

WINDOWS ON WRITING

PRACTICE IN CONTEXT



by G. Kirszner

Stephen R. Mandell

WINDOWS
ON
WRITING

PRACTICE IN CONTEXT

Laurie G. Kirszner

Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science

Stephen R. Mandell

Drexel University



St. Martin's Press
New York

Editor: Nancy Lyman
Development editor: Mark Gallaher
Managing editor: Patricia Mansfield Phelan
Senior project editor: Erica Appel
Production supervisor: Patricia Ollague
Art director: Lucy Krikorian
Text design: Patricia McFadden
Cover design: Patricia McFadden
Cover photo: Gary San Pietro

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 92-72090

Copyright © 1996 by St. Martin's Press, Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted by any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, except as may be expressly permitted by the applicable copyright statutes or in writing by the Publisher.

Manufactured in the United States of America.

0 9 8 7 6
f e d c b

For information, write:
St. Martin's Press, Inc.
345 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10010

ISBN: 0-312-07834-X

Acknowledgments

Dave Barry, "How Your Body Works" from *Stay Fit and Healthy Until You're Dead*. Copyright © 1985 by Dave Barry. Reprinted with the permission of the author and Rodale Press, Inc., Emmaus, PA 18098. For ordering information, please call 1-800-848-4735.

Leona Frankel, "History on the Head," *The New York Times* (April 25, 1993). Copyright © 1964 by The New York Times Company. Reprinted with the permission of *The New York Times*.

Martin Gansberg, "38 Who Saw Murder Didn't Call Police" from *The New York Times*, March 27, 1964. Copyright © 1964 by The New York Times Company. Reprinted with the permission of *The New York Times*.

Richard Lederer, "English is a Crazy Language" from *Crazy English*, ed. Elaine Pfefferblit. Copyright © 1990 Pocket Books. Reprinted with the permission of Pocket Books, a division of Simon & Schuster, Inc.

Merrill Markoe, "Showering with Your Dog" and "Men, Women, and Conversation" (excerpt) from *What the Dogs Have Taught Me*. Copyright © 1992 by Merrill Markoe. Reprinted with the permission of Viking Penguin, a division of Penguin Books USA, Inc.

Barbara Mujica, "No Comprendo," *The New York Times* (January 3, 1995). Copyright © 1995 by The New York Times Company. Reprinted with the permission of *The New York Times*.

Richard Pothier, "Animal Tests Saved My Life," *Newsweek* (February 1, 1993). Copyright © 1993 by Newsweek, Inc. Reprinted with the permission of *Newsweek*.

Anna Quindlen, "The Old Block" from *Thinking Out Loud*. Copyright © 1993 by Anna Quindlen. Reprinted with the permission of Random House, Inc.

Anna Quindlen, "Barbie at 35" (excerpt), *The New York Times* (September 10, 1994). Copyright © 1994 by The New York Times Company. Reprinted with the permission of *The New York Times*.

Gary Soto, "The Grandfather" from *A Summer Life*. Copyright © 1990 by University Press of New England. Reprinted with the permission of the publishers.

WINDOWS
ON
WRITING

PRACTICE IN CONTEXT



Preface

As we worked on *Windows on Writing: Practice in Context*, our goal was to write a book that would live up to its title. First, we wanted the text to be a “window” that would offer students a view of both the ideas they have to communicate and the writing and thinking skills they need to make such communication possible. Second, we wanted the text to offer “practice in context,” presenting as much instruction as possible in the context of students’ own writing. We also wanted the text to be a writing-centered workbook, integrating skill-building exercises with actual revision and editing tasks. Finally, we wanted this book to help students gain access to the ongoing exchange of ideas taking place in their schools, their communities, and their world.

