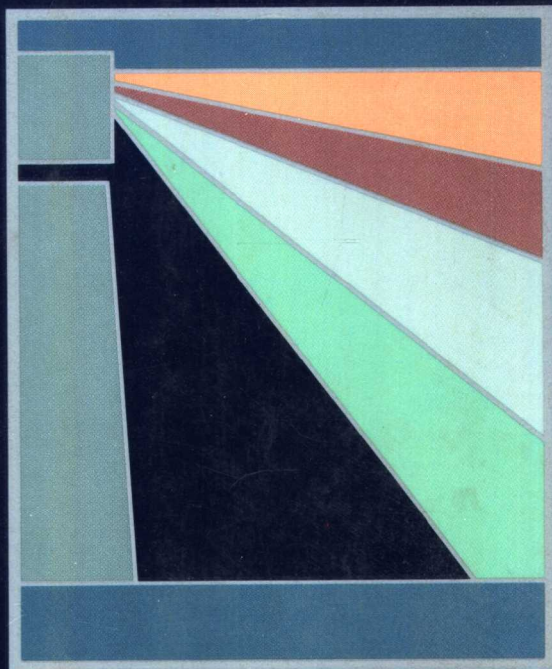


HOUGHTON MIFFLIN



THE BEACON
WORKBOOK

CYNTHIA L. FRAZER

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continued on page 529

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Preface

The Beacon Workbook is designed for instructors who want to give their students practice in one or more of the wide range of skills covered in freshman composition courses—composition, sentence structure, diction, grammar, punctuation, mechanics, and research. A collection of 180 exercises for student practice and review, *The Beacon Workbook* can be used in conjunction with *The Beacon Handbook* or can stand alone as a primary text. *The Beacon Workbook* follows the organization of *The Beacon Handbook* and reproduces its precepts for easy reference.

Key Features of *The Beacon Workbook*

Instructors and students will find the organization and format of *The Beacon Workbook* clear and accessible and its instruction and exercises lively and engaging. The formats of individual chapters vary appropriately for chapter content, but throughout the goal has been to provide a concise and lucid presentation of concepts, along with ample and varied opportunities for practice. Chapters on sentence structure, diction, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics begin with a preview exercise, followed by a discussion and review of key concepts and rules; this instruction in turn is followed by exercises in sentence and paragraph formats and a review exercise. Chapters on the composing process and research contain longer writing assignments, in addition to skill-building exercises. *The Beacon Workbook* also offers these features:

- Sentence and paragraph exercises in a variety of formats require students to use a combination of skills.
- Varied, high-interest subject matter for exercise paragraphs, sentences, and sets of continuous-discourse sentences reminds students that all writing occurs in a context.
- Abundant professional and student examples illustrate points in the instruction.
- Precepts and key terms are highlighted in boldface type, and many lists are boxed for easy reference.
- Pages are perforated and exercises begin on new right-hand pages so that students can easily submit material for grading without removing instructional text.

Acknowledgments

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I am also indebted to my parents, Dolores and John Lynch, for their consistent inspiration and support. Finally, I thank my children, Matthew and Courtney, who have been remarkably patient during the great many hours I spent writing, and I especially thank my husband, Greg, who deserves my deepest appreciation for his countless hours of assistance and encouragement.

Cynthia L. Frazer

Contents

Preface

xiii

THE COMPOSING PROCESS

1

1 Planning

2

- 1.1 *Selecting general subjects* 3
- 1.2 *Using planning strategies* 8
- 1.3 *Selecting and exploring your subject* 8
- 1.4 *Selecting your topic* 9
- 1.5 *Writing appropriately for your role, readers, and purpose* 11
- 1.6 *Characterizing your role, readers, and purpose* 13
- 1.7 *Evaluating and revising thesis statements* 17
- 1.8 *Writing your working thesis statement* 19

2 Drafting

21

- 2.1 *Organizing your materials* 21
- 2.2 *Outlining your paper in an informal format* 22
- 2.3 *Revising a formal mixed outline* 25
- 2.4 *Outlining your paper in a formal mixed or sentence format* 27
- 2.5 *Writing your rough draft* 28
- 2.6 *Selecting effective titles* 29
- 2.7 *Identifying and analyzing introductions* 32
- 2.8 *Writing your title and introductory paragraph* 33
- 2.9 *Identifying and analyzing conclusions* 34
- 2.10 *Writing your concluding paragraph* 35

