

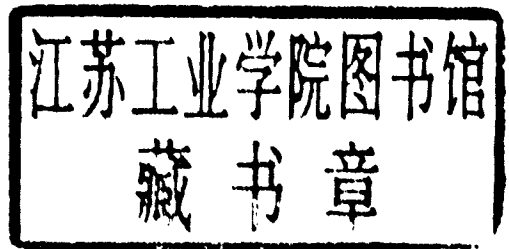
Essentials of Writing



Essentials of Writing

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Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., Scarborough, Ontario

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Messenger, William E., 1931-
Essentials of writing

Includes index.

ISBN 0-13-287939-5

1. English language - Rhetoric. 2. English
language - Rhetoric - Problems, exercises, etc.

I. Taylor, Peter A. (Peter Alan), 1936-

II. Title.

PE1408.M48 1988 808'.042 C88-093668-1

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Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey

Prentice-Hall International, Inc., London

Prentice-Hall of Australia, Pty., Ltd., Sydney

Prentice-Hall of India Pvt., Ltd., New Delhi

Prentice-Hall of Japan, Inc., Tokyo

Prentice-Hall of Southeast Asia (Pte.) Ltd., Singapore

Editora Prentice-Hall do Brasil Ltda., Rio de Janeiro

Prentice-Hall Hispanoamericana, S.A., Mexico

ISBN 0-13-287939-5

Production Editor: Katherine Mototsune

Cover Illustration and Design: Deborah-Anne Bailey

Composition: Darlene Simpson

Manufacturing Buyers: Matt Lumsdon/Sharon Houston

1 2 3 4 5 THB 93 92 91 90 89

Printed and bound in Canada by T.H. Best Printing Company Limited

Preface

You can think of writing either as a **process** or as a **product**, the finished piece of writing. If, like most students, you think of "writing" as the finished product, we hope this book will help you think the other way. We think that by changing the way you go about writing, you can produce work that is more satisfying both to you as a writer and to your reader. And though you will of course still be aiming to turn out a good *product*, your increased satisfaction will arise partly from a greater appreciation of the *process* by which you get there.

Using this Book

First browse through the book to see what kind of material it contains. Especially, have a look at the following features:

- the table of contents
- the index
- the glossary of terms
- the simplified outline of the writing process on the inside front cover
- the list of marking symbols on the inside back cover
- the separate chapters on argument, on the research paper, and on writing essay examinations and in-class essays
- the special exercises on idioms and on sentence-combining

Your instructor will probably determine the order in which you study the material. The chapters generally follow the steps in the process of

writing. But since this process is recursive, continually doubling back on itself, the order is flexible. But do read the **Introduction** first. And before you hand in any written assignments, go carefully through Chapter 10, so that you will know about the appropriate **manuscript conventions** and about **proofreading** — for example how to check for such things as spelling errors.

And chances are you will want to work closely with Chapters 6 through 9, which focus on **revising** and which you can use as a **handbook** while you are also working on material in other chapters.

Projects

Most of the chapters include writing projects of various scope and complexity. Some are simple exercises designed to help you master certain small principles. Others ask for short pieces of writing — perhaps a paragraph or two that will give you practice using a certain technique. Still others are major writing assignments that let you apply all the principles and techniques you've learned about.

* * *

Acknowledgments

In addition to cherishing a long-term general gratitude to our colleagues, students, editors, and other friends, we are specifically grateful to the following reviewers of the manuscript for their support and their helpful comments and suggestions: Barry Cameron, University of New Brunswick; Cecilia Lanz, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology; Victor A. Neufeldt, University of Victoria; and Sheila C. Trant, Centennial College. For permission to quote from published material, we are grateful to the following:

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INTRODUCTION

The Elements of Writing and the Process of Writing

THE WRITING CONTEXT

You talk differently at different times, depending on who your listeners are and what the circumstances are. Similarly, whenever you write, you write on a specific **occasion** with its own particular circumstances. That is, you write about a specific topic, to identifiable readers, with a specific purpose in mind, and using language that you choose for that occasion.

Think of these elements as making up **the writing context**. Here is a diagram of it:

