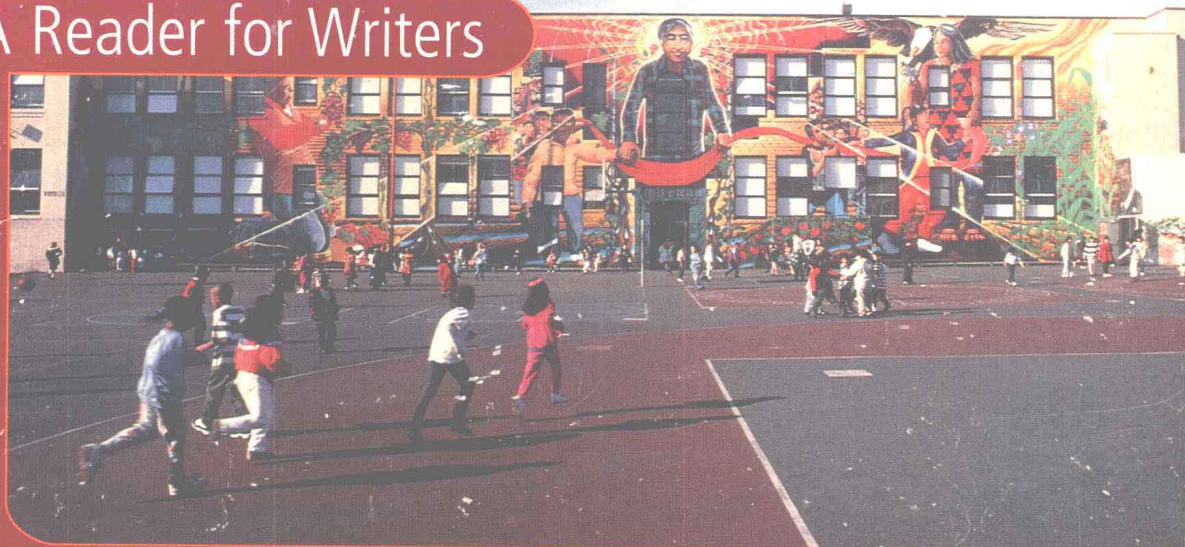


A Reader for Writers



Community Matters

Marjorie Ford

Elizabeth Schave



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A Reader for Writers

Marjorie Ford
Stanford University

Elizabeth Schave
New Visions Foundation



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Preface

All who serve, serve life. What we serve is something worthy of our attention, of our commitment of our time and our lives. Serving is not about fixing life, outwitting life, manipulating life, controlling life, or struggling to gain mastery over life. When we serve, we discover that life is holy.

Naomi Remen

Community Matters: A Reader for Writers presents a unique approach to the teaching of writing. We came to the project from two different disciplines: as a writing instructor and as a program director for a non-profit organization. Because of our professional experiences, our values are rooted in questions about how to create and support effective communities. Combining our insights, expertise, and ideals, our vision has been to create a book that will encourage students to think critically and creatively about the social, political, and philosophical issues that are shaping the communities to which they belong, while helping them to build a personally engaged community within their writing classroom.

Community Matters is designed as a rhetoric-reader for writing instructors who are interested in the theme of community and civic participation, as well as traditional and nontraditional teaching methods, including experiential learning and service learning. This approach to teaching writing will help to create bridges between those organizations that support and respond to community issues and the academic community with its focus on analysis, argument, and research. The text's emphasis on reflection will help students to make connections between their academic experiences and their role in the community.

Community Matters has two parts. Chapters 1–4 inform students about the fundamentals of reading, writing, and research, including academic and field research, while also providing guidelines for structuring community writing activities. Chapters 5–10 present the selected readings through a series of thematic topics: a sense of place, family, education, culture, work, and spirituality. Each chapter is divided into three sub-sections. The first group of readings focus on tradition, the second introduce current issues, while the third grouping features community action projects that have had a

significant impact on improving the quality of community life. These chapters offer a variety of writing styles and genres, including literary essays, arguments, proposals, memoirs, poems, and short stories. Because of the text's emphasis on social action and community development, many of the thematic selections have never been anthologized in composition readers, and some have been written especially for this text.

Distinctive Features of the Book

We have designed the *thematic features* to introduce students to a range of issues that contribute to a definition of community while also providing guidelines for developing critical thinking and reading skills. The *writing features* present reading and writing as integrated processes that will help students to become more adept at doing academic, field, and web research. The *apparatus features* guide students into analytical and expressive ways of understanding, thinking, and writing about the thematic selections.

Thematic Features

- Introduce a variety of readings, activities, and strategies that will help students to better understand their communities, from the most personal to the most public.
- Develop an extended definition as well as an awareness of community in its many faces and forms.
- Encourage students to explore and think critically about how social assumptions, institutions, and values strengthen our communities while sometimes leading to social conflict and misunderstanding.
- Identify and develop values and strategies that can help communities to solve social problems and effect change.
- Encourage within the format of a traditional thematic reader a type of experiential learning that is grounded in the classroom experience as well as in experiences within the larger community.