3 Revising

36

- 3.1 *Revising the content of your draft* 36
- 3.2 *Revising the style of your draft* 37
- 3.3 *Revising the technical aspects of your draft* 38
- 3.4 *Using peer editing* 39
- 3.5 *Peer editing a revised paper* 41
- 3.6 *Preparing your final copy* 43

4 Paragraphs

44

- 4.1 *Writing and supporting topic sentences* 47
- 4.2 *Developing a unified paragraph* 51

4.3	<i>Identifying transitions and repeated sentence elements</i>	57
4.4	<i>Using transitions and repeated sentence elements in your own writing</i>	59
4.5	<i>Writing deductive and inductive paragraphs</i>	60
4.6	<i>Developing paragraphs</i>	65

5 Critical Thinking and Writing 67

5.1	<i>Composing arguments</i>	69
5.2	<i>Writing summaries</i>	75
5.3	<i>Identifying assertions</i>	79
5.4	<i>Identifying evidence</i>	83
5.5	<i>Writing appeals</i>	87
5.6	<i>Identifying logical fallacies</i>	93

EFFECTIVE SENTENCES 95

6 Understanding Parts of Speech 96

	<i>Preview Exercise</i>	96
6.1	<i>Identifying and classifying nouns</i>	103
6.2	<i>Identifying pronouns and their types</i>	105
6.3	<i>Identifying and classifying verbs</i>	109
6.4	<i>Classifying action verbs as transitive or intransitive</i>	111
6.5	<i>Identifying verb tenses</i>	117
6.6	<i>Using appropriate irregular verb forms</i>	119
6.7	<i>Identifying adjectives</i>	125
6.8	<i>Identifying adverbs</i>	127
6.9	<i>Using adjectives and adverbs</i>	129
6.10	<i>Using conjunctions to combine sentences</i>	135
6.11	<i>Identifying prepositions and their objects</i>	137
	<i>Review Exercise 6</i>	139

7 Understanding Sentences 141

	<i>Preview Exercise 7a</i>	141
7.1	<i>Identifying subjects</i>	143
7.2	<i>Identifying predicates</i>	147
7.3	<i>Identifying subjects and predicates</i>	149
7.4	<i>Identifying complements</i>	153
7.5	<i>Identifying prepositional phrases</i>	159
7.6	<i>Identifying gerund phrases</i>	161
7.7	<i>Identifying participial phrases</i>	163
7.8	<i>Identifying infinitive phrases</i>	165

7.9	Using appositives to combine sentences	167	
7.10	Adding independent clauses to complete sentences	171	
	Review Exercise 7a	173	
	Preview Exercise 7b	175	
7.11	Writing compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences	179	
	Review Exercise 7b	181	
8	Sentence Variety		183
	Preview Exercise	183	
8.1	Varying sentence length	185	
8.2	Labeling and varying types of sentences	191	
8.3	Varying sentence beginnings	195	
8.4	Using coordination to combine sentences	199	
8.5	Using subordination to combine sentences	203	
8.6	Using coordination and subordination to revise sentences	205	
	Review Exercise 8	209	
9	Emphasis		211
	Preview Exercise	211	
9.1	Using the active and passive voices	213	
9.2	Writing concisely	219	
	Review Exercise 9	221	
10	Parallelism		223
	Preview Exercise	223	
10.1	Making constructions parallel	225	
10.2	Writing parallel elements	227	
	Review Exercise 10	229	
11	Pronoun Reference		231
	Preview Exercise	231	
11.1	Using pronouns clearly	235	
	Review Exercise 11	237	
12	Positioning Modifiers		239
	Preview Exercise	239	
12.1	Positioning modifiers correctly	243	
12.2	Revising to avoid misplaced modifiers	245	
	Review Exercise 12	247	

