



READING

TEXTBOOKS

A COLLEGE SKILLS HANDBOOK

WIENER • BAZERMAN

READING TEXTBOOKS

A College Skills Handbook

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Preface

We continue to listen to students and their teachers across the country, and this book is the result of what we've learned from them. Many users of our other books — *Reading Skills Handbook*, *Basic Reading Skills Handbook*, and *All of Us: A Multicultural Reading Skills Handbook* — have asked us to write a book focused exclusively on how to read college texts. We saw this as an important challenge: students at the postsecondary level must use their textbooks successfully to learn essential information about their courses and the disciplines these courses represent. Given the complexity of many subjects and the varieties of textbook approaches across the curriculum, we felt that a text-based reading skills handbook would meet an important need. Drawing on a time- and classroom-tested format, we have developed this book of instruction, practice, and anthology based on the many kinds of textbooks students face in their college careers.

Reading Textbooks: A College Skills Handbook presents in clear, readable language the fundamental reading and study skills required for college success. Here, students read a careful explanation of an important skill and examine passages to demonstrate that skill.

Our step-by-step approach, our carefully organized presentation, and our range of discipline-based materials allows students to move through increasingly complex skills with confidence. Of course, we know the value of whole-language approaches to linguistic growth and development, and we provide many opportunities for prereading, critical thinking, and writing to learn as part of a comprehensive effort to help students accomplish their goals. Exercise variety has motivated the practice activities we present here: students explore and advance their skills through short-answer, multiple-choice, and essay questions throughout the text.

Organization

We divide the book into two main parts, a *Handbook* that provides instruction in the essential reading skills and a section of *Reading Selections* that provides eighteen reading passages and related exercises. Arranged in five units, the *Handbook* begins with basic techniques for dealing with new words. It next exam-

ines important reading aids and comprehension skills before advancing to skills that help students interpret and evaluate what they read. Finally, the *Handbook* teaches basic study skills — techniques for taking notes, outlining, summarizing, and taking exams — that help students improve their performance in class. Numerous textbook exercises encourage mastery of the basic reading and study skills through practice and review. At the end of each unit, to help students put together newly acquired skills, we provide a substantive review reading from a current text students are likely to use. And we ask students regularly to apply these skills on their own to the required texts for their courses.

Each passage in the *Reading Selections* is accompanied by comprehension, interpretation, vocabulary, and writing exercises. Each question is keyed to the appropriate section in the *Handbook*; if students have difficulty answering a question, they can easily find and review the material that covers that particular skill. For example, a 9 after a question means that a review of Chapter 9, “Making Inferences,” will help students recall the techniques that readers use to make valid inferences. Throughout the text students will find questions that guide their understanding and interpretation of specific passages.

The organization of the book allows its adaptation to specific courses in several ways. The instructor may teach the five units in the *Handbook* in the early weeks of the term, postponing the study of the *Reading Selections* until students know the basic reading skills. The brief readings in the *Handbook* allow the reinforcement of newly learned concepts, and students should be ready for the longer readings by the time they reach the *Reading Selections*. Or, the instructor may choose to further reinforce the skills taught in the *Handbook* by immediately assigning appropriate work from the *Reading Selections*. Finally, the instructor may begin with the *Reading Selections* and return to key instructional units in the *Handbook* as specific needs arise in class.

Features

- All reading selections are drawn from high-interest textbooks, representing a wide range of academic subjects including psychology, history, marketing, physics, art, business communication, literature, philosophy, and geography.

- Time and class-tested two part format consists of the *Handbook*, providing skills instruction and practice, and the *Reading Selections*, providing readings and skills applications.
- Step-by-step instruction moves from vocabulary to comprehension to interpretation and evaluation, including coverage of study skills such as notetaking, outlining, summarizing, and taking exams.
- Numerous and varied practice activities include multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank exercises and short-answer and essay questions.
- Post-reading assignments and exercises encourage critical thinking.
- Cross-references between the *Handbook* and the *Reading Selections* enable students to easily find and review any skills with which they are having difficulty.
- Guide to disciplines included in the text appears on the inside back cover, so students and instructors can easily locate textbook selections from the various subjects represented.

