

SECOND EDITION

THE
ST. MARTIN'S
GUIDE TO
Writing

RISE B. AXELROD CHARLES R. COOPER

GUIDE TO WRITING

SECOND EDITION

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To the Instructor

When we first wrote the *St. Martin's Guide to Writing*, we tried to take the best that has been thought and said in the field of rhetoric and composition and turn it to practical use. We saw the *Guide* as continuing the classical tradition of treating rhetoric very seriously indeed, not just as a matter of producing correct prose but as one of thinking, reading, and writing intelligently. To the best insights from that tradition, we added what we believed to be the most promising developments in the "New Rhetoric."

We have been tremendously gratified by the enthusiastic reception that the first edition has received from instructors and students. For this second edition, we have enlarged coverage of some topics, but our basic goal remains unchanged: to help students discover, develop, and present their ideas. We aim to teach them to manage the writing process, to think critically and use evidence wisely. We seek to give them an understanding of rhetoric of many different situations. We hope to inspire them with the desire to discover ideas and influence readers and we want to acquaint them with the tools to write clearly and gracefully.

A comprehensive rhetoric, reader, and handbook, the *St. Martin's Guide* introduces students to the major forms of nonfiction writing: personal sketches, profiles, reports, position papers, proposals, evaluations, causal analyses, and literary interpretations. Part One provides several models of each kind of writing (both professional and student) along with detailed commentary and carefully sequenced guides to help students understand the constraints and possibilities of each kind of writing they attempt. The guides include specially designed invention activities as well as advice for drafting, critiquing a draft, revising, and editing. Purpose and audience are central issues in all these chapters. Each chapter ends with a section called "A Writer at Work," which shows one stage of the writing process from a student essay in that chapter.

Part Two looks at a wide range of essential writers' strategies: invention and revision; paragraphing and coherence; logic and reasoning; and the familiar modes of presenting information, like narrating, defining, and classifying. Examples and exercises are almost all taken from contemporary nonfiction, and many exercises deal with reading selections appearing in Part

One. This cross-referencing between Parts One and Two facilitates teaching writing strategies in the context of purpose and audience.

Part Three covers research strategies. These chapters discuss both field and library research and include thorough guidelines for using and documenting sources, with detailed examples of the two prominent documentation styles, those of the Modern Language Association and the American Psychological Association. The part concludes with a sample student research paper.

Part Four treats a special kind of academic writing: essay examinations. Here we show students how to analyze different kinds of exam questions and offer strategies for writing answers. The chapter is illustrated with actual questions from courses throughout the disciplines, plus two sample student essays.

The handbook at the back of this text is a complete reference guide, with exercises, covering sentence structure, usage, style, punctuation, and mechanics. We have tried here to maintain a descriptive, rather than prescriptive, point of view. Instead of merely listing rules for using punctuation, for instance, we look at the many ways punctuation marks actually are used in contemporary nonfiction and then provide examples from the work of professional writers.

Noteworthy features The *St. Martin's Guide to Writing* has several features that distinguish it from other college rhetorics. Chief among these are the practical guides to writing, the particularization of invention, the integration of modes and aims, and the integration of reading and writing.

Practical Guides to Writing. We do not merely talk about the composing process; rather, we offer practical, flexible guides that will lead students through the entire process, from invention through revision and self-evaluation. Thus, this book is more than just a rhetoric that students will refer to occasionally. It is a guidebook that will help them to write. Commonsensical and easy to follow, these writing guides teach students to assess a rhetorical situation, identify the kinds of information they will need, ask probing questions and find answers, and organize their writing to achieve their purpose most effectively.

Particularization of Invention. Like most other current rhetorics, we offer a full catalogue of general invention heuristics. But because we recognize how hard it is for students to know when and how to use these tools, we have designed specific invention strategies for each writing guide in Part One. By particularizing invention, the *St. Martin's Guide* helps students discover the pertinent questions to ask in any writing situation. Moreover, we try to promote a certain recursiveness in the composing process by encouraging students to continue generating and testing their ideas as well as ~~analyzing and synthesizing~~ **analyzing and synthesizing** information at *all* stages of planning, drafting, and

revising—to put off closure until they have explored the full possibilities of their topic.

