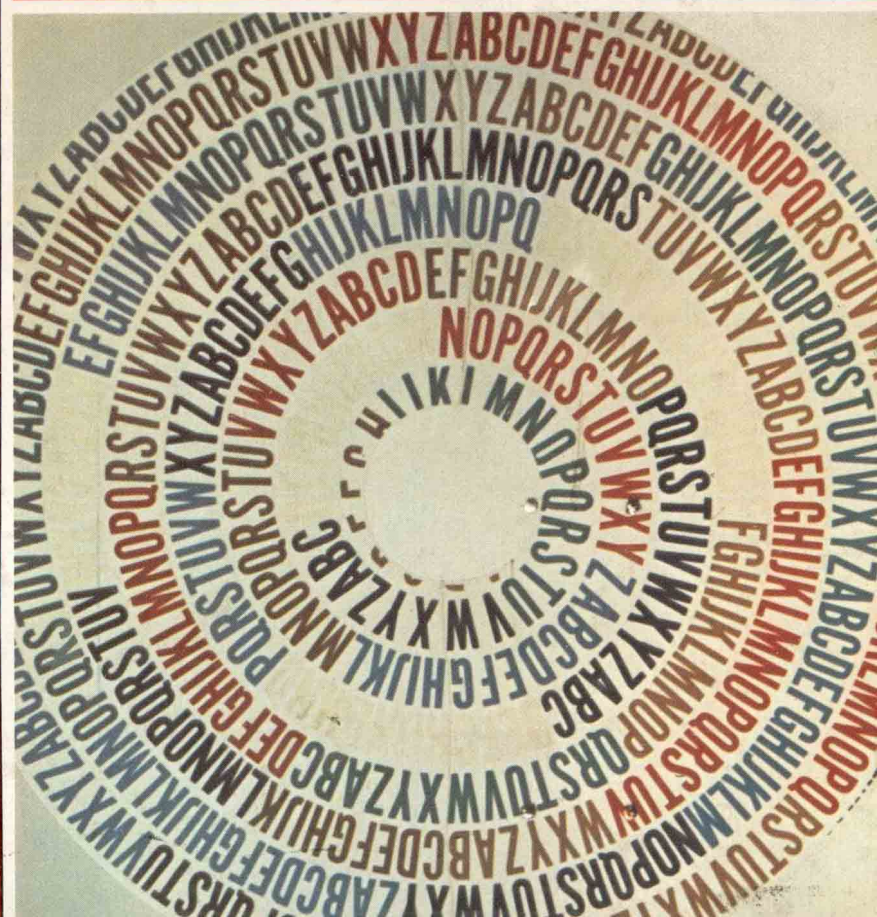


The ALLAN B. LEFCOWITZ Writer's Handbook



The Writer's Handbook

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Preface

The Writer's Handbook is a guide and textbook for beginning writers, covering the major principles and techniques of rhetoric, grammar, and usage. Because each writing situation presents different possibilities and problems that require different choices and solutions, the *Handbook* focuses on the *process* of writing as a practical craft involving a unique writer-reader relationship. Numerous writing examples from a variety of nonfiction works and student papers help the student to understand the processes of writing and rewriting. Exercises are strategically located so that the student can practice the principles and mechanics of writing as they are introduced. Extensive end-of-chapter review exercises reinforce the student's understanding of the chapter's contents.

The Writer's Handbook has two major divisions: (1) rhetorical elements of writing (Chapters 1–5) and (2) grammar and conventions of writing (Chapters 6–10). However, the chapters have been designed to be used in or out of their present sequence in order to accommodate any one of many possible assignment plans and to facilitate use of the *Handbook* as a reference guide.

Each chapter begins with a headnote summarizing its content and objectives. Chapter 1 is an overview of all the elements a reader responds to in writing, and each subsequent chapter is an elaboration of one of those elements. Chapters 2–5 constitute the rhetoric portion of the *Handbook*. These chapters progress from the more generalized areas of rhetoric, such as focus and organization (Chapter 2), to such specific topics as the paragraph (Chapter 3), the sentence (Chapter 4), and diction (Chapter 5).

Chapters 6–10 concentrate on the conventions of writing. Chapter 6—covering manuscript form, capitalization, italics, abbreviation, spelling, and so on—includes conventions of documentation and footnoting. Discussing these two topics in the chapter on manu-

script form allows the student to apply the principles of documentation and footnoting to a variety of writing assignments and not only to the library paper.

Chapter 7 examines punctuation in terms of particular writing situations. For example, the discussion of the series includes situations requiring the comma, semicolon, colon, and dash. This approach enables students to see punctuation as a process and not merely as a set of arbitrary rules.

Chapter 8 provides a succinct and comprehensive review of grammar. The glossary of terms and the list of common grammatical errors facilitate quick reference to key terms and common errors of grammar.

Chapter 9 discusses the techniques of library research, the availability and use of reference tools, and the preparation of the library paper. Library research is examined as an activity involving many of the writing principles, such as *focus* and *organization*, covered earlier in the *Handbook*. A sample library paper is included.

Chapter 10 is a glossary of usage concentrating on those questions of usage that have consistently caused students difficulty. Other, related high-frequency problems not listed in Chapter 10 are either referred to in the extensive topical index or included in the list of common grammatical errors in Chapter 8. Chapter 8 and Chapter 10 together comprise a full listing of guidelines for the most common grammar and usage problems.

The design of *The Writer's Handbook* is uncomplicated but sufficiently detailed to make the guidelines for writing and revision readily accessible both to students and instructors. The table of contents and index list all the major topics discussed in the *Handbook*. The numerical, alphabetized correction chart on the inside front cover is keyed to the text. The first number in all coded headings is the chapter number. The second number corresponds to the sequence of major topics or conventions within the chapter. Subtopics or conventions are labeled with the chapter number and major topic number and are lettered alphabetically. For example, *exactness*, as the sixth major topic in Chapter 5, "Diction," is coded 5.6. Under this major topic are the subtopics *accuracy*, *concreteness*, *appropriateness*, *economy*, and *variety*, coded 5.6a, 5.6b, 5.6c, 5.6d, and 5.6e, respectively.

Listed on the inside back cover are the major topics, keyed to the text; frequently used correction symbols, also keyed to the text; and proofreaders' marks, briefly illustrated. The topic listing pinpoints the major discussions to which instructors most often direct students. The correction symbols and proofreaders' marks commonly used

for correcting and revising writing provide instructors and students with a clear and rapid method for communicating about writing.

For their assistance in reviewing *The Writer's Handbook* I want to thank James C. Raymond, University of Alabama; Ronald C. Fort, Tarrant County Junior College; and Janice E. Keller, State University of New York at Farmingdale. An appreciation for contributions to the *Handbook* is due to my students and colleagues at the United States Naval Academy and to the staff of the Book Project Division of Prentice-Hall, Inc. A special note of thanks must go to Philip K. Jason, who helped to prepare the Instructor's Manual, and to Richard Wohlschlaeger, who assisted in the preparation of Chapter 8. Finally, I want to express my appreciation to Louise Hockett, the editor, without whose assistance the *Handbook* could not and would not have been created.

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