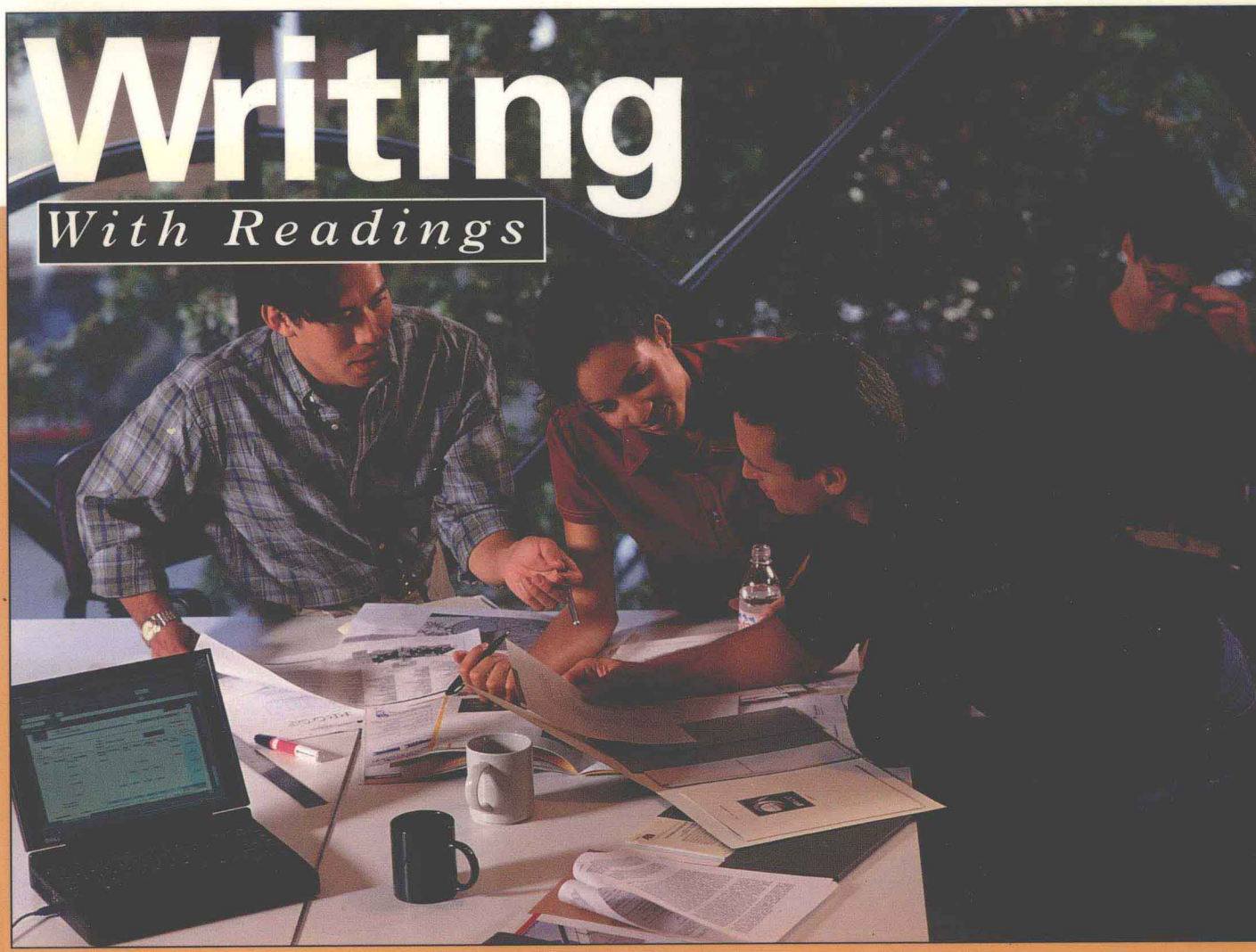
SUSAN ANKER

Real Writing

With Readings



Paragraphs and Essays for College, Work, and Everyday Life

SECOND EDITION

Real Writing
with Readings

Paragraphs and Essays for College, Work, and Everyday Life

Susan Anker

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Preface

The overarching purpose of *Real Writing* is to put writing in a real-world context, to present it as a skill that students need not only to pass the writing course but also to succeed in every arena of their lives—now and in the future. This purpose has informed this book from the start, as stated in the preface to the first edition:

> More than ever, students aren't only students: They are also workers, parents, people with diverse responsibilities for whom "student" is just one of many demanding roles. If what they learn is not directly related to the rest of what they do, it is easily lost among other pressing concerns. When their textbooks fail to make the connection, it is not surprising that writing remains for students something that is done only in college, or even only in the writing class.

The success of the first edition of *Real Writing*, along with the many endorsements of this approach that I have received from students and instructors, has confirmed the absolute necessity of making this connection between writing and students' lives. It remains the primary goal of this new edition of *Real Writing*. In each chapter, students can see people like themselves—students, workers, and parents—who have struggled with writing, who have wondered why it was important, and who are learning that good writing is not a mysterious, divinely inspired gift but a skill that can be learned by any person who is willing to pay attention and practice. Competence in any activity, whether it be playing a sport, cooking a meal, replacing a flat tire, or learning a dance, requires close attention to the necessary steps in the process and repeated practice, practice, practice. Throughout *Real Writing*, photos, quotes, profiles, and advice from real students help to emphasize both the hard work involved in becoming a competent writer and the absolute necessity of learning this skill.

Organization

Heeding the advice of reviewers, we have revised the organization of the first half of *Real Writing*. The new organization, which places coverage of writing paragraphs and essays side by side in each chapter on writing, remains straightforward and flexible. It makes these chapters easier to use as well.

The book is divided into three major sections: "Paragraphs and Essays," "Editing," and "Readings for Writers." A briefer version of the book without the readings is also available. Each of these sections is made up of two or more parts that group the chapters into logical and manageable chunks. In the first major section, "Paragraphs and Essays," Part One, "How to Write Paragraphs and Essays," presents the stages in the writing process. Part Two, "Writing Different Kinds of Paragraphs and Essays," covers each of the different paragraphs and essays that students are typically assigned to write: illustration, narration, description, and so

on. Part Three, "Writing in College and at Work" includes chapters on essay exams and summaries, research essays, and email and memos.

The second major section, "Editing," has four parts: Part Four, "The Four Most Serious Errors," Part Five, "Other Grammar Concerns," Part Six, "Word Use," and Part Seven, "Punctuation and Capitalization."

The final major section, "Readings for Writers," has ten chapters: an introduction to active reading and nine other chapters, each of which contains readings using one of the methods of development students have studied in Part Two.

Features

Most of the features of the first edition of *Real Writing* have been carried over—with much input and revision—to the second edition. Several new features have also been added as a result of my observations of students using the first edition in class, discussions with both faculty and students who use the text, and other extensive feedback (these new features are described in the shaded section on pp. ix–xi).

Teaches writing forms and strategies as practical, essential processes. *Real Writing* includes thorough, practical instruction in the importance of audience and purpose, the writing process, paragraph and essay structure and development, summaries, research, and more. Each chapter in Parts One and Two explains a step in the writing process or the key steps in writing a particular kind of paper and demonstrates how that step or type of writing is used in academic, professional, and personal settings.

Uses real-world assignments and examples. Throughout the text, *Real Writing* emphasizes the real-world connection in a number of ways. Assignment topics, exercises, models, and examples are drawn from college, work, and everyday life. In addition, each of the writing chapters in Part Two concludes with an assignment that applies the kind of writing covered in that chapter to a real-world context. The book also links types of writing with activities that students already know how to do in the "You Know This" notes that appear at the beginning of the chapters in Parts One and Two.

Motivates students with "Profiles of Success." An interview with and photograph of a former student who has "made it" in the real world opens each writing chapter in Part Two. Their honest words of advice and encouragement, along with samples of writing they have done for their jobs or in their everyday lives, show students that success is within their reach and that the writing skills they are learning will help them achieve that success.

