Fifth Edition

writing
from A to Z

THE EASY-TO-USE REFERENCE Handbook

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WRITING FROM A TO Z

The Easy-to-Use Reference Handbook

Fifth Edition

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To the Instructor

Through four editions, increasing numbers of students and instructors across the country have discovered the advantages of *Writing from A to Z*'s alphabetical organization. Although this organization is nontraditional for an English handbook, its familiarity makes the book easier than most other handbooks for students to use. Why? Students using this text do not need to crack a specialized "code" of organization that requires them to know established categories of writing information and instruction such as usage, grammar, and style. Instead, because the entries in *A to Z* are familiar and intuitive, students need only turn to a letter of the alphabet to find the appropriate entry that will answer their questions and provide examples. Easy-to-use cross-references also direct students to additional information.

Another advantage of this book's organization is that it makes plastic-coated, tabbed section dividers unnecessary and so eliminates this sometimes cumbersome feature. This truly is a handbook that allows students to flip through the pages easily and find the information they need quickly. For these reasons, students at all levels and across the disciplines actually use *Writing from A to Z* and use it comfortably, which helps to build their confidence and independence as writers. After they've completed their writing classes, they have a reliable writer's tool for the rest of their college coursework.

Key Features

The most distinctive feature of *Writing from A to Z* is the alphabetical organization of its core section, but an abundance of other notable features make it a handbook that students consistently use.

- **The most straightforward alphabetizing system available in a handbook.** The A to Z entries are organized by the letter-by-letter system, so users can ignore punctuation marks (such as slashes, hyphens, and commas) and spaces between words. This nontechnical alphabetizing system ensures ease of use.

- **Separate composing and research processes guides.** These concise guides precede the alphabetical entries and are identified with thumb tabs along the edges of their pages. For additional ease of use, each section opens with its own table of contents.

- **Extensive, integrated coverage of Internet research and writing with computers.** The up-to-date, detailed coverage of online writing and research, flagged with a computer icon   , helps students use computers effectively throughout their writing and research processes. Extensive guidelines for finding, evaluating, and using online sources are set off with a new thumb tab (Internet Searches) within the larger research section.

- **Coverage of the four most common documentation styles.** The MLA (Modern Language Association), APA (American Psychological Association), CSE (Council of Science Editors, formerly the Council of Biology Editors [CBE]), and Chicago (CMS) styles are covered in detail. Model student papers are provided for the MLA and APA formats, as are sample pages from student papers for the CSE and CMS formats, making *Writing from A to Z* especially effective for writing-intensive courses across the disciplines.

- **Coverage of graphics and document design.** In addition to a separate **document design** entry, *Writing from A to Z* provides entries such as **graphics**, **lists**, **manuscript form**, **tables**, and **typefaces** to help students produce papers that meet today's visual standards and use the design capabilities of computers appropriately.

- **Coverage of argumentation, informal logic, and critical thinking.** Principally located within the **logic** entry, this material includes discussions of topics such as deductive and inductive reasoning, the Toulmin method, and logical fallacies.

- **Integrated usage entries.** In traditional handbooks, students must locate a separate glossary of usage (containing word pairs and brief explanations of standard usage) and then find the information they need. In *Writing from A to Z,* usage entries such as *imply/infer* appear in the text's alphabetical section. The headings for these entries are italicized for ready recognition. For instance, on pages 314–15 students will find the following sequence:

  hanged/hung

  hasty generalization

  headings

  healthful/healthy

  helping verbs

  he/she, his/her

- **ESL entries throughout and a separate ESL index.** An ESL (English as a Second Language) icon   used throughout the book makes it easy for non-native speakers of English to find the help they need. This coverage is also listed in a separate ESL index, beginning on page E-1, that precedes the book's full subject index.

- New interactive tutors on writing papers for both rhetorical purposes and modes
- New tutorials for document design and visual rhetoric
- Tutorials for avoiding plagiarism and evaluating sources
- Over 3,000 grammar exercises with personalized feedback
- Bibliomaker software for MLA, APA, Chicago and CSE styles of documentation

Delivered in a new, state-of-the-art course management system featuring online peer review utilities, grade book, and communication tools, Catalyst 2.0 is the most complete online tool for writing and research and comes free with each new copy of *Writing from A to Z*.