We wrote *Windows on Writing* for our students, whom we see as interested, concerned, involved adults. We wanted to write a book whose basic approach and content would show our respect for our students and earn their respect in return. For this reason, we tried to avoid the sort of artificial exercises that teach students nothing more than that writing is a dull, repetitive, and ultimately pointless activity. Instead, most of the exercises we developed focus on revision and editing. We also made a point of seeking out fresh, contemporary content for examples, exercises, and student writing, and of avoiding childish and insulting topics like “Write about your favorite pet” or “Tell about a visit to the circus.” The result is a diverse assortment of exercises and writing assignments on issues of real interest and concern to students of various ages and backgrounds.

Another important goal was for the book’s style and tone to demonstrate our respect for our subject—the English language—as well as for our audience. To accomplish this, we used a level of diction that talks *to* (not *down to* or *at*) students. And, on every page, we tried to be concise without being abrupt, thorough without being repetitive, direct without being rigid, specific without being prescriptive, and flexible without being structureless.

Organization

The organization of *Windows on Writing* is logical yet flexible. In the first section of the book, titled Writing Paragraphs and Essays, Units 1–3 (Chapters 1–5) provide a focused but thorough treatment of the writing process (including a variety of invention strategies), paying special atten-

tion to writing and revising paragraphs and to expanding paragraphs into essays. Unit 1 begins with a general discussion of the writing process, paying special attention to the problems of beginning writers—in particular, gathering, selecting, and arranging ideas. Unit 2 applies these principles to writing effective paragraphs, explaining and illustrating various patterns of paragraph development—exemplification, narration, description, process, cause and effect, comparison and contrast, classification and division, definition, and argumentation. Encouraging students to expand on the skills they have already acquired, Unit 3 shows them how to expand paragraphs into essays. This unit also introduces students to the concept of thesis and support and offers instruction in writing effective introductions and conclusions.

The center of the book, *Revising and Editing Your Writing* (Units 4–9), provides a thorough review of sentence skills, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics in the context of revising and editing paragraphs and essays. Unit 4 (Chapters 6–8) discusses the simple sentence and highlights potential problem areas, such as sentence fragments and subject-verb agreement, while Unit 5 (Chapters 9–11) is a detailed review of verb tenses. Unit 6 (Chapters 12–14) shows how students can use coordination, subordination, and participles to combine simple sentences into compound and complex sentences, and an entire chapter in this unit is devoted to avoiding run-on sentences and comma splices. This section of the text ends with an overview of options for revising sentences for clarity and effectiveness in Unit 7 (Chapters 15–18); a review of nouns and pronouns, pronoun-antecedent agreement, adjectives and adverbs, and prepositions in Unit 8 (Chapters 19–21); and a discussion of some general problems with punctuation, mechanics, and spelling in Unit 9 (Chapters 22–25). Throughout these units, abundant practice exercises reinforce explanations and offer material for students to edit and evaluate.

Windows on Writing closes with three appendixes that students can refer to as the need arises. Appendix A gives advice for taking written exams, and Appendix B offers advice about some of the more common problems that arise for nonnative speakers. To help students to become more active readers, Appendix C introduces the reading process, focusing on a variety of skills such as highlighting, annotating, outlining, and writing a response paragraph.

Windows on Writing with Additional Readings is available to instructors who also ask their students to read short essays. This alternate edition contains everything found in *Windows on Writing* plus Appendix D: Patterns of Essay Development: Readings for Writers. This appendix builds on the discussion in Unit 3, showing students how the same patterns they use to develop paragraphs can also be used to develop complete essays. Here, along with charts showing options for organizing each pattern of essay and a writing checklist for each pattern, we include eighteen professional and nine student essays, rhetorically arranged. These readings range in style and tone from Gary Soto's lyrical "Grandfather" to Merrill Markoe's humorous "Showering with Your Dog" to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, "I Have a Dream." Our goal is to achieve a blend of personal and reportorial voices, formal and informal styles. Each of the professional reading selections is ac-

accompanied by four sets of questions designed to encourage critical thinking—Reacting to Reading, Reacting to Words, Reacting to Ideas, Reacting to the Pattern—as well as by additional Writing Practice topics.

Features

Central to *Windows on Writing* are a number of features developed to engage students and to make their writing practice more purposeful, more productive, and (not incidentally) more enjoyable.

