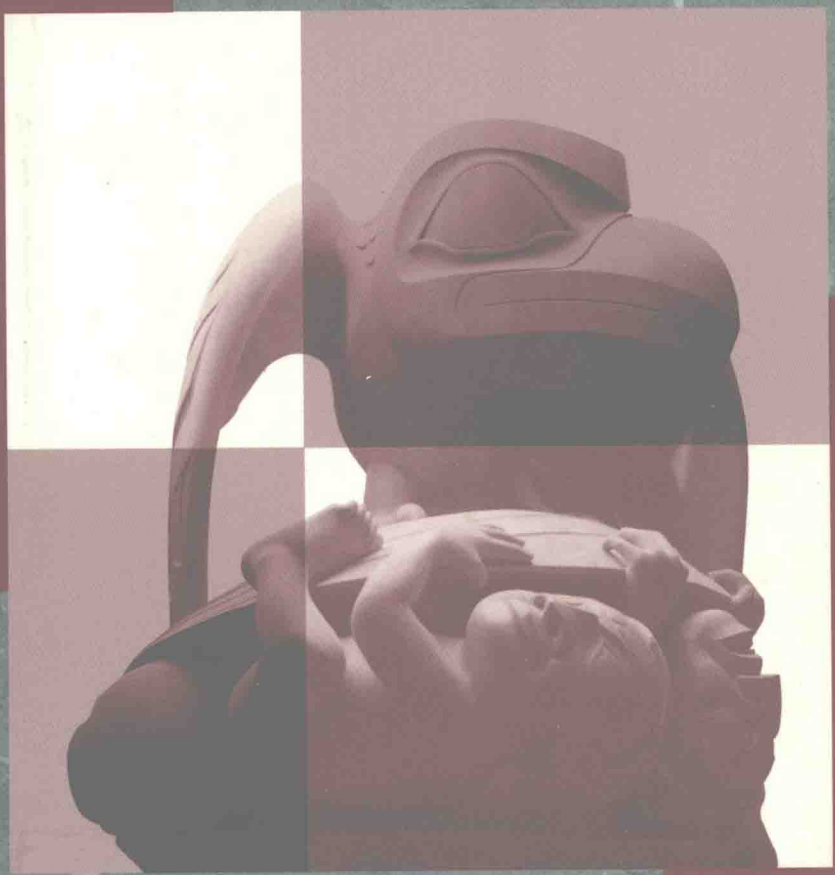
CANADIAN CONTENT



THIRD EDITION

NELL WALDMAN
SARAH NORTON

CANADIAN CONTENT

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SARAH NORTON

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PREFACE

To the Instructor

Canadian Content, Third Edition, is a reader designed for Canadian college and university students taking a first-level composition course. Most of the forty selections new to this edition—many of them never previously anthologized—are by or about Canadians. At this time in our country's history, it is appropriate, even urgent, to concentrate on the questions of who we are, where we have come from, and how we are similar to or different from our neighbours, so that we may choose intelligently where we want our common destiny to lead. To provide students with new perspectives on and insights into our diverse community, many of the selections new to this edition focus on the experience and uniqueness of being "Canadian."

Like its predecessors, this edition includes readings and instructional text for the four traditional rhetorical modes: narration, description, exposition, and argumentation. Narrative and descriptive prose provide a useful starting point for students not only because students are familiar with these forms from high school, but also because they will find powerful and affecting prose in the selections that constitute Unit One. However, since most of the writing that students are required to do in school and on the job is expository, most of this book is devoted to explaining and illustrating the six basic expository strategies. The first eight units are arranged in ascending order of difficulty: from narration and description to exemplification, process analysis, classification and division, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, definition, and finally argumentation, which requires the application of several expository techniques in addition to persuasive ones. The ninth unit, Further Reading, includes eight fairly sophisticated essays that employ a combination of rhetorical strategies. New to this edition

are a brief introduction to writing documented essays together with a list of topics designed to give students practice in writing documented essays based on selections in the text.

We acknowledge at the outset that the rhetorical patterns treated here individually are, in "real life" writing, most often found in combination. In our experience, however, students find it helpful to analyze and practise these patterns of development one at a time. When all have been mastered, students can then combine them in various ways to suit their purpose.

The essays within each unit are arranged from simplest to most complex; thus, an instructor can assign readings suited to the level of the class, or can lead students through a progressively challenging series of assignments in a single rhetorical mode. In choosing the selections for this text, we kept in mind three criteria: first, each essay had to be well written—an example of good standard English prose, neither very formal nor highly colloquial, the kind of prose we want our students to learn to write. Second, each selection had to exemplify one of the rhetorical modes: the structure and development had to illustrate clearly, if not exclusively, the pattern under discussion. Finally, we looked for pieces that were both informative and interesting, selections that would stimulate thought, provoke class discussion, and promote our students' understanding of themselves, of others, and of the world around us.

