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*Effective
Writing
for the
College
Curriculum*

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William Vesterman

EFFECTIVE WRITING FOR THE COLLEGE CURRICULUM

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P·R·E·F·A·C·E



Effective Writing for the College Curriculum is a reader for freshman composition that provides lively essays of high quality in a broad range of topics from the many disciplines that make up today's college curriculum. The collection includes a wide variety of effective twentieth-century writing on subjects well within the freshman student's own range of experience, areas of interest, and powers of judgment—writing that clearly shows the ways in which accomplished writers achieve clarity, organization, and forcefulness of expression in contemporary expository prose throughout the spectrum of specialized fields. The essays also show how and why skill in expository writing is a practical requirement not only for every major area of study but also for the businesses and professions that lie beyond college.

This anthology is designed to work in many different composition courses. The book attempts to provide help in a variety of programs and to the students they serve by presenting several specific aspects of design—many of them—in the areas of contents, organization, and special features.

The contents of *Effective Writing for the College Curriculum* are distinctive in providing:

- A full and serious treatment of the business and economics major—one of the largest in the country—along with representative articles in and on other neglected areas of study, such as agriculture.
- A special subsection of essays called Academic and Professional Discourse included within each general area of study. This breakdown allows the freshman student to become familiar with the kinds of specialized writing done in the various disciplines of a college curriculum and the various occupations of its graduates as well as with writing addressed to a general audience on many of the topics of current concern to those disciplines and occupations.

- A special section on Mass Communications and Popular Culture containing examples of topics of interest to contemporary students, whatever their career goals might be.

The organization of *Effective Writing for the College Curriculum* is designed for flexibility.

- A functional Table of Contents reflects a rhetorical organization within each of the five sections, an organization that moves from simpler to more complex prose forms. The first group in each section contains the forms often used at the beginning of a composition course and emphasizes personal observation and narration. The next group provides examples of the more complex methods involved in analysis and explanation, while the last group contains essays with a special emphasis on advocacy and argument.
- Linked selections allow a fuller discussion of an individual writer, such as Stephen Jay Gould, or of a particular topic, such as the cultural impact of Joe Louis.
- Thorough headnotes trace the career and mark the general achievements of each writer, while introducing that writer's particular essay.
- *Organized* discussion questions and suggestions for writing are broken down into four categories for each selection:
 - Summarizing main points
 - Analyzing methods of discourse
 - Focusing on the field
 - Writing assignments

Effective Writing for the College Curriculum also provides several special features to enhance the book's usefulness:

- A special appendix on the process of writing. Student writers first respond to one of the writing assignments in the book, e.g., on the essay by John Kenneth Galbraith, "How to Get the Poor off Our Conscience." In interviews the students then describe the ways in which they came to compose their essays, giving specific examples of problems they encountered and revisions they made. A parallel interview raises the same questions with one of the professional authors from the section on Science and Technology. William Tucker tells how he came to write his controversial environmental article, "Conservation in Deed."
- Each Section: Humanities, Social Sciences, Science and Technology, Business and Economics, Mass Communications and Popular Culture

is introduced by quotations from distinguished writers who testify to the universal value of good writing and discuss its principles.

- Two alternate tables of contents provide course organizations by compositional techniques and by themes and issues.
- A Teacher's Manual organizes possible responses to the discussion questions within the book itself into class plans and suggested syllabi, with a special emphasis on essays usefully taught together.

Taken as a whole, the contents, organization, and special features of *Effective Writing for the College Curriculum* attempt to foster reading and writing skills through the variety of interests and goals that characterize the students who take freshman composition today. From Russell Baker on the making of a writer to Tracy Kidder on the making of a fortune; from John McPhee on the making of an ice pond to Calvin Trillin on the making of an ice cream empire; from James Baldwin on black English to Thomas Sowell on the language of race; from Stephen Jay Gould on Darwin and Mickey Mouse to Philip Roth on literature and baseball; from Ada Louise Huxtable on the architecture of Houston to Stan Luxenberg on the structure of a McDonald's franchise; from Nora Ephron on the morality of photographs to Ann Hollander on the morality of women's dress—*Effective Writing for the College Curriculum* offers students high-quality writing on a range of interesting topics within contemporary fields of study, writing that neither talks down to nor is over the heads of the aspiring majors who need to learn to write for all the fields of activity they will come to explore in college and beyond.

