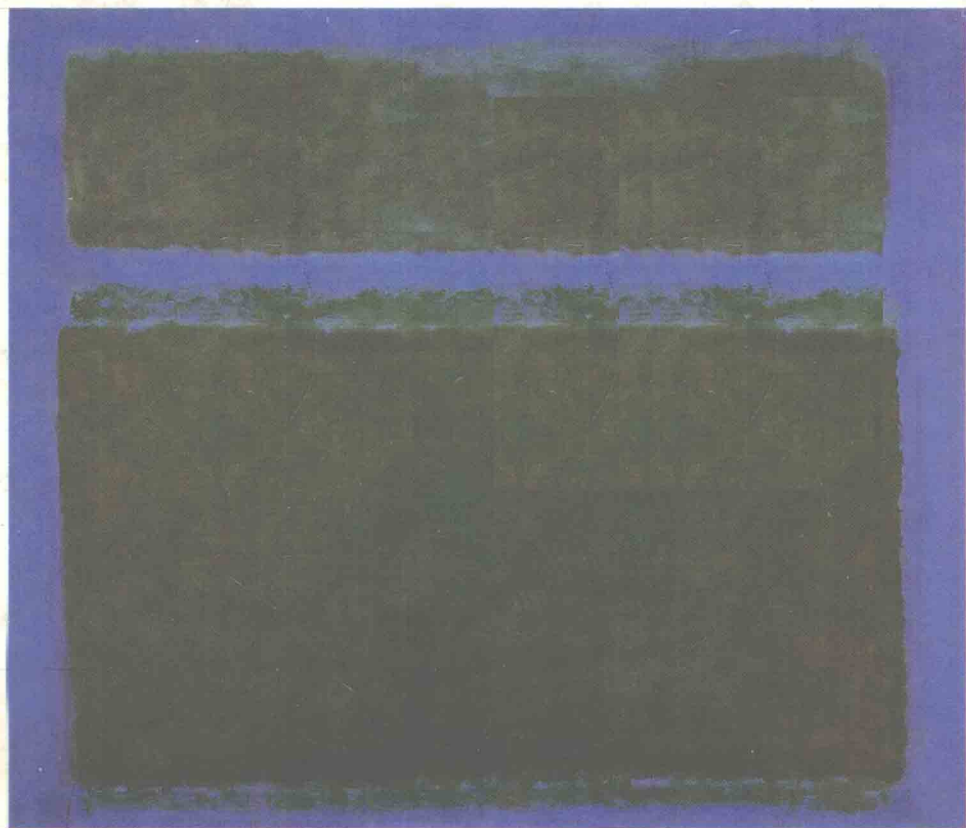


Prentice-Hall

HANDBOOK FOR WRITERS

NINTH EDITION



Prentice-Hall

HANDBOOK
FOR WRITERS

NINTH EDITION

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PREFACE

In revising the *Prentice-Hall Handbook for Writers* for this ninth edition, we have been guided by the knowledge that people write for an audience—whether it be the general public, colleagues and friends, business associates, college instructors, or simply themselves. Consequently, a writing task can be viewed as a series of choices a writer makes as he or she prepares a message for an intended audience. This book, then, concerns itself with those choices.

As a summary of grammar, usage, and rhetoric, the *Handbook* provides essential information. Its format is designed to serve two purposes: (1) to provide writers with a convenient reference for both preparing and reviewing their work; and (2) to assist instructors in teaching and evaluating writing, allowing them to direct their students' attention to specific matters regarding composing, writing, revising, and editing. This edition takes into account recent rhetorical theory and research while respecting traditional approaches to teaching composition. It offers both a range of explanations and a range of exercises to increase the likelihood that users of the book will benefit.

As thorough in its coverage of topics as previous editions, the ninth edition also offers substantial new material and a number of lively new examples. For instance, Sections 41–42 on the whole composition and paragraphs explore the writing process by focusing on strategies for meeting readers' needs while accomplishing the writer's goals. The four new sample essays at the end of Section 41 illustrate these strategies.