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section and for her tireless commitment to developing this edition's catalog of MLA documentation models for electronic sources. Her work and that of her colleagues with whom she collaborated contributes not only to this text but to the field of composition.

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To the Student:
How to Use This Book

Organized alphabetically like a dictionary, with key words at the tops of the pages and with the letters of the alphabet along the margins for easy access, *Writing from A to Z* enables you to turn directly to the information you need without first having to figure out what broader category your writing problem belongs to (usage? grammar? style? something else?) as you would in a topically organized handbook.

Please take the time to read the introductory sections, **Composing Processes** (beginning on page 1) and **Research Processes** (beginning on page 25). They provide a framework for all the other material in the book.

Alphabetizing System

You may not be aware that there are different systems of alphabetizing. All alphabetizing in this book is letter by letter, which simply means that punctuation marks and spaces between words are ignored. For example, on pages 506–08 you will find this sequence of entries:

verbals

verb errors

verb phrases

verbs

Notice that the order after the letters *v-e-r-b* is *a, e, p, s*. Just remember to ignore punctuation marks and spaces between words when searching for an alphabetical entry, and you will have no trouble finding what you need.

Cross-References within Entries

One of the most important features of *Writing from A to Z* is the network of cross-references within the entries. Every term that has an entry of its own is printed in bold type wherever it appears in other entries. Using these bold-type references, you can pursue a topic as extensively as you wish or quickly find only the information you require to continue with a particular writing task.

For example, suppose you felt (or a classmate or your instructor suggested) that something you had written would be more effective if certain points were given stronger emphasis. Flipping to the alphabetical entry for **emphasis**, you would find an opening paragraph that defines *emphasis* and lists various ways of achieving it, followed by three subsections headed IN PARAGRAPHS, IN SENTENCES, and WITH WORDS. This **emphasis** entry alone might very well give you all the help you need, but in reading the entry you would also encounter bold-type references to the following additional entries, all of which have something to do with emphasis:

repetition	balanced sentences
sentence types	parallel structure
punctuation	sentence fragment
intensifiers	dash
italics	exclamation point
compound sentences	word choice
complex sentences	verbs
simple sentences	active voice
cumulative sentences	sentence variety
periodic sentences	hyperbole

Many of these entries, in turn, contain further bold-type references. Which topics to pursue and how far to pursue them are entirely up to you.

Composing Processes

The first section of the book provides detailed guidance that will help you adapt your composing processes to suit the various writing situations you encounter. It covers topics such as identifying purpose, analyzing audience, drafting, revising, and proofreading. At the end of the section, on pages 22–23, you'll find a Checklist for Composing, which highlights the primary concerns of successful composition.

Research Processes: Finding, Using, and Documenting Sources

The second section of the book will guide you through the processes of gathering information from a wide variety of primary and secondary sources, print and electronic, and using it effectively in documented papers. **Research Processes** explains four styles for citing sources: Modern Language Association (MLA), American Psychological Association (APA), *Chicago Manual of Style* (CMS), and Council of Science Editors (CSE). The section on MLA style concludes with a complete sample research paper, and the other three sections each end with an array of sample pages.

Fail-Safe General Index and ESL Index

If going straight to an alphabetical entry in the book should fail to solve your problem, turn to the index. It provides an exhaustive listing of the topics covered in *Writing from A to Z,* not only by the terms used in the entries but also by commonsense terms you might think of instead—for example, *dots, spaced* or *periods, spaced* for *ellipsis points* (the three dots used to show an omission in a quotation or occasionally to signal a pause or hesitation in dialogue).

If English is not your native language, you will find English as a Second Language (ESL) listings not only throughout the general index but also collected for your convenience in a special ESL index beginning on page E-1.

Information for Writers of English as a Second Language (ESL)

Throughout the book you will notice   symbols. These icons mark information of particular importance for writers whose native language is not English. An index for ESL writers begins on page E-1.

Contents by Topic Area

The Contents by Topic Area can help you pull together information on broad subjects covered by multiple entries. You'll find this handy listing on the inside of the book's front cover.

Internet Coverage Identified with an Icon

Writing from A to Z has extensive, up-to-date coverage of the Internet, including particularly helpful guidelines for evaluating and documenting

Internet sources. This icon   identifies all Internet-related coverage so that you can find it as quickly as possible.

Word-Usage Entries

In *Writing from A to Z,* word-usage entries (such as *imply/infer*) appear right along with other kinds of entries in alphabetical order. Thus, on pages 314–16 you will find the following sequence:

> headings
> *healthful/healthy*
> helping verbs
> *he/she, his/her*
> *himself/hisself*

Just look up whatever word you are wondering about as you would look it up in a dictionary. Headings for word-usage entries are in italics, as shown in the list above; other headings are not italicized. A complete list of word-usage entries appears under the entry **usage**.

Mini Tables of Contents in Long Entries

Composing Processes and **Research Processes** as well as long or complex alphabetical entries have their own mini tables of contents or directories (as on page 158) to help you locate the specific information you need.

Revision Chart

Inside the back cover, you will find a chart of revision symbols commonly used by instructors in marking papers. The chart gives the meaning of each symbol and lists the number of the page that explains how to make the needed revision.

COMPOSING PROCESSES

Overview of Composing Processes

(Note: Throughout this book, words printed in **bold type** refer to alphabetical entries that give you more detailed information. Those entries may, in turn, contain other references in bold type. Thus, you can investigate any topic as quickly or as thoroughly as you wish.)

When we say that writers have gone through a composing process, we mean that they have taken a piece of writing from the point at which they develop ideas and consider ways of organizing them, through drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading. The process is not as neat and straightforward as it sounds, nor does every writer follow the same pattern. Writers sometimes jump ahead, sometimes loop back, sometimes draw arrows and stars, and sometimes hit the delete key. (The flowchart, Figure CP-1, illustrates the process.) Nevertheless, most writing—and all successful academic writing—is the result of the writer's attention to all phases of the composing process. This section describes each phase, moving from prewriting through proofreading; however, the order in which they are done depends upon each writer's personal process.

ASSESSING THE RHETORICAL SITUATION

Every act of writing is done in a particular context, called the *rhetorical situation*. Different kinds of writing may emphasize different elements of the rhetorical situation, but five elements are always present: writer, occasion, audience, topic, and purpose.