- **Overview Boxes** Every chapter opens with a boxed Overview that previews the chapter's key terms and concepts.
- **Paragraph Practice** For each chapter in the section *Revising and Editing Your Writing*, the first activity is a Paragraph Practice exercise that asks students to write an informal paragraph-length response to a specific assignment. Blank space encourages students to use invention strategies before writing their paragraph. This exercise offers students regular opportunities for informal writing practice.
- **Flashback Exercises** Throughout each chapter in *Revising and Editing Your Writing*, frequent Flashback exercises give students opportunities to learn sentence-level skills in the context of their own writing as they apply each lesson in turn to revising the Paragraph Practice response.
- **Focus Boxes** Throughout the text, Focus boxes visually highlight key points and potentially difficult concepts, while providing concise explanations and clear examples.
- **Practice Exercises** These include a full range of writing, revision, and editing activities that test and reinforce students' understanding of the concepts and practical issues covered in each chapter. We have tried to focus on exercises that treat students with respect as readers and writers, asking them to write about topics of their own choice rather than in response to artificial prompts far from their frame of reference, to analyze actual student writing rather than unrealistic examples, and to edit for errors in passages with content of real interest to young adult and adult learners rather than in essentially contentless individual exercises.
- **Extensive Review Aids** Every chapter closes with a **Review** box that reinforces key terms and concepts. **Chapter Reviews** at the end of most chapters include three kinds of exercises:
 1. revision of a student-written passage
 2. a final review of students' paragraph practices
 3. collaborative activities for group work

Finally, **Unit Reviews** contain collaborative activities for writing, revising, and editing; writing topics for essay-length writing; and a sample student essay for editing.
- **Appendixes for Specific Needs** *Writing Paragraphs and Essays in an Exam Setting*—Appendix A—provides advice for writing under pressure, and *Tips for ESL Writers* are provided in Appendix B.

- **Appendixes on Reading and Writing** Appendix C provides guidance in the reading process and, for those who choose *Windows on Writing with Additional Readings*, Appendix D provides a rhetorically-arranged collection of twenty-seven readings.

Model Paragraphs and Essays

Windows on Writing includes over thirty full-page examples of student writing at the ends of most chapters and units, as well as numerous paragraph-length examples. These enable students to develop and practice revision and editing skills on writing samples that are accessible and inviting to them. They also permit students to read and respond to examples of writing on topics and assignments similar to those they will encounter in their own college courses in various disciplines. In addition to these student models there are many paragraph-length examples by professional writers. *Windows on Writing with Additional Readings* includes twenty-seven additional selections—nine student and eighteen professional essays. We include these professional essays to provide springboards for class discussion as well as topics for student writers. Perhaps more important, we want all these essays to show students that the writing they do is not just an exercise but something that has a place in the real world.

Ancillaries

Windows on Writing is accompanied by a full teaching package, available to adopters of the text. The package includes the following:

- **Annotated Instructor's Edition**, which contains answers to all the exercises
- **Alternate Editions**, one with additional readings and one without readings
- **Transparency Masters** drawn from the text
- **Supplemental Exercises**, in disk or booklet form
- **Computerized Test Item File**
- **Editing/Proofreading Exercises**, on disk only
- **Micrograde**, a computerized grade management system

Some Final Thoughts

All in all, our goal in *Windows on Writing* has been to provide a text that can help basic writers develop college and real-world writing skills by practicing these skills in the context of writing and revising their own paragraphs and short essays. We have tried to design a book that allows true flexibility, so that instructors can use its features to complement their own individual teaching styles and to meet the needs of students at various levels of writing proficiency. Most of all, we have tried to write a text that is respectful of its audience—that treats basic writers as college-level learners, as adults who can take responsibility for their improvement as writers.

