Introduction to Writing in College

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MELANIE GAGICH

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Introduction to the Book

About This Book

This book was created not only to help students entering Cleveland State University's College Writing sequence save money on textbooks, but also to introduce my course, university resources, and common college writing genres. However, it is still a work in progress and not complete at this time.

In addition to chapters written by Melanie Gagich, this book contains complete and aggregated chapters from Monique Babin, Carol Burnell, Susan Pesznecker, Nichole Rosevear, and Jamie Wood's *The Word on College Reading and Writing* as well as one full chapter from Stephen D. Krause's *The Process of Research Writing*. These sections will be denoted with attribution information at the top of each section. *Introduction to Writing in College* was created by Melanie Gagich with support from Cleveland State University's 2017 Textbook Affordability Small Grant.

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About the Author

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Using This Book

This book aligns with Cleveland State University's First-Year Writing Program's shared ENG 100/101 curriculum while also including concepts and practices unique to Melanie Gagich's classroom.

Students are expected to read assigned chapters for homework, which will help them prepare for upcoming writing assignments, and to have access to this book in class on days when readings are assigned. Students may access the book using smart phones, tablets, laptops, or print it. If a student chooses to print the book, please be aware that some chapters include links to videos and to outside readings. Students who print the book are still responsible for accessing these outside materials.

Chapter 1: Introductions

Introducing Myself

I am Melanie Gagich and I created this text in part to help prepare you (my ENG 100/101 students) for some of the trickier aspects of writing in college. I would like to begin by introducing myself because as the semester unfolds I will hopefully get to know each of you through your formal and informal writing, so I think it is important for you to know a little about myself, too.

I am married to Chad who is currently an American Government high school teacher and who earned his Master's degree at Cleveland State. We own a dog, Ramona, and two cats, Rea and Frankenstein, and live in a 1920s house in Cleveland Heights. When my husband and I moved to Cleveland, we were so excited to be within walking distance of restaurants, movie theaters, etc. We love trying new restaurants and places, so recommendations are always welcome. I really enjoy reading and watching movies. Historical fiction and non-fiction are some of my favorite genres to read and I love to watch horror movies, new-age comedies, and depressing documentaries. Quentin Tarantino is one of my favorite directors and I really enjoy most of his movies. Other hobbies include walking my dog, traveling, and continuously renovating our house. When I am not binge-watching television shows, you can often find me doing one of those activities.

As for family, both of my parents created and own two different businesses. My mom owns and directs a daycare and my father owns a metal sheet roofing company. I have worked many summers for both of my parents and learned to love working on a roof, but never really enjoyed working at the daycare. My husband has also worked for my father and his father and we both gained a lot of experiences from working odd jobs, both indoor and outdoor.

Fo us, what became clear as we worked these odd jobs, was that it is very important to choose a career that one is passionate about. With this in mind, Chad decided to go back to school at CSU to earn his educator's license while I decided to go back to school for my doctoral degree. I am currently working towards earning my PhD in Composition and TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) during the summer.

I am originally from Avella, Pennsylvania, which is about 45 minutes south of Pittsburgh. Avella is very rural and I graduated from high school with approximately 50 other students. My high school experiences included taking part in "take your tractor to school day", attending the rodeo held on our football field each year, and enjoying a day off from school every year for the first day of doe season. Throughout high school I had a love/ hate relationship with writing based mostly on how my instructors approached it–teachers who allowed me the

freedom to be creative made me love it, while the teacher who corrected every grammar mistake I made caused me to shudder at the thought of English class. Although I eventually outgrew my dislike of English, I still experience anxiety when it comes to grammar and punctuation.

Although the English dialect used in the region where I am from is categorized as a Western Pennsylvania dialect, it is more specifically associated with "Pittsburghese." This means means I might use some words you've never heard like "yinz" (plural for "you") or "gumband" (either a hair tie or rubber band) .I grew up speaking this variation of English as my first (or home) language and although I have never been able to master another language, I very much recognize the value in mastering different languages and variations of language. One of the reasons for this recognition relates to my initial college experiences. When I arrived at my first undergraduate class, I remember I felt out of place because other students seemed to be able to "talk the talk" and participate in the college setting. For me, I often sat quietly in the back because I was usually too nervous to talk. I thought I sounded funny or didn't have anything "smart" to say. But, as the years went on, I realized that speaking academically is also a type of language and that doing and speaking college are skills and with practice, I could do both, too.

You might be wondering why I am telling you all of this. Well, I think it important for new college students to know that everyone (including his or her professors) has had to go through what you're going through at some point. Language(s) we learned, dialects we grew up hearing, prior life experiences, family history, etc. all affect the ways we write and communicate. Reflecting on how these factors influence our writing, recognizing that there are various types of "languages" used in college, and that a person can learn to "do college" can be an illuminating process. So, in this class, we will begin by discussing these concepts and hopefully it will help you transition from your prior writing environment and experience, into the new ones.

Exercise

Briefly answer the following questions and bring your answers to class:

- Where did you grow up? How might that affect the ways you "do college"?
- What sort of experiences have you had with writing? Do you like or dislike it? What factors might have influenced your opinion?
- What language(s) do you speak? Do you use slang/dialects that maybe not everyone knows? How might your language affect the way you write?

As a Teacher of First-Year Writing

Now that I've introduced myself on a personal level, I feel like I should briefly review my credentials and introduce myself as an instructor. I have a Bachelor's of Science in Secondary Education English from Slippery Rock University, a Master's of Arts in American Literature from Kent State University, and a Teaching English as a Foreign Language Certification (TEFL) from Via Lingua in Florence, Italy. Currently, I am in a summer residency Composition and TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) doctoral program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and I hope to earn my PhD by 2020. I want to study the effects and

perceptions of technology and multimodal assignments in introductory Composition classrooms (like ours) as the topic for my eventual dissertation.

I began teaching College Writing Courses in 2007 at Kent State and have taught over 100 courses up until now. I have taught at Kent State, University of Akron, Stark State College of Technology, and at a community college in Pittsburgh, Pa. I was hired as full-time college lecturer at CSU in 2012 and I love working here. And I am not just saying that; I truly enjoy collaborating with my colleagues, working with my department, and teaching the students of Cleveland State.

As an instructor, I have a few **bad** habits:

1. I talk fast and move quickly; however, I always provide handouts (probably too many!) and all handouts can be found on Blackboard

2. I swear from time to time–nothing too shocking but if it is a problem, please just talk to me after class to discuss it

3. I pace or move around a lot–again, if this is too distracting just see me after class and I will try to settle my pacing.

As an instructor, I also have what I perceive as **good** habits:

1. I answer relevant emails fairly quickly (usually within 24 hours)

2. I believe in a negotiation and transparency in the classroom. Meaning, I don't want to assign points, projects, due dates, without explaining my rationale to you–I try to facilitate dialogue between instructor and students and students to students in my classrooms

3. I promote a safe space in my classroom and I expect each and every student to treat others with respect. Although class discussions will likely involve topics surrounding power, race, gender, class, and language in the US, hateful speech and/or actions will not be tolerated.

4. That said, I am here to support you! I want to support your exploration of diverse topics, introduce you to various writing genres, and help you navigate the sometimes murky world of higher education. I know what it is like to be confused or lost, so feel free to come talk to me.

In terms of pedagogy (or how I choose to teach writing), I approach writing as a process and my classroom is student-centered. What this means is that your grade for each project will not only reflect a "one and done" method; instead, your process work will also make up a significant portion of your overall project grade. Students-centered means that my classes are not lecture classes, in fact, I do not enjoy lecturing at all. I believe that as an instructor of writing I am not a topical content expert but instead a guide who is helping you become a prepared college writer who facilitates your exploration of various topics through the reading of texts.

You will write a lot in my class. Some of it will be done as drafting workshops in class because I want to give you as many opportunities as possible to get your work done at school, but some work will be done as homework. However, I want you to know that I am here to help you and not to make you feel bad about your writing. I am a tough grader (and some say a tough instructor) but I work to make class fun, meaningful and allow you make connections between ENG 100/101 and your other courses.

Exercise

Briefly answer the following questions and bring your answers to class:

- What are your expectations for a college writing class? Why do you think you have those expectations?

- What are your expectations for your instructor? Provide a short rationale, or reason for, those expectations.

- What are your expiration for yourself? Provide a short rationale for those expectations.

1.1. Doing College

In 2015, I gave a presentation to a room full of high school seniors. The purpose of the presentation was to outline differences between high school and college in order to make students' transition from high school to higher education easier. I began the talk thinking that I would review writing practices; however, students quickly began interrupting my academic talk with questions like, "Do you need a pass to go to the bathroom?" or "What is a syllabus?" or "How much homework do you give?"

These questions threw me for a loop momentarily then I realized, of course, these were serious questions that were likely on the mind of many incoming college students.

With that presentation in mind, I decided to provide my students with a brief outline of requirements and terms that you might not have been familiar with in high school. Although you will have an introduction to college life class, I feel that my ENG 100/101 courses are also good places to help you learn to navigate college. I use my class as the foundation for this discussion and I provide important concepts that will help you meet my expectations and get the most out of my course.

What is Composition and College Writing?

One common misperception involves the name of the course. Many students seem to believe that your Introduction College Writing Course will be an "English" course. Meaning, many think the class will entail reading literature, writing creatively, and practicing grammar. In fact, that is really not the case. Although ENG 100/101 is a general education requirement, the way I approach it, it also belongs within the field of Composition and Rhetoric. College Writing instructors' utilize theories and practices outlined in various academic journals and organizations (e.g. *College Composition and Communication*).

This class will help prepare you for future college writing but will also help you begin to think more critically about the rhetorical moves that surround you. Think of the last political ad you saw or an article you read online–how do you know if it was legit? Do you know who paid for the ad/article or who will profit from it? If you do know, what does that mean? Do you ask yourself whose agenda is this when you interact with popular media like reality tv shows, news programs, commentary programs, blogs, articles, etc.? These are just some of the questions that are explored in this course and in other introductory composition courses, which positions it as complimentary to but also different from most "English" course you might have experienced in the past.

I would also like to point out the title of the course: "College Writing." To me this title illustrates that it is my job

to prepare you for college writing, not only for my course, but also for the duration of your college experience. Therefore, I have structured the class in a way I believe will help you become a better reader, writer, and critical thinker.

When reading your syllabus, you might have noticed a list of outcomes and course goals. Both lists are not meant to be read once and forgotten; instead, they should be taken into consideration as you move forward in the class.

As a reminder, I have listed the **outcomes** I hope are able to transfer to other classes while taking and after completing my ENG 100/101 course:

1. Preparedness for writing to targeted and various audience members;

2. The ability to recognize and use various rhetorical moves illustrating your awareness of the relationship between audience, situation/occasion, and purpose;

3. The ability to access and utilize critical thinking and reading skills in any given situation;

4. The willingness to participate in a classroom environment that promotes student responsibility, respect, and agency;

5. The willingness to participate in writing workshops

6. The ability to use peer and individual revision practices;

7. A confident and secure feeling towards your writing and writing processes;

8. The ability to converse using academic discourses (languages);

9. The willingness to use your own experiences to produce interesting, diverse, and mature written work.

Further, the First-Year Writing Program at CSU states that students in ENG 101 will be taught techniques and strategies in order to reach the following **course goals**:

1. Write effective explanatory and argumentative prose;

2. Read, understand, analyze, and respond to explanatory and argumentative prose;

3. Develop a thesis, unity, and coherence in a piece of writing;

4. Anticipate and address audience expectations;

5. Understand and use appropriate paragraph structure, transitions, logical development;

6. Choose and use appropriate diction; development of sentence structure and documentation style based on rhetorical situations;

7. Understand connotations and denotations in written texts;

8. Revise, edit, and proofread.

We will spend time with these outcomes and goals throughout the semester because they are reflected in the types of essays we write, the readings we read, and the personal reflections completed at the end of each unit. As a learner, you will also add on your personal outcomes and goals.

The outcomes and goals backup my claim regarding this class as a college writing class where you will spend

a lot of time talking about writing, learning writing skills, and writing. Lots and lots of writing. Our class time will be set up in a way that allows you to work during class, ask me questions directly, and collaborate with your peers. I do not force you to work in a group or with a partner but I strongly suggest you do because writing is not a solo activity. I have found my best writing has been done when I work with my friends, colleagues, and, yes, my parents. So I urge you to do the same!

Exercise

Please reflect on the following questions:

- How might college be different from your experience(s) in high school?
- How might college be similar to your experience(s) in high school?

1.2. Introduction to the Course: Technology in the Classroom

Technology in the Classroom and Course

Although my eventual research focus is multimodal composing and digital rhetoric, I believe that digital spaces, programs, freeware, software, etc. are tools, not magic wands. What I mean is that even though technology can be very useful in providing access to resources and to designing texts, it should not be seen as a tool that will teach any students rhetorical concepts without conceptual framing. As my grandmother used to say when she taught me how to sew, "You work the sewing machine, the sewing machine does not work you."

That said, we will use some technology in class (e.g. an online text book, Microsoft Word, cloud storage software,smart phones/tablets/computers, etc.). However, my approach to ENG 100/101 embraces foundational concepts and traditional methods, which means you will learn how to correctly format your documents using Word and MLA, all of our assignments will be printed old-school, and you will like write by hand during class. However, you are able to bring laptop/tablet/phone to write on but I reserve the right to ask you to remove it if I feel it is interfering with your learning or those around you. I also use Blackboard, a course management site, for discussion posts, a weekly course calendar, grades, etc.

Blackboard

Some of you might be familiar with course management systems from high school while for others this might be a very new. CSU's management is system is Blackboard (or BB for short). You can use it if you miss a class and need to catch up you can visit the Announcement Page to see the in-class activity and homework. You can also view your grades to keep up-to-date on your progress in the class. I try to organize the Homepage as clearly as possible but it might still take some getting used to, so be sure to play around with it.

I try to update grades on BB at the end of every essay project, so please try and be patient. If you see a mistake on the BB grade book, don't hesitate to tell me. I make mistakes (hard to believe, right?) so let me know if you think I made a mistake and we can discuss it.

You are required to use Blackboard because this is where I will post and update your weekly course calendar, post grades, and provide you access to supplementary materials. I will provide a quick tutorial of Blackboard during Week 1 and then post other information and documents to help you navigate the site. Of course, sometimes there

are SNAFUs and feel free to email me if something doesn't work or, *gasp*, I forget to post something on time. I am not infallible so do not hesitate to let me know.

Cleveland State University Computer Labs

Because not everyone owns a laptop and because I believe in providing students with the opportunities to work on drafts together, we will usually have at least two – three classes per project (nearly 12-15 times per semester) in a computer lab. Below are the computer labs I use most often:

Lab	Location
RT 302	Third floor of the library
RT 401	Fourth floor of the library
RT 502	Fifth floor of the library
LCLC Back Lab/Front Lab	First floor, to the left, near the writing center, in the library

Email

Part of doing college means understanding that how you communicate to others impacts how he or she perceives your maturity and/or professionalism. That said, I do not mind receiving and responding to emails but I do mind very much if those emails do not include a formal address/sign off, your full name, and your class and section number. Please use the example below as a reference when crafting your emails to me, or any professor.

