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The Modern Writer's Handbook

FOURTH EDITION

FRANK O'HARE

THE MODERN WRITER'S HANDBOOK

Frank O'Hare

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Edward A. Kline

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

Allyn and Bacon

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*To all my students, graduate and undergraduate,
at the University of Notre Dame
Edward A. Kline*

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PREFACE

To the Instructor

The fourth edition of *The Modern Writer's Handbook* remains up to date, complete, user friendly, and valuable not only in composition courses but also in writing across the curriculum courses and as a resource tool in writing centers. The fourth edition is deliberately compact and concise while still remaining comprehensive—complete enough to make available anything that a student might need as a solid foundation for the composition course. Brevity in a handbook is a virtue, and our revisions have resulted in a fourth edition that is compact both in size and in length. Yet in the process new features have been added while the enduring strengths of previous editions have been retained. To help students find information quickly and work with the handbook on their own, especially in writing centers, we have included a full system of cross-referencing; added new examples of student essays, all of which are annotated; and retained the useful checklists: improvements that build on the strengths of the successful third edition.

Expanded Coverage

The third edition provided a large number of compact-book users with some remarkable features that are usually found only in the giant handbooks, and these have been retained:

- The strong units on writing across the curriculum including full-length and fully annotated MLA and APA papers

- A fresh and amplified discussion of writing with a computer
- An enlarged section on sexist and biased language along with strong coverage of language and style
- A revised treatment of the writing process and collaborative writing
- An updated and amplified presentation on computerized research sources, including new MLA citation formats
- Checklists to summarize key operations students need to remember
- An updated and enlarged glossary of usage
- A comprehensive index

New Sections

The important new organization and sections in the fourth edition, remarkable in that the book is even more compact than its previous edition, include:

- Streamlining the units on grammar, sentence form, usage, and sentence style to produce an organization that (1) makes troublesome sentence and usage issues more accessible than ever, and (2) makes possible a new unit, "Clear Sentences," with an emphasis on sentence style
- Full coverage of English as a Second Language
- "Writing Arguments" with Toulmin-based coverage
- Units on critical reading and summarizing
- The "User's Self-Help" section will allow students to self-test and can also be useful in writing centers
- New prewriting examples as well as intermediate drafts including the critique process, as well as the final product
- Numerous sections freshened, amplified, and replaced, including two new fully annotated student papers
- Half of the exercises are new

New Pedagogy

New Student Models and Examples. This edition contains two new samples of student writing, including a student's essay in multiple drafts and a new essay to exemplify literary analysis that also incorporates writing about art. Each of these models is annotated to help the student understand how a piece of writing develops and what decisions a writer needs to make. Also retained in this edition are excerpts of student papers from courses in the social, natural, and applied sciences.

In addition, literally hundreds of examples appear throughout the text to illustrate the various principles of grammar and usage. Nearly fifty paragraphs by student and professional writers serve as examples of writing or appear in exercises.

Checklists. Twelve checklists appear at critical points in the text to serve as efficient summary references for student writers. One listing appears on the inside front cover of the handbook.

Exercises. Half the exercises in this edition are new in content and reflect the diversified composition of today's student body. Many of the exercises consist of related sentences to simulate proofreading and editing in paragraph form.

English as a Second Language. As more and more international students enroll in colleges across the nation, many ESL students are now working with native speakers in regular composition courses. The new chapter on ESL presents the most common difficulties these students encounter and includes comprehensive exercises to reinforce the units in the chapter.

Self-Diagnostic Section. The new "User's Self-Help" section at the end of the handbook features a set of self-administering diagnostic tests centering on grammar, punctuation, mechanics, syntax, and diction. The answer key identifies the topic at issue in an incorrect sentence; it then refers the student to the appropriate section of the handbook where a detailed explanation of the feature may be found and exercises can be worked to improve skills in selected areas.

Organizational Improvements

The basic organization of the fourth edition retains and improves on the successful organization of the third edition. The handbook begins with the stages in the writing process from prewriting through drafting, revision, and proofreading and editing to the final product. It also treats writing coherent paragraphs, critical thinking, writing arguments, and writing with a computer. The handbook then presents the grammar of the word and the sentence, the latter units reorganized to stress sentence forms, and continues with another reorganized section devoted to clear sentences. The book also includes units on punctuation and mechanics, spelling, the research paper, and then academic and business writing. Each of the handbook's nine parts subdivides into chapters and then further subdivides into sections that contain a rule followed by examples, cross-referenced to appropriate sections in the handbook. Exercises that allow for practical applications of the subject matter appear throughout.