Acknowledgments

Windows on Writing was not an easy book to write; it took time, patience, and stamina. Luckily, all the hard work we did was shared. We owe a lot of people a lot of gratitude: Nancy Barlow, Brookhaven College; Robert Bator, Community College of Chicago–Olive Harvey College; Barbara Beauchamp, County College of Morris; Ellen H. Bell, Manatee Community College; Robin Browder, Tidewater Community College; Jo Ann Buck, Guilford Technical Community College; Nancy Corbett, Ashland Community College; Michael Felker, South Plains College; Lillie Fenderson, Seminole Community College; Patricia Gaston, West Virginia University–Parkerburg; Margaret Glazier, Merced College; Judy A. Harris, Rochester Community College; Susan Lagunoff, St. Louis Community College–Florissant Valley; Ted McFerrin, Collin County Community College; James McGowan, Parkland College; Benjamin McKeever, Sinclair Community College; Rebecca Munshaw-Heintz, Polk Community College; Troy Nordman, M.F.A., Butler County Community College; Maureen Hogan O’Brien, Springfield Technical Community College; Frank Pintozzi, Kennesaw State College; Joyce Powell, North Lake College; Charlene Roesner, Kansas Wesleyan University; Carolyn Russell, Rio Hondo Community College; Isara J. Tyson, Manatee Community College; Russ Ward, Aims Community College; Julie Warmke-Robitaille, Santa Fe Community College; Suzanne Weisar, San Jacinto College South; Linda Whisnant, Guilford Technical Community College.

The person to whom we owe the most is Mark Gallaher, baritone *extraordinaire*, who challenged us to write this book and browbeat us until it was finished. His creative exercises helped to define the text’s voice, and his constant willingness to rethink, re-see, and revise taught us a thing or two about the recursive (and collaborative) nature of the writing process.

At St. Martin’s Press, Senior Editor Karen Allanson kept us on track (and on schedule) and encouraged and supported our efforts to write a book that would meet all our standards. Her assistant, Christine Kline, was a marvel of efficiency who used Post-it notes with grace and style. Our copy editor, Marcia Muth, did an impressively thorough, professional job of sorting through the manuscript, and Senior Project Editor Erica Appel guided it swiftly and skillfully through production. In fact, the entire St. Martin’s team—Nancy Lyman, Acquisitions Editor; Barbara Heinssen, Director of Development; Patricia McFadden, Senior Designer; Patricia Ollague, Production Manager; Janice Wiggins, Executive Marketing Manager; and Darby Downey, Manager of Marketing Communications—was consistently enthusiastic and professional. To these people, and to many others, we are grateful.

We are grateful too for the continued support of our families—Mark, Adam, and Rebecca Kirszner and Demi, David, and Sarah Mandell. We thank them here for services rendered: computer expertise supplied, writing samples contributed and evaluated, faxes untangled, phone messages taken, piles of manuscript picked up and delivered, vacations interrupted. Finally, we are grateful for the survival and growth of the writing partnership we entered into in 1975, when we were graduate students. We had no idea then of the wonderful places our collaborative efforts would take us. Now, we know.

Contents

Preface xiii

WRITING PARAGRAPHS AND ESSAYS 1

► **Unit 1 The Writing Process 1**

1 Planning, Drafting, and Revising 1

- A. Getting Your Bearings 1
- B. Using Invention Strategies 3
- C. Selecting and Arranging Ideas 10
- D. Drafting 13
- E. Revising 14

► **Unit 2 Focus on Paragraphs 19**

2 Writing Effective Paragraphs 19

- A. Unity: Using Topic Sentences 19
- B. Development: Supporting the Topic Sentence 25
- C. Coherence: Connecting Ideas 28

3 Patterns of Paragraph Development 38

- A. Exemplification 38
- B. Narration 42
- C. Description 45
- D. Process 49
- E. Cause and Effect 53
- F. Comparison and Contrast 57
- G. Classification and Division 63
- H. Definition 67
- I. Argument 71

Unit 2 Review 81

► **Unit 3 Paragraphs into Essays 86**

4 Thesis and Support 86

- A. Building Paragraphs and Essays 86
- B. Understanding Thesis and Support 91
- C. Moving from Topic to Thesis 97
- D. Stating the Thesis 100