Integration of Modes and Aims. The *St. Martin's Guide* treats the traditional modes of writing from two perspectives: as forms to be mastered, and as writing strategies to be used to achieve particular purposes. Unlike many current rhetorics, we do not distinguish writing by its modes but rather by its aims. Hence, while we focus on craft in our discussion of the modes in Part Two, we emphasize the integration of modes with aims through exercises analyzing how the modes are used strategically in the essays in Part One.

Systematic Integration of Reading and Writing. Because we see a close relationship between the abilities to read critically and to write intelligently, the *St. Martin's Guide* combines reading instruction with writing instruction. Each chapter in Part One introduces one kind of discourse, which students are led to consider both as readers and as writers. Readings are followed by questions that make students aware of how they as readers respond and at the same time help them understand the decisions writers make. Students are then challenged to apply these insights to their own writing as they imagine their prospective readers, set goals, and write and revise their drafts.

New to this edition

As the acknowledgments further on indicate, we had the benefit of much helpful advice from instructors across the land who had used the first edition. They helped us to see what worked well and what needed improvement, and they provided many valuable suggestions for specific changes and additions.

First among the additions is much *greater coverage of argumentation*. To the four argument chapters in the first edition, we have added two new chapters. Chapter 6, on the position paper, introduces the basic concepts of arguing a claim. Chapter 19 teaches argumentation strategies—making claims, using evidence, refuting counterarguments—as well as avoiding logical fallacies.

Chapter 11 provides a catalogue of invention strategies (found in Chapter 18 in the first edition) and a new, *specially designed plan for revising*. The plan presents a three-part process of rereading, re-envisioning, and rewriting, to help students gain critical distance, use the comments of other readers, clarify their purpose, and understand the needs and expectations of their readers.

Each of the Part One chapters now includes a new section on the purpose and audience common to that type of writing. In addition, the commentaries and questions following each reading directly address purpose and audience, to help students understand the way they affect the writer's decisions about the selection, organization, and presentation of information.

We have tried also to show *clearer connections between Parts One and Two*. The first edition had many cross-references from Part Two to Part One, but few in the reverse. To help instructors bring material from Part Two into

discussion of the readings in Part One, we have tried to strengthen the connections between the parts. Commentaries following the readings in Part One now introduce the major concepts in Part Two, and discussion of the basic features for each type of writing in Part One includes extensive cross-referencing to relevant Part Two chapters.

Also new to this edition is *advice on computer word processing*. Although we recognize that word processing will not in itself improve the quality of student writing, it can help students manage the process, and, therefore, make them more willing both to write and revise. In Chapter 1 we attempt to familiarize students with this technology and to show them how to use it as they would any other writing tool.

Finally comes *a more accessible and complete handbook*. The handbook has been substantially revised to provide greater accessibility as an editing and proofreading tool. The handbook offers more on the techniques of proofreading, more examples and exercises, additional headings, and a glossary of commonly misused words.

As a rhetoric, reader, and handbook, the *St. Martin's Guide* may be used in courses with diverse emphases. Courses focusing on the writing process, for example, might rely most heavily on the writing guides and the "Writer at Work" sections of Part One, whereas writing workshops might be centered on the guides' invention activities and shared critical readings of student drafts. Courses in writing centered in readings, on the other hand, have thirty-five complete pieces and more than a hundred passages to consider. And courses requiring attention to usage, punctuation, and mechanics could assign exercises from the handbook. The *St. Martin's Guide* is also available in a Short Second Edition, without the handbook (but otherwise identical to the complete edition).

