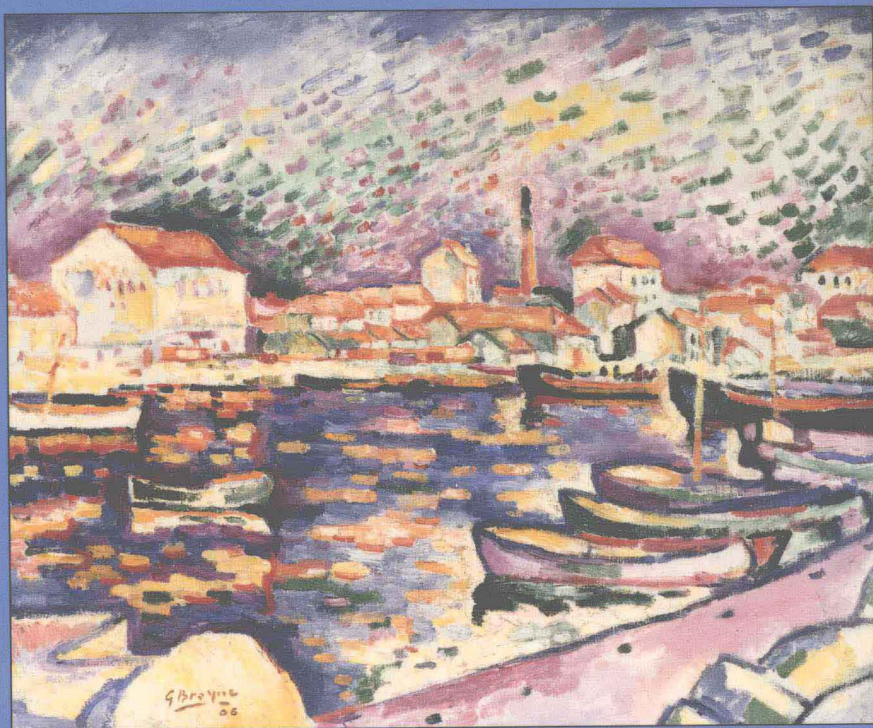


THE PROSE READER

ESSAYS FOR THINKING, READING, AND WRITING



KIM FLACHMANN
MICHAEL FLACHMANN

FOURTH EDITION

ANNOTATED INSTRUCTOR'S EDITION

THE PROSE READER

*Essays for Thinking,
Reading, and Writing*

FOURTH EDITION



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Preface to the Instructor

The Prose Reader is based on the assumption that lucid writing follows lucid thinking, whereas poor written work is almost inevitably the product of foggy, irrational thought processes. As a result, our primary purpose in this book, as in the first three editions, is to help students *think* more clearly and logically—both in their minds and on paper.

Reading and writing are companion activities that involve students in the creation of thought and meaning—either as readers interpreting a text or as writers constructing one. Clear thinking, then, is the pivotal point that joins together these two efforts. Although studying the rhetorical strategies presented in *The Prose Reader* is certainly not the only way to approach writing, it is a productive means of helping students improve their abilities to think, read, and write on progressively more sophisticated levels.

The symbiosis we envision among thinking, reading, and writing is represented in this text by the following hierarchy of cognitive levels:

1. *Literal, characterized by a basic understanding of words and their meanings;*
2. *Interpretive, consisting of a knowledge of linear connections between ideas and an ability to make valid inferences based on those ideas; and*
3. *Critical, the highest level, distinguished by the systematic investigation of complex ideas and by the analysis of their relationship to the world around us.*

WHAT REMAINS THE SAME

The Prose Reader is organized according to the belief that our mental abilities are generally sequential. In other words, students cannot read or write analytically before they are able to perform well on the literal and interpretive levels. Accordingly, the book progresses from selections that require predominantly literal skills,

description, narration, and example,
through readings involving more interpretation,
process analysis, division/classification, comparison/contrast, and
definition,
to essays that demand a high degree of analytical thought,
cause/effect, and argument/persuasion.

Depending on the caliber of your students and your prescribed curriculum, these rhetorical modes can, of course, be studied in any order. In the Rhetorical Table of Contents, each entry includes a one- or two-sentence synopsis of the selection so you can peruse the list quickly and decide which essays to assign. An alternate Thematic Table of Contents lists selections by academic discipline, responding to recent nationwide attempts to integrate reading and writing in content areas other than English through “Writing Across the Curriculum.”

- *The chapter introductions are filled with several types of useful information about each rhetorical mode.*

Each of the nine rhetorical divisions in the text is introduced by an explanation of how to think, read, and write in that particular mode. These introductions also contain a sample student paragraph and a complete student essay that illustrate each rhetorical pattern and help bridge the sometimes formidable gap between student and professional writing.

