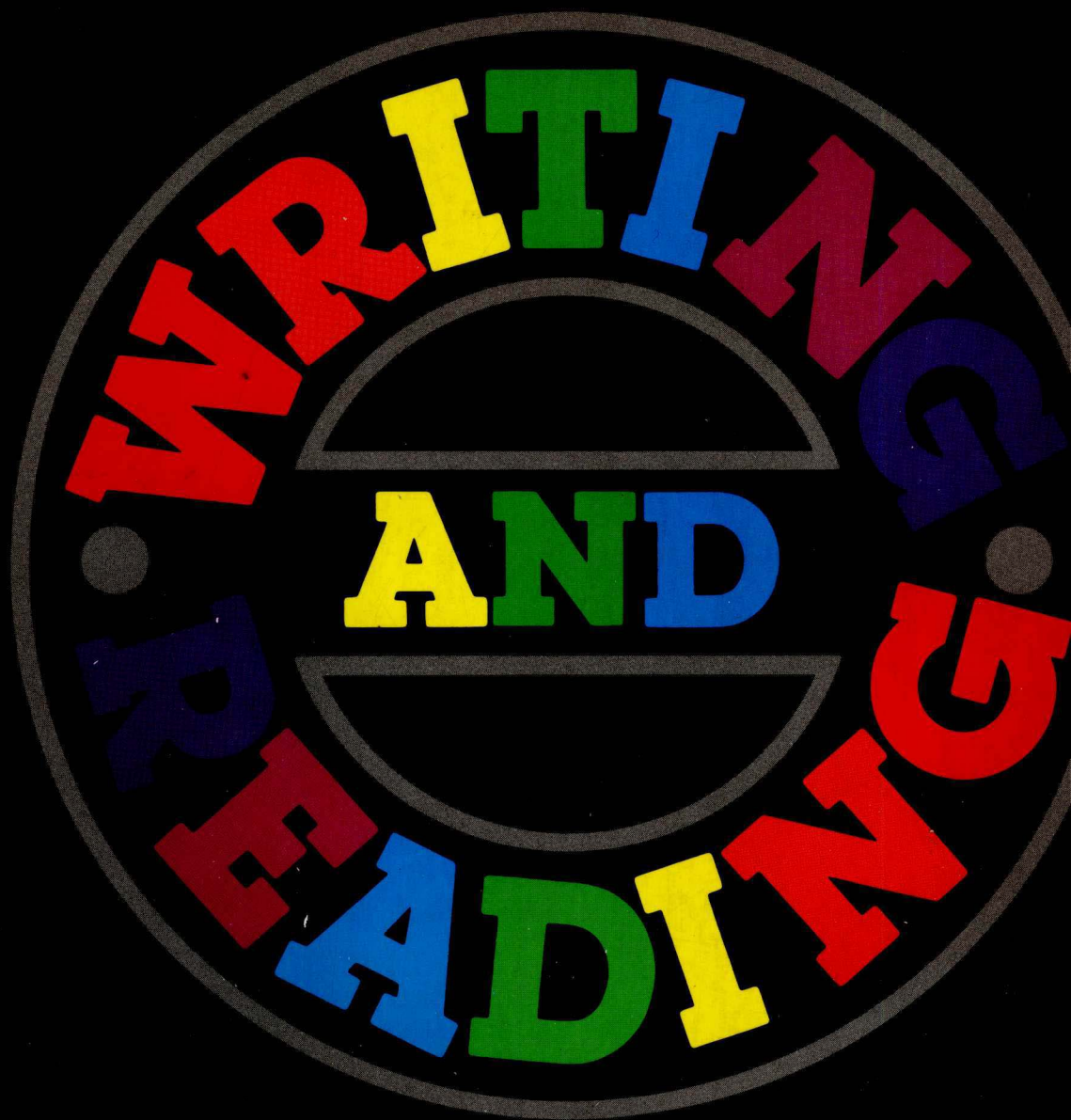

DOROTHY RUBIN



THE VITAL ARTS

SECOND EDITION

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**WRITING
AND
READING:
THE VITAL ARTS**

Dorothy Rubin

Trenton State College

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***With love to my understanding and supportive husband, Artie,
my lovely daughters, Carol and Sharon,
my precious grandchildren, Jennifer and Andrew,
my charming sons-in-law, John and Seth,
and my dear brothers Herb and Jack.***

preface

Our world is a complicated and competitive one. Love may make it go round, but we need understanding to stay on it comfortably. To understand more than our individual experiences can teach us—to deal with modern society and technology, that is, on terms better than those of primitive man—we must be able to get and to give information. The harsh fact is that a great amount of information is still passed and received through the written word, and anyone who finds either reading or writing difficult is seriously handicapped in the civilized struggle for a place in the world. Writing and reading are not frills of education; they are essentials of education.