Example Email

Hello Instructor/Professor/Ms. Gagich [*be sure to choose the appropriate title*],

This is Sally Sue from your ENG 101 Section 12 class. After rereading the syllabus, I still do not understand XXX. Can we please meet to discuss it?

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Sally Sue

I teach over 100 students per semester, so if you do not clearly state your name, then I will not respond. Also, though emails do not have to be perfect, but be sure to check your syllabus, Blackboard, and/or assignment sheet before sending me a question. If you ask a question that you can answer yourself, then I will likely not respond.

1.3. Introduction the Course: Classroom Materials and Policies

Syllabus

One of the biggest surprises I learned from my high school audience was that most of them had never heard of a syllabus. This made me ask the question, "how many times I have neglected to explain the importance and usefulness of the course's syllabus and calendar?" It turns out, almost never. So, here it goes!

The syllabus is a contract between you and your instructor. Yes, a contract. By reading the syllabus and not withdrawing from my class, you are entering into a contract with myself, the First-Year Writing Department, and the university. This sounds scary. It isn't, just so long as you READ THE SYLLABUS. The syllabus lists how you will be graded, required materials, course goals, expectations, mandatory attendance policies, and so on. Generally, when a question comes up about the course, you can find it on the syllabus. In ENG 100/101, the syllabus is NOT the course calendar. In this course, the course calendar is disseminated weekly via Blackboard, while an Aggregated Course Calendar is available outlining approximate due dates.

Course Calendar

I have created an aggregated course calendar listing important dates (available on Blackboard) and unit descriptions. The following gives a very brief overview of the units in ENG 101:

> *Unit 1 Summary and Response* involves explanatory writing, summary skills, and the use of grammatical 3rd and 1st person.
>
> *Unit 2 Rhetorical Analysis Part I* involves using less traditional forms of communicating to illustrate understanding of a text's context and purpose and recognizing rhetorical moves in an article.
>
> *Unit 3 Rhetorical Analysis Part II* moves away from explanatory writing and involves argumentative/opinion-driven writing, understanding how to contextualize your Point of View, and relying on grammatical 3rd person and academic language.
>
> *Unit 4 Argumentative Synthesis* involves all of the previous skills and asks you to incorporate more formal sources to provide a logical argument.
>
> *Unit 5 Reflective Analysis and Portfolio Creation* involves the inclusion of one essay of your choice

to be revised, a revised argumentative synthesis essay, and a reflective essay. The portfolio reflects the field's focus on revision and writing as a process, not a product. This assignment will be discussed in more depth in the future sections.

In addition to the aggregated calendar, students will be provided with a weekly Blackboard announcement showing the upcoming week's unit, topic, and homework. I have the tendency to alter our due dates throughout the semester, so I have found that by posting the calendar on Blackboard students (and I) are able to remember due dates and homework. I also feel it creates better communication between myself and my students while helping everyone to stay more organized. That said, not all professors will give you a weekly course calendar, sometimes you are given the calendar with no review and no explanation. The course calendar provides due dates. Important due dates. So whether it is my class or your Chemistry class be sure to check it at least once a week.

Attendance Policy

Time and again, professors are asked by students, "*Do I really have to come to class?*" And, the answer is nearly always the same, "*Yes, you really have to come to class.*"

You might ask, "*Is this true for all classes?*" The answer is, I don't know, but I do know in my class attendance is mandatory. The First-Year Writing Department has declared that four absences are allowed without excessively effecting your grade, anymore absences and your grade plummets. If you miss **eight classes,** then you automatically fail the course.

Below I have outlined the points loss correlated to number of classes missed for my course:

Absences	Points lost
0-2	No loss of points
3-4	Loss of 5 participation points
5	Loss of 15 participation points
6	Loss of 25 participation points
7	Loss of 35 participation points
8	Loss of 50 participation points
9	Automatic failure of the course

Come to class, be prepared, and be optimistic because I try to make class fun or at the very least worth your while. Remember, you are learning how to read, write and think in a college setting, so it is probably a good idea to show up.

The only absences considered excused by the First-Year Writing Program are those related to university-authorized activities. You must provide documentation for the excusable activities listed below:

- University *excused* absences: athletics and university-authorized group activities
- University *unexcused* absences include but are not limited to: emergency room visits, doctor visits, family illnesses or deaths, military leave, court room appearances, etc.

Homework

I vaguely remember high school but when I try to remember having homework, I draw a blank. After thinking about this phenomena, I realized that I rarely had homework in high school because I had so many breaks and study halls to finish the assigned work. I am not sure if that set-up is still the same, but just in case, I want to discuss why there always seems to be so much homework in my class and in your other classes.

One reason for the barrage of homework is because you only meet for class three or four hours a week—a big change from seven or eight hours in high school. When you meet with me during class, I need to cover difficult concepts, model assignments, and assign assignments in 50 minutes or less. That does not leave a lot of time for you to complete work in class, but I do try to allow "work days" or "drafting days" so that you have less homework. Yet, in the end, you will have homework and it is very important to stay up to date with your homework so you do not fall behind.

Also, when it seems like too much and you don't want to read or respond to one more damn article, please remember, you are swapping going to school five days a week for many hours to creating your own schedule with class being only three or four hours a week. And, arguably more importantly, you are choosing to be here. You are in college presumably for a reason and your professors, including myself, are assigning homework because it is important. So, although I know it can be hard to learn how to manage your time and be organized your first semester, it is part of the process of "doing college."

Office Hours

Another thing that may be new to some of you is the opportunity to work and talk one-on-one with your professor. It is definitely one of the perks of the college environment. I am available during certain times in my office, meaning, I am likely sitting by myself waiting for students to show up and ask for help or to say, "hello."

In general, it is always good (in any class) to introduce yourself to your professor. I have over 100 students per semester and it can get a little confusing, so introductions during office hours are a great way to stand out from the crowd. Furthermore, attending office hours can help answer questions concerning difficult assignments or concepts.

Below I have outlined where to find me and how to contact me:

Melanie Gagich, Assistant College Lecturer, First-Year Writing Program	
Where is my office?	RT 1832 (the 18th Floor of Rhodes Tower)
What are my office hours?	Semester dependent; check syllabus
What is my email?	m.gagich@csuohio.edu

1.4. Introduction to the Course: Grading and the Portfolio

Grades

You will be graded on your process work, participation, and final products. In the past, students who have embraced the writing process and spent time revising, editing, and reflecting, earned high grades on his or her final draft.

Once you've outlined, drafted, edited, and submitted your essay, then I will grade it. I try to get essays back within two weeks or less and one of the first things you might notice on your essay are grading symbols. These symbols are meant to accomplish three things: 1) allow me to grade essays more quickly 2) provide quick feedback for almost each line of text 3) compliment students' knowledge of symbols (e.g. emojis) in order to help them comprehend his or her grade.

I understand that it might take some time to recognize and understand my grading symbols so I have providing the following key:

Symbols for global level requirements	
Positive Symbols	**Meaning**
?	Great job
✓/+	Good job
✓	Proficient
?	Demonstrates improvement
!	Interesting idea

Symbols for global level requirements	
Negative symbols	**Meaning**
.	Deduction for grammar/mechanical/punctuation errors
✓/–	Needs improvement
– or ×	Needs major revision and/or incorrect
?	Demonstrates a lack of revision

Symbols for Lower Level Requirements

Symbol	Meaning
lol	"Laughing out loud", good job
Trans.	Needs a transition or revise the transition
Circle around a word	Change your "word choice"
c.s.	Remove your "comma splice"
v.t.	Correct your "verb tense" usage
inf.	Revise your "informal" tone or language
sp.	Correct your "spelling" error
conf. or ?	Change your "confusing" sentence structure
awk.	Revise "awkward" writing
X	Take out

The Portfolio

Another component of the First-Year Writing Program is the Portfolio. This assignment reinforces process-driven pedagogy and helps you to reflect on your growth as a writer.

In the past, the First-Year Writing Program evaluated students' success in ENG 100/101 by scoring a pass/fail essay exam; however, that is not longer the case. Instead, the program has shifted towards evaluative practices that focus on process and growth rather than product. This shift in assessment reflects work in the field of composition concerning best assessment practices and e-portfolios. Student ENG 101 portfolios will be created and collected as a physical document during the last week of classes. Portfolio assessment is supported by the CCCC executive committee "Electronic Portfolios: Principles and Practices" (2015) and their claim that as e-portfolios (and portfolios) become more established in higher education, "First-Year Composition will mostly serve as the course that introduces them to students" showcasing our important role in a "development that prioritize[es] students learning."

Further, in the CCCC executive committee "Writing Assessment: Purpose Statement" (2014), they recommend assessment practices that do not simply assess one piece of writing and assert that "[i]deally, writing ability must be assessed by more than one piece of writing, in more than one genre, written on different occasions, for different audiences, and responded to and evaluated by multiple readers as part of a substantial and sustained writing process" illustrating that assessment should not be based on one essay/assignment; instead, a portfolio system will show that students have the ability to write for multiple contexts and will give assessors more insight to the growth of a student.

It is my belief that portfolio assessment reinforces the core concepts of our composition program that include, but are not limited to, incorporation of student-centered teaching practices, implementation of rhetorical concepts, strategies, and analysis, and individual instructor evaluation of student work based on process and revision rather than only final product. Further, in my ENG 100/101 course, students have the opportunity to increase the grade of an essay that originally received a failing grade (less than 70%). To earn a higher grade, students must revise the content of the text to reflect the skills learning throughout the semester and the outcomes and goals listed on the syllabus rather than simply correcting mistakes. In this way, the portfolio not only reinforces reflection

and revision but will also provide you with an opportunity to increase your grade. Also, the portfolio is based on helping students gain agency (or ownership) of his or her writing and writing processes. Remember, the portfolio is *your* work and it will reflect who *you* are as a writer and college student.

The Assignment

In all ENG 100/101 courses, the portfolio will make up 15% of a students grade and will include five components: 1) the graded version of an essay of the students' choosing 2) a revised, portfolio version of that essay 3) the graded draft of the argumentative synthesis essay 4) a revised, portfolio version of the argumentative synthesis and 5) a reflective letter.

What follows are some important tips and considerations:

- Students must keep all graded drafts of their essays throughout the semester.

- The final argumentative synthesis essay will receive a "for now grade" during a one-on-one conference with your instructor. However, remember to save this draft, since it will be part of the final portfolio.

- The final portfolio version of the argumentative synthesis should illustrate a student's ability to independently revise his or her work.

- Each revised essay will include highlighted changes that the student made from the original, graded/conference draft to the portfolio draft.

Chapter 2: Reading in Writing Class

Reading to Build Content Knowledge

Creating or recognizing content knowledge is important because you must have something to write about before you can actually begin writing. Many students assume that he or she can simply read one or two articles and then write an entire essay, but that is hardly ever the case. Whether you are writing about yourself, responding to a topic chosen by the instructor, or crafting a research essay for history class, you need to build knowledge about the content area first.

Scenario 1

You are asked to write about a scary moment in your life. Before writing, you need to sit and think about what scares you, what it means for you to be frightened, what experiences you have had with fright, etc.

This process, even though it is content only about your experience(s), is still part of the content building process because you need to sift through many other experiences and also define what "fear" or "scared" means to you.

Scenario 2

Your instructor assigns everyone a debatable topic and you are asked to write about the benefits of the death penalty. You are excited because you have seen a lot of *Law and Order* and have decided that the death penalty is a "good thing" for American society. So, you sit down and write your essay using all of your ideas about the death penalty. Sounds good, right? Wrong.

To form a strong argument, a writer must consider all sides of an argument and in this scenario the student doesn't really have a lot of experience with the topic, which means he or she must build content knowledge first. This will most likely require finding opinion articles, statistics, and personal experience stories to develop an understanding of the topic. From there, an ethical writer (which you are working to become) must evaluate those sources to ensure credibility because if a writer relies on faulty sources, then his or her work becomes faulty or inaccurate, too.

Building content knowledge is key part of the writing process, which is why we will not read as many articles are you might think we would in this class. Instead, you will be practicing the act of building content knowledge by closely analyzing the content, context, and credibility of various articles.

In This Chapter

This chapter provides information pertaining to active readings strategies that students can and should use to help them become better readers, which in turn helps them formulate stronger content knowledge. It also provides a Reading Entry Template, which is a required part of the course.

2.1. Reading Effectively

MONIQUE BABIN, CAROL BURNELL, SUSAN PESZNECKER, NICOLE ROSEVEAR, JAIME WOOD

Good writing begins with good reading. Every time you read, you're exposed to someone else's ideas and to their way of writing: their word choice, vocabulary, knowledge base, use of language, and so forth.

How do you become a reader, or a better reader?

> **First**, read every day. And vary the materials you read: a book, a magazine article, an online blog, etc. Try readings things that are a little challenging. In other words, don't just vary the subject matter–vary the difficulty, too. Stretch!
>
> **Second**, learn and practice the skills of effective reading (which are explained below in this section).
>
> **Third**, keep reading. Every day. And use good effective reading skills.
>
> **Fourth**, learn and practice the skill of reading critically. To learn more, see Reading Critically in the "Writing about Texts" section.
>
> **Fifth**, keep reading. Yes, every day, putting your skills to work. (Practice makes perfect!)
>
> **Sixth**, well, you know.

CC0 Public Domain Image, "We Can Do It" by J. Howard Miller, 1942

Reading effectively means reading in a way that helps you understand, evaluate, and reflect on a written text. As you might guess, these skills are very important to college students, no matter what field you're going into: you'll be doing a lot of reading. The more effectively you read, the easier it'll be, the less time it will take, and the more you'll enjoy the experience.

People who read effectively use a variety of skills and techniques:

- They start by creating an optimal setting for reading. They pick the best time, place, and conditions.

- They engage in pre-reading strategies before starting to read (see pre-reading strategies later in this section)

- They read material efficiently: they pick up a piece of material, engage actively with it, and finish.

- They create a reading environment that helps decrease distraction.

- They annotate written texts (in other words, they write directly *on* the texts) or take notes as they read. By doing this, they enter into a discussion with the text, interacting with it.

- They research or investigate content they don't fully understand.

- They work to discover the central meaning of the piece. They ask themselves

  ◦ What is the author's point?

  ◦ What is the text trying to say?

  ◦ What story is the author telling?

  ◦ How does the author create and build this meaning?

- They reflect on what the text means to them, internalizing the meaning:

  ◦ How am I responding to this text?

  ◦ Why am I responding that way?

  ◦ What does the text make me think about?

  ◦ What does this information mean to me?

Do Quick Research

As you read, you might run into ideas, words, or phrases you don't understand, or the text might refer to people, places, or events you're unfamiliar with. It's tempting to skip over those and keep reading, and sometimes that actually works. But keep in mind that when you read something written by a professional writer or academic, they've written with such precision that every word carries meaning and contributes to the whole. Therefore, skipping over words or ideas could change the meaning of the text or leave the meaning incomplete.

When you're reading and come to words and ideas you're unfamiliar with, you may want to stop and take a moment to do a bit of quick research. Google is a great tool for this—plug in the idea or word and see what comes up. Keep on digging until you have an answer, and then, to help retain the information, take a minute to write a note about it.

2.2. Active Reading Strategy

Our Shared Active Reading Strategy: Reading Entries

What is a Reading Entry?