Detailed course plans for these and other courses, as well as commentary, teaching suggestions, and additional student essays, can be found in the Instructor's Resource Manual. Whatever approach is taken, we hope our book will provide an exciting and innovative course of study for your students.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We owe a great deal to others. The history of rhetoric reaches back to Greece in the fifth century B.C., and among our predecessors are teachers and scholars—Aristotle, Quintilian, and Cicero in classical times; Erasmus from the

early Renaissance; the eighteenth-century Scottsmen George Campbell and Hugh Blair; and Henry Day, the author of the most distinguished American rhetoric of the nineteenth century—who believed that rhetoric instruction was of great intellectual, social, and ethical importance. They considered rhetoric to be a study of thinking, speaking, and writing intelligently and responsibly. From this humanistic tradition comes our belief that students must learn to write well to realize their potential as thinkers, and as citizens.

And we owe a great deal to our contemporaries. Any list of debts will necessarily be incomplete, but we would be remiss in failing to acknowledge how much we have learned from Arthur Applebee, Walter Beale, James Berlin, Rexford Brown, Kenneth Burke, James Britton, Wallace Chafe, Francis Christensen, Robert Connors, Robert de Beaugrande, Peter Elbow, Jane Emig, Jeanne Fahnestock, Linda Flower, Toby Fulwiler, Sidney Greenbaum, Joseph Grimes, Anne Gere, M.A.K. Halliday, Ruqaiya Hasan, John Hayes, George Hillocks, James Kinneavy, William Labov, Richard Larson, Richard Lloyd-Jones, Elaine Maimon, Ann Matsuhashi, John Mellon, James Moffett, Donald Murray, Lee Odell, Anthony Petrosky, Sir Randolph Quirk, Tristine Ranier, Richard Rieke, D. Gordon Rohman, Mike Rose, John Schultz, Marie Secor, Mina Shaughnessy, Malcolm Sillars, Frank Smith, William Strong, Barbara Tomlinson, Stephen Toulmin, Tuen van Dijk, John Warnock, Eliot Wigginton, Joseph Williams, Ross Winterowd, Richard Young, and Robert Zoellner.

We must also acknowledge immeasurable lessons learned from all the writers, professional and student alike, whose works we read in search of selections and examples for this text. The clarity and grace found in much current nonfiction prose have repeatedly astounded us. To all the writers represented in this text we owe a great debt—together, they have set a high standard indeed for all writers. Our aim has been not to contradict their practice by anything we recommend to students in this book.

With this second edition, our debt is even greater to the staff, instructors, and students in the Third College Writing Program at the University of California at San Diego. Since 1979 this book has been developed very gradually in courses there, with instructors and students helping us to discover what worked and what did not. We appreciate their candor and support. The first edition has served as the main text in this program, and we are indebted to all of the thirty or so instructors who have used it and provided helpful criticism and advice. Special and notable contributions have been made by James Degan, Kate Gardner, Keith Grant-Davie, Kristin Hawkinson, Karen Hollis, Du-Hyoung Kang, Gesa Kirsch, Mary Jane Lind, Michael A. Pemberton, Evelyn Torres, and Pamela Wright. Once again, we owe an enormous debt to Phyllis Campbell and Rebekah Kessab, who have continued to eliminate the sort of administrative fuss and bother that discourages teachers and writers. And we would like to express special thanks to our students, for generous and willing feedback.

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A Brief Contents

1 INTRODUCTION 2

PART ONE

Writing Activities

<i>2</i>	REMEMBERING EVENTS	18
<i>3</i>	REMEMBERING PEOPLE	66
<i>4</i>	WRITING PROFILES	104
<i>5</i>	REPORTING INFORMATION	146
<i>6</i>	TAKING A POSITION	180
<i>7</i>	PROPOSING SOLUTIONS	216
<i>8</i>	MAKING EVALUATIONS	256
<i>9</i>	SPECULATING ABOUT CAUSES	292
<i>10</i>	INTERPRETING LITERATURE	328

PART TWO

Writing Strategies

<i>11</i>	INVENTION AND REVISION	366
<i>12</i>	CUEING THE READER	400
<i>13</i>	NARRATING	420
<i>14</i>	DESCRIBING	438
<i>15</i>	ILLUSTRATING	454
<i>16</i>	DEFINING	460
<i>17</i>	CLASSIFYING	476
<i>18</i>	COMPARING AND CONTRASTING	486
<i>19</i>	ARGUING	494