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Robert Atwan
William Vesterman

LEARNING
TO WRITE EFFECTIVELY:
A REQUIREMENT
FOR COLLEGE AND BEYOND



Writing is a vital task in all disciplines and professions. Even fields we may not think demand verbal skills often require a great deal of writing. As Dr. Gerald Weissmann, a professor of medicine at the New York University Medical Center, puts it: "Like other professionals—football scouts, diplomats, and underwriters come to mind—doctors write many words, under pressure of time and for a limited audience." Dr. Weissmann refers here to the writing that goes into the medical charts of patients. Although the everyday on-the-job writing required of practicing doctors does not ordinarily demand a high level of articulation, Weissmann nevertheless believes that the writing of physicians is extremely important: "The opening sequence of a medical record is," he maintains, "unique, and when well written, there's nothing quite like it." In his essay, "The Chart of the Novel" (see p. 315), he examines some of the literary styles of "clinical prose" and concludes that "when we fail at words, we fail to understand, we fail to feel."

Dr. Weissman's essay—it appropriately appeared in *Hospital Practice* magazine—should make it clear to all students that intelligent reading and good writing are not required only of English majors. All professions involve writing; in most of them, writing well, as Dr. Weissmann suggests, displays our competence and success in the field. One purpose of this text is to expose readers to a large, representative sample of effective writing on a broad range of topics from all the major disciplines and professions.

Besides offering a wide variety of authentic models from most major areas of college study, this collection also introduces students to several common categories of composition relevant to all writing, regardless of the writer's special interest. No matter what course a student writes for, certain organizational patterns and mental approaches will come into play. All disciplines require us to make independent observations, to describe a sequence of events, to analyze information and formulate explanations, to

take a position and argue a point Whether we are writing a business analysis, a scientific report, a study of popular music, or a personal reminiscence, these patterns and approaches often establish our focus and set our direction.

This is not to say that the various disciplines and professions do not have differences in methods and techniques. We soon learn that every field we study in college has a fairly specialized vocabulary. "value" means something different in art, economics, and mathematics, a "wash" is one thing in painting and another in business. An important part of learning any profession is learning to speak its language. As William Howarth says of the noted nonfiction writer, John McPhee (see p. 307): "A good part of his style rests on knowing the professional 'lingo' of a subject. He masters its vocabulary and syntax, even the jargon of atomic destruction—ploom, shake, jerk, kilojerk, megajerk."

A specialized vocabulary, technical terms, and jargon represent only one aspect of writing within a discipline. Many courses require that we learn certain procedures and conventions, that we adhere to prescribed formats, such as we see in scholarly articles, lab and business reports, case studies, and legal briefs. Nevertheless, despite visible differences in style and format throughout the various disciplines, much professional writing is generated out of similar patterns of thinking and forms of discourse. The critical analysis of a poem differs noticeably from the case analysis of a business firm, yet both literary critic and management consultant are similarly engaged in trying to understand the structure of a whole by examining its separate parts. A lab report does not resemble a sociological essay, yet both chemist and sociologist will have based their work on close firsthand observation. A legal brief sounds quite different from an essay on painting, yet both attorney and art critic advocate positions and construct arguments to support their cases.

The selections in this book, though intended to represent the various types of writing found throughout the college curriculum, also reflect several basic modes of discourse. These have been conveniently divided into three categories that pertain to most of the writing ordinarily conducted in every field of study: personal observation and narration, analysis and explanation, and advocacy and argument. Students can thus move from one field to another while maintaining a common focus on how observation (and description), narration, exposition, and argument remain crucial to the processes of writing within all disciplines. (These forms of discourse represent a complex field of study in themselves. Entire books have been written on each of them, and their significance in composition can only be surveyed here.) We have included in each chapter a fourth category, academic and professional discourse, to show how all these modes and patterns are reflected in the specialized writing performed by experts within the various fields.

PERSONAL OBSERVATION AND NARRATION

All disciplines depend on observation: A civil engineer carefully surveys a stretch of land to determine the necessary banking of a highway, a physician notices black gangrene on a patient's fingertips and deduces severe circulatory illness, a marketing analyst notices how children affect purchasing decisions in a supermarket, a journalist meticulously describes the key witness in a murder trial. Accurate observation is the bedrock of all scientific and humanistic inquiry. It provides the basis for our sense of reality, much of our language, and our acceptance or rejection of many ideas.