Writing and reading are being presented together because of their natural interrelatedness. As a writer, we are also a reader trying to determine whether what we have written makes sense and whether it accurately expresses what we wanted to convey. Writing requires that we be logical, and it is a means of learning as well as a means of conveying information. As a reader, we use the sequence and organization of ideas to help us to comprehend the writer's message as well as to remember it. Reading helps us also to gain insight into the skills necessary to be a good writer. Both reading and writing are thinking processes that require knowledge of fundamental skills.

Writing and Reading—The Vital Arts is a text and workbook to help students write and read effectively. Effective writing is, first, writing that is correct by common standards of usage, punctuation, and spelling. It is also writing that lays down the writer's meaning in an order of words, sentences, and paragraphs that a reader cannot mistake. Effective reading, as I see it, is reading that takes in not only what is said but how it is said, why it is said, and whether the statements hold up under reasoned examination. The mechanical understanding necessary for effective writing and reading is basic, but it is an understanding to be learned. From my experiences in my own learning, in teaching language arts to future teachers, and in teaching basic skills to college freshmen, I know that the understanding can be learned. This book is based on those experiences and that knowledge.

Many of the students who open this book will have worked with its principles before. I hope, however, that my presentation of the principles in simple units and the integration of reading and writing will provide new insights to familiar problems. The emphasis in *Writing and Reading—The Vital Arts* is on the rapid, enduring, and enjoyable acquisition of fundamentals. The contents progress from the simple sentence to the logical development of the complete short theme. The text is divided into three units. The first is devoted mainly to sentence formation, the second to understanding and use of the paragraph, and the third to composition as a whole. Each unit is divided into lessons, and each lesson contains one, two or three parts. The parts of each lesson, however, present different related aspects of writing or of writing and reading rather than segments of a single topic. The components of each lesson are related to each other but involve the student in experiences with a variety of skills instead of in an endurance test of unvarying concentration. The first lesson, for example, introduces the simple sentence, sentence subjects, and the general use of punctuation marks; the second lesson continues with the simple sentence, sentence predicates, and the comma.

The parts of the lessons are cumulative; that is, a topic such as punctuation is pursued throughout the book as part of each lesson until the student has met, and met again, every punctuation mark and its uses.

Beginning with Unit II, on writing paragraphs, each lesson incorporates a part on reading skills. The discussion of the writing applications of a main topic, for instance, follows a lesson part on reading paragraphs for their main ideas. The juxtaposition of activities reinforces the learning of each and, at the same time, provides more variety and interest for the student. In Unit III the reading selections are used as a stimulus for writing. Throughout *Writing and Reading—The Vital Arts* students are given many opportunities to write and to compare their writing to a number of samples selected from literature.

Each lesson part provides a simple, concise explanation of the specific skill it presents and supports each explanation with numerous examples analyzed as necessary. Practice in using the particular skill follows. Answers to the practices are given at the end of each lesson. At the end of each unit, special sections on spelling and review crossword puzzles add to the challenge. Repeated practice in each skill will be encountered as the student works through the book. Repetition of problems and access to the answers ensure the overlearning essential to fixing a principle in the mind.

In addition to the primary content of the book there are revision and proofreading checklists, as well as four appendixes. The first

contains some often used abbreviations. The second consists of some often used irregular verbs, and the third introduces some troublesome verbs. The fourth appendix is a comprehensive handbook-glossary for reference that gives definitions and explanations for every term or principle in the text.

If a glossary of terms appears in the appendix, grammatical and other terms presumably appear in the text. Unavoidably, some do. I have tried to give principles in practical, comprehensible language as often as possible, for a rich grammar vocabulary helps no one write well. But some explanations cannot be given without names, and when I cannot escape a word like “appositive,” I define it and then use it. But I hope readers will find I have succeeded in cutting down the usual list of names to be learned and that they will benefit from a concentration on practical principles in place of one on terminology.

