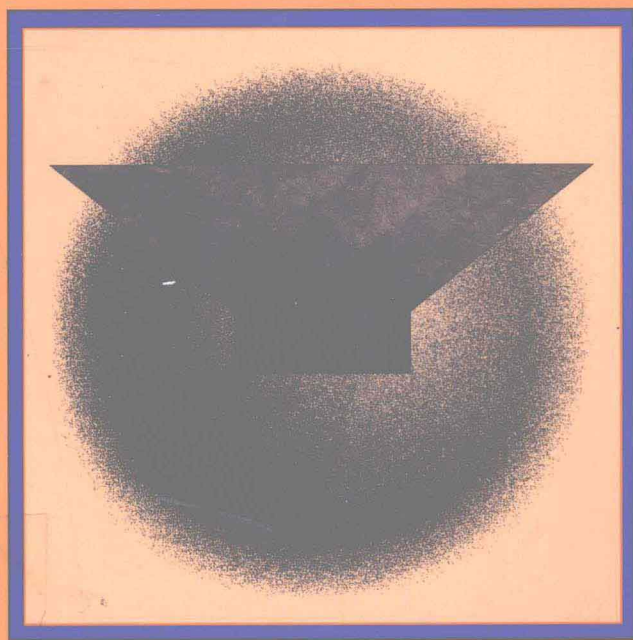


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Short Readings for Composition



WILLIAM J. KELLY

Strategy and Structure

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Strategy and Structure

*To my children,
Nicole Catherine Kelly and Jacqueline Michelle Kelly:
Your gifts—your intelligence, your compassion, your humor,
your capacity for life and love—day after day amaze and delight
me. I couldn't love you more.*

Preface

If you want to write better, read more.

This idea is certainly not original; American statesman Benjamin Franklin, among others, acknowledged that what he had read in his youth influenced the style of his own writing. In fact, if people did nothing more than derive pleasure from an essay and imitate the writer in their own writings, their essays would no doubt be better.

But effectively learning from reading goes far beyond mere appreciation of the quality of the writing and imitation of the writer's mastery in expressing the message. Improving writing through reading means recognizing the significance of an essay and then responding in some way to it. *Strategy and Structure* is designed to help your students develop these skills. It presents a wide range of outstanding writing to be enjoyed, discussed, and analyzed, and it provides guidelines that will help your students use what they've discovered to achieve their own mastery of writing.

The Arrangement of Text

Strategy and Structure is arranged to make it easier to master writing. The first two chapters focus on critical reading and the writing process. Chapter 1, "Writer as Reader," shows students how to recognize the strategies and techniques a writer has used so that they will be prepared to use these strategies and techniques themselves. It also features an annotated essay that demonstrates the process that should be followed. Then Chapter 2, "Working through the Writing Process," walks students through the various stages of the writing process. Both

chapters also introduce the concept of meeting the needs of the reader by recognizing the important relationships between *aim* (the purpose) and *form* (the rhetorical modes) in an essay.

The remaining nine chapters contain thirty-six writings, arranged on the basis of the modes and covering a wide variety of subjects, many embodying multicultural experiences. The collection contains works by such outstanding writers as Ellen Goodman, Langston Hughes, Joan Didion, and Richard Rodriguez, among others. This collection ensures that your students will face challenging, stimulating readings chapter after chapter.

The chapters themselves are laid out so that your students begin the course by writing from their own background and experiences, and then they gradually proceed to writing about different aspects of the world around them. Your students will thus face different writing challenges throughout the semester.

An important feature of *Strategy and Structure* is that the subject of Chapter 11, argument, is presented not as a mode but as an *aim*. This method of presentation makes perfect sense. Depending on the subject and situation, writers use a variety of modes to persuade the reader of the validity of their standpoints.

The Presentation of the Readings

Chapters 3–10 all follow the same pattern. First the mode is briefly discussed and explained, and then four essays dominated by that mode are presented. The first essay in each chapter is annotated to show how the writer has taken advantage of the mode.

The remaining three essays in each chapter are followed by four sets of questions, each focusing on a different aspect of the piece of writing. The questions are generally open-ended to allow a range of answers, always a great lead-in to spirited class discussions. *Understanding the Significance* deals with basic comprehension of the selection. *Discovering the Writer's Purpose* concentrates on the writer's message. *Examining the Writer's Method*

covers matters of structure and arrangement. And *Considering Style and Language* emphasizes particular stylistic devices used and examines the meanings of key words from the selections.

Each essay is also followed by a section titled *Your Turn: Responding to the Subject*, consisting of two possible writing assignments stemming from or reacting to the essay. Then, at the end of each chapter, fifteen additional topics for development are presented. Chapter 11 follows the same pattern as Chapters 3–10 except that in the final chapter, *aim* rather than *mode* is the focus. Thus, chapter after chapter your students will find ample opportunities to analyze successful writing and face a broad range of possibilities for creating successful writing of their own.

New in this Edition

The second edition of *Strategy and Structure* features a number of significant changes. For example, the prewriting examples as well as a number of the sample paragraphs are new. In addition, several new essays have been added, including works on rating television shows by *New York Times* columnist Frank Rich; on children and natural ability by syndicated columnist Thomas Sowell; on the real significance and effect of homelessness by Pulitzer-Prize winning writer Anna Quindlen; on accuracy in the media by Steven A. Holmes; on shoes and the stories they have to tell by Diane Riva; on the process responsible for fall's dazzling display of color by Diane Ackerman; on prejudice and police brutality by Paul F. Fletcher; and on different perceptions people have about the opposite sex by Steven Doloff.

Besides these new essays, an exciting, innovative feature called *Practical Application* has been added to Chapters 3–11. These entertaining and engaging assignments feature writing scenarios grounded in real-world writing. Each calls for a specific application of the writing technique discussed in that particular chapter, with guidelines provided about *approach* and

format. In some cases, a memorandum or op-ed piece is called for and in others, a short report or position paper. Each assignment also includes a model prepared by a student writer in response to a similar scenario with similar guidelines. Therefore, each of these chapters contains two distinctively different possibilities to practice and apply the principles addressed in that chapter, which translates into many interesting opportunities to develop a mastery of writing.

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I would also like to offer special thanks to my children, Jacqueline and Nicole. They are what every parent dreams of—bright, talented, compassionate, beautiful, funny. Day after day they inspire me to be just like them when I grow up.

But nobody deserves my thanks more than my wife, Michelle Nadeau Kelly. More than twenty-seven years after we first met, I'm still dazzled by her, by her intelligence and beauty, by her enthusiasm for life and learning, by her dedication to her family and her profession, by her brilliant insight into people. My life is rich, and my work possible, because of her.

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