DICTION	249
13 Using Meaning and Tone	250
<i>Preview Exercise</i>	250
13.1 <i>Revising informal diction</i>	253
13.2 <i>Writing with informal and formal diction</i>	255
13.3 <i>Considering connotations</i>	259
13.4 <i>Replacing words that have inappropriate connotations</i>	261
13.5 <i>Using specific words</i>	265
13.6 <i>Selecting appropriate prepositions in phrasal idioms</i>	269
13.7 <i>Using idioms appropriately</i>	271
13.8 <i>Understanding slang and regionalisms</i>	275
13.9 <i>Rewriting euphemisms</i>	277
<i>Review Exercise 13</i>	279
14 Choosing Effective Words	281
<i>Preview Exercise</i>	281
14.1 <i>Revising clichés and trite expressions</i>	283
14.2 <i>Recognizing and revising pretentious language and jargon</i>	287
14.3 <i>Revising ineffective figures of speech</i>	291
14.4 <i>Identifying and revising sexist language</i>	295
<i>Review Exercise 14</i>	299
GRAMMAR	301
15 Fragments	302
<i>Preview Exercise</i>	302
15.1 <i>Revising sentence fragments</i>	305
15.2 <i>Revising fragments in longer passages</i>	309
<i>Review Exercise 15</i>	311
16 Comma Splices and Fused Sentences	313
<i>Preview Exercise</i>	313
16.1 <i>Revising comma splices and fused sentences</i>	317
16.2 <i>Revising comma splices and fused sentences</i>	319
16.3 <i>Revising comma splices and fused sentences</i>	321
<i>Review Exercise 16</i>	323

17 Agreement	325
<i>Preview Exercise 17a</i>	325
17.1 <i>Detecting errors in subject-verb agreement</i>	329
17.2 <i>Revising subject-verb agreement errors</i>	331
<i>Review Exercise 17a</i>	333
<i>Preview Exercise 17b</i>	335
17.3 <i>Detecting errors in pronoun-antecedent agreement</i>	339
17.4 <i>Revising to eliminate errors in pronoun-antecedent agreement</i>	341
<i>Review Exercise 17b</i>	343
18 Pronoun Case	345
<i>Preview Exercise</i>	345
18.1 <i>Choosing the appropriate pronoun</i>	351
18.2 <i>Choosing the appropriate pronoun</i>	353
18.3 <i>Choosing the correct pronoun</i>	355
<i>Review Exercise 18</i>	357
19 Verb Tenses	359
<i>Preview Exercise</i>	359
19.1 <i>Choosing present-tense forms of verbs</i>	363
19.2 <i>Choosing past-tense forms of verbs</i>	365
19.3 <i>Choosing perfect- and progressive-tense forms of verbs</i>	369
19.4 <i>Using consistent verb tenses</i>	373
19.5 <i>Using the subjunctive mood</i>	377
<i>Review Exercise 19</i>	379
20 Adjectives and Adverbs	381
<i>Preview Exercise</i>	381
20.1 <i>Using adjectives and adverbs</i>	385
20.2 <i>Using irregular and troublesome comparatives and superlatives</i>	389
<i>Review Exercise 20</i>	391
PUNCTUATION	393
21 End Punctuation	394
<i>Preview Exercise</i>	394
21.1 <i>Supplying appropriate end punctuation</i>	397
<i>Review Exercise 21</i>	399

22	Commas	401
	<i>Preview Exercise</i>	401
22.1	Using commas between items in a series and between coordinate adjectives	403
22.2	Using commas in compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences	407
22.3	Using commas after introductory words and phrases	411
22.4	Using commas to set off nonrestrictive information and elements that provide contrast	415
22.5	Using commas with direct quotations, numbers, dates, addresses, place names, and titles	419
	<i>Review Exercise 22</i>	421
23	Unnecessary Commas	423
	<i>Preview Exercise</i>	423
	<i>Review Exercise 23</i>	427
24	Semicolons and Colons	429
	<i>Preview Exercise</i>	429
24.1	Revising misused semicolons	433
24.2	Revising misused colons	437
24.3	Writing sentences that contain semicolons and colons	439
	<i>Review Exercise 24</i>	441
25	Apostrophes	443
	<i>Preview Exercise</i>	443
25.1	Changing noun phrases into possessive expressions	445
25.2	Forming contractions with apostrophes	447
	<i>Review Exercise 25</i>	449
26	Other Marks of Punctuation	451
	<i>Preview Exercise</i>	451
26.1	Using dashes effectively	455
26.2	Using hyphens appropriately	459
26.3	Using parentheses, brackets, and ellipsis points	463
	<i>Review Exercise 26</i>	465

MECHANICS	467
27 Capitals	468
<i>Preview Exercise</i>	468
27.1 <i>Using capital letters</i>	471
<i>Review Exercise 27</i>	473
28 Italics	475
<i>Preview Exercise</i>	475
<i>Review Exercise 28</i>	479
29 Quotation Marks	481
<i>Preview Exercise</i>	481
29.1 <i>Writing dialogue and punctuating properly</i>	485
<i>Review Exercise 29</i>	487
30 Numbers and Abbreviations	489
<i>Preview Exercise</i>	489
<i>Review Exercise 30</i>	493
31 Spelling	495
<i>Preview Exercise</i>	495
31.1 <i>Forming plurals</i>	499
31.2 <i>Adding prefixes</i>	501
31.3 <i>Adding suffixes</i>	503
31.4 <i>Using ie or ei</i>	505
<i>Review Exercise 31</i>	507
RESEARCH	509
32 Taking Notes and Documenting Sources	510
32.1 <i>Taking notes</i>	517
Index	519

THE COMPOSING PROCESS

- 1** Planning
- 2** Drafting
- 3** Revising
- 4** Paragraphs
- 5** Critical Thinking and Writing

As they begin to work on a writing project, effective writers do not simply start writing. Instead, they begin by making plans.