Students who have used and/or reviewed *Real Writing* have responded enthusiastically to the "can do" tone, as well as the examples and activities that are relevant to their lives. For the first time, many students have told us, they are motivated to read and use a textbook.

Gives special emphasis to the four most serious errors. In a survey conducted for the first edition, instructors throughout the country identified four errors as most serious: fragments, run-ons, subject-verb agreement, and verb form problems. These four errors each have a separate chapter in Part Four, which opens the "Editing" section of the book. By concentrating on a limited number of major sentence problems as they begin to edit their papers, students feel they have a shot

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at mastering these problems and are more likely to remember strategies for avoiding them. Other important grammar concepts and problems are covered thoroughly in Part Five, "Other Grammar Concerns," after students have gained confidence by focusing on the most troublesome errors.

Provides practice, practice, practice. Throughout the writing chapters and—especially—the editing chapters, practice exercises on high-interest topics help students immediately apply what they have learned. Every section that covers a skill or a grammar problem is followed by at least one practice. In addition, every chapter in Parts Four through Seven ends with a practice that asks students to edit one or more paragraphs for the sentence problems covered in that chapter, which helps them learn to edit their own paragraphs and essays.

Is easy for students to use. The consistent, three-part format of most chapters (either Understand/Practice/Write or Understand/Practice/Edit) helps students successfully navigate the information. Every chapter ends with a chapter review that can be used as a review quiz. In addition, every chapter in the editing section ends with a flow chart designed to help students, especially visual learners, find and correct errors. To help students learn how to use and get the most out of *Real Writing*, Chapter 1, "Getting Started," shows students how to find information they need and introduces the important features.

Helps students to think critically. Most students come to college needing to learn how to learn. "Thinking Critically" guides throughout the book get students to *focus* on the matter at hand, *ask* themselves some key questions, and *write* or *edit* based on their answers. This process of reflection benefits not only students' writing and editing but also every aspect of their lives.

Provides a reader that connects reading with writing. "Readings for Writers," at the end of the longer edition of *Real Writing*, is a collection of twenty high-interest selections in the areas of college, work, and everyday life, all of which have been reviewed and approved by students. The selections are organized according to rhetorical mode, which parallels the arrangement of the writing chapters, making it easier for students to see the connection to their own writing and for instructors to link the readings to the writing instruction. Like the rest of the book, the reader promotes active learning. An introduction explains and models strategies for active, critical reading, and the unique apparatus includes not only headnotes, comprehension and critical thinking questions, and writing prompts, but also guiding questions that give students a focus as they read.

New to This Edition

A More Flexible Organization and an Easy-to-Use Design

- **A revised organization for the chapters on writing.** The first edition of *Real Writing* followed the pattern of most writing workbooks. The chapters about writing paragraphs were separated from the chapters about writing essays. However, a number of instructors have reported that in their courses, they start out with the paragraph, but at some point during the semester, they move to teaching the essay. Students must then flip back and forth between the full explanations of kinds of

writing in the paragraph part of the book and the briefer review provided in the essay part. As I watched classes using *Real Writing*, I saw how disruptive and potentially confusing this flipping back and forth could be. The previous organization also makes it harder for students to see how paragraphs and essays are related. Therefore, in the second edition of *Real Writing*, Parts One and Two now cover both paragraphs *and* essays. This new organization makes the move from paragraph to essay smoother and more natural for students and for instructors. It does not change the way an instructor would present these topics; but it does make this material easier for students to find and use.

In most chapters in Parts One and Two, elements common to both paragraphs and essays are covered in the first part of the chapter followed by separate sections on paragraphs and essays. The paragraph section of each chapter has a green border; the essay section has a gold border. For each chapter in Part Two, an instructor can choose to assign either a paragraph or an essay. In addition, an instructor can easily assign an essay to the more advanced students while the rest of the class responds to the paragraph assignment.