PART THREE

Research Strategies

- 20 FIELD RESEARCH 518
21 LIBRARY RESEARCH 534
22 THE RESEARCH PAPER: USING AND ACKNOWLEDGING
SOURCES 550

PART FOUR

Writing under Pressure

- 23 ESSAY EXAMINATIONS 576

Handbook

Contents

1	Introduction	2
	HOW WRITING WORKS	3
	ABOUT THIS BOOK	6
	<i>Invention and research / Planning and drafting / Reading someone else's draft critically / Revising / Editing / Learning from writing</i>	
	WRITING WITH A WORD PROCESSOR	15

PART ONE

Writing Activities

2	Remembering Events	18
READINGS	PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE	44
SMOOTH AND EASY	BASIC FEATURES OF ESSAYS ABOUT REMEMBERED EVENTS	45
RUSSELL BAKER, 20	<i>A well-told story / Vivid presentation of significant scenes and people / A clear indication of the event's significance / An appeal to the reader's experience</i>	
THE LOST WEEKEND	GUIDE TO WRITING	
LINDA ELLERBEE, 26		
THE ARGUMENT	THE WRITING TASK	49
JOHN EDGAR WIDEMAN, 31	INVENTION	49
A HANGING	<i>Choosing an event to write about / Testing your choice / Defining the event's autobiographical significance / Recalling specific sensory details / Recalling other people / Redefining the event's significance</i>	
GEORGE ORWELL, 36	PLANNING AND DRAFTING	53
CALLING HOME	<i>Seeing what you have / Setting goals / Outlining the narrative / Drafting the essay</i>	
JEAN BRANDT, 41		

READING A DRAFT WITH A CRITICAL EYE	55
<i>First general impression / Pointings / Analysis</i>	
REVISING AND EDITING	57
<i>Revising an essay about an event / Editing and proofreading</i>	
LEARNING FROM YOUR OWN WRITING PROCESS	59
A WRITER AT WORK	
FROM INVENTION TO DRAFT TO REVISION	59
<i>Invention / The first draft</i>	

3	<i>Remembering People</i>	66
READINGS	PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE	84
UNCLE WILLIE	BASIC FEATURES OF ESSAYS ABOUT REMEMBERED PEOPLE	85
MAYA ANGELOU, 68	<i>A vivid portrait / A detailed presentation of anecdotes and scenes /</i>	
MARTHA	<i>A clear indication of the person's significance / An appeal to the</i>	
KATE SIMON, 73	<i>reader's experience</i>	
MY PARENTS	GUIDE TO WRITING	
RICHARD RODRIGUEZ, 77		
FATHER	THE WRITING TASK	88
JAN GRAY, 82	INVENTION	88
	<i>Choosing a person to write about / Testing your choice / Defining the</i>	
	<i>person's significance / Recalling key anecdotes and conversations /</i>	
	<i>Describing the person</i>	
	PLANNING AND DRAFTING	92
	<i>Seeing what you have / Setting goals / Outlining the portrait /</i>	
	<i>Drafting the essay</i>	
	READING A DRAFT WITH A CRITICAL EYE	94
	<i>First general impression / Pointings / Analysis</i>	
	REVISING AND EDITING	96
	<i>Revising a portrait / Editing and proofreading</i>	
	LEARNING FROM YOUR OWN WRITING PROCESS	98
	A WRITER AT WORK	
	REVISING A DRAFT AFTER A CRITICAL READING	98
	<i>The first draft / A critical reading</i>	

4

Writing Profiles

104

READINGS

**SADDLE BRONC RIDING AT
THE NATIONAL FINALS**

GRETEL EHRLICH, 106

INSIDE THE BRAIN

DAVID NOONAN, 110

THE PINBALL PHILOSOPHY

JOHN MCPHEE, 115

THE LAST STOP

BRIAN CABLE, 122

PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

125

BASIC FEATURES OF PROFILES

126

An intriguing, well-focused subject / A controlling theme / A vivid presentation / An informative, entertaining pace