Sections 31–34 on effective sentences follow a similar approach: how can writers convey meaning most effectively to their readers? What techniques are available for achieving desired results? The emphasis is not on sentence manipulation for its own sake but rather on shaping sentences to create and enhance meaning for the reader.

In this edition of the *Handbook*, we have also paid deliberate attention to the needs of writers in situations other than English composition class. As a result, Section 41 on the whole composition and

Sections 44–45 on research and the research paper have a broader scope than in previous editions. Instead of focusing only on the library, the research section examines research as a method and process and discusses several types of research resources. Section 45 treats the research paper as a scholarly activity, one quite appropriate for undergraduates, not as an exercise in documentation format. As part of our plan to reach across the curriculum to writers in a variety of disciplines, we have chosen a sample research paper from a sophomore sociology course; the paper uses the documentation style set forth in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (1984), but a portion of the paper, including the references, is also produced according to the style manual of the American Psychological Association (APA).

People familiar with earlier editions of the *Handbook* will notice some helpful reorganization in the ninth edition. History and standards of English are now located with the other sections on words rather than at the beginning of the book. “Effective Sentences” and “Words” now precede rather than follow “Larger Elements,” an arrangement that many users have suggested better suits their presentation in the classroom. Also, the glossaries of grammatical terms and usage have been moved to the end of the book so that they will be more accessible for quick reference. Those sections that typically receive the heaviest use as references in the evaluation of papers—Sections 1–30, dealing with grammar, punctuation, and mechanics—have been updated but not reorganized. Their reference numbers remain the same as in the eighth edition, although many sections include fresh, new material. All the exercises in Sections 1–30 are new.

The *Handbook* is carefully designed to be a useful and easy reference guide in preparing, evaluating, and revising papers. It classifies the standards and conventions of writing and provides references to them in three ways: (1) through a full index; (2) through a detailed table of contents; and (3) through the charts on the endpapers of the book. Each major rule is given a number and a symbol. Thus the writer can check readily any convention about which he or she is doubtful. Instructors, in reading papers, can conveniently call attention to a specific convention or a general principle by using either numbers or symbols to refer students to appropriate sections of the *Handbook*. For an illustration of these possibilities, see the sample corrected drafts of the student papers in Sections 15 and 41.

As we mentioned previously, people write for an audience. We are particularly conscious of the various audiences a handbook may serve. Believing that all writers are colleagues, sharing many of the same problems and facing some of the same choices, we have worked to create a handbook that is at once comprehensive, reliable, thoughtful—and humane. We also hope this book reflects the enjoyment and satisfaction that can be derived from working with the English language.

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To Mamie Atkins, University of Maryland Overseas Program, and John Presley, Augusta College, we are particularly grateful. They

created the new exercises for Sections 1–30 and supplied numerous practical suggestions for the rest of the text. We are also indebted to Mamie Atkins for preparing the *Instructor's Manual* for this edition.

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As technical advisor, Gary Kramer deserves special mention. His expertise in microcomputers, programming, and software enabled us to bring word processing and the writing process together in this edition of the *Handbook*.

As principal planner and reviser of editions four through eight, Richard Beal, of Boston University, contributed immeasurably to the quality and success of the *Handbook*. His continued guidance during the writing of this ninth edition has been invaluable and is deeply appreciated.

As always, the support from Prentice-Hall has been generous. We are especially indebted to Philip Miller, our acquisitions editor, who advised and consented in just the right proportions; to Virginia Rubens, our production editor, who cannot be praised enough for her skill at juggling manuscripts and deadlines; to Lisa Femmel, our marketing manager, whose enthusiasm is infectious and whose sense of the market has been vital to the project. Joyce Perkins, our development editor, contributed immeasurably to the *Handbook*. Once again she nurtured the manuscript from concept to completion with humor, grace, and style.

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