

NEW HANDBOOK WRITING SKILLS

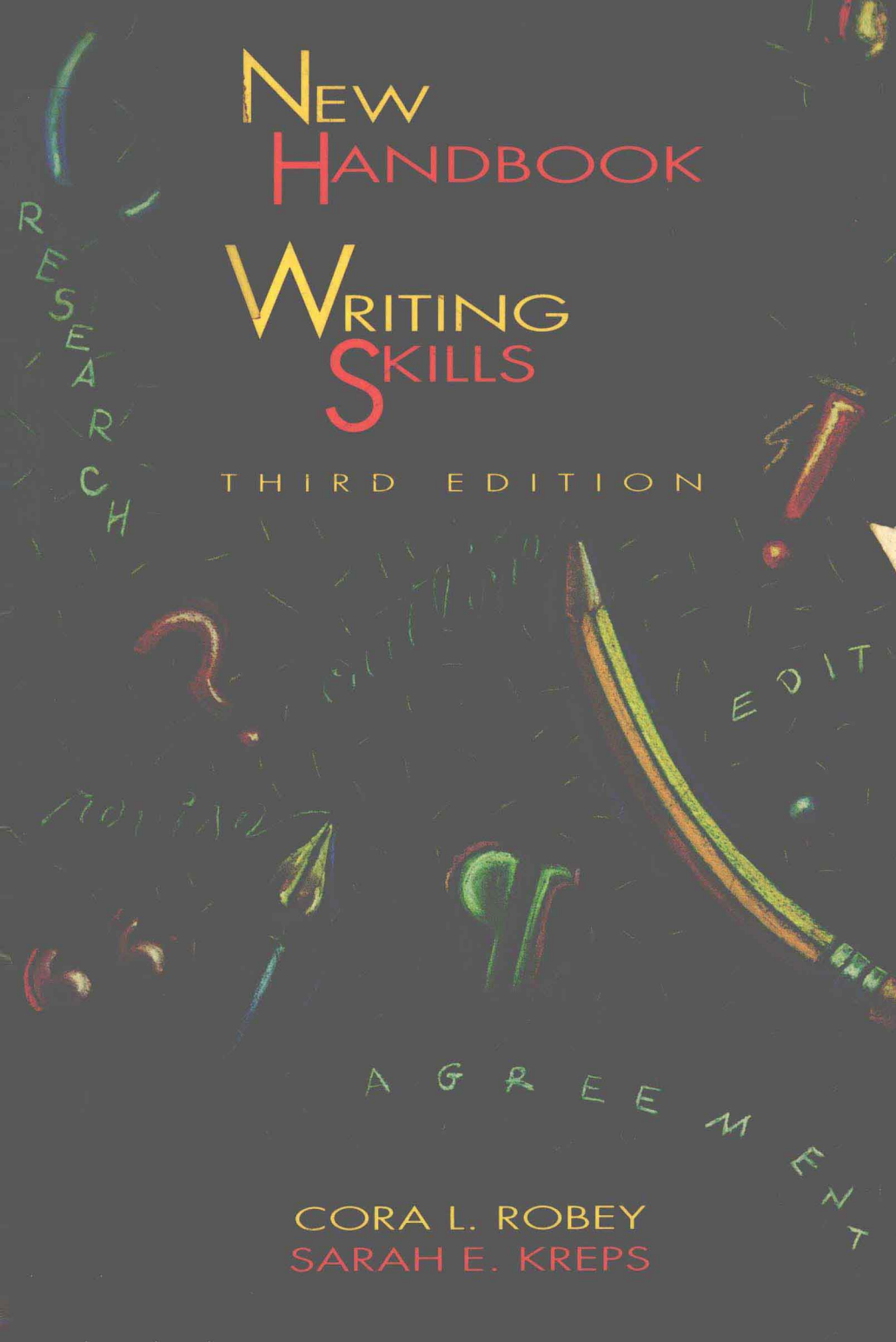
THIRD EDITION

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NEW HANDBOOK OF BASIC WB WRITING SKILLS

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TO THE INSTRUCTOR

The *Handbook of Basic Writing Skills* was originally written in response to a need for a reference and writing aid that could be readily understood by all students, regardless of their background in English. The *New Handbook of Basic Writing Skills*, Third Edition, is like the first and second editions in that it uses clear and simple language in its examples and explanations and contains an abundance of exercises. It offers assistance in all the areas covered by the traditional handbooks and gives special emphasis to the problems that trouble beginning writers—particularly verb endings, subject-verb agreement, noun plurals, fragments, run-together sentences, possessive endings, and sentence logic. It helps the student through each step from constructing a sentence to researching and organizing a full-length paper.