In any subject, good writers are good observers. They have learned to be attentive to details, to notice things that a less careful observer may miss. Give two students an assignment to describe an instructor's office and one will see only bland generalities ("Plenty of books . . . a cluttered desk . . . a sofa . . . pictures on the wall") while the other will notice things in a greater specificity ("books ranging from Boswell's *Life of Johnson* to a special history of the machine gun . . . a desk piled with papers from various projects . . . a black sofa with work shoes underneath . . . pictures of favorite authors on the wall"). The first office could be anyone's—it is practically generic; the other begins to suggest a real individual.

Detail and specificity will keep a writer's observations from being general and abstract. Much of the ineffective writing in any discipline works at the level of minimal detection ("a tree," "a bird") rather than at precise recognition ("a Dutch elm," "a cardinal"). Though concrete writing often demands a knowledge of specific terms, it also demands that as observers we develop the habit of viewing the world and events with greater attention to detail. Here are a few techniques, which are fully exemplified throughout the book, that can help writers become better observers, and observers better writers.

1. **Learn to see beyond convenient generalizations.** Most people tend to see the objects around them in generic terms. Students, for example, can spend four years at a college and never notice what the major buildings on campus actually look like. Someone who develops good habits of observation will not see merely "buildings" but particular types of buildings—made out of various materials and designed according to specific architectural styles. (For an example of a keen architectural eye, see Ada Louise Huxtable's observations of Houston, p. 38.)
2. **Choose descriptive terms carefully.** A danger in descriptive writing is the careless adjective. In lazy writing there is often an abuse of synonyms, as though the writer assumed that closely related words mean more or less the same thing. Yet, a careful writer, who consults a dictionary, will find a wealth of distinctions among words he or she might have used indis-

criminally. For example, in describing the reflection of light, it is useful to know that "glittering," "glimmering," and "glistening" have different shades of meaning. A good dictionary, remember, is not merely a place to check spelling and isolated definitions; it can disclose a wide spectrum of important distinctions among seemingly similar words. Awareness of such distinctions will help give any writing clarity, accuracy, and force.

3. **Be aware of your own predispositions and expectations.** As social scientists consistently warn, what we see is frequently determined by what we expect to see. A careful observer takes such expectations into account. A sociologist, for example, fascinated by criminal subcultures (urban street gangs, for instance) might easily convey a distorted, romanticized view of the subculture's behavior. Journalists, too, may find their objectivity compromised by biases and preconceptions. If the writer, however, does not intend to advocate a position, but intends to be intellectually objective and neutral, then potentially distorting, preexisting attitudes toward the subject need to be carefully considered before writing.
4. **Consider your standpoint as observer.** Our perceptions are often determined by our particular position as observers. Where are you in location to an object or event? Are you close or far? Are you at the game or watching it on television? Are you a participant, an observer, or both? Whether writing in the arts or sciences, a consideration of our own physical point of view is extremely important. For example, in the sociological paper "Stepping Aside: Correlates of Displacement in Pedestrians" (see p. 249), note how the writers are careful to provide specific information about where and how they conducted their observations of sidewalk behavior.
5. **Be selective in the use of detail.** Though personal observations cannot exist without detail, some details are always more significant than others. We have all been bored by speakers who do not make distinctions between the significant and the trivial, who cannot tell us about a tour of Europe without dragging us through every airport along the way. Good observers, of course, do notice minutiae and small events. In "The Making of a Writer" (see p. 5), Russell Baker describes in careful detail the manager of the grocery store where he worked as a boy. Yet Baker does not wallow in specificity; he makes each detail contribute to his portrayal of the manager's personality.
6. **Learn to see what is not there.** All good observers develop the habit of noticing missing details. A detective at the scene of a serious automobile accident might wonder why he finds no skid marks in sight. An ecologist may discover that the absence of a particular species signals a significant environmental change. Scientists especially learn to pay attention to the absence of phenomena, knowing that sometimes negative results can lead to positive discoveries. They know, too, that much valuable knowledge derives from inferring what is not seen from what is.

Much of the effective writing in this collection grew out of careful observation. Within each discipline, you will find a vital interaction between solid observation and good writing. What Daniel E. Garvey and William L. Rivers say in their book *Newswriting for the Electronic Media* applies to writing across the curriculum: "Observing . . . is a double process. It is seeing things with as little distortion as possible and describing what you see with as much verbal precision as your abilities permit. Verbal precision is useless without good observation, and good observation can be crippled by imprecise writing."