The organization of *Writing and Reading—The Vital Arts* will adapt to a variety of courses and student needs. Someone who wants to follow a single topic from start to finish without interruption can do so by turning from lesson part to lesson part. The answers to the main exercises are in the book, and the content is self-pacing. A student taking a conventional class and a student enrolled in a learning lab or self-help program will gain equally from the text.

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D.R.

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unit I

SENTENCES

Introduction

The sentence is a significant unit of language, a unit that has meaning. It is a word or group of words stating, asking, commanding, supposing, or exclaiming. The sentence contains a subject and a verb that are in agreement in number with one another. It begins with a capital letter and ends with a period (.), a question mark (?), or an exclamation point (!). There are four types of sentences: the simple, the compound, the complex, and the compound-complex.

There are clear-cut rules for correct sentences, but correct style is a much more complicated matter. Short sentences are used for effect, and so are longer sentences. There are times for repetition in writing, and there are times for brevity. Good writers use word imagery and descriptive phrases to make their writing colorful and interesting. Knowledge of how to use the various methods of expanding and combining sentences, as well as how to avoid using "overworked phrases," helps develop writing style.

Special Note

Although there are practices in the following lessons on recognizing simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences, the emphasis is on the writing of sentences. The recognition practices are presented to make you aware of the different types of sentences that you encounter in your everyday reading and to help you to gain experience in working with them.

lesson 1

Simple Sentences I

Word Usage: The Subject of a Sentence

Punctuation

Answers to Practices

Simple Sentences I

1. A **simple sentence** contains a word or group of words that names something (subject) and says something about the thing named (predicate). It expresses a complete meaning or thought. *Examples:* Jennifer smiles. José is going to the Park. The clouds are moving slowly.

2. A simple sentence consists of one single statement, command, wish, question, or exclamation. *Examples:* Sharon is playing the piano. Don't go there. Were I only able to go with you. How old are you? We are delighted at your engagement!

3. A simple sentence may be as brief as one word if it expresses a complete thought. In each of the following sentences, you must realize that the subject, *you*, is understood. Also, notice how the punctuation helps give the meaning. *Examples:* Go. Stop. Help!

4. A simple sentence may have a single subject and a single verb or a compound (two or more) subject and compound verb. *Examples:* Sharon swims a lot. Carol is happy. The boys and girls are good athletes. The boys and girls swim every day. The boys and girls swim and hike every day. We play basketball in the morning and swim in the afternoon.

5. Sentence fragments (incomplete parts of sentences) are groups of words that do not express complete thoughts, and as such they cannot stand alone as sentences. *Examples:* Into the woods, And in a minute the children, When they arrived. Although the group of words *When they arrived* has a subject and a predicate, it cannot stand alone because the thought signaled by *when* has not been completed.

Practice A. Underline the sentences in the following list.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1. Run away. | 6. The candidate's speech. |
| 2. The students. | 7. The man, who stopped us. |
| 3. In the study. | 8. The homework assignment is. |
| 4. Eat. | 9. Let's do it. |
| 5. Go to town. | 10. Beyond the school, when we arrived. |

STOP. Check answers at the end of Lesson 1 (p. 10).

Practice B. Choose one word or group of words from column I and one word or group of words from column II to construct 10 simple sentences that make the *best* sense. Write the letter from column II to the left of the number in column I.

Column I	Column II
_____ 1. The snowfall	a. went to the same school.
_____ 2. Did	b. are not too good.
_____ 3. The food and drink	c. houses 105 students.
_____ 4. Our dormitory at college	d. need sun and water.
_____ 5. John and Carol	e. are identical twins.
_____ 6. I	f. is a one-celled animal.
_____ 7. Green plants	g. was eight inches deep.
_____ 8. Herb and Jack	h. is a two-legged animal.
_____ 9. An amoeba	i. am a math major.
_____ 10. Man	j. you go to class today?

STOP. Check answers at the end of Lesson 1 (p. 10).

Practice C. Underline all sentence fragments in the following paragraphs.

1. Many people work by day and sleep by night. Studies show. Night workers are not as efficient as day workers. Night workers also