

# Writing Cornerstone

# Paragraphs in Context

# Leslie Dupont

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PARAGRAPHS IN CONTEXT

**Leslie Dupont**



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## *Dedication*

**This book and all others are dedicated to the many  
students I have worked with and look forward  
to working with for decades to come.  
You are my teachers.**

# Preface

---

As writers and human beings, each of us requires more than a sentence, paragraph, or essay “blueprint” to engage with writing—at any level. Writing must be meaningful and audience aware; to remain engaged, the audience immediately must be able to connect with what they are reading. What is important is *doing* the act of writing as you explore various aspects of writing.

Writers come from a variety of writing and speaking backgrounds, and any book on writing, to be effective, must address these backgrounds. Today’s typical community college student population, for instance, contains many ESL and limited English proficiency (LEP) students. In addition, many college students are now familiar with visual media like television and computer and video games. These and other students are more used to seeing and talking than reading and writing. In addition, students come from a variety of cultural backgrounds in which writing takes varying levels of importance, from essential to nonexistent. Finally, many students have attention deficit disorder (ADD) or learning disabilities (such as dyslexia). This variety of backgrounds and learning styles demands a flexible approach to writing that understands how wonderfully “messy” the writing process is. A primary goal of this book is to honor multiple writer backgrounds and learning styles.

## GOALS AND THEMES

This book’s primary goal is to approach writing by honoring writers’ widely varied backgrounds and learning styles. *Writing Cornerstones* incorporates student writing experiences and the various writing contexts encountered in college—aiming to help students gain flexibility in writing situations.

A second goal is to help students surmount fear-based and other barriers to writing, encouraging them to approach college writing with increased comfort and confidence. To encourage this a large part of each chapter is comprised of real-world and academic writing applications from which students and teachers can draw.

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

*Chapter One*, “Writing Backgrounds and Styles: Knowing Yourself,” introduces students to themselves as writers by having them explore their own

backgrounds to become conscious of their individual writing patterns and the influences on their attitudes toward writing.

**Chapter Two, “What Makes an Effective Paragraph?”** breaks through myths about paragraphs and immediately models paragraphs that work well and explains why they do. In this chapter, students are encouraged not only to begin writing paragraphs but also to begin thinking critically about what makes a paragraph effective or ineffective.

**Chapter Three, “Audience and Context: Your Reader(s) and Other Influences on Your Writing,”** establishes the importance of knowing why you are writing and whom you’re writing to. Readers establish the tone, purpose, and content of any piece of public writing, and knowing who they are allows a writer to make appropriate choices in these areas. In addition, this chapter introduces writers to the other surrounding influences on them and their writing: culture, value systems, time, place, and language.

**Chapter Four, “Reading and Writing Are Connected,”** discusses the important idea that reading and writing influence each other heavily and cannot be separated.

**Chapter Five, “Invention: Strategies for Getting Started,”** gets writers working with a wide variety of prewriting strategies that address many learning styles: writer-based, kinesthetic (movement-based), oral, visual, and aural.

**Chapter Six, “Making Meaning,”** introduces writers to concepts of unity and organization in the paragraph. It provides activities that immediately apply structure to ideas.

**Chapter Seven, “Revision and Content Development: Getting from the First Draft to the Final Draft,”** distinguishes between length and thoroughness, helping writers learn how to expand on ideas rather than simply repeat them. It establishes the importance of meaningful content at a paragraph level. It also presents revision as a lively, thoughtful process that is separate from proofreading.

**Chapter Eight, “Working on Your Paragraphs,”** provides information and activities for working in and out of the classroom to improve your writing: showing each writer how others write, helping writers form writing and workshopping groups, and suggesting activities writers can do with their own and their peers’ writing.

**Chapter Nine, “Proofreading: The Final Step,”** sets out the basics of grammar and punctuation so that writers can improve their writing at the sentence level after revising content and organization. This chapter encourages writers to make connections between the mechanics of writing and the meaning behind these mechanics.

**Chapter Ten, “Format: Professional Presentation,”** introduces writers to basic MLA and APA formatting and documentation styles.

## CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

All chapters are divided into two major sections: “What’s the Point?” and “Applications.” The chapters and the activities within them may be used in any order desired by both students and instructors.

The down-to-earth nature of the question “What’s the Point?” is designed to parallel the very valid questions that students have about writing and its usefulness. “Applications” sections not only help writers immediately apply what has been discussed in the preceding pages but also prepares them to write in a variety of contexts in and out of an academic setting.

## UNIQUE FEATURES OF *WRITING CORNERSTONES*

- An ESL Table of Contents
- Writing activities for multiple learning styles
- Spaces within the text for writing, which allow writers to use this text as a workbook
- Incorporation of outside writing resources, both print and web based
- An appendix on technical writing basics
- Self-reflection activities to help writers identify their strengths for writing
- Separate chapters and emphases on revision, proofreading, and formatting
- Introduction to the basics of MLA and APA formats to familiarize writers with these two common documentation styles
- Writing activities that help writers to apply grammar basics in their own writing immediately

## SUPPLEMENTS

### The Teaching and Learning Package

A complete **instructor’s manual** to accompany *Writing Cornerstones: Paragraphs in Context* is available (ISBN 0–321–07867–5). Prepared by the author, it features chapter descriptions and sample answers to applications, as well as sample syllabi, handouts, and lesson plans. These documents offer both new and experienced instructors clear plans for applying the textbook in the classroom. They also provide ready-to-use materials for instructors with limited preparation time.

A separate **test bank** is available, featuring quizzes for each chapter in the textbook. Ask your Longman sales rep for ISBN 0-321-07868-3.

Be sure to visit *Writing Cornerstones* online at <http://www.ablongman.com/dupont>. The web site features areas accessible to and aimed at two different audiences: instructors and students. It offers an overview of the textbook’s layout and content; a .pdf version of the instructor’s manual; and printable versions of handouts, lesson plans, and sample syllabi. In addition, it offers links for both instructors and students to relevant web sites for each chapter, a continuously expanding bibliography of relevant books and articles, a section on teaching tips, a glossary, and writing activities/exercises and reviews.

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