Supplements

The following supplementary publications to accompany this handbook are specifically designed to help instructors with assignments related to student use of this handbook:

- A casebound *Instructor's Annotated Edition*, available as a desk copy to adopting instructors, provides overprinted answers and suggested responses to all handbook exercises.
- A comprehensive paperbound text, *A Guide to Teaching Writing*, is available as an Instructor's Manual to the adopting faculty. Written by handbook author Edward A. Kline, Director of the Freshman Writing Program at Notre Dame University, this book provides a thorough treatment of important composition topics related to teaching freshman writing from this handbook. Coverage includes preparing the class, plagiarism issues, rhetoric and writing processes, designing and assessing assignments, ESL issues, and bibliographies on key topics and methodologies in composition.
- A *Test Bank* to accompany this handbook has been prepared by Marie-Louise Nickerson of Bronx Community College. It provides seven instructor-administered Diagnostic Tests and twenty Achievement Tests on all major topics in the handbook, plus Comprehensive Tests in eight areas. Answers are keyed to *The Modern Writer's Handbook*.
- A computerized *Test Bank* makes all the test book's items available on standard computerized formats for Macintosh and PC equipment.

The following additional resources on the teaching of composition are also available, on request to an Allyn and Bacon representative, for instructors who have adopted this handbook:

- *The Allyn & Bacon Sourcebook for College Writing Teachers* by James C. McDonald, University of Southwestern Louisiana, is a collection of writings by foremost scholars on important theories and pedagogies in composition studies—including critical thinking and reading, collaborative learning, writing with computers, and other topics. It is especially

designed to help college writing instructors who face teaching for the first time, or for teachers who are reexamining their teaching goals and methods.

- *Teaching College Composition* by Maggy Smith, University of Texas at El Paso offers freshman composition instructors many ideas to help organize and teach. It synthesizes research and practice in every chapter so that instructors can see where recommended pedagogies originated in composition research. The book covers planning, creating assignments, preparing early class sessions, and teaching the processes of writing, as well as methods of evaluation.

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To the Student

This book will help you develop and refine your writing skills with guidance from your instructor. It does not provide you with a foolproof formula for writing an essay or for avoiding all errors. No such shortcuts exist. *The Modern Writer's Handbook* does provide you with a plan for good writing that begins by illustrating general writing strategies and proceeds to help you work through planning, prewriting, drafting, revising, and proof-reading. The book offers you options, not laws. It is not wrong, for example, to compose a first draft without writing a formal outline first, but because some people find outlining helpful, we describe strategies for outlining in Section 2c.

How To Find the Information You Need

This handbook has been designed to help you locate information quickly. It is a good idea to spend a few minutes familiarizing yourself with how the book works, especially with the devices that will help you find the information you need.

Blue Tabs at the top of each page in the handbook contain particular chapter numbers, section letters, and chapter symbols (these symbols are shorthand for the chapter title and correspond to the correction symbols listed on the front end papers). The tabs can help you find information by thumbing through the book. Note also that at the top of every page, **chapter titles** appear in full on left-hand pages and **section titles** appear on right-hand pages to give you more specific guidance.

Checklists (boxed and tinted blue) appear throughout the handbook and provide you with convenient summaries of the handbook's guidelines on writing and revising. A list of all the handbook's checklists appears on the inside cover of the text. **Numerous lists** appear throughout the text to assist you with your writing.

Endpapers (the inside front and back covers and facing pages) contain important information:

1. A list of all the handbook's checklists appears on the inside front cover.
2. A list of correction symbols, which your instructor may use in correcting your essays and papers, appears on the endpaper facing the inside front cover. For example, if your instructor marks the symbol *dm* in the margin of your paper, you can consult the correction symbol list and note that the abbreviation means *dangling modifier*—a topic covered in section number **17a**. You can then consult the section number indicated (**17a**) for more information.
3. On the back endpapers, you will find an overview of the handbook's contents. Glance at it to get a sense of how the handbook is structured.

The **User's Self-Help** section at the end of the book contains a set of self-administering "diagnostic tests." Your teacher may require you to complete them, or you can do them on your own initiative. The tests concern grammar, syntax, diction, and punctuation/mechanics. Each is followed by an answer key that identifies for you the topic at issue in an incorrect sentence and leads you to the section of the handbook where the issue is presented in detail. There you can work on the designated exercises that will help you improve your skill on those topics.

The **Glossary of Usage** and the **Glossary of Grammatical Terms** provide you with accessible and brief explanations of which words to use in certain situations. For example, use the Glossary of Usage to determine whether the word *who* or *whom* is appropriate. Use the Glossary of Grammatical Terms to find the definitions of basic grammatical terms such as *case* or *pronoun*. Entries are arranged alphabetically in both glossaries.