Writing Features

- Present reading and writing as linked processes.
- Support a process-based writing pedagogy.
- Place a special emphasis on the role of audience.
- Provide strategies for creating effective writing groups.
- Discuss and clarify techniques for academic, web-based, and field research.
- Provide guidelines for community-based writing projects.

Apparatus Features

- Author notes for all of the selections.
- Reading analysis questions for all of the selections (“Reading Matters”).
- Writing prompts for all of the selections (“Writing Matters”).
- End of chapter questions that encourage comparative analysis and community-based writing activities.
- URLs for websites related to thematic selections.
- Visual materials that help to deepen the thematic presentation.

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We are grateful to the many people who helped to inform our understanding of community and who supported us during the process of creating and developing *Community Matters*. First we thank our reviewers for their insightful questions and their various perspectives.

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Marjorie Ford



Elizabeth Schave

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“The foreignness almost seemed literal; often I didn’t understand what the people in my grandmother’s house were saying, and often what I said was not understood.”

The Monkey Garden	<i>Sandra Cisneros</i>	97
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“This was a garden, a wonderful thing to look at in the spring. But bit by bit, after the monkey left, the garden began to take over itself.”

Grand Central Terminal	<i>Tony Hiss</i>	100
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“Just walking through the vast main concourse in the Grand Central Terminal, in New York—something that over half a million people do every working day—almost always triggers in me a spontaneous and quiet change in perception.”

The Way to Rainy Mountain *N. Scott Momaday* **105**

"Although my mother lived out her long life in the shadow of Rainy Mountain, the immense landscape of the continent interior lay like memory in her blood."

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"Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offense."

A Moral Place *Tracy Kidder* **113**

"It looked as if Northampton's current residents stood almost equally divided in their strong opinions about their town, about how people ought to conduct their private lives inside it, about the way Northampton defined tolerance, about who owned the place."

The Invisible Riot *Mike Davis* **120**

"This invisible Mid-City riot, conflated by most news reports with events in majority-black areas, was driven primarily by empty bellies and broken dreams, not by outrage over the acquittal of the cops who beat Rodney King."

The Clan of One-Breasted Women

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"The time had come to protest with the heart, that to deny one's genealogy with the earth was to commit treason against one's soul."

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"On the borders, as elsewhere, global economic restructuring and its guises of 'development' are advantaged by invisibility. Those who run the companies and profit from inexpensive labor and unregulated operations do not have to see the consequences of their actions."

The Wisdom that Builds Community *Greg Watson* **141**

"Conventional wisdom says that wealth is having a job. Let's bring in Wal-Mart, let's bring in IBM, and they will give the people jobs. That's not real wealth."

The Social and Public Arts Resource Center

William Cleveland **150**

"A wall that becomes a mural becomes a bridge to useful knowledge, ideas, and inspiration."

River of Words *Robert Hass and Pamela Michael* **158**

"There is no reason we cannot give our kids hope, and a sense of pride, and a love of our amazing earth, and a sense of purpose, and we need to begin now."

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"Don't tell anyone you had an aunt. Your father does not want to hear her name. She has never been born."

A Family Legacy *Marian Wright Edelman* **183**

"It is the responsibility of every adult—especially parents, educators, and religious leaders—to make sure that children hear what we have learned from the lessons of life and to hear over and over that we love them and that they are not alone."

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"It now had been laid to my charge to keep my own heart free of hatred and despair."

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"She asks me if I want more.
I own no words to stop her.
Even before I speak, she serves."

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"And when is there time to remember, to sift, to weigh, to estimate, to total? I will start and there will be an interruption and I will have to gather it all together again."

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"We agree that the effects of divorce are long-term. We know that the family is in trouble. We have a consensus that children raised in divorced or remarried families are less well adjusted as adults than those raised in intact families."

A Parents' Bill of Rights

Sylvia Hewlett and Cornel West **219**

"What we now need is a spark to ignite the smoldering embers of parental overload and anguish."

Shaping Solutions **223**

Soul Sisters *Lis Harris* **223**

"The Children's Center is unique ... because it focuses on the needs of the children who await their mothers' release—children who have committed no crimes but who are being punished nonetheless by having to adjust to strange neighborhoods, different schools, and the vagaries of overburdened families and foster-care networks."

Kathmandu *Craig Kielburger* **236**

"When we walked at night, we had seen these children hanging out near the hotels, restaurants, and the other spots that tourists frequent. Most of them were nine to fifteen years old, but some were as young as six.... These kids, known as *kathe* in Nepal, had made the streets their home."

How to "YA/YA" in Your Neighborhood *Claudia Barker* **247**

"YA/YA (Youth Aspirations/Young Artists) feels and functions more like a household than an institution.... Various staff members resemble parental figures, big sisters and brothers, and even a grandmother or two."