The Reading Entry template was created as a guide meant to help you comprehend texts and begin thinking about textual analysis. In combination with textual highlighting, Reading Entries should help you contextual the text (author, publisher, history, etc.), summarize main ideas in a text, and respond the text's purpose. You are not expected to spend hours completing them; instead, they should be written without over-worrying about "perfect" word choices, grammar, mechanics, etc. Reading Entries and highlighting textual features are required to help you learn active reading activities.

You will complete a Reading Entry for every article read in class. Historically, that means approximately 12-18 reading entries. You must type each Reading Entry. Each time a Reading Entry is assigned you must have access to it in class whether you print it, hand write it, or have it available electronically. You will earn Informal Writing Points for each Reading Entry completed on time and this will be marked by a stamped given to you (by your instructor or SLA leader) on the day it is due. You will then keep the Reading Entry in your Homework Journal/ Folder that also includes your In-Class writing assignments collected mid-way through the semester and at the end of the semester.

Grade Break Down:

Stamped Reading Entry	5 points
Collected Reading Entry in Homework Folder	5 points
Total points earned:	10 points out of a possible 10 points

This might seem confusing, so here is an example:

Your assigned homework is to read an article from *The Engaged Reader* and write a Reading Entry. You type the Reading Entry and bring it to the class the day it is due. Your instructor (me) stamps your Reading Entry and we discuss the reading as a class. You have now earned five (5) participation points. Once the

class is over, you place your Reading Entry in the Homework Journal/Folder and your instructor collects the whole folder two weeks later, where you will earn another five (5) participation points for making notes and correcting the entry.

Below is the Reading Entry Template I want you to use for the remainder of the semester. Feel free to add onto the Template in any way you find helpful.

Reading Entry Template

Label each reading entry as: Reading Entry #1: "Title of the article" & author(s)

Find textual features by highlighting the text using the following key:

Yellow	=	Introductions/Summaries
Pink/Red	=	Arguments (made in paragraphs, not just the "thesis")
Green	=	Examples to support arguments
Blue	=	Counter-claims, concessions, and/or rebuttals

Contextualize the text by answering all of the following questions. You should perform Internet searches to adequately answer each question:

- Who is the author and what are his or her credentials?
- Who originally published the text (e.g. *The New York Times*; *The Atlantic*)?
- Based on who originally published the text, what level of credibility does it suggest?
- When was the text written? What does that mean?
- What is the topic(s) of the text?
- What is the author's argument/claim/position?
- Who is the audience? Are you a part of that audience? How do you know

Question the text by writing at least one serious question you have concerning the text, author, topic, etc.

Increase your vocabulary skills by listing 2 vocabulary words and their definitions

Respond to the Text by writing a short paragraph concerning the author's argument and how well it is supported by examples, data, logic, etc. Based on that, do you believe the source is credible?

Activity:

Practice active reading strategies by rereading Anne Lamont's "Shitty First Drafts" and complete a Reading Entry for it.

Chapter 3: Writing as a Process

Donald M. Murray, a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and educator, presented his important article, "Teach Writing as a Process Not Product," in 1972. In it, he criticizes writing instructors' tendency to view student writing as "literature" and to focus our attentions on the "product" (the finished essay) while grading. The idea that students are producing finished works ready for close examination and evaluation by his or her instructor is fraught with problems because writing is really a process and arguably a process that is never finished.

As Murray explains,

> What is the process we [writing instructors] should teach? It is the process of discovery through language. It is the process of exploration of what we know and what we feel about what we know through language. It is the process of using language to learn about our world, to evaluate what we learn about our world, to communicate what we learn about our world. Instead of teaching finished writing, we should teach unfinished writing, and glory in its unfinishedness (4).

What this chapter hopes to reveal is how we will utilize a specific and somewhat demanding process in order to help you produce written work you are proud of. It also includes a short segment pertaining to thesis and body paragraph writing.

3.1. ENG 100/101 Writing Process

The Writing Process
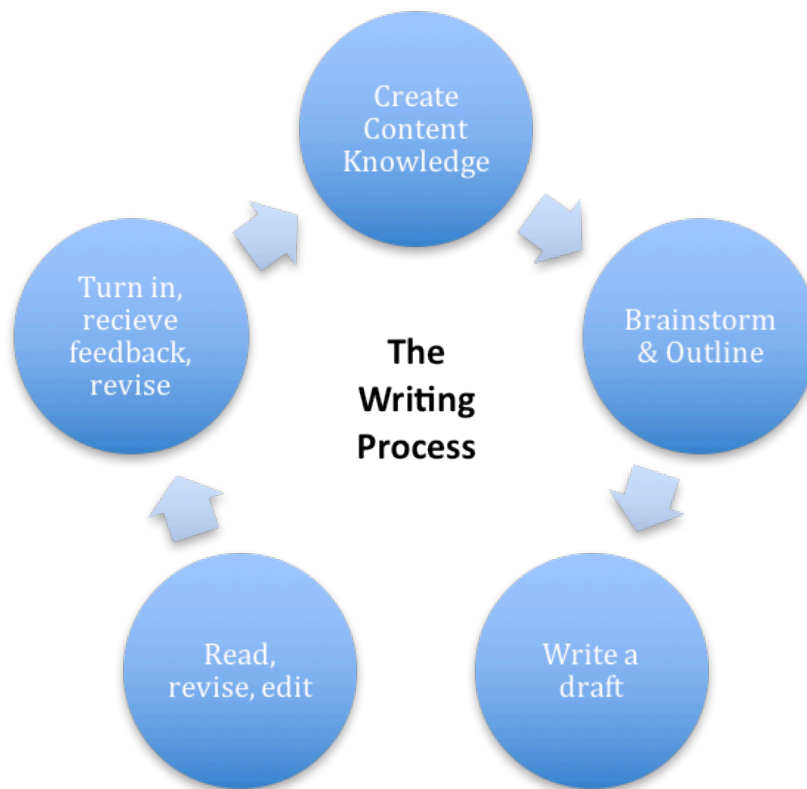
In ENG 101, you are expected to follow a process in order to craft strong, revised, and edited drafts for each essay. Below are the terms and brief descriptions for each step of the writing process we will use in my class:

Free-writing begins the writing process. This is usually an informal in-class writing or brainstorming a possible topic or argument.

Outlining creates a roadmap of your essay and helps you stay focused and organized. A lot of students "hate" outlining but it is a mandatory part of the process and many students have become life-long converts after realizing its benefits.

Drafting involves working through ideas, finding an organizational pattern that fits the assignment, and roughly integrating sources. In my course this process involves the creation of at least two separate drafts. The first is *Draft 1* and is ½ of the total length of your essay including the intro + thesis + context + 1st body paragraph. Basically, I ask you to write a "shitty" first draft and bring it to class. *Draft 2* is the complete rough draft of your essay including all sections. This is still a rough draft but your ideas should all be in there.

Highlighting and Labeling are completed for and on Drafts 1 and 2 as homework and often during the Peer Response process. These are cognitive strategies I use to ensure students are including the major requirements in the essay, helps me recognize any issues you might be having with determining the purpose of each paragraph, and allows students to "talk to me" on his or her text. (See below for more information)

Peer and Self Response Workshops require that you use a rubric to make sure you've included all of the global requirements. I allow students to work alone or with a partner but I strongly recommend working in pairs.

The Final Draft is the final revised draft of the assignment. This draft should reflect the entire process up until this point and should be as refined as possible. You will print, label and bring it to class on the due date. This is the one I will grade.

Final Editing is done in class on the final printed draft. You will be given the opportunity to perform a final read through during class to make sure you do not overlook small errors such as misplaced commas, margin size, spelling errors, etc. I include final editing because I don't want you to think of me as your editor and/or the last word in good writing. YOU wrote the essay, YOU put thought and effort into it, and YOU get the opportunity to clean-up any silly mistakes because writing is a process and good writers know that writing is never finished.

A *Writing Reflection* will be done in class and helps you connect your assignment to your life, my class, other CSU classes, and your future career. It should help you make connect transferable skills from the assignment to other areas of your life.

Revising involves rethinking content and structural decisions and does not mean simply correcting errors. You are able to revise an essay if it does not earn a grade of 80% or higher. Writing is always about revision and if you want to revise at any time, for any reason simply justify your reasons to me during office hours.

What is Highlighting and Labeling?

Highlighting

You will highlight everything you read and write using the same colors. In this way, I hope to help you see that paragraphs in texts "do" certain things such as introduce main ideas, provide example, concede to arguments, make arguments, etc. At first this seems confusing, but over time, it will not only make sense but will help you become stronger readers and writers. However, to keep it easy we will have only four colors that correspond to writing features:

Yellow	Introductions/Summaries
Pink/Red	Arguments (made in paragraphs, not just the "thesis")
Green	Examples to support arguments
Blue	Counter-claims, concessions, and/or rebuttals

Labeling

You will be asked to label portions of your text in order to help you learn how to revise independently. Each assignment asks you to point out key genre (essay-type) and rhetorical (persuasive) features. For instance, in the summary you might be asked to label your introduction, thesis statement, and main ideas.

Labeling also helps **me** grade your essays faster, shows me that you are actively participating in class discussions and the drafting/editing process, and that your revisions are global, not small sentence-level revisions.

Labeling helps **you** visualize what might be missing in your essay, recognize what sentences and/or paragraphs "do" in essays, and shows me what you're thinking so that I can respond to it accordingly.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center is located on the 1st floor of the library in the back left corner. To make an appointment you should use Starfish. The Writing Center is open Monday – Thursday from 9:30am – 7:00pm and on Fridays from 9:30am – 4:00pm.

I strongly recommend using the Writing Center, but remember, it is not an editing service. Instead, it is a place to go and get feedback about your writing, not only your grammar. In order to get the most out of your 30-minute session, I suggest the following:

- Bring a paper with instructor feedback;
- Write at least two questions on the paper about issues you want to address;
- Bring the assignment and/or rubric so that you can get help talking out organization;
- Be polite and be on time.

The Writing Center is an excellent place to get help for all of you classes and for all assignments including but not limited to; lab reports, research papers, group projects, journal entries, ESL help/guidance, and grammar tutorials. In my class, if you go to the Writing Center get them to sign your Bonus Point Writing Center slip (available on Blackboard) to earn two bonus points per visit.

Revision versus Editing

Generally speaking, students assume that editing is the same as revision. Within this assumption is the idea that revising means either correcting errors pointed out by the instructor and/or correcting "grammar mistakes," which is often code for punctuation, spelling, and grammar. Neither of these options is revising. To revise a work a student must consider his or her goal in writing the paper. He or she must then think metacognitively (thinking about thinking) about how well the paper achieves that goal. To do that a student might consider the following:

- Is the organization clear and logical?

- Does each paragraph "do" something? Does it have an obvious point and/or purpose?

- Are the sources relied upon credible and diverse?

- Does the language, documentation style, and formatting reinforce credibility?

- Are the language choices, documentation style, and formatting appropriate for the target audience?

Changes made after considering these metacognitive questions, are revisions. Incorporating more evidence, adding a concession, removing a personal story, etc. are all examples of global-level revisions.

Editing, on the other hand, often includes reading and rereading to check for errors. Errors are associated with spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc. but editing considers the readability of a text. So, it is not that one person is right or wrong, it more about how well you can reach the audience you are targeting.

Social Media Writing Scenario:

You want your friends to know you've just gotten a promotion but you do not want to seem too braggy. So you sit and think about how to craft a message that lets everyone know what you earned, while still seeming modest. You begin typing. You read it. You realize the language you used doesn't make sense. You delete the post. You try again. You write a short and concise sentence, "I am so thankful for my, new job and lovely new opportunities." You like it. You decide that is the idea you want to get across. Then you reread it and realize that the word "lovely" doesn't really sound like you, so you change it to "awesome," which sounds much more you. You think you made a mistake with punctuation, you check Google, you're right, you did. So, you change it, "I am so thankful for my new job and the awesome opportunity." There—finished.

As you can see, this process involved revision and editing and it is likely something you encounter all the time, now I am just asking you to be aware of it.

Chapter 4: Writing a Summary

What is a summary?

A summary is a comprehensive and objective restatement of the main ideas of a text (an article, book, movie, event, etc.) Stephen Wilhoit, in his textbook *A Brief Guide to Writing from Readings,* suggests that keeping the qualities of a good summary in mind helps students avoid the pitfalls of unclear or disjointed summaries. These qualities include:

> *Neutrality* – The writer avoids inserting his or her opinion into the summary, or interpreting the original text's content in any way. This requires the writer avoid language that is evaluative, such as: good, bad, effective, ineffective, interesting, boring, etc. Also, keep "I" out of the summary; instead, summary should be written in grammatical 3rd person (For example: "he", "she", "the author", "they", etc).

> *Brevity* – The summary should not be longer than the original text, but rather highlight the most important information from that text while leaving out unnecessary details while still maintaining accuracy.

> *Independence* – The summary should make sense to someone who has not read the original source. There should be no confusion about the main content and organization of the original source. This also requires that the summary be accurate.

By mastering the craft of summarizing, students put themselves in the position to do well on many assignments in college, not just English essays. In most fields (from the humanities to the soft and hard sciences) summary is a required task. Being able to summarize lab results accurately and briefly, for example, is critical in a chemistry or engineering class. Summarizing the various theories of sociology or education helps a person apply them to his or her fieldwork. In college, it's imperative we learn how to summarize well because we are asked to do it so often.

Why should I learn how to write a summary?

Summary writing is a genre and one used often in college classes. In most classes, you will write some form of summary, which may be short, annotative summaries; long, stand-alone summaries; or summaries that act as an integral piece of the overall essay. Our first assignment reflects the third type of essay; however, you will use summary throughout the semester in ENG 100/101 and throughout your college careers.

In This Chapter

This chapter introduces the importance of choosing appropriate grammatical voice when writing and provides some strategies for writing an effective and accurate summary.

4.1. Point of View

MONIQUE BABIN, CAROL BURNELL, SUSAN PESZNECKER, NICOLE ROSEVEAR, JAIME WOOD

Point of view (PoV) refers to the writer's perspective as they explain what's happening around them or tell a story. We describe writing as being in the first, second, or third person.

First person PoV

First person PoV uses pronouns like **I, me, us, our,** and **we**.

- When you read a passage written in first person, it's as if you're inside that person's head, seeing through their eyes. You think what they think, see what they see, and know what they know.

Water drop in a dandelion seed by photophilde is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

- The **strength** of first person is in the way it shares emotional intensity. We *feel* what the narrator feels. We respond to events along with them.

- The **weakness** of first person is its lack of significant information. We only know what the narrator knows; we can't get into the heads of other characters who are nearby. We also only see what that narrator sees; we can't see what else is going on around them or even around the next bend in the road. The first person narrator's knowledge of all the story's events is limited.

- Writers tend to use first person when they want to convey emotional intensity, as in a personal narrative, or when they want us to know the narrator intimately.

Example

"I could picture it. I have a habit of imagining the conversations between my friends. We went out to the Cafe Napolitain to have an aperitif and watch the evening crowd on the Boulevard" (from Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*).

Second person PoV

Second person PoV uses pronouns like **you, your,** and **yourself**.

When you read a passage written in second person, it's as if the writer is talking directly to you.