The general **Index** contains a complete listing of all topics covered in the handbook along with page references and is designed for easy access.

Organization

This book first presents a general view of the writing process: planning, drafting, and revising your essay. It then considers the surface features of the language, emphasizing the important conventions that educated readers expect to encounter when they read your writing. The handbook concludes by introducing you to the specialized writing tasks you will encounter in your various college courses and in the business world.

Part I offers advice about the writing process: preparation for writing including critical reading, producing the first draft, revising (re-seeing) the draft, and proofreading and editing it. Detailed coverage on writing with a computer follows. Next, paragraph development is discussed, including organizational and developmental strategies as well as transitions within and between paragraphs. Part I concludes with a consideration of critical thinking and faulty reasoning and a new section on writing arguments.

Parts II through VII examine the principles of grammar, sentence form, clear sentences, diction and style, punctuation and mechanics, and spelling. You will use these parts of the book for reference if you are already familiar with grammatical principles and the terms and conventions of usage. If your familiarity with this material is limited, you can use these sections to help you master the conventions of grammar and usage.

Part VIII explains and illustrates how to write a research paper: how to select and limit a topic; how to plan, research, and write the paper; and then how to document it according to the styles recommended by the Modern Language Association (MLA) and the American Psychological Association (APA). A complete annotated sample research paper demonstrates each style. Refer to these samples for guidance as you write your own papers.

Part IX explains and illustrates the types of writing you will be called on to do in your different college courses whether in the humanities, literary analysis, or in social, natural, and applied sciences and in the business world with examples of each type of writing. You may also find the chapter on preparing for writing essay examinations (Chapter 53) useful.

The handbook is divided into parts, then into chapters and sections. Each chapter contains sections that explore in detail the subject matter at hand. For instance, Part V, "Diction and Style" contains the following subdivisions: Chapter 23, "Appropriate Word Choice"; Chapter 24, "Sexist and Biased Language"; and Chapter 25, "Exact Word Choice." Each of these chapters is further subdivided into sections. Thus, Chapter 23 covers the following: **23a** slang, **23b** colloquialisms, **23c** jargon, and **23d** gobbledygook. Each of these sections provides you with advice to follow, examples for clarification, and practice exercises.

You learn to write better only by writing often. *The Modern Writer's Handbook* serves as a guide to all steps in the writing process and with continued use will help you grow in competence and confidence. Paradoxically, the more diligently you use this handbook, the less you will need it.

Edward Kline
University of Notre Dame

User's Guide to Locating Information

Use the *back endpapers* for a *compact contents* if you know which topic might give you the right information. The *main contents* will show you further detail.

Use the *index* to find the word or term that will lead you to the right information

Use the *correction symbol chart* on the *front endpaper* to interpret an instructor's mark and follow it to the right information in this book.

Use the "*Helpful Checklists*" inventory in the *front endpapers* to locate useful checklist procedures for writing and research processes.

Use *section numbers* to follow cross-references within the text that may lead you to more precise information.

Here are the location features and reference features available on a typical page:

Tabs show **correction symbols & section reference numbers.**

Headers show **section titles & page numbers.**

Blue headings show **topics of sections & subsections.**

Blue type shows **guideline rules of usage.**

Explanations show **cross reference numbers.**

Refer to **summary tables & lists.**

Find explanatory examples.

Find revision examples.

Choosing Appropriate Forms for Troublesome Verbs **11c** 179

11c Choosing Appropriate Forms for Troublesome Verbs

Master troublesome pairs of verb forms.

Because of similarity in form and related meanings, the *transitive and intransitive senses* of certain pairs of verbs are frequently confused (see Section 7e). The following pairs of verbs often give people trouble: *lie* and *lay*; *sit* and *set*; *rise* and *raise*; *sneak* and *sneaked*.

1 Lie and lay

The verb *lie* means "recline." The verb *lay* means "put" or "place." Do not confuse the principal parts of these verbs.

PRESENT INFINITIVE	PAST TENSE	PAST PARTICIPLE	PRESENT PARTICIPLE
lie	lay	lain	lying
lay	laid	laid	laying

The problem most people have with these verbs is using a form of *lay* when they mean *lie*. *Lie* is intransitive; it does not take an object. *Lay* is transitive; it does take an object.

Lie on the floor. (*no object*)

Lay the book on the table. (*object*)

NOT: Why is Millie **laying** on the couch in the nurse's office?
BUT: Why is Millie **lying** on the couch in the nurse's office?

NOT: Peter **laid** in the sun too long yesterday.
BUT: Peter **lay** in the sun too long yesterday.

NOT: She had just **laid** down when the telephone rang.
BUT: She had just **lain** down when the telephone rang.

THE MODERN WRITER'S HANDBOOK