A Vision of the Quilt *Cleve Jones* **261**

"There was a deep yearning not only to find a way to grieve individually and together but also to find a voice that could be heard beyond our community, beyond our town."

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"They know the limits of the opportunities that *they* can offer to their children; and they know these aren't the same as what another class of people in another section of the city are providing for their children."

The First Day Edward Jones 287

"For as many Sundays as I can remember, perhaps even Sundays when I was in her womb, my mother has pointed across I Street to Seaton as we come and go to Mt. Carmel. 'You gonna go there and learn about the whole world.' But one of the guardians of the place is saying no, and no again."

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"What do you do when silence breaks out in your class, the times when you suddenly forget everything you were going to say, or you ask a question no one answers, and you sit there wishing you were dead, blush rising from your throat, face hot, throat clenched?"

School Daze Douglas Franz and Catherine Collins 299

"Class did not start until Monday, but, taking a page from the movie business, Celebration Company had organized a 'sneak preview' for this Friday night, and much of the town had turned out. They couldn't wait to see the school. And they couldn't wait to meet the new principal, the woman who had come to rescue their children."

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"Even in the hands of sincere allies of children, equity, and public education, the current push for far greater standardization than we've ever previously attempted is fundamentally misguided."

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"There should also be, I think, a 'school-community broker,' who would match students to learning opportunities in the wider community."

Digital Divide *David Bolt and Ray Crawford* **334**

"The last twenty years have seen a tremendous leap forward in the use of technology in classrooms, creating a different educational experience for some students—but not, by any means, for all."

A Different Mirror *Ronald Takaki* **348**

"What happens when historians leave out many of America's peoples? What happens, to borrow the words of Adrienne Rich, 'when someone with the authority of a teacher describes our society, and you are not in it?'"

Learning Through Collaboration **358**

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"We were no longer only reading and talking about them; we were with them, reading and talking with them."

Jazz Gives Teens New Footing *Janice Ross* **369**

"He's physically strong and fearless, working in the midst of a room where a half-dozen of his dance students this afternoon are convicted murderers."

Tales from the Bright Side: Miami-Dade Community College
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"The invention of the two-year community college, former University of California president Clark Kerr has argued, is the real invention of American twentieth-century education."

Cross-Cultural Collaborations *Tim Stanton* **384**

"I had to be a learner as much as one coming to 'serve'. Indeed I came to view my experience in South Africa as the education of a service-learning educator."

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"The Games begin with the forces of 197 nations marching out behind flags. Strictly segregated and almost military in their color-coordinated uniforms they conclude just two weeks later, with all the competitors spilling out onto a central lawn, till you can't tell one team from another. The colors run."

A Glimpse of the Void *Judith Williamson* 402

"The death of Princess Diana was an accident, a completely senseless occurrence. And it was, at first, hard to believe not only because of its suddenness, but because the absence of someone whose image had been so present in our culture seemed like a contradiction in terms."

Playing the Race Card *Henry A. Giroux* 405

"There can be little doubt that the O.J. Simpson trial became a metaphor for America's fixation with celebrity justice, lurid violence, interracial sexuality, and tabloid psychobabble."

Evita *Mark Bego* 414

"Similarities [abound] between Madonna and the real-life Evita, two of the most famous and written-about women of the twentieth century..."

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"Police later claimed that they were not prepared for the protesters' violence, but, as one protester later commented, what they were unprepared for was a network of nonviolent protestors totally committed to one task—shutting down the WTO (World Trade Organization)."

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"'Vietnamese are Vietnamese if they believe they are,' he said by way of explanation, and I liked him on the instant."

Virtual Tibet *Orville Schell* **443**

"At a nearby table a little boy with a shaven head and wearing a miniature monk's robe—one of the three child actors who will portray the young Dalai Lama at various ages—is drinking Sprite and manipulating a beeping Game Boy while his bored mother stares off into space."

We Are What We Eat *Donna R. Gabaccia* **448**

"Eating habits both symbolize and mark the boundaries of our cultures."

The Khan Men of Agra *Pamela Michael* **455**

"I made the sort of decision that every traveler has to make from time to time: you decide to take a risk, trust a stranger, enter a cave, explore a trail, act on intuition and experience something new."

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Culture Of, By and For the People *Richard Kurin* **458**

"[T]he Festival genre, historically used to represent others, had become a successful means of representing ourselves."

Write This Down *Jacqueline Tobin* **464**

"Sitting beside this elderly black woman, surrounded by a sea of her handiwork, I felt that she was inviting me to share in her family stories and memories and become a part of an oral tradition that had allowed her culture to survive."

**"Coming Home to Manilatown": Resurrecting
the International Hotel** *Estella Habal* **470**

"When the Manilatown Museum and Cultural Center is finally completed, it will be, as poet Al Robles puts it, like 'coming home to a fresh crop of rice.'"

The Great Jazz Day
Art Kane, Robert Benton, and Milt Hinton **477**

"It was like some great kind of homecoming. I can't think of another time when there was ever such a great gathering of musicians in one spot."