- **An easy-to-use, colorful new design.** *Real Writing* now has a more colorful design that highlights useful features—such as the "Thinking Critically" guides, marginal tips and journal prompts, key steps for the types of writing in Part Two, and writing checklists—so that students can find them easily both as they work through the chapter and as they do their own writing. Green and gold borders differentiate the paragraph and essay sections in Parts One and Two.

More Help for Writing in the Real World

In order to bring this new edition even closer to students' real lives, we have added more examples of how writing is used at work and in everyday life.

- **More real-world examples of writing.** Though instructors who used the first edition of *Real Writing* commented that their students benefited from the "Profiles of Success," many advised us to further integrate the profiles into the chapter. Now each profiled person has written an example, usually from his or her job, of the kind of writing discussed in the chapter. Students analyze the structure of that example and are also given that topic as one choice among the assignment topics.

- **A new chapter on writing email and memos.** Chapter 20 gives students guidelines for preparing these two common forms of workplace writing, in keeping with the focus on writing in the "real" world.

More Help for Writing in College

- **A new chapter on organization.** In Part One, Chapter 6, "Making a Plan," offers guidelines for planning a paragraph or essay, including increased instruction on preparing an outline.

- **A new chapter on cause and effect.** Part Two now has a complete chapter (16) on writing cause and effect paragraphs and essays.

- **A new chapter on reasearch.** A full chapter (19) on "The Research Essay" covers the basics of writing a research paper, including finding sources and documenting them using MLA style, using the Internet, evaluating electronic sources, and avoiding plagiarism.

More Help with Sentence Problems

- **Editing Workshops.** The editing workshops, which appear throughout the "Editing" section, provide a unique link from grammar to writing. Most instructors will agree that although completing a practice can help students learn a grammar concept, it doesn't always give them concrete strategies to use when editing their own writing. The editing workshops are designed to address this problem. Each editing workshop is a three-part grammar practice. A "Guided Example" provides students with concrete strategies for finding and editing a particular error, a ten-item practice gives them an opportunity to apply what they have learned, and a "Try It Out" activity asks them to try out the concept by generating their own sentence.

- **More practices.** In order to provide students with more opportunities for practice, over two hundred new practice items have been added to this edition, particularly in the "Editing" section. We have also replaced over half of the practices in the "Editing" section with new practices on high-interest topics such as finding the ideal job, domain names on the Internet, and working parents.

Ancillaries

The ancillary program that accompanies *Real Writing* is as realistic about instructors' busy lives as the text is about students' lives. Because instructors and students are relying more and more on computers for writing, research, and instruction, the electronic ancillaries that accompany the second edition of *Real Writing* are designed to enhance the text instruction and give you and your students plenty of options. The print ancillaries for instructors provide practical, useful advice as well as additional resources. The print ancillaries for students offer help with managing the course and with research.

More Electronic Ancillaries

- **Exercise Central** (available at <www.bedfordstmartins.com/realwriting>): With more than 4,000 exercise items, Exercise Central is the largest collection of online grammar exercises available. It is easy to use and convenient for students and instructors alike. Multiple exercise sets on every grammar topic, at two levels, ensure that students get as much practice as they need. Customized feedback turns skills practice into a learning experience, and the reporting feature allows both students and instructors to monitor and assess student progress.

- **Writing Guide Software for *Real Writing:*** Developed specifically for *Real Writing*, this software leads students step by step through the process of writing each of the types of paragraphs and essays covered in the text and also provides an online assessment test, an electronic journal, and grammar tutorials.

- **Companion Web Site for *Real Writing:*** The Web site includes links to Exercise Central and help with research for students, as well as additional resources that can be downloaded by instructors, including forms, outlines, checklists, and much more.

- **WebCT Resources:** Our content for WebCT makes it simple for instructors using this online learning architecture to build a course around *Real Writing*. The content is drawn from the book and its ancillaries.