GUIDE TO WRITING

THE WRITING TASK

129

INVENTION AND RESEARCH

129

Choosing a subject / Exploring your preconceptions / Planning your project / Posing some preliminary questions / Finding a tentative theme

PLANNING AND DRAFTING

134

Seeing what you have / Setting goals / Outlining the profile / Drafting a profile

READING A DRAFT WITH A CRITICAL EYE

137

First general impression / Pointings / Analysis

REVISING AND EDITING

139

Revising a profile / Editing and proofreading

LEARNING FROM YOUR OWN WRITING PROCESS

140

A WRITER AT WORK

THE INTERVIEW NOTES AND REPORT

140

The interview / A report on the interview

5

Reporting Information

146

READINGS

CHIGGERS

SUE HUBBELL, 148

CHOLESTEROL

ISAAC ASIMOV, 152

TRACING A KILLER

ANASTASIA TOUFEXIS, 155

**THE DIGITAL AUDIO TAPE
CONTROVERSY**

DAVID GREEN, 158

PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

162

BASIC FEATURES OF ESSAYS REPORTING INFORMATION

163

A subject and a thesis / An appeal to readers' interests / A logical plan / Clear definitions / Appropriate writing strategies

GUIDE TO WRITING

THE WRITING TASK

166

INVENTION AND RESEARCH

166

Finding a subject / Probing your subject / Asserting a tentative thesis / Testing your choice / Analyzing your readers / Finding out more about your subject / Refocusing your thesis statement / Defining key terms

PLANNING AND DRAFTING	170
<i>Seeing what you have / Setting goals / Outlining the report / Drafting the report</i>	
READING A DRAFT WITH A CRITICAL EYE	172
<i>First general impression / Pointings / Analysis</i>	
REVISING AND EDITING	174
<i>Revising an informative essay / Revising to sharpen the focus / Revising to clarify the organization / Revising to enrich the content / Revising for readability / Editing and proofreading</i>	
LEARNING FROM YOUR OWN WRITING PROCESS	175
A WRITER AT WORK	

USING SOURCES	176
---------------	-----

6

<i>Taking a Position</i>	180
--------------------------	-----

READINGS

**TAKING A STAND
AGAINST SEXISM**

KRISTIN A. GOSS, 184

**ABORTION, RIGHT
AND WRONG**RACHEL RICHARDSON
SMITH, 186**ANIMAL RIGHTS VERSUS
HUMAN HEALTH**

ALBERT ROSENFELD, 189

JOURNALISTIC ETHICS

SIDNEY YOUNG, 194

PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE	197
----------------------	-----

BASIC FEATURES OF POSITION PAPERS	198
-----------------------------------	-----

A well-defined issue / A clear position / A convincing argument / A reasonable tone

GUIDE TO WRITING

THE WRITING TASK	202
------------------	-----

INVENTION AND RESEARCH	202
------------------------	-----

Choosing an issue to write about / Exploring the issue / Researching the issue / Considering your purpose and audience / Testing your choice / Developing your reasoning / Anticipating counterarguments / Restating your thesis

PLANNING AND DRAFTING	207
-----------------------	-----

Seeing what you have / Setting goals / Outlining the position paper / Drafting the position paper

READING A DRAFT WITH A CRITICAL EYE	210
-------------------------------------	-----

First general impression / Pointings / Analysis

REVISING AND EDITING	211
----------------------	-----

Revising a position paper / Revising to strengthen your argument / Revising for readability / Editing and proofreading