5 Introductions and Conclusions 106

- A. Introductions 106
- B. Conclusions 111

Unit 3 Review 118

REVISING AND EDITING YOUR WRITING 121

► **Unit 4 Writing Simple Sentences 121**

6 The Basic Sentence Pattern: Subjects and Verbs 121

- A. Identifying Subjects 122
- B. Identifying Prepositional Phrases 125
- C. Identifying Verbs 127

7 Avoiding Sentence Fragments 134

- A. Including Subjects and Verbs 135
- B. Including Complete Verbs 137
- C. Expressing Complete Thoughts 139

8 Subject-Verb Agreement 147

- A. Understanding Subject-Verb Agreement 148
- B. Avoiding Problems with *Be*, *Have*, and *Do* 152
- C. Avoiding Problems When Words Come between the Subject and the Verb 155
- D. Avoiding Problems with Indefinite Pronouns As Subjects 157
- E. Avoiding Problems When the Verb Comes before the Subject 158
- F. Avoiding Problems with the Relative Pronouns *Who*, *Which*, and *That* 160

Unit 4 Review 166

► Unit 5 Understanding Verbs 169**9 The Past Tense 169**

- A. Understanding Regular Verbs in the Past Tense 170
- B. Understanding Irregular Verbs in the Past Tense 173
- C. Using *Be* in the Past Tense 177
- D. Using *Can/Could* and *Will/Would* 180

10 Past Participles and the Perfect Tenses 186

- A. Recognizing Regular Past Participles 187
- B. Recognizing Irregular Past Participles 189
- C. Using the Present Perfect Tense 195
- D. Using the Past Perfect Tense 199
- E. Using Past Participles As Adjectives 202

11 Present Participles and the Progressive Tenses 208

- A. Recognizing Present Participles and Using the Present Progressive Tense 209
- B. Using the Past Progressive Tense 213

Unit 5 Review 219**► Unit 6 Building Sentences 222****12 Combining Sentences with Coordination 222**

- A. Using Coordinating Conjunctions to Form Compound Sentences 223
- B. Using Semicolons to Form Compound Sentences 228
- C. Using Semicolons and Conjunctive Adverbs to Form Compound Sentences 230

13 Combining Sentences with Subordination 239

- A. Using Subordinating Conjunctions to Form Complex Sentences 240
- B. Using Relative Pronouns to Combine Sentences 245
- C. Using Relative Pronouns to Introduce Restrictive and Nonrestrictive Ideas 250

viii • CONTENTS

14 Avoiding Run-Ons and Comma Splices 257

- A. Identifying Run-Ons and Comma Splices 258
- B. Correcting Run-Ons and Comma Splices 259

Unit 6 Review 269

► Unit 7 Revising for Clarity and Effectiveness 272

15 Avoiding Illogical Shifts 272

- A. Avoiding Illogical Shifts in Tense 273
- B. Avoiding Illogical Shifts in Person 276
- C. Avoiding Illogical Shifts in Number 278
- D. Avoiding Illogical Shifts in Discourse 281
- E. Avoiding Illogical Shifts in Voice 283

16 Using Parallelism 291

- A. Recognizing Parallel Structure 292
- B. Using Parallel Structure 294

17 Revising for Sentence Variety 303

- A. Varying Sentence Types 304
- B. Varying Sentence Openings 307
- C. Combining Sentences 310
- D. Varying Sentence Length 318

18 Revising Words 328

- A. Choosing Exact Words 329
- B. Using Concise Language 333
- C. Avoiding Trite Expressions 337
- D. Using Similes and Metaphors 340
- E. Avoiding Sexist Language 343

Unit 7 Review 349

► Unit 8 Understanding Nouns, Pronouns, and Other Parts of the Sentence 353

19 Using Nouns and Pronouns 353

- A. Recognizing Nouns and Forming Plural Nouns 354

- B. Recognizing Personal Pronouns 357
- C. Understanding Pronoun Case 359
- D. Understanding Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement 365
- E. Solving Special Problems with Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement 367
- F. Understanding Reflexive and Intensive Pronouns 376