Print Ancillaries for Instructors

- **Instructor's Annotated Edition for *Real Writing:*** This useful resource gives practical, page-by-page advice on teaching with *Real Writing* through unique marginal annotations—many contributed by teachers around the country—on discussion topics, how to explain difficult concepts, alternative activities, teaching in the computer lab, and teaching ESL students. It also contains answers to all exercises and suggestions for using the other ancillaries.

- ***Teaching Real Writing: Practical Suggestions*** by Eddye S. Gallagher, Tarrant County College: This useful volume contains information and advice on working with basic writers, bringing the real world into the classroom, collaboration, using computers, teaching ESL students, and assessment. There are also tips for new instructors, ideas for making the most of *Real Writing* and its package, and a section on the TASP exam. A special section on critical thinking features suggestions and activities for promoting this skill.

- ***Teaching Real Writing: Additional Resources*** by Susan Anker and Eddye S. Gallagher: This helpful volume provides supplementary material that can be used in class, such as diagnostic tests, forms, outlines, checklists, and much more.

- ***Teaching Developmental Writing: Background Readings*** by Susan Naomi Bernstein, Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania: This wonderful collection of thirty-five professional essays by writers such as Mike Rose and Rei Noguchi covers topics of interest to basic writing instructors and includes useful editorial apparatus that gives practical ideas for classroom use.

More Print Ancillaries for Students

- ***Working with Sources: A Brief Guide to Accompany Real Writing*** by Ingrid Schreck, Chaffey College: This practical, easy-to-use resource is for instructors who want even fuller coverage of the research paper than is presented in *Real Writing* itself. It includes a sample student essay and forty-two MLA-style documentation models.

- **Notebook Dividers to Accompany *Real Writing:*** For students who use three-ring binders, these preprinted tabs and useful tips on managing parts of the course will help them get and stay organized.

Acknowledgments

While my name is the only one that appears on the cover of this book, revising *Real Writing* was anything but a solo enterprise: The supporting cast was both immense and instrumental in conceiving and implementing new ideas, in refining existing ones, and in making the book happen. To those whose names follow, I am deeply grateful.

Editorial Advisory Board

The eleven members of our Editorial Advisory Board have graciously offered thoughtful, insightful, and critical suggestions that are reflected on each page of *Real Writing*. The stacks of their reviews in my office are a monumental testament to the amount of reading and writing each board member has done on this revision. I can only hope that I've done justice to the sage ideas they sent my way. This is your book as much as mine, and I am beholden to each of you.

Eddye S. Gallagher, Tarrant County College, Northeast Campus (TX). Eddye has been a shaper of *Real Writing* from the very start, when the first edition was only a glimmer. Her experience, directness, and practicality have been a mainstay over the six years we've been working together on this book.

Steven A. Garcia, Riverside Community College (CA). Steve, too, is a longtime board member whose fine appreciation of humor, visuals, and the importance of linking new content to what students already know has made *Real Writing* a much more user-friendly book. So, Steve, when do you think they'll send us to the real St. Martin's for a meeting?

Cathryn Amdahl, Harrisburg Area Community College (PA). At every stage, Cathryn reminded me to give audience, purpose, and rhetorical context their proper due. Her perceptions about composition are very sound, and her comments have been consistently useful.

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Billie A. Unger, Shepherd College (WV). Billie's no-nonsense understanding of what her students will respond to and what they need has helped refine all parts of the book. Billie's advice was instrumental in adding practices to this edition of the book and to improving those we already had. She was also an early and enthusiastic advocate of the revised organization for the writing chapters.

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Reviewers

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Students

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Jonna Perrillo has worked long and hard to prepare the exercises that are available through Exercise Central.

Eddye S. Gallagher, Editorial Advisory Board member and a steady supplier of pragmatic advice and ideas, wrote *Practical Suggestions*, the wonderfully useful instructor's manual, and contributed tests and practice exercises to *Additional Resources*. I think Eddye and I are bonded for life.

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Bedford/St. Martin's

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And Jim, you are ever the source of my strength and reason.

Susan Anker

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