After each essay, the student writer has provided a thorough analysis of the experience, explaining the most enjoyable, exasperating, or noteworthy aspects of writing that particular essay. (We have found that this combination of student essays and commentaries makes the professional selections easier for students to read and more accessible as models of thinking and writing.) Although each chapter focuses on one particular rhetorical strategy, students are continually encouraged to examine ways in which other modes help support each writer’s main intentions.

- *As in earlier editions, the essays in The Prose Reader continue to represent a wide range of topics.*

These subjects include discrimination, ethnic identity, job opportunities, aging, education, sports, women's roles, prison life, time management, AIDS, immigration, physical handicaps, and the writing process itself.

The essays were selected on the basis of five important criteria: (1) high interest level, (2) currency in the field, (3) moderate length, (4) readability, and (5) broad subject variety.

Together, these essays portray the universality of human experience as expressed through the viewpoints of men and women, many different ethnic and racial groups, and a variety of ages and social classes.

- *The Argument and Persuasion chapter (Chapter 9) covers topics such as religion's place in public schools, affirmative action, gun control, and immigration, and it includes two sets of opposing-viewpoint essays on freedom of the press and the effects of TV.*

The essays in this chapter are particularly useful for helping your students refine their critical thinking skills in preparation for longer, more sustained papers on a single topic. The first five essays in this chapter encourage students to wrestle with provocative issues that make a difference in how we all live. Then, the two sets of opposing viewpoint essays help the students see coherent arguments at work from two different perspectives on a single issue.

- *"Documented Essays: Reading and Writing from Sources" (Chapter 10) features academic writing throughout the college curriculum in the form of research papers on group violence and Latina health.*

These essays demonstrate the two most common documentation styles—Modern Language Association (MLA) and American Psychological Association (APA). By including documented essays, we intend to clarify some of the mysteries connected with research and documentation; we have also tried to provide interesting material for creating more elaborate writing assignments in accord with your own specific course goals. In addition, we offer a full range of apparatus for these selections, including a list of

Further Reading on each subject and suggested topics for longer, more sophisticated essays and research papers.

- *The book ends with our popular chapter called “Thinking, Reading, and Writing.”*

This section includes essays on listening, reading fiction, understanding the process of writing, writing with style, and composing on the computer. In addition to demonstrating all the rhetorical modes at work, these essays provide a strong conclusion to the theoretical framework of this text, which focuses intently on the interrelationships among thinking, reading, and writing.

- *Because our own experience suggests that students often produce their best writing when they are personally involved in the topics of the essays they read and in the human drama surrounding those essays, we precede each selection with thorough biographical information on the author and provocative prereading questions on the subject of the essay.*

The biographies explain the real experiences from which an essay emerged, and the prereading questions (“Preparing to Read”) help students focus on the purpose, audience, and subject of the essay. The prereading questions also foreshadow the questions and writing assignments that follow each selection. Personalizing this preliminary material encourages students to identify with both the writer of the essay and the essay’s subject matter—and thus engages the students’ attention and energizes their response to the selections they read.

- *The questions at the end of each selection are designed to help students move sequentially from various literal-level responses to interpretation and analysis.*

Five different types of questions are furnished for each essay:

1. *“Understanding Details,” questions that test the students’ literal and interpretive understanding of what they have read;*
2. *“Analyzing Meaning,” questions that require students to analyze various aspects of the essay;*

3. *“Discovering Rhetorical Strategies,”* questions that investigate the author’s rhetorical plan in constructing the essay;
4. *“Making Connections,”* questions that ask students to find thematic and rhetorical connections among essays they have read; and
5. *“Ideas for Discussion/Writing,”* exercises that supply writing and discussion topics for use inside or outside the classroom.

These questions deliberately examine both the form and the content of the essays so that your students can cultivate a similar balance in their own writing.

- *The writing assignments are preceded by Preparing to Write questions designed to encourage students to express their feelings, thoughts, observations, and opinions on various topics.*

Questions about their own ideas and experiences help students produce writing that corresponds as closely as possible to the way they think.

- *The writing assignments themselves seek to involve the students in realistic situations by providing a specific purpose and audience for each essay topic.*

In this manner, student writers are drawn into rhetorical scenes that carefully focus their responses to a variety of questions or problems.