Writers commonly develop their observations in a narrative format. Accurate observation plays an important role in all types of writing, but without personal observation, narrative could hardly function. In most narratives, the writer not only tells what happened but builds into the account a wealth of descriptive detail. Writers in every field rely on narration to unfold a sequence of events. As an expository mode of writing, narration appears (as many of the selections in this book clearly demonstrate) throughout scientific studies, business reports, historical accounts, journalism, and broadcasting. The literary uses of narrative, moreover, are especially complex, and many scholarly studies have focused exclusively on the function and meaning of narration in fiction and poetry.

In its most elementary forms, narration records a straightforward chronological series of events: "A happened, then B happened, then C, etc." But such storybook narration is ~~seldom useful in expository writing, where the interdependency of events—their logical development—is more important than simple sequential order.~~ In other words, in most college and professional writing, consequence is more important than sequence: "B occurred because of A, which then led to C, and so on." Note in Steven Levy's scientific detective story, "My Search for Einstein's Brain" (see p. 271), the interlocking of events—how each personal experience logically builds to another.

One difficulty in composing narration is that writing is a linear activity, while much of what happens in our personal experience happens all at once. Anyone who has tried to describe a fairly complicated event or process—recounting the plot of a spy movie or hitting a baseball—knows how easily we get sidetracked by simultaneous activities. The narrator is often forced into a sequence of "A happened, which led to B, and then resulted in C, D, and E simultaneously." Clearly, we can't write about (or read about) C, D, and E all at the same time. In such cases—and these are common in expository narration—the writer needs to organize the events in a hierarchical order. Without a clear structure, the most significant events may get buried in digressions, and insignificant occurrences may receive disproportionate coverage. What helps the writer most in recording complicated sequences is a clear sense of purpose (ask: what is my main reason for writing?) and a strong sense of direction (ask: where is my narrative ultimately heading?).

A clear sense of purpose and direction is also important in maintaining an effective balance between the narrative's forward movement and the inclusion of personal observations. When we tell a story we almost always add description or commentary. Relating the process of his religious "salvation" (see p. 22), the poet Langston Hughes combines narration and description: "A great many old people came and knelt around us and prayed, old women with jet-black faces and braided hair, old men with work-gnarled hands." Hughes's purpose in his essay, however, is not to describe the people or setting around him but rather to give a step-by-step account of an unforgettable experience. The narrative thrust of the passage can be clearly seen by examining the opening words of nearly every paragraph ("Still," "Finally," "Then," "Now," "Suddenly," "When," "That night"). Yet, even with an undeviating sense of narrative direction, Hughes manages to include vivid observations so that we obtain a picture of the dramatic event along with the main action.

Whether you are writing in the first-person singular of your experiences (as does Langston Hughes) or reporting events in third-person expository prose (as does Calvin Trillin in "Competitors: The Great Ice Cream War" [on p. 439], narration and description often proceed hand in hand. In the section Personal Observation and Narration, you will see how writers working in a variety of disciplines effectively integrate descriptive details into well-regulated and carefully developed narrative.

ANALYSIS AND EXPLANATION

At Harvard Business School, all first-year students are required to take a course in the written analysis of cases (see p. 427); in literature courses students are routinely expected to analyze the works of major writers; broadcasting students must learn how to analyze the news as well as report it; social scientists spend enormous amounts of time analyzing data. Analysis is a key term in science, philosophy, psychology, mathematics, art, medicine, and law. In fact, analyzing information is perhaps the most commonly required writing task throughout the disciplines and professions.

Though each discipline may use different analytical techniques, "analysis" generally refers to a method by which something is broken down into its separate elements. The separate parts are then rigorously examined with respect to each other and to the organization of the whole. Thus a chemist can analyze a substance not only to discover what elements it contains but also to learn the exact proportions of each element and the molecular arrangement of the whole. So, too, a psychoanalyst will often work with a patient's dream by dividing the dream into separate parts and then examining the interrelations of each part.

Most analysis involves four phases: (1) identifying the separate parts, (2) examining each part, (3) determining the relations of part to part, and (4)

determining the relations of the parts to the whole. All these activities can be clearly seen in Aaron Copland's essay "How We Listen to Music" (see p. 32), which moves from a consideration of separate notes to the effects of an entire musical composition. One could also apply analytical methods to understand the writing process: We could (1) break it down into three stages—prewriting, writing, and revision; (2) examine the distinctive features of each stage; (3) look at how any one stage in the process is connected to the others; and (4) determine how the distinctive features of each stage affect the entire process of composition.