1a To begin, select a general subject.

The most effective writing develops from a writer's interest in a subject. Keep an open mind about possible topics, and select a general subject that appeals to you. If circumstances or other people determine your subject, as often happens in academic and professional writing, start with the strategies discussed in section 1b.

When you are trying to select a general subject, consider these possibilities:

What you have learned through general reading. Responses to your general reading in books, magazines, and newspapers can lead to effective subjects.

Your regular activities. Routine activities—working, studying, eating, shopping—can be interesting topics if thoughtfully explored.

Your special interests. Since you enjoy and know about certain topics—sports statistics, computer games, drama, antique cars—you can probably write interesting papers about them.

The people you know. The appearance, personality, behavior, and beliefs of people—your family, friends, teachers, doctors, political representatives—intrigue other people.

Places you have visited. Memorable places—foreign cities or countries, historical landmarks, the local pub, a national park—can provide interesting subjects.

Your unusual experiences. An exploration of an experience that most others have not had can lead to an insightful paper.

The problems people face. Personal, social, economic, and political problems can be provocative subjects.

Changes in your life. Reflections on your feelings and thoughts about significant changes in your life—adjusting to your parents' divorce, going to college, getting a job, coping with the death of a friend or family member—may provide a rewarding subject.

Your likes and dislikes. Your preferences in food, entertainment, and the like can reveal underlying attitudes and values of interest to yourself and others.

Your strong opinions. Your strong opinions on important matters like censorship, international relations, or human rights may provide effective subjects.

Current social, political, and cultural events. A local, national, or international event that you have been following closely may make an informative subject.

The academic courses you have taken. Topics raised in your courses or connections that you can make among different disciplines—for example, ways in which art and marketing interact in advertising—can be productive subjects.

EXERCISE 1.1 **1** *Selecting general subjects*

For each of the following general subjects, identify a potential subject for a paper.

1. Your general reading _____

2. Your regular activities _____

3. Your special interests _____

4. People you know _____

5. Places you have visited _____

6. Your unusual experiences _____

7. Problems people face _____

8. Changes in your life _____

9. Your likes and dislikes _____

- 10. Your strong opinions _____

- 11. Current social, political, and cultural events _____

- 12. Academic courses you have taken _____

1b **Develop ideas through planning.**

Most writers do not move directly from selecting a general subject to writing a paper. Instead, they explore the general subject, select and develop a narrow topic, consider their knowledge of and opinion about the topic, and explore a variety of ways to develop ideas related to the topic. Planning strategies they commonly use are freewriting, journal writing, journalists' questions, looping, clustering, and brainstorming.

Freewriting

Freewriting means writing spontaneously for brief, sustained periods of ten or fifteen minutes. Freewriting can be *unfocused* if you are searching for a subject or *focused* if you know the subject but are deciding how to approach it. Freewriting usually uses complete sentences but requires no other formal constraints, allowing the writer to focus on content rather than on correctness.

To begin, think briefly about your subject and then start writing about it. Write quickly, and write whatever comes to your mind. Do not worry about grammar, mechanics, spelling, neatness, or form. Simply write. If you cannot think of something to say, write "I can't think of something to say" until another thought comes to mind.

Journal Writing

Keeping a journal means recording your thoughts and observations, usually in a notebook, at a regular time interval, often daily. Like freewriting, **journal writing** allows writers to record ideas for further evaluation, but journal writing focuses on and develops a specific topic or event. It allows you to explore—now and over time—your thoughts and feelings about people, events, and ideas that interest or concern you.

Journalists' Questions

Journalists have long used a reliable set of questions—*who, what, when, where, how, and why*—to explore their subjects and to discover details that their readers want to know. Asking these questions can help you to focus on various aspects of your subject and to find interesting connections and information. You will find that some questions stimulate more ideas than others and that the most useful questions will vary from subject to subject.