- *The book concludes with a glossary of composition terms (along with examples and page references from the text) and an index of authors and titles.*

WHAT IS NEW

We have made several changes in the fourth edition of *The Prose Reader* that represent the responses of reviewers from many different types of colleges and universities all over the United States:

- *We have expanded the rhetorical introductions, including more specific instruction on writing each type of essay, a new section focusing on each rhetorical mode as a way of thinking, and additional material introducing and explaining the student essays.*

- ▶ *The fourth edition of The Prose Reader contains fifteen new essays. We have updated some of the selections, added new authors, and introduced new topics, such as growing up, the logistics of job interviews, work and motherhood, male and female identity, writing, personal identity, immigration, TV, the media, and Latina health.*
- ▶ *Since multicultural and women's issues have always been well represented in The Prose Reader, this edition continues to make a commitment to cultural and sexual diversity by including many new essays by women and ethnic-minority authors, among them Maya Angelou, Barbara Ehrenreich, Gloria Steinem, Rita Mae Brown, Alice Walker, and Peter Salins.*
- ▶ *We have replaced both sets of pro/con essays to make them more timely and accessible to our students today. The topics covered are freedom of the press and the relationship between TV and violence.*
- ▶ *We have included a documented essay in Chapter 10 on an important new issue in the health care debate. We now offer documented essays on group violence and Latina health, which demonstrate both the MLA and the APA documentation styles.*
- ▶ *We have expanded the number of questions after each essay, including a new set of questions entitled "Making Connections," which ask students to draw conclusions and recognize thematic and rhetorical relationships they may not have seen before among various essays in this book.*

WHAT SUPPLEMENTS ARE AVAILABLE

Available with *The Prose Reader* is a thorough **Annotated Instructor's Edition** designed to help make your life in the classroom a little easier. We have filled the margins of the AIE with many different kinds of supplementary material, including background information about each essay, definitions of terms that may be unfamiliar to your students, a list of related readings from this text that can be taught profitably with each other, a list of related videos from the *ABC News/Prentice Hall Video Library*,

innovative teaching ideas, provocative quotations, specific answers to the questions that follow each selection, additional essay topics, and instructor comments on teaching in different rhetorical modes.

In addition to the *Annotated Instructor's Edition*, we have created a new supplement that combines the ***Instructor's Resource Manual*** and the ***Quiz Book***. In it, we identify and discuss some of the most widely used theoretical approaches to the teaching of composition; we then offer innovative options for organizing your course, specific suggestions for the first day of class, a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of using different teaching strategies, and several successful techniques for responding to student writing. Next, we provide two objective quizzes for each essay to help you monitor your students' mastery of a selection's vocabulary and content. This supplement ends with some additional professional essays (two opposing viewpoint essays and one documented essay), a series of student essays (one for each rhetorical strategy featured in the text) followed by the student writer's comments, and an annotated bibliography of books about thinking, reading, and writing.

An exciting new supplement available with this edition of *The Prose Reader* is a **computer disk (3¹/₂" IBM and Macintosh format)** that contains all the quizzes from the *Instructor's Resource with Quiz Book*. These quizzes can be copied onto other disks or printed directly from the master disk for your students to work with. This computer disk will be especially useful in colleges and universities that have computer classrooms for their composition courses; in addition, students can take individual copies of the disk with them to complete their assignments off campus.



Also available with *The Prose Reader* is the complete ***ABC News/Prentice Hall Video Library***, which is a series of nine video clips (from four to twelve minutes long) on such provocative subjects as teens and prejudice, Prozac, and political correctness on college campuses. In the margins of the *Annotated Instructor's Edition*, we list videos from this collection that can effectively be taught with certain essays in the text.

This entire instructional package, available to you free of charge, is intended to help your students discover what they want to say and to prompt them to shape their ideas into a coherent

form, thereby encouraging their intelligent involvement in the complex and exciting world around them.

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Our final and most important debt is to our students, who have taught us so much over the years about the writing process.

Preface to the Student

Accurate thinking is the beginning and fountain of writing.
—Horace

THE PURPOSE OF THIS TEXT

Have you ever had trouble expressing your thoughts? If so, you're not alone. Many people have this difficulty—especially when they are asked to write their thoughts down.

The good news is that this “ailment” can be cured. We've learned over the years that the more clearly students think about the world around them, the more easily they can express their ideas through written and spoken language. As a result, this textbook intends to improve your writing by helping you think clearly, logically, and critically about important ideas and issues that exist in our world today. You will learn to reason, read, and write about your environment in increasingly complex ways, moving steadily from a simple, literal understanding of topics to interpretation and analysis. Inspired by well-crafted prose models and guided by carefully worded questions, you can actually raise the level of your thinking skills while improving your reading and writing abilities.

The Prose Reader is organized on the assumption that as a college student you should be able to think, read, and write on three increasingly difficult levels:

1. *Literal, which involves a basic understanding of a selection and the ability to repeat or restate the material;*
2. *Interpretive, which requires you to make associations and draw inferences from information in your reading; and*
3. *Analytical or critical, which invites you to systematically separate, explain, evaluate, and reassemble various important ideas discovered in your reading.*

For example, students with a literal grasp of an essay would be able to understand the words on the page, cite details from the selection, and paraphrase certain sections of the essay. Students equipped with interpretive skills will see implicit relationships within a selection (such as comparison/contrast or cause/effect), make inferences from information that is supplied, and comprehend the intricacies of figurative language. Finally, students functioning analytically will be able to summarize and explain difficult concepts and generate plausible hypotheses from a series of related ideas. In short, this book leads you systematically toward higher levels of thinking and writing.

In order to stimulate your thinking on all levels, this text encourages you to participate in the making of meaning—as both a reader and a writer. As a reader, you have a responsibility to work with the author of each essay to help create sense out of the words on the page; as a writer, you must be conscious enough of your audience so that they perceive your intended purpose clearly and precisely through the ideas, opinions, and details that you provide. Because of this unique relationship, we envision reading and writing as companion acts in which writer and reader are partners in the development of meaning.

To demonstrate this vital interrelationship between reader and writer, our text provides you with prose models that are intended to inspire your own thinking and writing. In the introduction to each chapter, we include a student paragraph and a student essay that feature the particular rhetorical strategy under discussion. The essay is highlighted by annotations and by underlining to illustrate how to write that type of essay and to help bridge the gap between student writing and the professional selections in the text. After each essay, the student writer has drafted a personal note with some useful advice about generating that particular type of essay. The essays that follow each chapter introduction, selected from a wide variety of well-known contemporary authors, are intended to encourage you to improve your writing through a partnership with some of the best examples of professional prose available today. Just as musicians and athletes richly benefit from studying the techniques of the foremost people in their fields, you will, we hope, grow in spirit and language use from your collaborative work with the writers in this collection.

HOW TO USE THIS TEXT

The Prose Reader contains essays representing the four main purposes of writing:

Description

Narration

Exposition

Persuasion

Our primary focus within this framework is on exposition (which means “explanation”), because you will need to master this type of verbal expression to succeed in both the academic and the professional worlds. Although the essays in this text can be read in any order, we begin with

description

because it is a basic technique that often appears in other forms of discourse. We then move to

narration, or storytelling,

and next to the six traditional expository strategies:

example

process analysis

division/classification

comparison/contrast

definition

cause/effect

The text continues with an expanded chapter on

argument and persuasion,

including two sets of opposing viewpoint essays. Chapter 10 discusses and presents

documented research papers,

and the anthology concludes with selections about thinking, reading, and writing.

“Pure” rhetorical types rarely exist, of course, and when they do, the result often seems artificial. Therefore, although each essay

in this collection focuses on a single rhetorical mode as its primary strategy, other strategies are always at work in it. These selections concentrate on one primary technique at a time in much the same way a well-arranged photograph highlights a certain visual detail, though many other elements function in the background to make the picture an organic whole.

Each chapter begins with an explanation of a single rhetorical technique. These explanations are divided into six sections that move from the effect of this technique on our daily lives to its integral role in the writing process. The first section catalogs the use of each rhetorical mode in our lives. The second section, “Defining _____” (e.g., “Defining Description”), offers a working definition of the technique and a sample/student paragraph so that we all have the same fundamental understanding of the term. A third section, entitled “Thinking Critically by Using _____,” introduces each rhetorical mode as a pattern of thought that helps us organize and more fully understand our experiences. A fourth section, called “Reading and Writing _____ Essays” (e.g., “Reading and Writing Descriptive Essays”), explains the processes of reading and writing an essay in each rhetorical mode, and a fifth section presents an annotated student essay showing this particular rhetorical method “at work,” followed by comments from the student writer. The last part offers some final comments on each rhetorical strategy.

Before each reading selection, we have designed some material to focus your attention on a particular writer and topic before you begin reading the essay. This “prereading” segment begins with biographical information about the author and ends with a number of questions to whet your appetite for the essay that follows. This section is intended to help you discover interesting relationships among ideas in your reading and then anticipate various ways of thinking about and analyzing the essay. The prereading questions forecast not only the material in the essay, but also the questions and writing assignments that follow.

The questions following each reading selection are designed as guides for thinking about the essay. These questions are at the heart of the relationship represented in this book among thinking, reading, and writing. They are divided into four interrelated sections that move you smoothly from a literal understanding of