

THE

NORTON

FIELD

GUIDE



TO WRITING

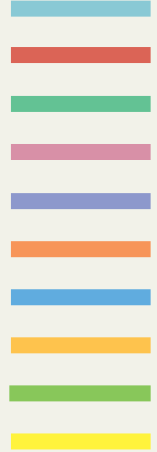
WITH READINGS & HANDBOOK

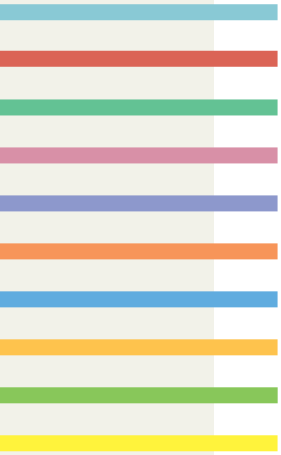
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Richard Bullock • Maureen Daly Goggin  
Francine Weinberg

FIFTH EDITION

The Norton Field Guide to Writing  
*with readings and handbook*





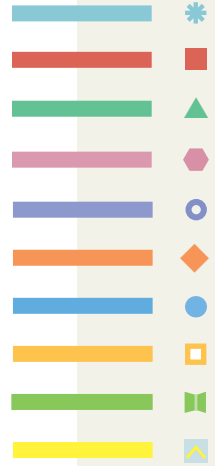
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The Norton  
Field Guide  
to Writing  
*with readings and handbook*

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WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY

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# Preface

*The Norton Field Guide to Writing* began as an attempt to offer the kind of writing guides found in the best rhetorics in a format as user-friendly as the best handbooks, and on top of that, to be as brief as could be. We wanted to create a handy guide to help college students with all their written work. Just as there are field guides for bird watchers, for gardeners, and for accountants, this would be one for writers. In its first four editions, the book has obviously touched a chord with many writing instructors, and it remains the best-selling college rhetoric—a success that leaves us humbled and grateful. Student success is now on everyone’s mind. As teachers, we want our students to succeed, and first-year writing courses offer one of the best opportunities to help them develop the skills and habits of mind they need to succeed, whatever their goals may be. Success, though, doesn’t end with first-year writing; students need to transfer their knowledge and skills to other courses and other writing tasks. To that end, we’ve added new chapters on reading and writing across fields of study and new guidance on writing literature reviews. We’ve also added “Taking Stock” questions to each Genre chapter to help students develop their metacognitive abilities by reflecting on their work.

*The Norton Field Guide* still aims to offer both the guidance new teachers and first-year writers need and the flexibility many experienced teachers want. In our own teaching we’ve seen how well explicit guides to writing work for students and novice teachers. But too often, writing textbooks provide far more information than students need or instructors can assign and as a result are bigger and more expensive than they should be. So we’ve tried to provide enough structure without too much detail—to give the information college writers need to know while resisting the temptation to tell them everything there is to know.

Most of all, we’ve tried to make the book easy to use, with menus, directories, a glossary/index, and color-coded links to help students find what they’re looking for. The links are also the way we keep the book brief: chapters are short, but the links send students to pages elsewhere in the book if they need more detail.

## What's in the Book

*The Norton Field Guide* covers 14 genres often assigned in college. Much of the book is in the form of guidelines, designed to help students consider the choices they have as writers. The book is organized into ten parts:

1. **ACADEMIC LITERACIES**. Chapters 1–4 focus on writing and reading in academic contexts, summarizing and responding, and developing academic habits of mind.
2. **RHETORICAL SITUATIONS**. Chapters 5–9 focus on purpose, audience, genre, stance, and media and design. In addition, almost every chapter includes tips to help students focus on their rhetorical situations.
3. **GENRES**. Chapters 10–23 cover 14 genres, 4 of them—literacy narrative, textual analysis, report, and argument—treated in greater detail.
4. **FIELDS**. Chapters 24–26 cover the key features of major fields of study and give guidance on reading and writing in each of those fields.
5. **PROCESSES**. Chapters 27–34 offer advice for generating ideas and text, drafting, revising and rewriting, editing, proofreading, compiling a portfolio, collaborating with others, and writing as inquiry.
6. **STRATEGIES**. Chapters 35–46 cover ways of developing and organizing text—writing effective beginnings and endings, titles and thesis statements, comparing, describing, taking essay exams, and so on.
7. **RESEARCH / DOCUMENTATION**. Chapters 47–55 offer advice on how to do academic research; work with sources; quote, paraphrase, and summarize source materials; and document sources using MLA and APA styles. Chapter 54 presents the “official MLA style” introduced in 2016.
8. **MEDIA / DESIGN**. