



THE
SCRIBNER
WORKBOOK
FOR
WRITERS



Marie-Louise Nickerson



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WORKBOOK
FOR
WRITERS

Marie-Louise Nickerson
Bronx Community College

Allyn and Bacon

Boston London Sydney Toronto Tokyo Singapore



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PREFACE

The *Scribner Workbook for Writers* follows the overall format of the *Scribner Handbook for Writers* by Robert DiYanni and Pat C. Hoy. The first ten parts of the *Workbook*, consisting of forty-five chapters, closely parallel Parts I through V of the *Handbook*: "Writing," "The Essay," "Reading," "Thinking," "Paragraphs," "Grammar," "Clear and Effective Sentences," "Sentence Style," "Words," and "Punctuation and Mechanics." The *Workbook*'s final section, Chapter 46, "Avoiding Plagiarism: Using Sources Correctly," presents guidelines for correct use of sources and exercises in using quotation, paraphrase, and summary.

How to use the *Workbook*

Parts I through X of the *Workbook* may be used independently or in conjunction with the *Handbook*. In the latter case, students studying various sections of the *Handbook* can complete the corresponding exercises in the *Workbook*. It includes numerous exercises of various types not found in the *Handbook*. Independent use of the *Workbook* is made possible by the detailed coverage and illustrations of grammar, clear and effective sentences, sentence style, words, and punctuation and mechanics. Thus, instructors may use the *Handbook* and *Workbook* simultaneously or separately.

Special Features

A major feature of the *Workbook* is its inclusion of numerous writing exercises and hundreds of writing topics. These exercises, which generate student writing, appear not only in the chapters on writing, reading, and thinking, but also in most other chapters of the book. The writing exercises are designed to give students practice in writing sentences, brief paragraphs, and longer responses. They also cover a wide range of writing situations, from reverse relationships, basic sentence grammar, idiomatic expressions, and grammar for ESL writers, to freshening stale clichés, using appropriate words, and choosing correct punctuation.

Another important feature of the *Workbook* is Chapter 19, "Grammar for ESL Writers." The areas covered in this comprehensive chapter include the following: count nouns and mass nouns, determiners, articles, quantifiers, demonstratives, possessive forms of pronouns, word order for modifiers, present and past participles as adjectives, modal auxiliaries, gerunds and infinitives, phrasal verbs, prepositions, direct and indirect discourse, and idiomatic expressions.

Various types of exercises are throughout the *Workbook*. In addition to writing exercises, the book includes exercises that ask students to identify sentence elements, to edit sentences

and paragraphs for faulty usage, and to select from multiple choices the correct answers to grammatical situations. The exercises geared toward generating student writing are particularly useful in determining whether students have mastered an area of grammar or writing skill. In addition, most exercises are preceded by an example that shows students what is expected from them.

The *Instructor's Answer Key* includes answers to all exercises except those that ask students to write paragraphs or longer responses.

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MARIE-LOUISE NICKERSON

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PART ONE

Writing

CHAPTER 1

Writing—A Way of Expressing Ideas

We write to convey ideas to an audience. Writing an essay involves a series of tasks: accumulating evidence, forming ideas, considering the audience, organizing, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading. This list of activities may make the writing process seem linear; it is not. The writing process is often recursive.

1a

Assessing audience and purpose

(Section 1d in the *Handbook*)

Your readers make up your audience. What you say, how you organize it, and how you say it will depend greatly on your audience and its makeup, interests, experiences, and needs. When you plan a piece of writing, keep the following Audience Checklist in mind.

AUDIENCE CHECKLIST

- Who are my readers? Are they experts in my subject? Are they generalists with an interest in my subject but no special knowledge?
- What does my audience know? Should I give detailed background information or brief summaries? Will my audience understand technical language, or should I give definitions of specialized terms?
- What response do I want? Do I want my audience to gain understanding, or do I want my audience to respond to my ideas with actions?
- Will audience members be friendly or hostile? If they are friendly, how do I sustain their interest? If they are hostile, how can I make them more receptive to my ideas?

- What does an objective look at my writing tell me? If I look at my own writing as if I were a member of the audience, what do I discover? Have I left out anything? What might my audience object to? How can I anticipate those objections?
- What attitudes and opinions does my audience have? What tone would be most appropriate and produce the desired effect with this audience?

1b Preparing to write

(Section 1e in the *Handbook*)

Ideas for writing are everywhere; the trick is knowing how to find them. A reading journal or a personal journal can provide you with many ideas.

1 Keeping a reading journal

A reading journal can be an excellent source of ideas for writing. In a reading journal, you can record not only facts and ideas found in your reading, but also your reactions to and your reflections on those facts and ideas. The format for a reading journal can vary. You can keep a journal in a notebook, on pads of paper, or on a computer. In your journal, you may wish to use freewriting, letting your mind play over what you have read, recording your ideas as they occur to you. You may wish to keep a double-column notebook, with summaries of the text on one side and your reactions and reflections on the other.

2 Keeping a personal journal

Another valuable source of ideas for writing is the personal journal. (Note that this sort of journal is not supposed to be a diary that records everything you did.) The personal journal is a place to record interesting experiences, things you observed that set you thinking. While you may wish to include detailed descriptions in your personal journal, it is more important to write about your reactions, feelings, responses, and ideas.

1c Organizing

(Section 1f in the *Handbook*)

Deciding how to organize an essay will depend on how you wish to present your ideas. There are a number of organizational methods: organizing from general to specific, specific to general, climactic order, time order, and spatial order. Outlining before writing can help you organize and present your ideas so that readers can follow your argument easily. Depending on which format works best for you, you may choose mapping as a way of organizing ideas, a formal sentence outline, a topic outline, or an informal outline consisting of a few phrases and key words or of ideas arranged in groups.

The following chart lists the steps that you may go through in producing a piece of writing. While the process is not strictly linear—you may find yourself returning to an earlier step that you thought you had completed—the list is helpful.

STEPS IN THE WRITING PROCESS

- Gathering ideas (in journals, through research, and so on)
- Organizing
- Drafting
- Revising
- Editing
- Proofreading

EXERCISE 1 Writing for Specific Audiences

For each topic that follows, write a brief paragraph aimed at the specified audience.
Example:

Topic: Failing a quiz

Audience: Your family

When I got my last math quiz back, I was upset by the low grade, a 56, the lowest grade I've had so far this semester. When I looked over the questions that I had the most difficulty with, I noticed that the ones I got wrong all had something to do with exponents. Obviously, I need to know more about exponents and how to handle them in equations, so yesterday I went to the math lab and got a tutor.

1. Topic: Failing a quiz
Audience: Your best friend

2. Topic: Failing a quiz
Audience: Your advisor

3. Topic: Quitting your job
Audience: Your boss

4. Topic: Quitting your job
Audience: Your family

5. Topic: Being in a car accident
Audience: Your classmates