LEARNING FROM YOUR OWN WRITING PROCESS	213
--	-----

A WRITER AT WORK

DEFINING THE ISSUE	213
--------------------	-----

7

Proposing Solutions

216

READINGS

**BIRTH CONTROL IN THE
SCHOOLS: CLINICAL
EXAMINATION**

ADAM PAUL WEISMAN, 218

**TESTING AND SOCIETY:
WHAT CAN BE DONE?**

DAVID OWEN, 223

TO UNTEACH GREED

CAROL BLY, 230

**A PROPOSAL TO
STRENGTHEN
THE LANGUAGE
ACQUISITION PROJECT**

WENDY JO NIWA, 234

PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

237

BASIC FEATURES OF PROPOSALS

238

A well-defined problem / A clear proposed solution / A convincing argument / A reasonable tone

GUIDE TO WRITING

THE WRITING TASK

241

INVENTION AND RESEARCH

241

Choosing a problem to write about / Finding a tentative solution / Testing your choice / Identifying your readers / Defending your solution / Listing and developing reasons for adopting your proposal / Comparing your solution to alternative solutions / Researching your proposal

PLANNING AND DRAFTING

246

Seeing what you have / Outlining the proposal / Setting goals / Drafting the proposal

READING A DRAFT WITH A CRITICAL EYE

250

First general impression / Pointings / Analysis

REVISING AND EDITING

252

Revising a proposal / Editing and proofreading

LEARNING FROM YOUR OWN WRITING PROCESS

253

A WRITER AT WORK

ANALYZING THE READERS OF A PROPOSAL

253

8

Making Evaluations

256

READINGS

**THE TREASURE OF THE
SIERRA MADRE**

JAMES AGEE, 258

**THE MIDWEST:
CLOSE TO HEAVEN**

JANE GREER, 264

**THE GREATNESS OF
ALBERT EINSTEIN**

BERTRAND RUSSELL, 269

PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

275

BASIC FEATURES OF EVALUATIONS

276

Presentation of the subject / An authoritative judgment / A convincing argument / Comparison

GUIDE TO WRITING

THE WRITING TASK

278

INVENTION AND RESEARCH

278

Identifying a subject for evaluation / Examining your knowledge of the subject / Testing your choice / Identifying criteria / Analyzing

**UNDEFENDED BY OUR
GUARDIAN**

STEVEN WEISMAN, 272

*your readers / Generating reasons and evidence / Elaborating on the
most convincing reasons*

PLANNING AND DRAFTING 282

*Seeing what you have / Setting goals / Outlining the evaluation /
Drafting the evaluation*

READING A DRAFT WITH A CRITICAL EYE 285

First general impression / Pointings / Analysis

REVISING AND EDITING 287

Revising an evaluation / Editing and proofreading

LEARNING FROM YOUR OWN WRITING PROCESS 288

A WRITER AT WORK

ANALYZING REASONS FOR AN EVALUATION 288

9

Speculating About Causes 292

READINGS

**WHY WE CRAVE
HORROR MOVIES**

STEPHEN KING, 294

**WHY CHILDREN DON'T
SEEM CHILDLIKE
ANYMORE**

JOSHUA MEYEROWITZ, 299

**SUICIDE AMONG YOUNG
PEOPLE**

VICTOR FUCHS, 302

**WHERE WILL THEY SLEEP
TONIGHT?**

KIM DARTNELL, 307

PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE 311

BASIC FEATURES OF ESSAYS SPECULATING ABOUT CAUSES 311

*A presentation of the phenomenon or trend / A convincing causal
argument / A reasonable, authoritative tone*

GUIDE TO WRITING

THE WRITING TASK 313

INVENTION AND RESEARCH 313

*Finding a subject / Exploring what you know about your topic /
Considering causes / Testing your choice / Researching the topic /
Considering your readers / Making your explanation as convincing as
possible / Anticipating and refuting counterarguments / Rejecting
alternative explanations*

PLANNING AND DRAFTING 318

*Seeing what you have / Setting goals / Outlining the essay / Drafting
the essay*

READING A DRAFT WITH A CRITICAL EYE 321

First general impression / Pointings / Analysis

REVISING AND EDITING 323

Revising a causal analysis / Editing and proofreading

LEARNING FROM YOUR OWN WRITING PROCESS 324

A WRITER AT WORK

ANALYZING CAUSES 324