- The **strength** of second person is in a direct connection with narrator and reader; when reading second person, you feel as if you're having a conversation with the narrator. This is especially effective when they are giving instructions.
- The **weakness** of second person is that it limits the audience by making it seem the narrator is talking to only one person. It can create a strange "dreamy" tone that may make the text feel strange. It can also feel aggressive or accusatory.
- Writers may use second person when they want to talk directly to one reader, give instructions, or create a dreamy or meditative passage.

Examples

"You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. You're on your own. And you know what you know" (from Dr. Seuss' *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*).

"You are walking through a forest…. It is peaceful…. You breathe deeply and slowly as you listen to the forest sounds around you…. You hear the sounds of leaves underfoot as you follow the path…. You find a fallen log…. You sit down" (meditation sequence).

"When you fill out the form, use a #2 pencil" (instructions).

Third person PoV

Third person PoV uses pronouns like **she, he, it, them,** and **their** and omits "I."

- When you read a passage written in third person, you experience a perspective that is all-seeing and all-knowing. A third person narrator can see past, present, and future; they can also know whatever any character knows as well as how that character feels and thinks. They have a full view of whatever is in front of, behind, beside, above, or below them. In short, they can see the entire scene. Third person is all about facts.
- The **strength** of third person is its ability to be informative. It sees all, knows all, and shares this with the reader. Because it does not use the "I" voice, it feels objective and smart.
- The **weakness** of third person is its lack of intimacy. It's focused on information and thus tells us little about emotion and feelings. We end up knowing a lot about the setting and events and not much about the human nature of the characters, what they're thinking, or what they plan to do next.
- Writers tend to use third person when they want to write objectively without sounding emotional or biased. Much college, research, and professional writing is done in third person. And note that there are a number of sub-forms of third person; you may hear more about these if you study creative writing.

Example

"The seller of lightning-rods arrived just ahead of the storm. He came along the street of Green Town, Illinois, in the late cloudy October day, sneaking glances over his shoulder. Somewhere not so far back, vast lightnings stomped the earth. Somewhere, a storm like a great beast with terrible teeth could not be denied" (from Ray Bradbury's *Something Wicked This Way Comes*).

4.2. Writing Summaries

MONIQUE BABIN, CAROL BURNELL, SUSAN PESZNECKER, NICOLE ROSEVEAR, JAIME WOOD

What Makes Something a Summary?

When you ask yourself, after reading an article (and maybe even reading it two or three times), "What was that article about?" and you end up jotting down–from memory, without returning to the original article to use its language or phrases–three things that stood out as the author's main points, you are summarizing. Summaries have several key characteristics.

You're summarizing well when you

- use your own words
- significantly condense the original text
- provide accurate representations of the main points of the text they summarize
- avoid personal opinion.

Summaries are much shorter than the original material—a general rule is that they should be no more than 10% to 15% the length of the original, and they are often even shorter than this.

It can be easy and feel natural, when summarizing an article, to include our own opinions. We may agree or disagree strongly with what this author is saying, or we may want to compare their information with the information presented in another source, or we may want to share our own opinion on the topic. Often, our opinions slip into summaries even when we work diligently to keep them separate. These opinions are not the job of a summary, though. A summary should *only* highlight the main points of the article.

Pro Tip

Focusing on just the ideas that best support a point we want to make or ignoring ideas that don't support that point can be tempting. This approach has two significant problems, though:

First, it no longer correctly represents the original text, so it misleads your reader about the ideas presented in that text. A summary should give your reader an accurate idea of what they can expect if we pick up the original article to read.

Second, it undermines your own credibility as an author to not represent this information accurately. If readers cannot trust an author to accurately represent source information, they may not be as likely to trust that author to thoroughly and accurately present a reasonable point.

How Should I Organize a Summary?

Like traditional essays, summaries have an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. What these components look like will vary some based on the purpose of the summary you're writing. The introduction, body, and conclusion of work focused specifically around summarizing something is going to be a little different than in work where summary is not the primary goal.

Introducing a Summary

One of the trickier parts of creating a summary is making it clear that this is a summary of someone else's work; these ideas are not your original ideas. You will almost always begin a summary with an introduction to the author, article, and publication so the reader knows what we are about to read. This information will appear again in your bibliography, but is also useful here so the reader can follow the conversation happening in your paper. You will want to provide it in both places.

In summary-focused work, this introduction should accomplish a few things:

- Introduce the name of the author whose work you are summarizing.
- Introduce the title of the text being summarized.
- Introduce where this text was presented (if it's an art installation, where is it being shown? If it's an article, where was that article published? Not all texts will have this component–for example, when summarizing a book written by one author, the title of the book and name of that author are sufficient information for your readers to easily locate the work you are summarizing).
- State the main ideas of the text you are summarizing—just the big-picture components.
- Give context when necessary. Is this text responding to a current event? That might be important to know. Does this author have specific qualifications that make them an expert on this topic? This might also be relevant information.

So, for example, if you were to get an assignment asking you to summarize Matthew Hutson's *Atlantic* article, "Beyond the Five Senses" (found at www.theatlantic.com) an introduction for that summary might look something like this:

> In his July 2017 article in *The Atlantic*, "Beyond the Five Senses," Matthew Hutson explores ways in which potential technologies might expand our sensory perception of the world. He notes that some technologies, such as cochlear implants, are already accomplishing a version of this for people who do not have full access to one of the five senses. In much of the article, though, he seems more interested in how technology might expand the ways in which we sense things. Some of these technologies are based in senses that can be seen in nature, such as echolocation, and others seem more deeply rooted in science fiction. However, all of the examples he gives consider how adding new senses to the ones we already experience might change how we perceive the world around us.

However, you will probably find yourself more frequently using summary as just one component of work with a wide range of goals (not just a goal to "summarize X").

Summary introductions in these situations still generally need to

- name the author
- name the text being summarized
- state just the relevant context, if there is any (maybe the author has a specific credential that makes their work on this topic carry more weight than it would otherwise, or maybe the study they generated is now being used as a benchmark for additional research)
- introduce the author's full name (first and last names) the first time you summarize part of their text. If you summarize pieces of the same text more than once in a work you are writing, each time you use their text after that initial introduction of the source, you will only use the author's last name as you introduce that next summary component.

Presenting the "Meat" (or Body) of a Summary

Again, this will look a little different depending on the purpose of the summary work you are doing. Regardless of how you are using summary, you will introduce the main ideas throughout your text with transitional phrasing, such as "One of [Author's] biggest points is…," or "[Author's] primary concern about this solution is…."

If you are responding to a "write a summary of X" assignment, the body of that summary will expand on the main ideas you stated in the introduction of the summary, although this will all still be very condensed compared to the original. What are the key points the author makes about each of those big-picture main ideas? Depending on the kind of text you are summarizing, you may want to note how the main ideas are supported (although, again, be careful to avoid making your own opinion about those supporting sources known).

When you are summarizing with an end goal that is broader than just summary, the body of your summary will still present the idea from the original text that is relevant to the point you are making (condensed and in your own words).

Since it is much more common to summarize just a single idea or point from a text in this type of summarizing

(rather than all of its main points), it is important to make sure you understand the larger points of the original text. For example, you might find that an article provides an example that opposes its main point in order to demonstrate the range of conversations happening on the topic it covers. This opposing point, though, isn't the main point of the article, so just summarizing this one opposing example would not be an accurate representation of the ideas and points in that text.

Concluding a Summary

For writing in which summary is the sole purpose, here are some ideas for your conclusion.

Now that we've gotten a little more information about the main ideas of this piece, are there any connections or loose ends to tie up that will help your reader fully understand the points being made in this text? This is the place to put those.

This is also a good place to state (or restate) the things that are most important for your readers to remember after reading your summary.

When your writing has a primary goal other than summary, your conclusion should

- include an in-text citation, if appropriate (to learn how to do this correctly, see the discussion of in-text citation in "Crediting and Citing Your Sources," part of the "Using Sources Correctly" section of this text)
- discuss the summary you've just presented. How does it support, illustrate, or give new information about the point you are making in your writing? Connect it to your own main point for that paragraph so readers understand clearly why it deserves the space it takes up in your work. (Note that this is still not giving your opinion on the material you've summarized, just making connections between it and your own main points.)

Chapter 5: Responding to a Text

What is a Response Essay?

Often a response follows a summarization and/or examination of a text. The author (you) responds to some aspect of the original author's argument and/or main ideas. For instance, if you read an essay arguing that one fast food chain is better than another (for various reasons), then you would respond in agreement, disagreement or mixed agreement to the author's argument or persuasiveness by referring directly to the text and also using your own personal experiences, researched facts, and/or logical examples to support your opinion (Colorado State University).

Why am I writing a response essay?

As you work through your college experience, you will hear over and over that you should not use "I" or first person. I have told many students this, too. However, writing from a first person perspective is important and can be a useful tool because it allows you to effectively use experiences and anecdotes to either introduce a topic or support your point of view. Although learning how to write for academic audience using academic language and tone is very important, I believe beginning with casual tone and first person helps you understand the difference between the two.

Another common misconception of a personal response assignment is that the instructor is asking the student to "write a story," but the purpose of a personal response assignment is to convey internal reflections and thoughts into a formal and organized piece of writing. In this case, you are not asked to simply "write a story" but instead craft a valid and personal response to an author's work and argument. A response or reaction to a text is not a narrative essay, even though you may use personal pronouns to react and/or respond to the author's argument(s).

Another reason for including a summary and response essay assignment is because it prepares you for our later rhetorical work. Knowing how to accurately summarize an authors' argument and how to appropriately respond to that argument are important skills.

In This Chapter

The summary and response assignment provides you with opportunities to practice writing concise summaries,

two types of thesis statements, and body paragraphs; therefore, this chapter includes information pertaining to these skills.

5.1. Tone, Voice, and Point of View

MONIQUE BABIN, CAROL BURNELL, SUSAN PESZNECKER, NICOLE ROSEVEAR, JAIME WOOD

Yo! Wassup?
Hey, how you doin'?
Hello, how are you today?

Which of the above greetings sounds most formal? Which sounds the most informal? What causes the change in tone?

Your voice can't actually be heard when you write, but it can be conveyed through the words you choose, the order you place them in, and the point of view from which you write. When you decide to write something for a specific audience, you often know instinctively what tone of voice will be most appropriate for that audience: serious, professional, funny, friendly, neutral, etc.

For a discussion of analyzing an author's point of view when reading a text, see Point of View in the "Writing about Texts" section.

What is point of view, and how do I know which one to use?

Point of view can be tricky, so this is a good question. Point of view is the perspective from which you're writing, and it dictates what your focus is. Consider the following examples:
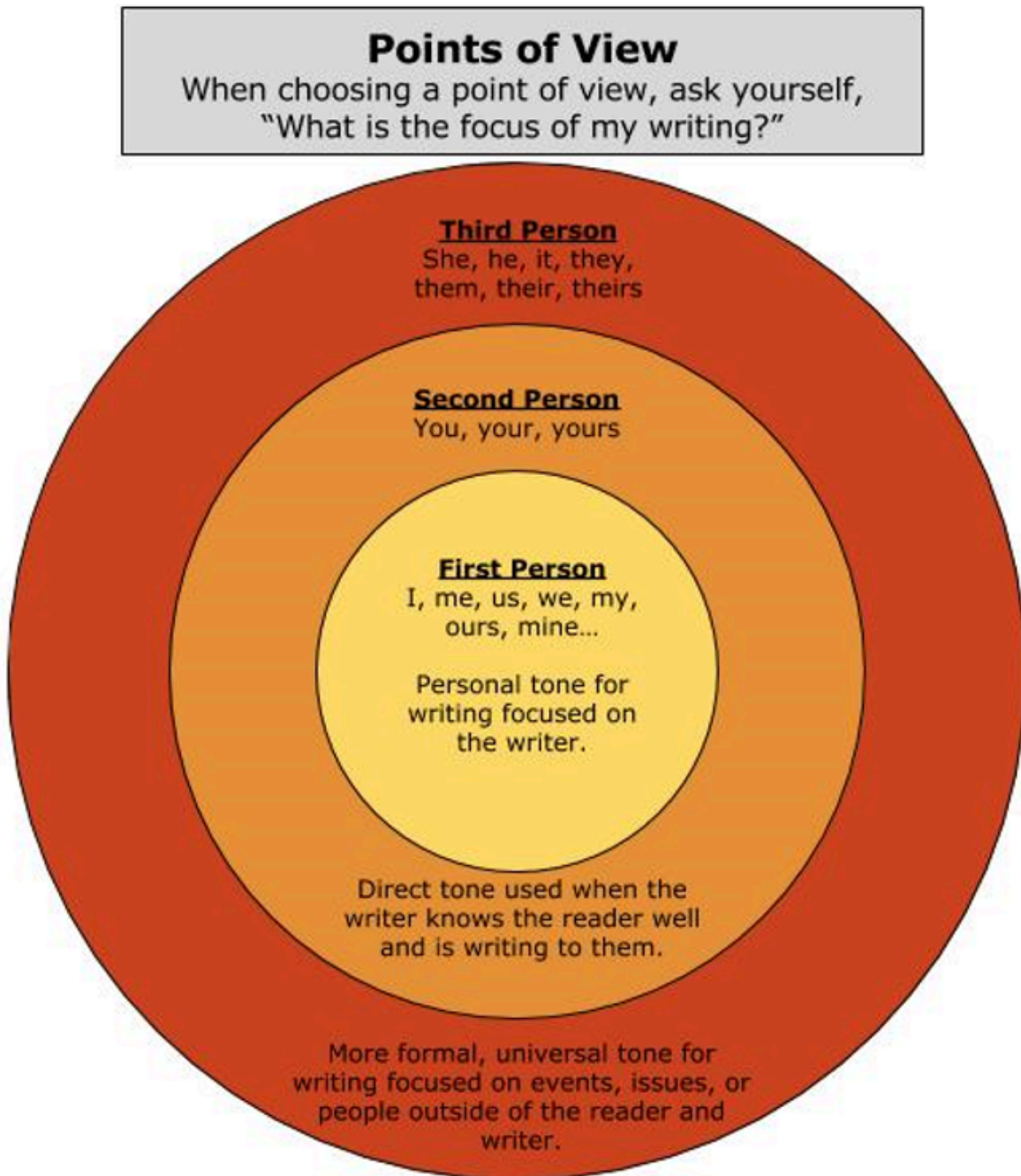
- I love watching the leaves change in the fall. (First person point of view)
- You will love watching the leaves change color. (Second person)
- The leaves in fall turn many vibrant colors. (Third person)

Which of the above sentences focuses most clearly on the leaves? Third person, right? The first person sentence focuses on what "I" love and the second person sentence focuses on what "you" will love.

- **First person** uses the following pronouns: I, me, my, us, we, myself, our, ours…. Any words that include the speaker/writer turn the sentence into first person.

- **Second person** uses any form of the word "you," which has the effect of addressing the reader.

- **Third person** uses pronouns like he, she, it, they, them…. Any words that direct the reader to a person or thing that is not the writer or reader turn the sentence into third person.

That's a lot to think about. When is it okay to use each of these points of view?

Points of View
When choosing a point of view, ask yourself,
"What is the focus of my writing?"

Third Person
She, he, it, they,
them, their, theirs

Second Person
You, your, yours

First Person
I, me, us, we, my,
ours, mine…

Personal tone for
writing focused on
the writer.

