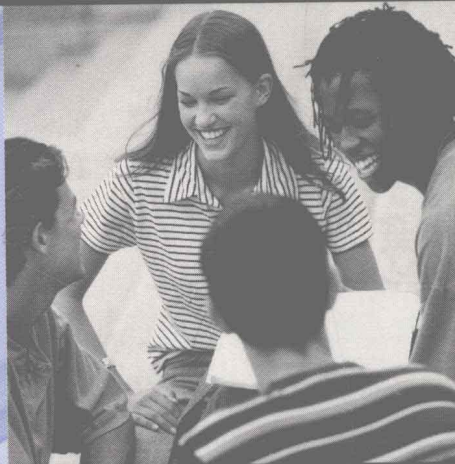


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Craig B. Jacobsen

Scenarios for Writing

Issues,
Analysis,
and Response





Scenarios for Writing

ISSUES, ANALYSIS, AND RESPONSE

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For Courtney—I love you.

—G. R. G.

For Laura, with love.

—C. B. J.

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Preface

Scenarios for Writing is a rhetoric-reader with sequenced collaborative and individual assignments focused on issues of the day. More than any other composition textbook currently available, this book brings rhetorical situations to life, offering students immediate, identifiable audiences and purposes for their writing. Dedicated to improving students' academic, civic, and general communication skills, *Scenarios for Writing* offers an approach that seamlessly integrates practice in reading, thinking, listening, speaking, and writing. Teachers and students have told us how much they like this book's distinctive approach; we invite you to read on and discover what makes *Scenarios* so different, engaging, and effective.

A UNIQUE APPROACH

Scenarios for Writing is different from other rhetoric-readers in a number of ways. The primary difference is found in the narrative "scenarios" that lie at the center of the work students do in chapters 4 through 9. Practical tools for the composition classroom, these short narratives dramatize contemporary issues and establish contexts for rhetorical analysis and interaction. Presenting composites of real-life events and interest groups—such as those students themselves, or their families, friends, or coworkers might encounter—the scenarios grab students' attention, make the issues understandable, and encourage empathy with the people involved. The flexible assignment sequences that follow the scenarios invite students to work collaboratively and individually as they aim to resolve the central dilemma. The readings and the writing and speaking assignments that accompany each scenario stress the multiple perspectives inherent in any issue, so students gain practice in thinking about and communicating from varied, often conflicting, perspectives that combine group and individual interests. Finally, each scenario chapter culminates with academic essay options.

The scenarios chapters, then, provide a central problem to solve, a basic structure for students' work, a range of flexible sequenced assignments, and initial research sources; however, the specific interest groups, processes, and outcomes that individual classes bring to life are left for individual groups of students and teachers to decide. The scenarios are, in this

sense, student- and class-driven, and so will be different every time they're used. But what is constant is that students, as members of interest groups interacting with other competing interest groups, learn to approach issues from multiple perspectives and to communicate with immediate audiences and purposes in mind. Throughout the process of working with the scenarios, students constantly develop new ways of solving rhetorical problems related to clearly defined rhetorical situations.

OVERALL ORGANIZATION

Scenarios for Writing is divided into two parts and includes three appendixes. Part I: Student Guidebook, includes three chapters, each covering a different aspect of college reading, writing, and research and providing "Applying What You Read" activities. Chapter 1 grounds students in an understanding of the rhetorical situation, discusses the recursive nature of writing and the different stages of the writing process, and helps students analyze their own writing processes. Chapter 2 moves students into discussions of various aspects of college reading and writing and the specific work they'll do in the scenarios chapters. Chapter 3 covers research strategies and writing from sources, including evaluating and acknowledging sources.

Part II: The Scenarios, opens with an introduction that serves as a bridge between the book's two parts, preparing students to apply the advice found in part I to the rhetorical work the scenarios require in part II, and detailing how the scenarios chapters work. Six scenarios, each in its own chapter, follow the introduction: Chapter 4, Online Education: Who Needs the Classroom, Anyway?; Chapter 5, Student Privacy: Bad Times at Westwood High; Chapter 6, Guns for Sale: Recycling Your Police Department's Weapons; Chapter 7, Suburban Sprawl: The Future of Saguaro Flats; Chapter 8, Pornography on the Internet: Cyberporn at Your Local Library?; and Chapter 9, Living Wills: Decisions about Life and Death. Readings ("Resources") help to inform students about the scenarios' central and related issues. Three appendixes appear at the end of the text: Appendix A, Preparing a Writer's Portfolio; Appendix B, Extending the Scenarios to Your Community: Service Learning; and Appendix C, Documenting Your Sources.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE SCENARIOS CHAPTERS

Although the specific structure of each of the scenarios chapters (chapters 4–9) varies slightly, their overall framework and apparatus are consistent. "First Impressions" open each scenario chapter. This feature presents three to five images related to the issue at the center of the chapter's scenario, followed by questions that prompt students' initial thinking,

discussion, and writing. A brief discussion of the central issue comes next, immediately preceding the actual scenario (the two- to three-page narrative account of a timely situation that calls for rhetorical action on the part of a number of interest groups). Details about the interest groups and options for involvement follow the scenario and precede the chapter's "Resources"—the collection of readings that can serve as an initial set of sources. "Questions for Discussion and Writing" follow every reading and lend themselves, if desired, to additional collaborative and individual work.

A sequence of activity and assignment options follows the readings: "Taking Action," a collaborative project; "Speaking Your Piece," an opportunity for the group to speak about its position publicly; and "Individual Writing: Essay Options," each chapter's culminating set of optional academic projects. "For Further Research and Writing" discussions suggest ways for students to widen the focus of each scenario. In addition, "Applying What You Read" and "For Example" boxes appear throughout the text.

FEATURES SUMMARY

Scenarios for Writing is a different kind of rhetoric-reader, one that brings rhetorical situations and issues of the day to life by offering

- Six scenarios that are relevant to students' everyday lives, current issues dramatized in narrative form and appropriate for rhetorical analysis and response.
- Flexible assignment sequences that combine collaborative and individual work and that culminate in academic writing (research-based persuasive essays).
- More than 50 diverse reading selections that enrich students' understanding of the scenarios' central issues—each accompanied by "Questions for Discussion and Writing."
- Seamless integration of reading, research, thinking, listening and speaking, and writing activities.
- Consistent emphasis on persuasion and negotiation within the context of various, often competing, points of view.
- Three chapters of rhetorical instruction in Part I: Student Guidebook.
- Photos followed by questions opening each chapter ("First Impressions") in part II.
- Three appendixes that complement students' scenarios work: appendix A on constructing portfolios, appendix B on extending the scenarios to service-learning projects, and appendix C on documenting sources.

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