Learning analytical methods in some fields, especially the humanities, may seem cumbersome at first and may also seem to interfere with an instinctive appreciation. "I don't want to analyze the poem, I just want to enjoy it," students often say, employing a false distinction, since the appreciation of any art form or performance is enhanced—not diminished—by our ability to understand what went into its composition or achievement. Someone who does not understand the often intricate patterns of play in football will most likely watch a game simply by focusing only on the ball, thus missing about 75 percent of the real action on the field. So, too, someone who reads a novel simply to find out what happens at the end—or perhaps to acquire a "big idea" or two—will miss all the verbal artistry that went into its production.

Analysis is not often intended to be an end in itself nor meant only to enhance our appreciation; it is throughout the disciplines an aid to explanation. In most college assignments, students will be asked to analyze information for the purpose of explaining something significant about it. The child psychiatrist Robert Coles (see p. 178), for example, analyzed the language and behavior of affluent children to see how important notions of social "entitlement" take root. The art historian, Anne Hollander (see p. 167), analyzed contemporary styles of dress to explain a new trend in adolescent sexual identity.

Analysis for the purpose of explaining the meaning of objects, ideas, or events can follow several common patterns of development. These patterns can be used to organize paragraphs within an essay or sometimes an entire essay. A working knowledge of these patterns is fundamental to writing within all disciplines:

1. **Definition.** Explaining thoroughly what something is can be accomplished through extended definition. This is especially important when attempting to explain abstract or complex ideas for which a single dictionary definition would be inadequate. Extended definitions are often necessary when a writer attempts to refine or expand our understanding of a subject about which we may not have considered as carefully as the writer. Such is the case in John Canaday's "What Is a Painting?" (see p. 26) and Ernest Hartmann's "What Is a Nightmare?" (see p. 240)

2. **Illustration.** Elucidating a general point by offering concrete examples is one of the most commonly used methods of explanation. There is scarcely a page in this collection that doesn't itself offer an example of using examples. By means of carefully selected examples the writer can show familiarity with the topic, give the statements clarity, and support his or her arguments. When confronted with general statements and assertions in writing, we almost instinctively want examples, and when they are not offered, we feel the writer has not properly prepared the material. How convincing would Joan D. Lynch's study of music videos be if she had neglected to offer any specific examples of the form to support her contention that the videos are a contemporary version of surrealistic art? (see p. 727)
3. **Classification.** Explaining something by placing it within a larger category or dividing it into smaller categories can be done through classification. In attempting to understand human gesture, for example, Desmond Morris (see p. 659) first examined gesture within the larger category of communication (gesture then becomes like language), then classified gesture into all the various types ("the thumb up," etc.) he could find in use. Yet, another anthropologist might have devised a different system of classification, dividing gestures into facial gestures, hand gestures, arm gestures, etc.
4. **Comparison and Contrast.** In many instances explanation can be usefully achieved by means of comparison and contrast. The writer explains a subject or idea by demonstrating how it either resembles or differs from another subject or idea. A student who wants to write about his love of baseball might do so by showing either (a) how closely baseball resembles something else of value (as Philip Roth does in comparing the pleasures of baseball to the enjoyment of literature (on p. 612) or (b) by contrasting it to another sport he finds inferior (e.g., the precision of baseball versus the clumsy violence of ice hockey). Comparison and contrast essays are commonly used for evaluative purposes throughout the disciplines: a critic will establish the importance of a movie by comparing it favorably to an undisputed film classic; a business writer will show the superior quality of one fast food franchise by contrasting it with another. Comparison and contrast also help sharpen distinctions between similar concepts, as Bruno Bettelheim shows in his essay "Fairy Tale versus Myth" (see p. 154).
5. **Cause and Effect.** An important method of explaining why something happened or may happen is causal analysis. Historians and social scientists often attempt to determine the causes behind events, ideologies, or prevailing attitudes and behavior. In science, technology, business, and economics, writers examine causative factors in order to predict effects. Cause-and-effect relations are critical to marketing decisions, as James Atlas demonstrates in "Beyond Demographics: How Madison Avenue

Knows Who You Are and What You Want" (see p. 514). Though effective when causes and effects are carefully linked, causal analysis can lead to numerous intellectual pitfalls. "Because" is a very tricky term in any subject. No matter which discipline we work in, we always need to ask ourselves if we are making a correct distinction between what we perceive as a cause and what we see as an effect. Did the President improve the performance of the economy, or did the economy improve the performance of the President?