Throughout the text, we emphasize that there is no one "best" way of approaching a topic. There are always many approaches to choose from when organizing and developing an idea, and the "best" choice depends on a careful analysis of one's audience, subject, and purpose. In other words, we present the traditional rhetorical modes not as compositional straitjackets but as methods of invention, options to explore when considering how to approach a particular subject.

Many instructors prefer to organize their courses around themes rather than structural patterns, so we have included a second Table of Contents organized by theme. The Further Suggestions for Writing (page 401), which encourage students to consider similarities and differences between essays throughout the text, should be particularly useful to instructors who prefer the thematic approach.

Each unit begins with an introduction written in an informal, accessible style. Where possible, examples and allusions have been drawn from the students' culture, not just to make the point clear, but also to make the writing process less intimidating. One of the goals of this text is to demystify the writing process. The introductions encourage the student to ask specific questions about his or her subject and then to formulate a thesis statement that, tentatively at first, more definitively after several drafts, summarizes the

essay in a single sentence. Whether or not this sentence appears in the final draft, the exercise of formulating and refining a thesis statement serves to clarify both the student's thinking and the paper's organization.

Many students resist composing a traditional essay outline. The thesis statement—which is an outline in miniature—ensures that the student has done the preliminary thinking and organizing that a well-structured paper requires. Students sometimes object to this "blueprint" approach to composition, protesting that "real writers don't write this way." True: novelists, poets, playwrights, and many other professional writers do not approach writing this way. Nevertheless, as the selections in this text clearly illustrate, "real" writers do pay careful attention to the organization and development of their prose. A few, such as Bertrand Russell and Martin Luther King, Jr., even employ a formal thesis statement.

Most of our students, of course, do not aspire to become professional writers. Their goal is to write competently within the context of their company, business, or profession. Unfortunately, many students arrive at college without much training or practice in writing clear prose; hence, we have emphasized structure throughout this text. Most college students, in our experience, respond positively to a practical, no-nonsense approach to writing such as the one we present here.

Immediately following the introduction in each unit, there is a short model essay that illustrates the prose structure being presented. To show students how a single subject may be approached from different points of view and supported in different ways, all the model essays focus on the subject of education and have been designed to illustrate the introductory and concluding strategies that are explained in the List of Useful Terms at the back of the book.

Within the units, each selection is followed by a short biographical note and by definitions of the most difficult words and allusions. Please note that our "meanings" are not intended to be exhaustive definitions; we have explained each word or phrase specifically as it appears in its context. Not all potentially problematic terms have been glossed, only those that the majority of students are likely to have difficulty with: terms that lack contextual clues as to their meaning or that are essential to the reader's understanding of the text. We expect students to use their dictionaries to clarify the meaning of other words they may not know.

Two sets of questions follow each essay. The Structure and Strategy questions are designed to lead the students to an understanding of *form*: how the piece is put together and why the writing strategies employed are effective. The Content and Purpose

questions are designed to encourage the students' analysis of the *content* of the piece, to deepen their understanding of meaning.

Words or phrases that are included in the List of Useful Terms appear in capital letters in the questions. For example, if a question explores an author's use of DICTION, the typeface serves as a cue to consult the List of Useful Terms for an explanation of the word "diction."

We have included a few Suggestions for Writing after each essay. These suggestions lead either to a paper with a form similar to that of the essay under discussion or to one that responds in some way to the content of the piece. At the end of each unit, Additional Suggestions for Writing give students practice in the specific rhetorical form that is its focus. And finally, at the end of the book, we have provided Further Suggestions for Writing, a list of topics to encourage students to identify and explore thematic and formal links between two or more selections in the text.

Acknowledgements

This text, like its predecessors, has been very much a co-operative effort. We wish to acknowledge the contributions of Pierre Coupey, Barbara North, and Annette Pope, who reviewed the text and commented most helpfully on its strengths and weaknesses. We are also indebted to the many readers whose suggestions helped shape the form and content of this edition. In particular, we thank Ritva Seppanen, Andrew McLelland, Robin Conover, Cliff Werier, Sabrina Reed, Sandra Bit, Nicholas J. Collins, Tim Chamberlain, Hugh Cook, Ramona Montagnes, Anthea Kyle, and Barbara Brown. Special thanks are due to John Dixon, of Capilano College; Joan Rike, of Vancouver Community College; and Phil Zacharatos, of the Ministry of Forests, B.C., who took the time to provide biographical and factual information we would otherwise have been unable to confirm. And finally, we would like to thank the thousands of students and teachers across Canada whose use and enjoyment of the first two editions have made this third edition possible.

About the Cover Art

On our cover, Bill Reid's sculpture interprets an ancient Haida creation myth. Raven, bored with the pretty but lifeless world in which he found himself, sought company and entertainment. Flying over a beach one day, he spotted a gigantic clamshell that was closed tight, trapping dozens of little creatures inside. Raven prodded and pried at the shell and eventually coaxed the creatures, the first humans, out into the light of day. Like the clamshell, the selections in this book contain ideas, imagination, vision, and life. Readers who

patiently and persistently dig beneath the surface will be rewarded with knowledge and entertainment to inspire and brighten their world.

A Note from the Publisher

Thank you for selecting *Canadian Content,* Third Edition, by Nell Waldman and Sarah Norton. The authors and publisher have devoted considerable time to the careful development of this book. We appreciate your recognition of this effort and accomplishment.

We want to hear what you think of *Canadian Content.* Please take a few minutes to fill in the stamped reader reply card at the back of the book. Your comments and suggestions will be valuable to us as we prepare new editions and other books.

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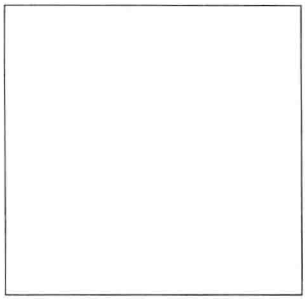

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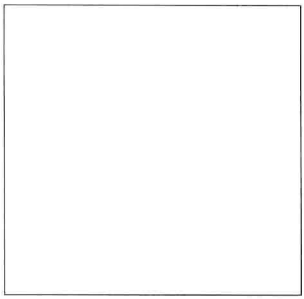


By Theme

On Canada

On the Contemporary Scene

On the Cultural Mosaic

On History

On the Arts, Media, and Sports

On Morals and Ethics

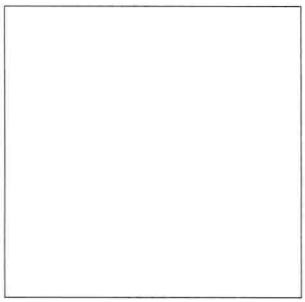
On Politics

On Relationships

On Science, Technology, and Nature

On Language and Writing

INTRODUCTION



1. How to Read with Understanding

Every college student knows how to read—sort of. The trouble is that most of us don't read very efficiently. We don't know how to adapt our reading style to our purpose. Most people aren't even aware that there are different kinds of reading suited to different purposes.

Basically, there are two kinds of reading: **surface reading**, which is casual reading for pleasure or for easy-to-find facts. This is the kind of reading we engage in when we enjoy a novel, magazine, or newspaper. The second kind of reading is **deep reading**. This is the type required in college courses and on the job: reading to acquire the knowledge, facts, and ideas we need in order to understand a topic. This kind of reading has practical rather than recreational purposes. Both kinds of reading can bring us personal satisfaction, but one is undeniably more difficult than the other.

Deep reading, or analytical reading, is the kind that most of us don't do as well as we would like. As with any other skill, there is a technique involved that can, with practice, be mastered. In general, there are three basic guidelines to follow: figure out as much about the piece as you can *before* reading it; identify what you don't understand *while* reading it; and review the whole thing *after* reading it.

Specifically, there are seven steps to reading with understanding:

1. Remove Distractions

Every year, teachers hear hundreds of students protest that they are able to read perfectly well while listening to music, watching television, talking on the phone, or filing their nails. These students are right. They can read under those circumstances, but they can't read for understanding. To read analytically, you have to focus your attention completely on the text. Reading for understanding is an *active* process, requiring your full concentration and participation. For example, you should learn to read with a pencil in your hand, if you don't already do so. Only half the task of making the meaning clear belongs to the writer; the other half belongs to you. Understanding is something you have to work at.

Find a quiet spot, with a good reading light, where you can be alone with your book, your pencil, and your dictionary. We'll get to the dictionary later.

2. Preview Before You Read

Human beings cannot learn facts, ideas, or even words in isolation. We need a context, a sense of the whole into which the new piece of information fits. The more familiar you are with the context and content of a piece before you begin to read, the better able you will be to read with understanding—whether you're reading three sentences or three volumes.

Figure out as much as you can before beginning to read. How long is the piece? You'll want to estimate how much time you'll need to complete it. What's the title? The title usually points to something significant about the writer's topic or purpose. Like the label on a candy bar, the title of an article tells you something about what's inside. Who wrote it? Knowing something about the author helps you predict what the essay might be about. Is the author dead or alive? What is his or her nationality: Canadian, American, or Tasmanian? Is she a humorist or a social critic? Or is he a journalist or an academic? Is the author a specialist in a particular field?

What about the body of the work? Does it include any diagrams or illustrations? Are there subheadings that indicate the division of the material into main ideas? Finally, for the readings in this text, don't forget the context we've provided for you: the unit in which each essay is found gives you a clue to the kind of organization and development you can expect.

3. Read the Selection All the Way Through

This is a very important step, and it isn't always easy. Most inexperienced readers have a fairly short attention span—about eight to ten