There are thirty chapters in the *New Handbook of Basic Writing Skills*. You should be able to refer students to the appropriate section of the handbook for virtually any error found in a student paper. The first eight chapters cover such basic writing concerns as agreement, verbs, and fragments. The verb section (Chapter 7) is the largest in the book and contains many useful exercises. Chapters 9 through 11 cover other important elements of sentence structure. Chapters 12 through 19 cover spelling and punctuation, and focus on questions inexperienced writers are likely to ask about these matters. Chapters 20 through 23 represent a simple approach to the use of words. The dictionary chapter (20) should be helpful to students who need to build reading skills. Chapters 24 through 30 move from sentence improvement and variety through the paragraph (26), the full-length paper (27), the research paper, manuscript form and editing (28–29), and business writing (30). These last few chapters offer practical suggestions on subjects like brain-

storming, the selection and limitation of topics, organization of material, and editing. You might want to use these chapters for beginning the teaching of rhetoric. Chapter 27 now includes basic instructions and outlines and sample papers for many types of assignments.

The exercises in the *Handbook* are aimed particularly at areas in which students need practice. Not all exercises will be helpful to all students, of course, so you will probably want to use some as general class exercises and assign certain others—especially those in Chapters 1 through 8—to students with particular writing problems, on an individual basis. The examples used in the explanations and in the exercises are mainly student sentences; they are frequently interesting in themselves and are close to the style students use in their own writing.

Although the *New Handbook of Basic Writing Skills* has the strengths of the first and second editions, it is intended to be even more responsive to the needs of students. The Third Edition includes the following features:

1. Chapter 27 on the full-length paper has been greatly expanded. It discusses purpose, topic, audience, and thesis. The section on outlining (27c) now gives advice on organizing papers of process, comparison, classification, analysis, personal experience, definition, and persuasion, and includes an outline and sample student paper for each type of assignment. It has a new section on revision (27g).
2. There are more instructions and practice in sentence recognition and in understanding basic sentence construction in Chapters 1–3.
3. There is now a separate chapter on logic (Chapter 25).
4. There are more editing, sentence combining, and Cloze exercises.
5. Chapter 26 on the paragraph gives the student more practice in collecting and focusing ideas and describes more methods of organizing paragraphs, using student models.
6. There is a more detailed discussion of sequence of tenses.
7. The research paper (Chapter 28) contains a new paper on steroids and sports in new MLA documentation style and includes explanations

and sample entries demonstrating footnote-style documentation in the APA style.

8. Chapter 29 now includes an editing checklist and several paragraphs which offer editing practice.
9. In addition to business letter writing, Chapter 30 now includes memos, report writing, and inquiry and claim letters.
10. There are new or improved discussions on the following subjects:
 - a. recognition of subject and verb
 - b. recognition of singular and plural words
 - c. coordinating and subordinating conjunctions
 - d. *will* and *would*
 - e. clear pronoun and noun references
 - f. doubling consonants in spelling
 - g. unnecessary apostrophes
 - h. sexist language

Throughout the book there are such labels as RIGHT and WRONG and WEAK and BETTER to identify example sentences. These labels are designed to help students recognize Standard American English. We are not commenting in any way on the acceptability of the language that students use in their own informal speech.

The *New Workbook of Basic Writing Skills*, Third Edition, can be used in conjunction with the *Handbook*. The *Workbook* follows the format of the *Handbook* and provides many additional exercises. Answers to exercises now appear at the back of the *Workbook* so that students can check their own answers. An Instructor's Manual is also available and includes diagnostic tests and answers to all exercises in the *Handbook*.

Special thanks go to the many people who helped us in the preparation of the manuscript for the Third Edition. We would like to thank the staff at Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, particularly Stuart Miller, Julia Ross, Suzanne Montazer, Avery Hallowell, and Mandy Van Dusen; and my colleagues at Tidewater Community College, Portsmouth Campus, particularly W. P. Covington, Charles Earl, Priscilla Haley, Walter Harris, Charles W. Hoofnagle, Billie Luckie, Barbara Marr, Robert Marshall, Carolyn Melchor, Barbara Nudel-

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Cora Robey
Sarah Kreps
Helen Maloney

TO THE STUDENT

This handbook is designed to help you express your ideas correctly and clearly in writing. When you talk with your friends, you may use informal language or even leave out words and still be understood; but when you write for college classes or in your work, you need to be careful in your selection and use of words.

Since the words you use and the way you use them must be understood by both you and the person who reads what you have written, certain forms have been accepted as usual, or standard, ways to write what you want to write. In this book you will see examples with labels such as RIGHT and WRONG to help you recognize and use these standard forms.

Each section of the book covers a different area of writing skills. Your instructor will usually let you know, by chapter number, what chapters you need to refer to in order to correct errors in your papers. You do not have to start at the beginning of the book unless directed to do so. By doing the exercises in each chapter, you will have a chance to practice what you have learned.

If you are confused about how to organize your paper, which form of a word to use, or how to say clearly what you mean to say, you may want to look at a particular chapter for help while you are writing a paper. Chapters 1 through 23 help you construct sentences and choose correct words. Chapters 24 through 26 tell how to write logically and to arrange sentences into paragraphs, and Chapters 27 through 30 help you plan a complete paper, do research, prepare and edit your papers, and master the basics of acceptable business writing.

Learn to use this handbook both as a reference book while you are writing and to correct your finished work. Let it help you prevent errors as you fulfill your writing assignments.

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