20 Using Adjectives and Adverbs 382

- A. Understanding Adjectives and Adverbs 383
- B. Understanding Comparatives and Superlatives 387
- C. Using Demonstrative Adjectives 392

21 Using Prepositions 398

- A. Understanding Prepositions 399
- B. Using Prepositions in Familiar Expressions 401

Unit 8 Review 408

► Unit 9 Special Problems with Punctuation, Mechanics, and Spelling 411

22 Using Commas 411

- A. Using Commas in a Series 412
- B. Using Commas to Set Off Introductory Phrases and Transitional Words and Expressions 414
- C. Using Commas with Appositives 416
- D. Using Commas in Dates and Addresses 418

23 Using Apostrophes 423

- A. Using Apostrophes to Form Contractions 424
- B. Using Apostrophes to Form Possessives 426
- C. Revising Incorrect Use of Apostrophes 429

24 Setting Off Proper Nouns, Direct Quotations, and Titles 434

- A. Capitalizing Proper Nouns 435
- B. Punctuating Direct Quotations 438
- C. Setting Off Titles of Books, Stories, and Other Works 442

x ■ CONTENTS

25 Understanding Spelling 449

- A. Understanding Spelling and Pronunciation 450
- B. Deciding between *ie* and *ei* 453
- C. Understanding Prefixes 455
- D. Understanding Suffixes 455
- E. Learning Commonly Confused Words 459
- F. Becoming a Better Speller 470

Unit 9 Review 476

APPENDIXES 481

Appendix A: Writing Paragraphs and Essays in an Exam Setting 481

- A. Before the Exam 481
- B. At the Exam 482
- C. Writing a Paragraph 484
- D. Writing an Essay 485

Appendix B: Tips for ESL Writers 488

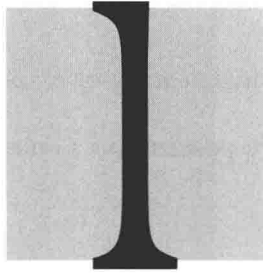
- A. Including Subjects in Sentences 488
- B. Avoiding Special Problems with Subjects 488
- C. Indicating Whether Nouns Are Singular or Plural 489
- D. Understanding Count and Noncount Nouns 489
- E. Using Determiners with Count and Noncount Nouns 491
- F. Understanding Articles 492
- G. Forming Negatives and Questions 494
- H. Indicating Verb Tense 495
 - I. Recognizing Verbs That Do Not Form the Progressive Tenses 495
 - J. Placing Adjectives in Order 495
 - K. Learning Prepositions 496
 - L. Understanding Prepositions in Two-Word Verbs 497

Appendix C: The Reading Process 498

- A. Approaching a Reading Assignment 498
- B. Highlighting a Reading Assignment 501

C. Annotating a Reading Assignment 503
D. Outlining a Reading Assignment 505
E. Writing a Response Paragraph 506

Index



Planning, Drafting, and Revising

Overview

In this chapter you will learn

- To understand your assignment, audience, and purpose
- To use invention strategies to find ideas for writing
- To select and arrange ideas
- To write a first draft
- To revise your draft
- To edit your work

A GETTING YOUR BEARINGS

Before you begin any writing assignment, you should get a sense of what you are being asked to do. Instead of plunging in headfirst and starting to write, take the time to ask some questions about your assignment, your audience, and your purpose for writing. Finding out the answers to these questions now will save you time in the long run.

QUESTIONS ABOUT ASSIGNMENT, AUDIENCE, AND PURPOSE

Assignment

- What is my assignment?
- When is my assignment due?
- Will I be expected to complete my assignment at home or in class?
- Will I be allowed to revise after I hand in my assignment?

Audience

- Who will read my paper—just my instructor or other students too?
- What will my readers expect?

Purpose

- Why am I writing?
- Am I expected to express personal reactions—for example, to tell how I feel about a piece of music or a shocking news event?
- Am I expected to present information—for example, to answer an exam