Direct tone used when the
writer knows the reader well
and is writing to them.

More formal, universal tone for
writing focused on events, issues, or
people outside of the reader and
writer.

Many of your college instructors will ask you to write in third person only and will want you to avoid first or second person. Why do you think that is? One important reason is that third person point of view focuses on a

person or topic outside yourself or the reader, making it the most professional, academic, and objective way to write. The goal of third person point of view is to remove personal, subjective bias from your writing, at least in theory. Most of the writing you will do in college will require you to focus on ideas, people, and issues outside yourself, so third person will be the most appropriate. This point of view also helps your readers stay focused on the topic instead of thinking about you or themselves.

The best answer to your question is that the point of view you choose to write in will depend on your audience and purpose. If your goal is to relate to your audience in a personal way about a topic that you have experience with, then it may be appropriate to use first person point of view to share your experience and connect with your audience.

The least commonly used point of view is second person, especially in academic writing, because most of the time you will not know your audience well enough to write directly to them. The exception is if you're writing a letter or directing your writing to a very specific group whom you know well. (Notice that I'm using second person in this paragraph to directly address you. I feel okay about doing this because I want you to do specific things, and I have a pretty good idea who my audience is: reading and writing students.) The danger of using second person is that this point of view can implicate readers in your topic when you don't mean to do that. If you're talking about crime rates in your city, and you write something like, "When you break into someone's house, this affects their property value," you are literally saying that the reader breaks into people's houses. Of course, that's not what you mean. You didn't intend to implicate the readers this way, but that's one possible consequence of using second person. In other words, you might accidentally say that readers have done something that they haven't or know, feel, or believe something that they don't.

Even when you intend to use third person in an academic essay, it's fine in a rough draft to write "I think that" or "I believe" and then to delete these phrases in the final draft. This is especially true for the thesis statement. You want to eliminate the first person from the final draft because it moves the focus—the subject and verb of the sentence—to the writer rather than the main point. That weakens the point because it focuses on the least important aspect of the sentence and also because it sounds like a disclaimer. I might say "I think" because I'm not sure, or "I believe" because I want to stress the point that this is only my opinion. Of course, it's okay to use a disclaimer if you really mean to do so, and it's also fine to use first person to render personal experience or give an anecdote.

Does anything else affect the tone of my writing?

Yes! Many times writers are so focused on the ideas they want to convey that they forget the importance of something they may never think about: sentence variety. The length of your sentences matters. If you start every

sentence with the same words, readers may get bored. If all of your sentences are short and choppy, your writing may sound unsophisticated or rushed. Some short sentences are nice though. They help readers' brains catch up. This is a lot to think about while you're writing your first draft though, so I recommend saving this concern for your second or third draft.

Visit the Purdue OWL page, "Strategies for Variation" for some examples of sentence variety and exercises that will improve your sentence variety superpowers.

5.2. Finding the Thesis

MONIQUE BABIN, CAROL BURNELL, SUSAN PESZNECKER, NICOLE ROSEVEAR, JAIME WOOD

You have plucked one idea (or closely related group of ideas) out of all of your possible ideas to focus on. Congratulations! Now what? Well, now you might write about that topic to explore what you want to say about it. Or, you might already have some idea about what point you want to make about it. If you are in the latter position, you may want to develop a working thesis to guide your drafting process.

What Is a Working Thesis?

A thesis is the controlling idea of a text (often an arguable idea—you will learn more about this in a bit). Depending on the type of text you are creating, all of the discussion in that text will serve to develop, explore multiple angles of, and/or support that thesis.

But how can we know, before getting any of the paper written, exactly what thesis the sources we find and the conversations we have will support? Often, we can't. The closest we can get in these cases is a working thesis, which is a best guess at what the thesis is likely to be based on the information we are working with at this time. The main idea of it may not change, but the specifics are probably going to be tweaked a bit as you complete a draft and do research.

So, let's look at one of the examples from "Strategies for Getting Started" from the "Prewriting—Generating Ideas" section of this book: the cluster about the broad central idea of danger. If the main idea is "danger," maybe the conversation you decide you want to have about it after clustering is that sometimes people step into danger intentionally in order to prove ourselves in some way. Next, you might make a list of possible thesis statements. For the sake of example, let's say this is for an assignment in response to the film *The Hunger Games*. Some thesis statements that fit this situation might look like this:

- Ultimately, *The Hunger Games* is a film about facing fears.
- In the 2012 film *The Hunger Games*, the main character's fear of losing her sister drives her to face a different set of dangers.
- Katniss Everdeen, the heroine of *The Hunger Games*, creates as much danger for herself as she faces from others over the course of the film.

If you were writing a summary, the first example in that list might be a good thesis to work with. If you were writing a review, the second one might be the better option. Let's say, though, that you've been assigned to write a more traditional college essay, something a little more focused on analysis. In that case, the final example in this list looks like a good working thesis. It might not be quite the same as the thesis you end up with in later drafts, but it looks like a strong idea to focus your ideas around while you're first getting them on the page.

5.3. The Paragraph Body: Supporting Your Ideas

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Body Paragraphs

Whether the drafting of a paragraph begins with a main idea or whether that idea surfaces in the revision process, once you have that main idea, you'll want to make sure that the idea has enough support. The job of the paragraph body is to develop and support the topic. Here's one way that you might think about it:

- **Topic sentence**: what is the main claim of your paragraph; what is the most important idea that you want your readers to take away from this paragraph?

- **Support in the form of evidence**: how can you prove that your claim or idea is true (or important, or noteworthy, or relevant)?

- **Support in the form of analysis or evaluation**: what discussion can you provide that helps your readers see the connection between the evidence and your claim?

- **Transition**: how can you help your readers move from the idea you're currently discussing to the next idea presented? (For more specific discussion about transitions, see the following section on "Developing Relationships between Ideas").

For more on methods of development that can help you to develop and organize your ideas within paragraphs, see "Patterns of Organization and Methods of Development" later in this section of this text.

Types of support might include

- Reasons

- Facts

- Statistics

- Quotations

- Examples

Now that we have a good idea what it means to develop support for the main ideas of your paragraphs, let's talk about how to make sure that those supporting details are solid and convincing.

Good vs. Weak Support

What questions will your readers have? What will they need to know? What makes for good supporting details? Why might readers consider some evidence to be weak?

If you're already developing paragraphs, it's likely that you already have a plan for your essay, at least at the most basic level. You know what your topic is, you might have a working thesis, and you probably have at least a couple of supporting ideas in mind that will further develop and support your thesis.

So imagine you're developing a paragraph on one of these supporting ideas and you need to make sure that the support that you develop for this idea is solid. Considering some of the points about understanding and appealing to your audience (from the Audience and Purpose and the Prewriting sections of this text) can also be helpful in determining what your readers will consider good support and what they'll consider to be weak. Here are some tips on what to strive for and what to avoid when it comes to supporting details.

Good support	**Weak Support**
• is relevant and focused (sticks to the point)	• lacks a clear connection to the point that it's meant to support
• is well developed	• lacks development
• provides sufficient detail	• lacks detail or gives too much detail
• is vivid and descriptive	• is vague and imprecise
• is well organized	• lacks organization
• is coherent and consistent	• seems disjointed (ideas don't clearly relate to each other)
• highlights key terms and ideas	• lacks emphasis of key terms and ideas

Breaking, Combining, or Beginning New Paragraphs

Like sentence length, paragraph length varies. There is no single ideal length for "the perfect paragraph." There are some general guidelines, however. Some writing handbooks or resources suggest that a paragraph should be at least three or four sentences; others suggest that 100 to 200 words is a good target to shoot for. In academic writing, paragraphs tend to be longer, while in less formal or less complex writing, such as in a newspaper, paragraphs tend to be much shorter. Two-thirds to three-fourths of a page is usually a good target length for paragraphs at your current level of college writing. If your readers can't see a paragraph break on the page, they might wonder if the paragraph is ever going to end or they might lose interest.

The most important thing to keep in mind here is that the amount of space needed to develop one idea will likely be different than the amount of space needed to develop another. So when is a paragraph complete? The answer is, when it's fully developed. The guidelines above for providing good support should help.

Some signals that it's time to end a paragraph and start a new one include that

- You're ready to begin developing a new idea
- You want to emphasize a point by setting it apart
- You're getting ready to continue discussing the same idea but in a different way (e.g. shifting from comparison to contrast)
- You notice that your current paragraph is getting too long (more than three-fourths of a page or so), and you think your writers will need a visual break

Some signals that you may want to combine paragraphs include that

- You notice that some of your paragraphs appear to be short and choppy
- You have multiple paragraphs on the same topic
- You have undeveloped material that needs to be united under a clear topic

Finally, paragraph number is a lot like paragraph length. You may have been asked in the past to write a five-paragraph essay. There's nothing inherently wrong with a five-paragraph essay, but just like sentence length and paragraph length, the number of paragraphs in an essay depends upon what's needed to get the job done. There's really no way to know that until you start writing. So try not to worry too much about the proper length and number of things. Just start writing and see where the essay and the paragraphs take you. There will be plenty of time to sort out the organization in the revision process. You're not trying to fit pegs into holes here. You're letting your ideas unfold. Give yourself—and them—the space to let that happen.

Chapter 6: Thinking Rhetorically

What is Rhetoric?

The definition of rhetoric commonly used is, "the art of persuasion." Rhetoric is everywhere and can involve any kind of text including speech, written word, images, movies, documentaries, the news, etc. So it is important to understand how to navigate the murky waters of persuasion and rhetoric.

In my opinion, the OWL of Purdue does a great job of describing some of the intricacies of rhetoric in the following passage:

> A Review of Rhetoric: From "Persuasion" to "Identification"
>
> […] Aristotle defined rhetoric as "an ability, in each particular case, to see the available means of persuasion" (Aristotle *Rhetoric* I.1.2, Kennedy 37). Since then, Aristotle's definition of rhetoric has been reduced in many situations to mean simply "persuasion." At its best, this simplification of rhetoric has led to a long tradition of people associating rhetoric with politicians, lawyers, or other occupations noted for persuasive speaking. At its worst, the simplification of rhetoric has led people to assume that rhetoric is merely something that manipulative people use to get what they want (usually regardless of moral or ethical concerns).
>
> However, over the last century or so, the academic definition and use of "rhetoric" has evolved to include any situation in which people consciously communicate with each other. In brief, individual people tend to perceive and understand just about everything differently from one another (this difference varies to a lesser or greater degree depending on the situation, of course). This expanded perception has led a number of more contemporary rhetorical philosophers to suggest that rhetoric deals with more than just persuasion. Instead of just persuasion, rhetoric is the set of methods people use to *identify* with each other—to encourage each other to understand things from one another's perspectives (see Burke 25). From interpersonal relationships to international peace treaties, the capacity to understand or modify another's perspective is one of the most vital abilities that humans have. Hence, understanding rhetoric in terms of "identification" helps us better communicate and evaluate all such situations.

Why Do I Need to Think Rhetorically?

A rhetorical analysis asks you to, "examine the interactions between a text, an author, and an audience." However, before you can begin the analysis you must first understand the historical context of the text and the rhetorical situation.

By historical context, I mean you must determine where in history the text is situated—was it written in the past five years? Ten? One hundred? Then you must think about how that might affect the information being delivered. Once you determine the historical-ness of the text, then you must determine the rhetorical situation (i.e. who, what, when, where, why). The following questions will help:

- What is the topic of the text?
- Who is the author? What are their credentials, what sort of experiences have they had? How do their credentials, or lack of, connect (or not) with the topic of the text?
- Who is the target audience? Who did the author have in mind when they created the text?
- Who is the un-intended audience? Are they related in anyway to the target audience?
- What was the occasion or historical context? What was happening during the time period when the text was produced? Where was the text distributed or published?
- How does the topic relate to the author, audience and occasion?
- What is the author's purpose? Why did they create the text?

You are already asked to find the context when writing your Reading Entries, but when writing a rhetorical analysis the rhetorical situation is even more important. Meaning can change based on when, where and why a text was produced and meaning can change depending on who reads the text.

An example of the rhetorical situation affecting the meaning associated with the text is noticeable when we think about the articles in *The Engaged Reader*. An important part of the rhetorical situation is audience and since many of the articles were not written with you (college student in introductory composition class) in mind; therefore, the meaning you create might be different from the meaning the author's target audience creates. For example, we read "Who Are You and What Are You Doing Here?" and you were part of the target audience, so you connected with and understood the purpose behind the reading. However, if I asked you to read a text about higher education written in 1876, you would probably have a hard time understanding and connecting to it because you are not the target audience and the text's context (or rhetorical situation) has changed.

Further, the occasion for writing might be very different, too. Many of the articles are at least five years old, or older, and this affects the references they make, the relevancy of the topic (think of the change regarding gay marriage in the past few years), and the historical moments that have taken place since. All of these components affect the way you, the reader, read a text and although you might not be a member of the target audience or were even alive during the production of the text, that does not mean that you cannot recognize rhetorical moves associated with these texts.

In This Chapter

This chapter includes information pertaining to audience and purpose because they are foundational aspects of the rhetorical situation.

6.1. Audience

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Each time you communicate, in writing or otherwise, you consider whom you're communicating with and why, whether you're conscious of this or not. Think about it: if you're asking your best friend for a favor, aren't you going to ask differently than if you were asking your boss for a raise? You already have a great instinct for knowing how to shape language around the people you are addressing and what your goal is. So how can you use this instinct when writing for your college classes?

"Theater audience wearing 3-d glasses" by Burns Library, Boston College is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

A roaring political rally, a studio audience, dancing concert goers—these are all examples of different types of audiences, but an audience for your writing is a bit different. All audiences have a job to do: they are consumers of information or experiences. So when you set out to write, deciding who your audience is, is an important first step.

What is the Difference between an Audience and a Reader?

Great question! It's as simple as this: your audience is the person or group whom you intend to reach with your writing. A reader is just someone who gets their hands on your beautiful words. The reader might be the person you have in mind as you write, the audience you're trying to reach, but they might be some random person you've never thought of a day in your life. You can't always know much about random readers, but you should have some understanding of who your audience is. It's the audience that you want to focus on as you shape your message.

Isn't My Instructor Always My Audience?

Sometimes your instructor will be your intended audience, and your purpose will be to demonstrate your learning about a particular topic to earn credit on an assignment. Other times, even in your college classes, your intended audience will be a person or group outside of the instructor or your peers. This could be someone who has a personal interest in or need to read about your topic but who may never actually read your work unless it finds a place to be published like a blog or website. Understanding who your intended audience is will help you shape your writing.

Here are some questions you might think about as you're deciding what to write about and how to shape your message:

- What do I know about my audience? (age, gender, interests, biases, or concerns; Do they have an opinion already? Do they have a stake in the topic?)

- What do they know about my topic? (What does this audience *not* know about the topic? What do they need to know?)

- What details might affect the way this audience thinks about my topic? (How will facts, statistics, personal stories, examples, definitions, or other types of evidence affect this audience? What kind of effect are you going for?)

