in college. Of course, language skills will help you in other ways—for example, in your social and family life and on the job. For now, it will be helpful to recognize that writing is not a single act. It is a process. It is a series of steps that result in a composition—whether a term paper in history or a job application letter—that is well thought-out, carefully organized, and technically correct. These steps usually should include the following:

**FRED BASSET** / Alex Graham



Copyright © Tribune Media Services, Inc. Reprinted with permission.