6. **Analogy.** Explaining an abstract topic or one that is unfamiliar to readers can be achieved by means of analogy. In most expository writing, analogy works as an extended comparison, in which the writer points out a number of similar features between two things, e.g., the brain and a computer, corporate life and warfare. As a way of visualizing one thing in terms of another, analogy often lends concreteness to subjects that may be difficult to follow. Also, by explaining one thing in terms of another, analogy can offer new ways of considering a subject: e.g., Gerald Weissmann's depiction of hospital medical charts as though they were parts of novels (see p. 315), Jay Haley's analysis of psychotherapy in terms of gamesmanship (see p. 188).

The above patterns of development can be used to stimulate our thinking (How can I define W?" "What caused X?"), to direct our planning ("Can I list three examples of Y?"), and to organize paragraphs or even entire essays ("Suppose I contrast Z with A throughout the paper?"). Though the patterns are fundamental to writing in all disciplines, they rarely appear in isolated form in any one paper. Writers naturally and frequently combine several patterns in a single essay. In "What Is a Painting?" (see p. 26), note how John Canady uses illustration in conjunction with comparison and contrast to formulate his definition of a painting.

ADVOCACY AND ARGUMENT

Besides having to prepare reports on personal observations and to analyze information, college students are also commonly required to perform a third type of writing—arguing a position. Throughout various courses, students will customarily be asked to advocate an idea or support an issue (e.g., supply-side economics, capital punishment, the right to abortion). Later, when on the job, the defense of ideas becomes almost an occupational necessity, as people are often required to put into writing their suggestions and proposals. Engineers with a good argument for how to speed up a plant's production methods will certainly be required not only to express the idea in writing but also to make a strong case for its implementation. Rarely can important professional recommendations or policy decisions be made without argument.

The poet Robert Frost once said that most people tend to confuse thinking—with voting. That is, they feel that a stance for or against something—without supplying reasons—is sufficient in itself. A show of hands may be acceptable in an assembly, however, or a ballot in a voting booth, but in argumentative writing we must give convincing reasons for our positions and opinions. It is not enough in an essay to assert that we are for or against the death penalty; we must make a case for our position. Doing so—constructing well-ordered argumentative essays—is among the most practical and satisfying verbal skills we can learn in a writing course.

Though effective argumentation is a complex topic, with numerous categories and subcategories, there are five important matters to keep in mind when we advocate a position or make a claim. These are:

1. **The assertion.** This is the main proposition—the point—of our argument. Though it may take the form of a thesis statement (“I intend to show that pornography is not protected by the First Amendment”), the main point could also be implied throughout an essay. Whether the assertion is about meaning or values or policy, the writer should first make sure that the assertion is truly an arguable point. Many argumentative-sounding essays are constructed around personal opinions that no one would object to (“Pets Can Be Fun”) or matters of taste (“Why I Prefer Tulips to Roses”) that barely constitute a basis for legitimate debate. A good example of a strong assertion based on a clear arguable point is James Baldwin’s “If Black English Isn’t a Language, Then Tell Me, What Is?” (see p. 101).
2. **Evidence.** To make a convincing argument, writers need to back up their assertions with evidence. Most evidence used in argumentative essays takes the form of relevant examples, carefully validated observations, facts and figures, and authoritative testimony. All these evidentiary techniques can be seen, for example, in Isaac Asimov’s historical essay on scientific method, “Pure and Impure: The Interplay of Science and Technology” (see p. 342). Since a writer’s space is often limited, evidence must be selected carefully and used economically. A multiplication of examples is not necessary (in fact, it may backfire) if one or two instances will adequately make the point. Also, the writer should only worry about supporting those statements required to make the point; not every statement in an argument requires evidence.
3. **Anticipating Objections.** In most arguments, especially those involving popular controversies (abortion, euthanasia, freedom of speech, etc.), the writer should be familiar with the objections that will be raised by opposing points of view. If writers know in advance the criticism that will most probably be brought against their argument, they will be better prepared to defend it. Including objections to our arguments—as long as we summarize them fairly—is always a good strategy. Not only can we