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Support for Instructors

In addition to the student text and Instructor's Annotated Edition, the following materials are available with adoption of *Reading Textbooks: A College Skills Handbook*.

- **Test package.**
- **Newsweek subscription.** A ten-week subscription card may be shrinkwrapped with the text for a nominal fee.
- **The dictionary deal.** *The American Heritage College Dictionary* may be shrinkwrapped with the text at a substantial savings.

Correlations to Basic Reading Skills Tests

Many states require college students to demonstrate their competence in reading. In the tables below, the reading skills included in three representative state tests are correlated to the sections in *Reading Textbooks* where the specific skills are covered.

TEXAS ACADEMIC SKILLS PROGRAM (TASP)

Determining the Meaning of Words and Phrases

Words with multiple meanings	1e, 1f, 2f
Unfamiliar and uncommon words and phrases	1a, 1b, 1c, 1d

Understanding the Main Idea and Supporting Details in Written Material

Stated vs. implied main idea	6b(1), 6b(2)
Supporting details	7b

Analyzing the Relationship among Ideas in Written Material

Organizational patterns and relationships in written materials	8a(1-3), 8b, 8c, 8d, 8e
Drawing conclusions from written material	10

Using Critical Reasoning Skills to Evaluate Written Material

Steps in critically evaluating written material	9, 12a, 12b, 12c
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Applying Study Skills to Reading Assignments

Summarizing, notetaking, outlining	13a, 13b, 13c, 13d, 13e
Interpreting information in graphic form	4b, 4c, 4d, 4e

FLORIDA COLLEGE LEVEL ACADEMIC SKILLS TEST (CLAST)

Reading with Literal Comprehension

Recognizing main ideas	6a, 6b(1), 6b(2)
Identifying supporting details	7b
Determining meaning of words on the basis of context	1c

FLORIDA COLLEGE LEVEL ACADEMIC
SKILLS TEST (CLAST) (continued)

Reading with Critical Comprehension	
Identifying the author’s overall organizational pattern	8a, 8b, 8c, 8d, 8e
Distinguishing between statements of fact and statements of opinion	12a
Detecting bias	12b
Recognizing the explicit and implicit relationships within sentences	6a, 9
Recognizing the implicit as well as explicit relationships between sentences	6a, 6b(1), 6b(2), 9
Recognizing valid arguments	12a, 12b
Drawing logical inferences and conclusions	9, 10

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Handbook

Handbook

Introduction

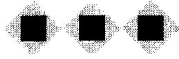
Learning to read college textbooks is not learning just a single skill. *It is learning many skills that work together and build on one another.* Each time you improve any one skill, it strengthens all the others. As your vocabulary improves, you will be able to understand and interpret your reading in many school subjects. And as you learn to comprehend and interpret better, you will gain more clues about the meanings of unfamiliar words.

The first half of this book reviews the basic skills of reading. Each skill is explained clearly in its own section. Exercises drawn almost exclusively from textbooks follow each section so that you can practice each skill as you learn about it. Your teacher may assign sections for the whole class to study or may assign you sections to work on individually, depending on your needs. Also, as you find areas that you want to work on personally, you can go over sections on your own.

To help you find skills that you need to study, we have separated the skills into five units: Vocabulary, Textbook Reading Aids, Understanding Textbooks, Critical Thinking in Textbooks, and Basic Study Skills. The detailed table of contents and index as well as the "Brief Guide to the Handbook" on the inside front cover of the book can help you locate skills that you want to work on.

Each skill also is given a number, based on the chapter and section in which it is discussed. For example, finding main ideas in paragraphs appears in section b of Chapter 6, "Topics and Main Ideas in Paragraphs." The number 6b, then, refers to the section that you need to look at for help in finding main ideas in paragraphs. When you are reading one section, the book may cross-refer to another section by using the number of the other section. Your teacher also may write the number on a piece of your work to suggest that you go over a particular section. Finally, the second half of this book has reading selections with questions. Each question has a reference number that lets you know which skill you need to answer the question. If you have problems with the question, you can look at that section in the first half of the book for help.

Unit One



Vocabulary

*Chapter 1 Building a Strong
Vocabulary*

Chapter 2 Using a Dictionary