6.2. Purpose

MONIQUE BABIN, CAROL BURNELL, SUSAN PESZNECKER, NICOLE ROSEVEAR, JAIME WOOD

Often, you'll know your purpose at the exact moment you know your audience because they're generally a package deal:

The purpose of argument by jon collier is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

- I need to write a letter to my landlord explaining why my rent is late so she won't be upset. (Audience = landlord; Purpose = explaining/keeping her happy)

- I want to write a proposal for my work team to persuade them to change our schedule. (Audience = work team; Purpose = persuading/to get the schedule changed)

- I have to write a research paper for my environmental science instructor comparing solar to wind power. (Audience = instructor; Purpose = analyzing/showing that you understand these two power sources)

How Do I Know What My Purpose Is?

Sometimes your instructor will give you a purpose like in the third example above, but other times, especially out in the world, your purpose will depend on what effect you want your writing to have on your audience. What is the goal of your writing? What do you hope for your audience to think, feel, or do after reading it? Here are a few possibilities:

- Persuade/inspire them to act or think about an issue from your point of view

- Challenge them/make them question their thinking or behavior

- Argue for or against something they believe or do/change their minds or behavior

- Inform/teach them about a topic they don't know much about

- Connect with them emotionally/help them feel understood

Chapter 7: Analyzing Rhetorically

What Is Rhetorical Analysis?

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Rhetoric-the art of persuasion
Analysis-breaking down the whole into pieces for examination
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Unlike summary, a rhetorical analysis does not only want a restatement of ideas; instead, you must recognize rhetorical moves and acts of persuasion. Remember the "Thinking Rhetorically" Chapter? The Owl of Purdue noted that rhetoric is happening all around us. Well, it is but within the 21st century and abundance of information, it can sometimes be difficult to discern what is a rhetorical strategy and what is simple manipulation; however, an understanding of rhetorical moves will help you become more savvy with the information surrounding you on a day to day basis.

I contend that rhetorical moves can be a form of manipulation but if the audience can recognize those moves, then they are more critical consumers of information rather than blindly accepting whatever they read, see, hear, etc. Therefore, we will navigate the waters of rhetorical analysis where you will not be arguing a position or responding to an argument—you will be recognizing what the author is doing.

When writing a rhetorical analysis you must think and read critically because when you are looking for rhetorical moves, not trying to make a claim or statement. The goal of this essay is to explain **what** is happening and **why** the author might have chose to use that movies and **how** that choice might affect their audience. Based on this, the assignment is explanatory in nature, although there will be aspects of argumentative skills because you must negotiate with what the author *was trying to do* and *what you think* the author is doing. Edward P.J. Corbett has observed, rhetorical analysis "is more interested in a literary work for what it *does* than for what it *is"* (qtd. in Nordqvist).

In This Chapter

Rhetorical appeals and references to logical fallacies are introduced in this chapters as well as explanations for why these are important to readers and writers.

7.1. Analyzing Content and Rhetoric

MONIQUE BABIN, CAROL BURNELL, SUSAN PESZNECKER, NICOLE ROSEVEAR, JAIME WOOD

When we talk about rhetoric (REH-torr-ick), we're talking about the ways we write and speak effectively and persuasively. We use rhetoric to explain, to describe, and to argue or persuade.

In developing your reading and analysis skills, always think about what you're reading, questioning the text—and your responses—as you read. Use the following questions to help analyze as you assess the text's content and the ways it makes its points. Think of it as taking the text apart—dissecting it to see how it works:

- **What is the author's main point?** Describe this in your own words. Do they make the point successfully? Is the point held consistently throughout the text, or does it wander at any point?

- **What information does the author provide to support the central idea?** Making a list of each point will help you analyze. Hint: each paragraph should address one key point, and all paragraphs should relate to the text's central idea.

- **What kind of evidence does the author use?** Is it based more on fact or opinion, and do you feel those choices are effective? Where does this evidence come from? Are the sources authoritative and credible? (Learn more about the CRAP method for evaluating sources in the section titled "Finding Quality Texts.")

- **What is the author's main purpose?** Note that this is different that the text's main idea. The text's main idea (above) refers to the central claim or thesis embedded in the text. The author's purpose, however, refers to what they hope to accomplish. For example, a cookbook is assembled in order to share recipes and cooking methods. But perhaps the author also wanted to include a group of treasured family recipes in hopes of sharing them with a wider cooking audience. The text has one purpose, while the author has an additional aim for the work.

- **Describe the tone in the piece.** Is it friendly? Authoritative? Does it lecture? Is it biting or sarcastic? Does the author use simple language, or is it full of jargon? Does the language feel positive or negative? Point to aspects of the text that create the tone; spend some time examining these and considering how and why they work. (Learn more about tone in in the section titled "Tone, Voice, and Point of View.")

- **Is the author objective, or does he/she try to convince you to have a certain opinion?** Why does the author try to persuade you to adopt this viewpoint? If the author is biased, does this interfere with the way

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you read and understand the text?

- **Do you feel like the author knows who you are?** Does the text seem to be aimed at readers like you or at a different audience? What assumptions does the author make about their audience? Would most people find these reasonable, acceptable, or accurate?

- **Does the text's flow make sense?** Is the line of reasoning logical? Are there any gaps? Are there any spots where you feel the reasoning is flawed in some way?

- **Does the author try to appeal to your emotions?** Does the author use any controversial words in the headline or the article? Do these affect your reading or your interest?

- **Do you believe the author?** Do you accept their thoughts and ideas? Why or why not?

Check Your Understanding: Jargon

Jargon refers to language, abbreviations, or terms that are used by specific groups— typically those people involved in a profession. Using jargon within that group makes conversation simpler, and it works because everyone in the group knows the lingo.

The problem with using jargon when writing is that if your reader has no idea of what those terms mean, you'll lose them.

1. **Read this paragraph that relies heavily on jargon**:
Those who experience sx of URI might consider visiting a PCP. This should happen ASAP with pyrexia >101, enlarged cervical nodes, purulent nares drainage, or tonsillar hypertrophy. Tx may include qid antibios, ASA, fluids, and a mucolytic.
If you're in a medical field, you probably understood that paragraph. Otherwise, it probably sounded like another language!

2. **Now read this translation in lay (non-jargon) terms**:
Those who have cold symptoms might consider visiting their primary care provider. This should happen quickly if there is fever over 101, swollen glands in the neck, green or yellow drainage from the nose, or inflamed, swollen tonsils. Treatment may include antibiotics, aspirin, fluids, and medications designed to loosen phlegm and make it easier to cough.
That's quite a change, yes? It's a good example of why we usually want to avoid jargon, only use it with an audience that understands it, or explain each term carefully as we use them.

3. **What did you discover about jargon?** What areas are you familiar with that may have their own types of jargon? Write a paragraph that discusses your experience with or ideas about this topic.

7.2. Rhetorical Analysis

Rhetorical Appeals

Rhetorical strategies/appeals refer to ethos, pathos and logos. The strategies are Greek terms and can be discussed individually or as a culmination of all three. The way I approach rhetorical analysis is to help you identity rhetorical moves, rather than focusing on the broad category of the rhetorical strategy.

Ethos

Ethos appeals to an audience using the author's credibility and character. The author's credibility is determined by his or her knowledge and expertise in the subject at hand. For example, if you are learning about Einstein's Theory of Relativity, would you rather you learn from a professor of physics, or a high school English teacher?

Character is different from credibility because it involves personal history and even personality traits. A person can be credible but lack character or vice versa. For example, the President of the USA has both credibility and character because he is the leader of our country (credibility) and he was inaugurated because he won the votes from the American people (character). Tiger Woods is another example because he was once considered a great role model for children, then he cheated on his wife and the tabloids found out. He went from being considered appealing to audiences to losing his sponsors (Nike, Gatorade) because his character was badly tarnished.

When reading a text, you should always think about the author's credibility regarding the subject as well as their character.

A rhetorical move that connects with ethos:

> When reading an article about abortion, the author mentions that she has had an abortion.

The previous statement is an example of a move because they are creating credibility via anecdotal evidence and first person narrative, but it would be up to you, the analyzer, to point out this move and associate it with a rhetorical strategy.

To see how ethos can be misused or used in a manner that may be misleading, please visit the following link to WritingCommons.org: Fallacious Ethos

Pathos

When an author relies on pathos, it means they are using emotions to appeal to their audience. Emotional appeals can be very strong and compelling. For example, ASPCA commercials use photographs of injured puppies, kittens, etc. to convince their audience to donate money.

However, authors can *overuse* emotional appeals and turn-off their target audience. This can be called "fallacious pathos." For example,

> An anti-abortionist might use graphic images of aborted babies to convince abortionist supporters to change their mind.

When reading a text, you should locate when the author is trying to convince you using emotions because it can mean they are lacking substance or trying to emotionally manipulate an audience.

Logos

When an author relies on logos, it means they are using logic, structure and evidence to appeal to their audience. Strong uses of Logos includes the use of facts and explanations. An author can appeal to an audience's sense of logic by using strong facts and explanations. Facts that can be fact checked (checked using multiple sources) are excellent ways to convince an audience. Additionally, providing a solid and non-biased explanation of their argument is a great way for an author to invoke logos.

For example, if I were trying to convince my students to complete their homework, I might explain that I understand everyone is busy and they have other classes (non-biased), but the homework will help them get a better grade on their test (explanation). I could add to this explanation by providing statistics showing the number of students who failed and didn't complete their homework versus the number of students who passed and did complete their homework (factual evidence).

To explore the misuse of logos, please visit the following link from WritingCommons.org: Logical Fallacies

Chapter 8: Arguing Academically

What Is An Argumentative Synthesis?

An argumentative synthesis essay uses various sources in order to illustrate a conversation surrounding a debatable or controversial topic before joining the conversation by delivering your own argument based on those credible sources. This essay provides a space for students to show their culmination of writing skills learned over the entire semester because it asks students to summarize, connect, respond, and provide rebuttals and/or concessions, which encapsulates skills practiced in each of the prior three essays.

"In composition courses, 'synthesis' commonly refers to writing about multiple texts, drawing together particular themes or traits that you observe in those texts, and organizing the material from each text according to those themes or traits" (Jamieson), while *Argument* is commonly understood as the asserting, supporting, and defending of informed opinions on a relevant and debatable topic. Argument is connected to *synthesis* in that the full consideration of various *other* opinions on a subject (synthesis) helps a writer assert *his or her* most informed opinions. Another way to think of it is to illustrate the conversation surrounding the topic before using those voices to support you own opinion.

In This Chapter

This chapter includes various sources meant to help you understand synthesis and argument and to guide you in the creation of your academic argument.

8.1. Synthesizing

Synthesizing

Babin, Burnell, Pesznecker, Rosevear, and Wood explain the following:

> To **synthesize** is to combine ideas and create a completely *new* idea. That new idea becomes the conclusion you have drawn from your reading. This is the true beauty of reading: it causes us to weigh ideas, to compare, judge, think, and explore—and then to arrive at a moment that we hadn't known before. We begin with simple **summary**, work through **analysis**, evaluate using **critique**, and then move on to **synthesis**.

What are the features of synthesis?

Synthesis is a flexible skill involving the use of other sources that either support your own view or assert an opposing point of view. Good writers always consider the opinions of people with whom they disagree then use those opinions to further defend their own. Therefore, in this essay, synthesis means comparing and contrasting your views with those of others. You may also compare and contrast the views of your sources, noting places where they seem to support each other's ideas, and places where they might disagree or conflict.

Examples of sentence structures that demonstrate synthesis:

Synthesis that indicates agreement/support:

- Source A asserts that… Source B agrees when he or she states…
- According to both A & B…
- The combined conclusions of sources B & C seem to indicate that…
- The evidence shows that…
- Source B is correct that…
- Source C makes a convincing case when she argues…
- I agree with Source A's conclusion that…

Synthesis that indicates disagreement/conflict:

- Source A asserts that…Yet Source B offers a different perspective by…

- Source C & B would likely disagree regarding…

- My view, however, contrary to what Source A has argued, is…

- I argue that X & Y are the best solution, though Source B offers a different option.

- In contrast, I would like to offer some objections to the opinions expressed by source C…

- While source A makes an intriguing argument, I would disagree…

What the above examples indicate is that synthesis is the careful weaving in of outside opinions in order to show your reader the many ideas and arguments on your topic and further assert your own. Notice, too, that the above examples are also *signal phrases*: language that introduces outside source material to be either quoted or paraphrased.

8.2. Arguing

What are the features of argument?

Argument is not simply the loud, assertive, unwavering statement of your opinion in the hopes of conquering the opposition. Argument is the careful consideration of numerous positions, and the careful development of logically sound, carefully constructed assertions that, when combined, offer a worthwhile perspective in an ongoing debate. Certainly you want to imagine yourself arguing *with* someone—and certainly you want to believe your opinion has superior qualities to theirs—but the purpose of argument is not to solve a practical problem or shut down a conversation. Rather it's to illuminate, expand, and further inform a debate happening on a worthwhile subject between reasonable, intelligent people. In other words, calling the opposition *stupid* is not good argument. And anyway, that's an ad hominem attack.

Most of the tools of argument you already have in your possession; they are the strategies you evaluated when considering the arguments of others in Rhetorical Analysis. The tables are turned now, and the spotlight is on *you*. Therefore, you must carefully use the following strategies to your own advantage:

Logos

The use of reasonable logic, data/evidence, and support to establish the practicality and rationality of your ideas. The types of logical structures at your disposal include:

- Debatable and Supportable Claims
- Logical Reasoning
- Noticeable Examples
- Reasonable Projections
- Concessions & Rebuttals
- The Avoidance of Logical Fallacies

Pathos

The use of examples and language that evokes an appropriate emotional response in your reader—that gets them to care about your topic.

Structure

The optimal planned/organized/fluid building of ideas and arguments onto one another for the most persuasive impact or effect on the reader; the consideration of how ideas connect with each other and their placement within the essay; the use of concessions and rebuttals (see above) strategically placed; the clear use of transitional language to facilitate reader comprehension.

Style/ Eloquence

The use of formal language appropriate for the audience and occasion; the use of precise, engaging language that avoids idiom and cliché, and dull or simple word choices; the use, where appropriate, of poetic or figurative language, or language that evokes the senses.

Ethos

The ethical and well-balanced use of all of the strategies above to present yourself as trustworthy and intelligent in your consideration of the topic and in the development of your argument.

8.3. Developing Relationships between Ideas

MONIQUE BABIN, CAROL BURNELL, SUSAN PESZNECKER, NICOLE ROSEVEAR, JAIME WOOD

Transitioning

So you have a main idea, and you have supporting ideas, but how can you be sure that your readers will understand the relationships between them? How are the ideas tied to each other? One way to emphasize these relationships is through the use of clear *transitions* between ideas. Like every other part of your essay, transitions have a job to do. They form logical connections between the ideas presented in an essay or paragraph, and they give readers clues that reveal how you want them to think about (process, organize, or use) the topics presented.

Why are Transitions Important?

Transitions signal the order of ideas, highlight relationships, unify concepts, and let readers know what's coming next or remind them about what's already been covered. When instructors or peers comment that your writing is choppy, abrupt, or needs to "flow better," those are some signals that you might need to work on building some better transitions into your writing. If a reader comments that she's not sure how something relates to your thesis or main idea, a transition is probably the right tool for the job.

When Is the Right Time to Build in Transitions?

There's no right answer to this question. Sometimes transitions occur spontaneously, but just as often (or maybe even more often) good transitions are developed in revision. While drafting, we often write what we think, sometimes without much reflection about how the ideas fit together or relate to one another. If your thought process jumps around a lot (and that's okay), it's more likely that you will need to pay careful attention to reorganization and to providing solid transitions as you revise.

When you're working on building transitions into an essay, consider the essay's overall organization. Consider using reverse outlining and other organizational strategies presented in this text to identify key ideas in your essay and to get a clearer look at how the ideas can be best organized. See the "Reverse Outlining" section in the "Revision" portion of this text, for a great strategy to help you assess what's going on in your essay and to help you see what topics and organization are developing. This can help you determine where transitions are needed.

Let's take some time to consider the importance of transitions at the sentence level and transitions between paragraphs.

Sentence-Level Transitions

Transitions between sentences often use "connecting words" to emphasize relationships between one sentence and another. A friend and coworker suggests the "something old something new" approach, meaning that the idea behind a transition is to introduce *something new* while connecting it to *something old* from an earlier point in the essay or paragraph. Here are some examples of ways that writers use connecting words (highlighted with red text and italicized) to show connections between ideas in adjacent sentences:

To Show Similarity

When I was growing up, my mother taught me to say "please" and "thank you" as one small way that I could show appreciation and respect for others. *In the same way*, I have tried to impress the importance of manners on my own children.

Other connecting words that show similarity include *also*, *similarly*, and *likewise*.

To Show Contrast

Some scientists take the existence of black holes for granted; *however*, in 2014, a physicist at the University of North Carolina claimed to have mathematically proven that they do not exist.

Other connecting words that show contrast include *in spite of*, *on the other hand*, *in contrast*, and *yet*.

To Exemplify

The cost of college tuition is higher than ever, so students are becoming increasingly motivated to keep costs as low as possible. *For example*, a rising number of students are signing up to spend their first two years at a less costly community college before transferring to a more expensive four-year school to finish their degrees.

Other connecting words that show example include *for instance*, *specifically*, and *to illustrate*.

To Show Cause and Effect

Where previously painters had to grind and mix their own dry pigments with linseed oil inside their studios, in the 1840s, new innovations in pigments allowed paints to be premixed in tubes. *Consequently*, this new technology facilitated the practice of painting outdoors and was a crucial tool for impressionist painters, such as Monet, Cezanne, Renoir, and Cassatt.

Other connecting words that show cause and effect include *therefore*, *so*, and *thus*.

To Show Additional Support

When choosing a good trail bike, experts recommend 120–140 millimeters of suspension travel; that's the amount that the frame or fork is able to flex or compress. *Additionally*, they recommend a 67–69 degree head-tube angle, as a steeper head-tube angle allows for faster turning and climbing.

Other connecting words that show additional support include *also*, *besides*, *equally important*, and *in addition*.

A Word of Caution

Single-word or short-phrase transitions can be helpful to signal a shift in ideas within a paragraph, rather than between paragraphs (see the discussion below about transitions between paragraphs). But it's also important to understand that these types of transitions shouldn't be frequent within a paragraph. As with anything else that happens in your writing, they should be used when they feel natural and feel like the right choice. Here are some examples to help you see the difference between transitions that feel like they occur naturally and transitions that seem forced and make the paragraph awkward to read:

Too Many Transitions: The Impressionist painters of the late 19th century are well known for their visible brush strokes, for their ability to convey a realistic sense of light, and for their everyday subjects portrayed in outdoor settings. *In spite of this fact*, many casual admirers of their work are unaware of the scientific innovations that made it possible this movement in art to take place. *Then*, In 1841, an American painter named John Rand invented the collapsible paint tube. *To illustrate the importance of this invention*, pigments previously had to be ground and mixed in a fairly complex process that made it difficult for artists to travel with them. *For example*, the mixtures were commonly stored in pieces of pig bladder to keep the paint from drying out. *In addition*, when working with their palettes, painters had to puncture the bladder, squeeze out some paint, and then mend the bladder again to keep the rest of the paint mixture from drying out. *Thus*, Rand's collapsible tube freed the painters from these cumbersome and messy processes, allowing artists to be more mobile and to paint in the open air.

Subtle Transitions that Aid Reader Understanding: The Impressionist painters of the late 19th century are well known for their visible brush strokes, for their ability to convey a realistic sense of light, for their everyday subjects portrayed in outdoor settings. *However*, many casual admirers of their work are unaware of the scientific innovations that made it possible for this movement in art to take place. In 1841, an American painter named John Rand invented the collapsible paint tube. *Before this invention*, pigments had to be ground and mixed in a fairly complex process that made it difficult for artists to travel with them. The mixtures were commonly stored in pieces of pig bladder to keep the paint from drying out. When working with their palettes, painters had to puncture the bladder, squeeze out some paint, and then mend the bladder again to keep the rest of the paint mixture from drying out. Rand's collapsible tube freed the painters from these cumbersome and messy processes, allowing artists to be more mobile and to paint in the open air.

Transitions between Paragraphs and Sections

It's important to consider how to emphasize the relationships not just between sentences but also between paragraphs in your essay. Here are a few strategies to help you show your readers how the main ideas of your paragraphs relate to each other and also to your thesis.

Use Signposts

Signposts are words or phrases that indicate where you are in the process of organizing an idea; for example, signposts might indicate that you are introducing a new concept, that you are summarizing an idea, or that you are concluding your thoughts. Some of the most common signposts include words and phrases like *first, then, next, finally, in sum*, and *in conclusion*. Be careful not to overuse these types of transitions in your writing. Your readers will quickly find them tiring or too obvious. Instead, think of more creative ways to let your readers know where they are situated within the ideas presented in your essay. You might say, "The first problem with this practice is…" Or you might say, "The next thing to consider is…" Or you might say, "Some final thoughts about this topic are…."

Use Forward-Looking Sentences at the End of Paragraphs

Sometimes, as you conclude a paragraph, you might want to give your readers a hint about what's coming next. For example, imagine that you're writing an essay about the benefits of trees to the environment and you've just wrapped up a paragraph about how trees absorb pollutants and provide oxygen. You might conclude with a forward-looking sentence like this: "Trees benefits to local air quality are important, but surely they have more to offer our communities than clean air." This might conclude a paragraph (or series of paragraphs) and then prepare your readers for additional paragraphs to come that cover the topics of trees' shade value and ability to slow water evaporation on hot summer days. This transitional strategy can be tricky to employ smoothly. Make sure that the conclusion of your paragraph doesn't sound like you're leaving your readers hanging with the introduction of a completely new or unrelated topic.

Use Backward-Looking Sentences at the Beginning of Paragraphs

Rather than concluding a paragraph by looking forward, you might instead begin a paragraph by looking back. Continuing with the example above of an essay about the value of trees, let's think about how we might begin a new paragraph or section by first taking a moment to look back. Maybe you just concluded a paragraph on the topic of trees' ability to decrease soil erosion and you're getting ready to talk about how they provide habitats for urban wildlife. Beginning the opening of a new paragraph or section of the essay with a backward-looking transition might look something like this: "While their benefits to soil and water conservation are great, the value that trees provide to our urban wildlife also cannot be overlooked."

Evaluate Transitions for Predictability or Conspicuousness

Finally, the most important thing about transitions is that you don't want them to become repetitive or too obvious. Reading your draft aloud is a great revision strategy for so many reasons, and revising your essay for transitions is no exception to this rule. If you read your essay aloud, you're likely to hear the areas that sound choppy or abrupt. This can help you make note of areas where transitions need to be added. Repetition is another problem

that can be easier to spot if you read your essay aloud. If you notice yourself using the same transitions over and over again, take time to find some alternatives. And if the transitions frequently stand out as you read aloud, you may want to see if you can find some subtler strategies.

Exercise: Try Out Some New Transition Strategies

Choose an essay or piece of writing, either that you're currently working on, or that you've written in the past. Identify your major topics or main ideas. Then, using this chapter, develop at least three examples of sentence-level transitions and at least two examples of paragraph-level transitions. Share and discuss with your classmates in small groups, and choose one example of each type from your group to share with the whole class. If you like the results, you might use them to revise your writing. If not, try some other strategies.

8.4. Appealing to Your Audience

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Once you know who your intended audience is and what your purpose is for writing, you can make specific decisions about how to shape your message. No matter what, you want your audience to stick around long enough to read your whole piece. How do you manage this magic trick? Easy. You appeal to them. You get to know what sparks their interest, what makes them curious, and what makes them feel understood. The one and only Aristotle provided us with three ways to appeal to an audience, and they're called *logos, pathos,* and *ethos*. You'll learn more about each appeal in the discussion below, but the relationship between these three appeals is also often called *the rhetorical triangle,* and in diagram form, it looks like this:
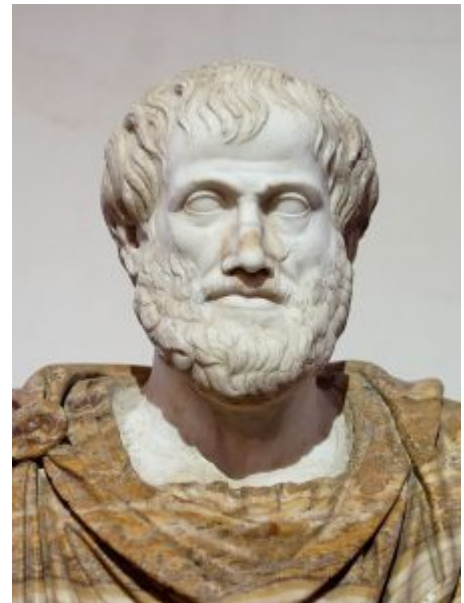
After Lysippos [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons
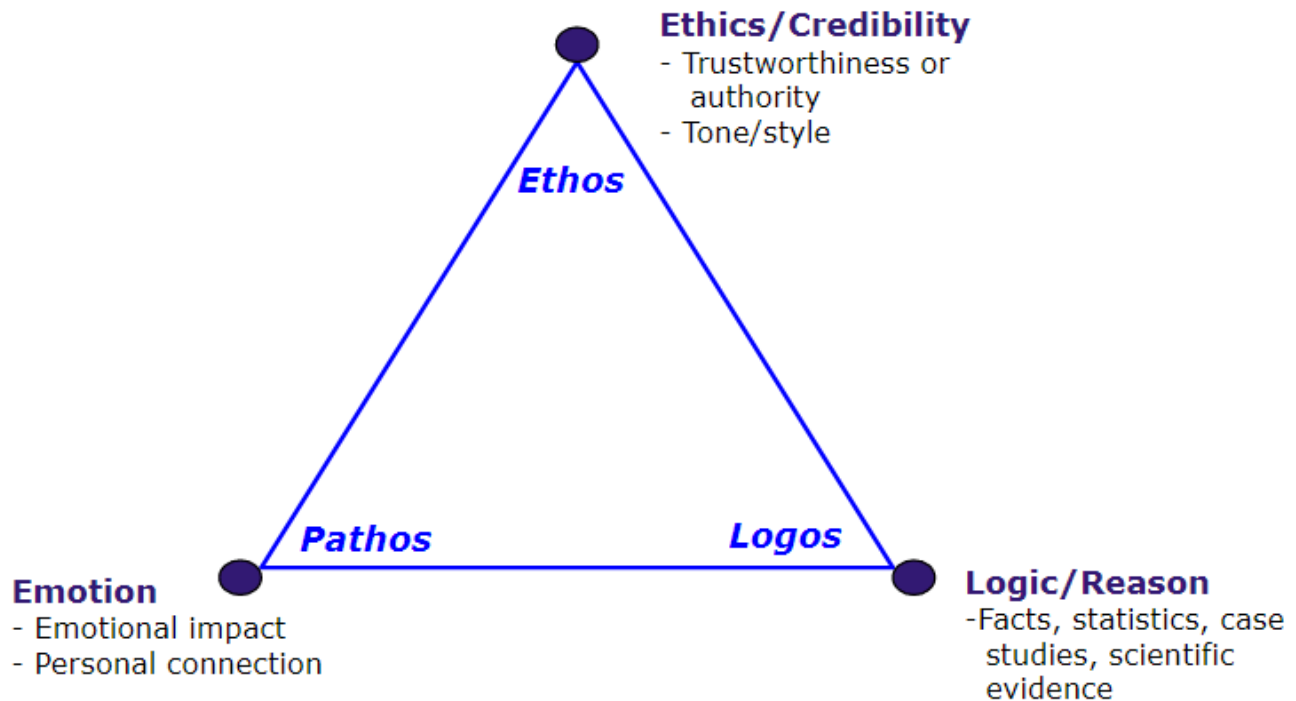
Pathos

Latin for emotion, *pathos* is the fastest way to get your audience's attention. People tend to have emotional responses before their brains kick in and tell them to knock it off. Be careful though. Too much *pathos* can make your audience feel emotionally manipulated or angry because they're also looking for the facts to support whatever emotional claims you might be making so they know they can trust you.

Logos

Latin for logic, *logos* is where those facts come in. Your audience will question the validity of your claims; the opinions you share in your writing need to be supported using science, statistics, expert perspective, and other types of logic. However, if you only rely on *logos*, your writing might become dry and boring, so even this should be balanced with other appeals.

Ethos

Latin for ethics, *ethos* is what you do to prove to your audience that you can be trusted, that you are a credible source of information. (See *logos*.) It's also what you do to assure them that they are good people who want to do the right thing. This is especially important when writing an argument to an audience who disagrees with you. It's much easier to encourage a disagreeable audience to listen to your point of view if you have convinced them that you respect their opinion and that you have established credibility through the use of *logos* and *pathos*, which show that you know the topic on an intellectual and personal level.

Below is a video (found at https://vimeo.com/73606689) about rhetorical appeals that goes into more detail about

the three appeals and how Aristotle used the rhetorical triangle to illustrate the relationship between the appeals and the audience.

For more on appealing to your audience, also see Imagining Your Audience's Needs, in the "Prewriting: Generating Ideas" section of the text.

8.5. Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Avoiding Plagiarism

STEVEN D. KRAUSE

Learning how to effectively quote and paraphrase research can be difficult and it certainly takes practice. Hopefully, your abilities to make good use of your research will improve as you work through the exercises in part two and three of The Process of Research Writing, not to mention as you take on other research writing experiences beyond this class. The goal of this chapter is to introduce some basic strategies for summarizing, quoting and paraphrasing research in your writing and to explain how to avoid plagiarizing your research.

How to Summarize: An Overview

A summary is a brief explanation of a longer text. Some summaries, such as the ones that accompany annotated bibliographies, are very short, just a sentence or two. Others are much longer, though summaries are always much shorter than the text being summarized in the first place.

Summaries of different lengths are useful in research writing because you often need to provide your readers with an explanation of the text you are discussing. This is especially true when you are going to quote or paraphrase from a source.

Of course, the first step in writing a good summary is to do a thorough reading of the text you are going to summarize in the first place. Beyond that important start, there are a few basic guidelines you should follow when you write summary material:

- **Stay "neutral" in your summarizing.** Summaries provide "just the facts" and are not the place where you offer your opinions about the text you are summarizing. Save your opinions and evaluation of the evidence you are summarizing for other parts of your writing.

- **Don't quote from what you are summarizing.** Summaries will be more useful to you and your colleagues if you write them in your own words.

- **Don't "cut and paste" from database abstracts.** Many of the periodical indexes that are available as part of your library's computer system include abstracts of articles. Do no "cut" this abstract material and then "paste" it into your own annotated

bibliography. For one thing, this is plagiarism. Second, "cutting and pasting" from the abstract defeats one of the purposes of writing summaries and creating an annotated bibliography in the first place, which is to help you understand and explain your research.

How to Quote and Paraphrase: An Overview

Writers quote and paraphrase from research in order to support their points and to persuade their readers. A quote or a paraphrase from a piece of evidence in support of a point answers the reader's question, "says who?"

This is especially true in academic writing since scholarly readers are most persuaded by effective research and evidence. For example, readers of an article about a new cancer medication published in a medical journal will be most interested in the scholar's research and statistics that demonstrate the effectiveness of the treatment. Conversely, they will not be as persuaded by emotional stories from individual patients about how a new cancer medication improved the quality of their lives. While this appeal to emotion can be effective and is common in popular sources, these individual anecdotes do not carry the same sort of "scholarly" or scientific value as well-reasoned research and evidence.

Of course, your instructor is not expecting you to be an expert on the topic of your research paper. While you might conduct some primary research, it's a good bet that you'll be relying on secondary sources such as books, articles, and Web sites to inform and persuade your readers. You'll present this research to your readers in the form of quotes and paraphrases.

A "quote" is a direct restatement of the exact words from the original source. The general rule of thumb is any time you use three or more words as they appeared in the original source, you should treat it as a quote. A "paraphrase" is a restatement of the information or point of the original source in your own words.

While quotes and paraphrases are different and should be used in different ways in your research writing (as the examples in this section suggest), they do have a number of things in common. Both quotes and paraphrases should:

- be "introduced" to the reader, particularly the first time you mention a source;
- include an explanation of the evidence which explains to the reader why you think the evidence is important, especially if it is not apparent from the context of the quote or paraphrase; and
- include a proper citation of the source.

The method you should follow to properly quote or paraphrase depends on the style guide you are following in your academic writing. The two most common style guides used in academic writing are the Modern Language Association (MLA), and the American Psychological Association (APA). I discuss both of these different style guides in some detail in the Appendix of this book. Your instructor will probably assign one of these styles before you begin working on your project, however, if he/she doesn't mention this, be sure to ask.

When to Quote, When to Paraphrase

The real "art" to research writing is using quotes and paraphrases from evidence effectively in order to support your point. There are certain "rules," dictated by the rules of style you are following, such as the ones presented by the MLA or the ones presented by the APA. There are certain "guidelines" and suggestions, like the ones I offer in the previous section and the ones you will learn from your teacher and colleagues.

But when all is said and done, the question of when to quote and when to paraphrase depends a great deal on the specific context of the writing and the effect you are trying to achieve. Learning the best times to quote and paraphrase takes practice and experience.

In general, **it is best to use a quote when:**

- **The exact words of your source are important for the point you are trying to make.** This is especially true if you are quoting technical language, terms, or very specific word choices.

- **You want to highlight your agreement** with the author's words. If you agree with the point the author of the evidence makes and you like their exact words, use them as a quote.

- **You want to highlight your disagreement** with the author's words. In other words, you may sometimes want to use a direct quote to indicate exactly what it is you disagree about. This might be particularly true when you are considering the antithetical positions in your research writing projects.

In general, **it is best to paraphrase when:**

- **There is no good reason to use a quote to refer to your evidence.** If the author's exact words are not especially important to the point you are trying to make, you are usually better off paraphrasing the evidence.

- **There is no good reason to use a quote to refer to your evidence.** If the author's exact words are not especially important to the point you are trying to make, you are usually better off paraphrasing the evidence.

- **You are trying to explain a particular a piece of evidence in order to explain or interpret it in more detail.** This might be particularly true in writing projects like critiques.

- **You need to balance a direct quote in your writing.** You need to be careful about directly quoting your research too much because it can sometimes make for awkward and difficult to read prose. So, one of the reasons to use a paraphrase instead of a quote is to create balance within your writing.

Tips for Quoting and Paraphrasing

- **Introduce** your quotes and paraphrases to your reader, especially on first reference.
- **Explain** the significance of the quote or paraphrase to your reader.
- **Cite** your quote or paraphrase properly according to the rules of style you are following in your essay.

- **Cite** your quote or paraphrase properly according to the rules of style you are following in your essay.

- **Quote when** the exact words are important, when you want to highlight your agreement or your disagreement.

- **Paraphrase when** he exact words aren't important, when you want to explain the point of your evidence, or when you need to balance the direct quotes in your writing.

Four Examples of Quotes and Paraphrases

Here are four examples of what I mean about properly quoting and paraphrasing evidence in your research essays. In each case, I begin with a **BAD** example, or the way **NOT** to quote or paraphrase.

Quoting in MLA Style

Here's the first **BAD** example, where the writer is trying to follow the rules of MLA style:

```
There are many positive effects for advertising prescription drugs on
television.   "African-American   physicians   regard   direct-to-consumer
advertising of prescription medicines as one way to educate minority patients
about needed treatment and healthcare options" (Wechsler, Internet).
```

This is a potentially good piece of information to support a research writer's claim, but the researcher hasn't done any of the necessary work to explain where this quote comes from or to explain why it is important for supporting her point. Rather, she has simply "dropped in" the quote, leaving the interpretation of its significance up to the reader.

Now consider this revised **GOOD** (or at least **BETTER**) example of how this quote might be better introduced into the essay:

```
In her Pharmaceutical Executive article available through the Wilson Select
Internet database, Jill Wechsler writes about one of the positive effects of
advertising prescription drugs on television.  "African-American physicians
regard direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription medicines as one way
to educate minority patients about needed treatment and healthcare options."
```

In this revision, it's much more clear what point the writer is trying to make with this evidence and where this evidence comes from.

In this particular example, the passage is from a traditional print journal called *Pharmaceutical Executive*. However, the writer needs to indicate that she actually found and read this article through Wilson Select, an Internet database which reproduces the "full text" of articles from periodicals without any graphics, charts, or page numbers.

When you use a direct quote in your research, you need to the indicate page number of that direct quote or you need to indicate that the evidence has no specific page numbers. While it can be a bit awkward to indicate within the text how the writer found this information if it's from the Internet, it's important to do so on the first reference of a piece of evidence in your writing. On references to this piece of evidence after the first reference, you can use just the last name of the writer. For example:

```
Wechsler also reports on the positive effects of advertising prescription
drugs on television.  She writes…
```

Paraphrasing in MLA Style

In this example, the writer is using MLA style to write a research essay for a Literature class. Here is a **BAD** example of a paraphrase:

```
While Gatsby is deeply in love with Daisy in The Great Gatsby, his love for
her is indistinguishable from his love of his possessions (Callahan).
```

There are two problems with this paraphrase. First, if this is the first or only reference to this particular piece of evidence in the research essay, the writer should include more information about the source of this paraphrase in order to properly introduce it. Second, this paraphrase is actually not of the *entire* article but rather of a specific passage. The writer has neglected to note the page number within the parenthetical citation.

A **GOOD** or at least **BETTER** revision of this paraphrase might look like this:

```
John F. Callahan suggests in his article "F. Scott Fitzgerald's Evolving
American Dream" that while Gatsby is deeply in love with Daisy in The
Great Gatsby, his love for her is indistinguishable from his love of his
possessions (381).
```

By incorporating the name of the author of the evidence the research writer is referring to here, the source of this paraphrase is now clear to the reader. Furthermore, because there is a page number at the end of this sentence, the reader understands that this passage is a paraphrase of a particular part of Callahan's essay and *not* a summary of the entire essay. Again, if the research writer had introduced this source to his readers earlier, he could have started with a phrase like "Callahan suggests…" and then continued on with his paraphrase.

If the research writer were offering a brief summary of the entire essay following MLA style, he wouldn't include a page number in parentheses. For example:

```
John F. Callahan's article "F. Scott Fitzgerald's Evolving American Dream"
examines Fitzgerald's fascination with the elusiveness of the American Dream
in the novels The Great Gatsby, Tender is the Night, and The Last Tycoon.
```

Quoting in APA Style

Consider this **BAD** example in APA style, of what **NOT** to do when quoting evidence:

```
"If the U.S. scallop fishery were a business, its management would surely be
```

```
fired, because its revenues could readily be increased by at least 50 percent
while its costs were being reduced by an equal percentage." (Repetto, 2001,
p. 84).
```

Again, this is a potentially valuable piece of evidence, but it simply isn't clear what point the research writer is trying to make with it. Further, it doesn't follow the preferred method of citation with APA style.

Here is a revision that is a **GOOD** or at least **BETTER** example:

```
Repetto (2001) concludes that in the case of the scallop industry, those
running the industry should be held responsible for not considering methods
that would curtail the problems of over-fishing. "If the U.S. scallop fishery
were a business, its management would surely be fired, because its revenues
could readily be increased by at least 50 percent while its costs were being
reduced by an equal percentage" (p. 84).
```

This revision is improved because the research writer has introduced and explained the point of the evidence with the addition of a clarifying sentence. It also follows the rules of APA style. Generally, APA style prefers that the research writer refer to the author only by last name followed immediately by the year of publication. Whenever possible, you should begin your citation with the author's last name and the year of publication, and, in the case of a direct quote like this passage, the page number (including the "p.") in parentheses at the end.

Paraphrasing in MLA Style

Paraphrasing in APA style is slightly different from MLA style as well. Consider first this **BAD** example of what **NOT** to do in paraphrasing from a source in APA style:

```
Computer criminals have lots of ways to get away with credit card fraud
(Cameron, 2002).
```

The main problem with this paraphrase is there isn't enough here to adequately explain to the reader what the point of the evidence really is. Remember: your readers have no way of automatically knowing why you as a research writer think that a particular piece of evidence is useful in supporting your point. This is why it is key that you introduce and explain your evidence.

Here is a revision that is **GOOD** or at least **BETTER**:

```
Cameron (2002) points out that computer criminals intent on committing credit
card fraud are able to take advantage of the fact that there aren't enough
officials working to enforce computer crimes. Criminals are also able to use
the technology to their advantage by communicating via email and chat rooms
with other criminals.
```

Again, this revision is better because the additional information introduces and explains the point of the evidence. In this particular example, the author's name is also incorporated into the explanation of the evidence as well. In APA, it is preferable to weave in the author's name into your essay, usually at the beginning of a sentence.

However, it would also have been acceptable to end an improved paraphrase with just the author's last name and the date of publication in parentheses.

How to Avoid Plagiarism in the Research Process

Plagiarism is the unauthorized or uncredited use of the writings or ideas of another in your writing. While it might not be as tangible as auto theft or burglary, plagiarism is still a form of theft.

In the academic world, plagiarism is a serious matter because ideas in the forms of research, creative work, and original thought are highly valued. Chances are, your school has strict rules about what happens when someone is caught plagiarizing. The penalty for plagiarism is severe, everything from a failing grade for the plagiarized work, a failing grade for the class, or expulsion from the institution.

You might not be aware that plagiarism can take several different forms. The most well known, **purposeful plagiarism** , is handing in an essay written by someone else and representing it as your own, copying your essay word for word from a magazine or journal, or downloading an essay from the Internet.

A much more common and less understood phenomenon is what I call **accidental plagiarism**. Accidental plagiarism is the result of improperly paraphrasing, summarizing, quoting, or citing your evidence in your academic writing. Generally, writers accidentally plagiarize because they simply don't know or they fail to follow the rules for giving credit to the ideas of others in their writing.

Both purposeful and accidental plagiarism are wrong, against the rules, and can result in harsh punishments. Ignoring or not knowing the rules of how to not plagiarize and properly cite evidence might be an *explanation,* but it is not an *excuse*.

To exemplify what I'm getting at, consider the examples below that use quotations and paraphrases from this brief passage:

> Those who denounce cyberculture today strangely resemble those who criticized rock music during the fifties and sixties. Rock started out as an Anglo-American phenomenon and has become an industry. Nonetheless, it was able to capture the hopes of young people around the world and provided enjoyment to those of us who listened to or played rock. Sixties pop was the conscience of one or two generations that helped bring the war in Vietnam to a close. Obviously, neither rock nor pop has solved global poverty or hunger. But is this a reason to be "against" them? (ix).

And just to make it clear that *I'm* not plagiarizing this passage, here is the citation in MLA style:

Lévy, Pierre. Cyberculture. Trans. Robert Bononno. Minneapolis: U of

    Minnesota P, 2001.

Here's an obvious example of plagiarism:

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Those who denounce cyberculture today strangely resemble those who
criticized rock music during the fifties and sixties.
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In this case, the writer has literally taken one of Lévy's sentences and represented it as her own. That's clearly against the rules.

Here's another example of plagiarism, perhaps less obvious:

> The same kind of people who criticize cyberculture are the same kind of people who criticized rock and roll music back in the fifties and sixties. But both cyberculture and rock music inspire and entertain young people.

While these aren't Lévy's exact words, they are certainly close enough to constitute a form of plagiarism. And again, even though you might think that this is a "lesser" form of plagiarism, it's still plagiarism.

Both of these passages can easily be corrected to make them acceptable quotations or paraphrases.

> **In the introduction of his book <u>Cyberculture</u>, Pierre Lévy observes that** "Those who denounce cyberculture today strangely resemble those who criticized rock music during the fifties and sixties" **(ix)**.

> **Pierre Lévy suggests** that the same kind of people who criticize cyberculture are the same kind of people who criticized rock and roll music back in the fifties and sixties. But both cyberculture and rock music inspire and entertain young people **(ix)**.

Note that changing these passages from examples of plagiarism to acceptable examples of a quotation and a paraphrase is extremely easy: properly cite your sources.

This leads to the "golden rule" of avoiding plagiarism:

Always cite your sources. If you are unsure as to whether you should or should not cite a particular claim or reference, you should probably cite your source.

Often, students are unclear as to whether or not they need to cite a piece of evidence because they believe it to be "common knowledge" or because they are not sure about the source of information. When in doubt about whether or not to cite evidence in order to give credit to a source ("common knowledge" or not), you should cite the evidence.

Plagiarism and the Internet

Sometimes, I think the ease of finding and retrieving information on the World Wide Web makes readers think that this information does not need to be cited. After all, it isn't a traditional source like a book or a journal; it is available for "free." All a research writer needs to do with a web site is "cut and paste" whatever he needs into his essay, right? Wrong!

You need to cite the evidence you find from the Internet or the World Wide Web the same way you cite evidence from other sources. To not do this is plagiarism, or, more bluntly, cheating. Just because the information is "freely" available on the Internet does not mean you can use this information in your academic writing without

properly citing it, much in the same way that the information from library journals and books "freely" available to you needs to be cited in order to give credit where credit is due.

It is also not acceptable to simply download graphics from the World Wide Web. Images found on the Internet are protected by copyright laws. Quite literally, taking images from the Web (particularly from commercial sources) is an offense that could lead to legal action. There are places where you can find graphics and clip art that Web publishers have made publicly available for anyone to use, but be sure that the Web site where you find the graphics makes this explicit before you take graphics as your own.

In short, you can use evidence from the Web as long as you don't plagiarize and as long as you properly cite it; don't take graphics from the Web unless you know the images are in the public domain. For more information on citing electronic sources, see Chapter 12, "Citing Your Research with MLA and APA Style."

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