Occasion

Occasion is the occurrence that prompts you to write. You may need to answer a letter from a friend, leave instructions for your child's caregiver, or write a paper for a class. Obviously, these three occasions would lead to quite different decisions about a number of matters—for instance, the length and
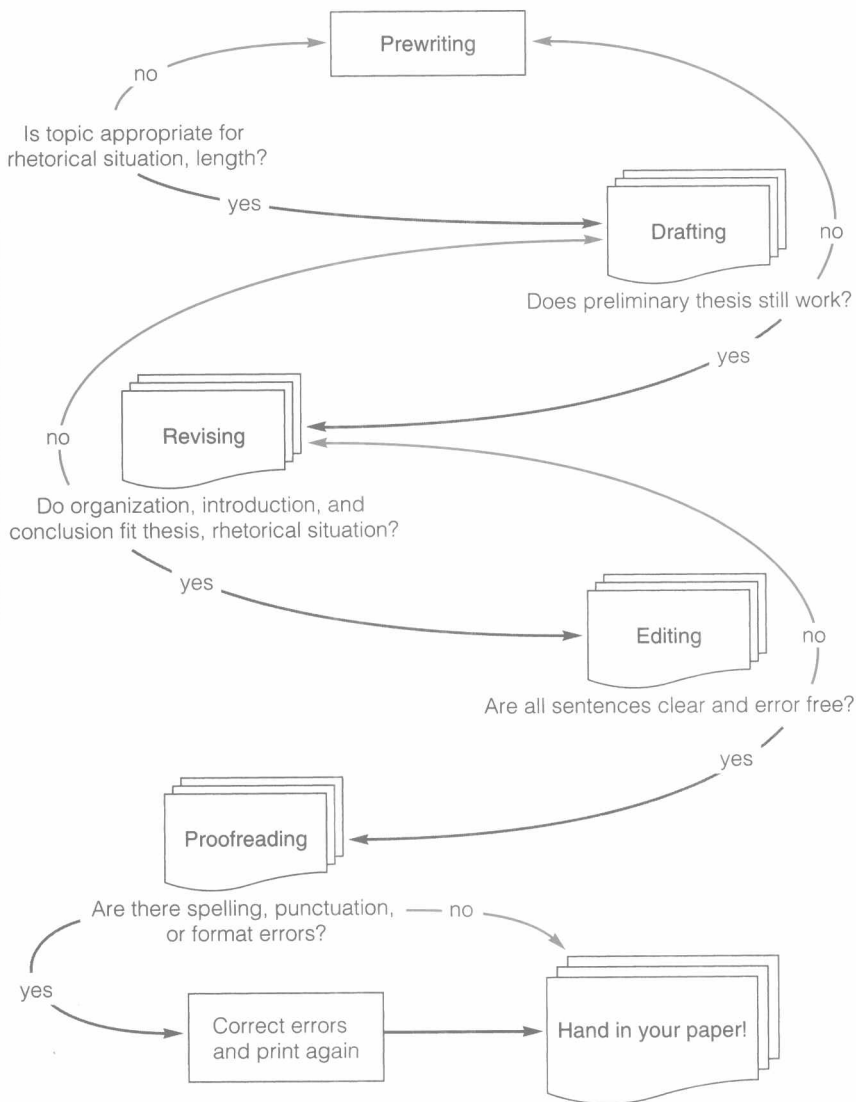
COMPOSING PROCESSES

Figure CP–1. Flowchart of the composing processes.

the formality of the **tone.** In most letters, use of the second-person pronoun *you* is permissible, whereas in academic writing, *you* should be avoided. In instructions—such as those in this book—using *you* personalizes the tone. Pay attention to the occasion, and adjust your tone accordingly.

Audience

Just as you speak in different ways to different people—friends and strangers, adults and children, family members and colleagues at school or work— your **audience** also affects how and what you write. For instance, terms that are clear to one audience need to be defined for another. A writing course presents a special audience problem: your instructor is part of your audience, but not all writing instructors want you to write just for them. Some instructors want you to write for a more general audience consisting of intelligent, well-intentioned readers. A useful technique for doing so is to imagine one specific reader who is typical of the audience and write to that person. If your course includes **peer response** sessions in which students read and comment on one another's drafts, you may know your readers personally, be able to write for them, and benefit from their feedback.

Topic

In a writing course, the instructor may assign a **topic** or allow you to choose your own. If the topic is assigned, unless it is one that already interests you, the challenge is to discover some aspect of it—some way of focusing or narrowing it—that does interest you. Even when you have the luxury of picking a topic, you may still have the problem of focusing it so that you can do it justice in a paper of the expected length. In addition to considering your **audience** and **purpose**, take into account your knowledge of the subject. If your area of expertise is already highly specialized, the problem is solved. However, if you know, or find, a great deal of information about a general topic, try breaking it into subcategories and writing about the area of most interest. Even the best writers find it difficult to write about something they know or care little about, so whenever possible narrow the topic to something that interests you.

> ⟨atalyst   For tips on how to select a topic for an informative paper, visit
> **<www.mhhe.com/ebest/reports>**.

Purpose

At the outset or during the writing process, decide on your **purpose**, and then make sure as you draft, revise, and edit that everything in your paper works toward accomplishing that goal. Depending on the purpose, you will emphasize some elements of the rhetorical situation more than others. Some writing—usually called **expressive**—emphasizes the writer almost to the exclusion of other elements. Examples of expressive writing include personal response **journals**, in which the writer can express feelings and explore ideas, and **narrative** essays that recount and reflect on personal experiences.