HEATH GUIDE to College Writing

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The Heath Guide to College Writing

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about the authors

Both of the authors are graduates of the University of Texas—Austin's rhetoric program. Together, they bring nearly fifty years of experience as both rhetoric teachers and textbook writers to *The Heath Guide to College Writing*.

Ralph F. Voss is Professor at the University of Alabama, where he teaches graduate courses in rhetoric/composition and American drama, and undergraduate writing. He is also Coordinator for Courses in Technical Writing, Advanced Composition, and second-semester Freshman English. Previously he has also served as Director of Freshman English, Graduate Teacher Trainer for Composition, Director of the Writing Center (at both the Universities of Alabama and Utah), and Mentor for First-Time Teachers of American Literature. He is the author of Elements of Practical Writing (Holt, 1985) and articles and reviews on composition theory and pedagogy in College Composition and Communication, Teaching English in the Two-Year College, Journal of Advanced Composition, and The Writing Teacher. He has also written A Life of William Inge: The Strains of Triumph (University Press of Kansas, 1989), biographical and critical articles in The Dictionary of Literary Biography and Kansas Quarterly, and reviews of scholarly works in American drama in South Atlantic Review.

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preface

The Heath Guide to College Writing brings together the best of the two most popular approaches to teaching writing, namely

- The Product-Oriented Approach, which focuses on teaching qualities of the written product, an approach that has long characterized teaching writing in North America: and
- The Process-Oriented Approach, which focuses on teaching the oftenrecursive steps the writer follows to complete the written product, an approach that has been gaining acceptance since the early 1970s. Bringing together the best of these two approaches, we aim to build bridges between reading (guiding students through reader response, close analysis, and critical thinking) and writing (giving students practice in observing the techniques of real writers at work—writing multiple drafts, collaborating, and revising critically).

The Heath Guide to College Writing is a full rhetoric intended for use in first-and second-semester composition courses at two- and four-year colleges and universities. It emphasizes processes of composing, the traditional rhetorical triangle (writer's voice, subject, and reading audience, all attuned to purpose), development of critical skills (writing, reading, thinking), and use of the modes (comparison, definition, description, etc.) for invention. The Heath Guide includes numerous sample readings, plus an extensive chapter on library research and a concise handbook for grammar (this last in the hardbound edition only). Because The Heath Guide incorporates writing-across-the-curriculum, chapters on writing essay test responses, reports, proposals, and preparing oral reports, and elements of business and technical communication, students using this book will develop not only as general writers but also as writers who can successfully meet the writing demands of other academic and career choices.

The distinctive structure of *The Heath Guide to College Writing* unites process and product approaches to writing and shows that reading and writing are two sides of the practice of critical thinking. Each of the eighteen chapters in Parts Two, Three, and Four begins with professional and student writing samples which students will analyze for key features, guided by questions that follow each sample. Once these key features are established, there follows a brief discussion of the writing purpose or technique the sample illustrates. Each chapter then leads students from responding to the reading samples, through writing and analyzing their own written responses, to producing more polished writing after reading a fully developed case study. Each case study follows a student through a typical assignment dealing with the kind of writing on which the chapter focuses,

zeroing in on a specific aspect of the writing process. Each chapter concludes with suggestions for individual and group writing activities.

Each chapter in Parts Two, Three, and Four also includes these features to reinforce and extend concepts:

- Writers' Circle, a group writing activity tied to one of the chapter's reading selections, to reinforce chapter concepts through collaborative learning,
- Pre- and Postreading Worksheets linked to a specific reading to reinforce students' application of critical reading skills, and
- Bridges: Another Perspective, a brief discussion of a single reading that encourages students to make connections with other readings throughout the book and to think critically about an issue the reading raises.

The Heath Guide to College Writing also seeks to show writing and reading as very human experiences that take place in a very real world. Each reading, for example, comes with a biographical sketch about its author, often explaining the context in which the author produced that particular work. Each part opens with a profile of a writer discussing his or her writing, and scattered throughout the text are brief, evocative comments writers have made about their experiences in the processes of writing.

We have tried to make the structure of *The Heath Guide* clear and easy to use. Because we believe people learn to write more effectively by *doing* reading and *doing* writing, we have tried to avoid solid pages of print that simply *talk about* writing. Instead, we ask students to *get involved in writing* frequently in each chapter.

To assist instructors using this book, we have provided *The Heath Guide to College Writing Starter Kit*, a nuts-and-bolts guide for the first-time teacher of freshman composition (from which more experienced teachers may also gain insights), available in both print and disk formats; *The Teacher's Resource Manual for The Heath Guide to College Writing*, with content tailored specifically to *The Heath Guide*; *The Heath Guide to College Writing Annotated Teacher's Edition*, with page-by-page tips for teaching the content of this book; and a set of overhead transparencies that illustrate key concepts from the text. All these aids are available from your D. C. Heath representative.

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As writers, we have the same feeling at the end of this long project that writers always have at the end of writing—we figure we got some things right and some things wrong. If you use this book and feel strongly about something in it, for good or for ill, drop us a line. Either way, we'd like to hear from you.

Ralph F. Voss

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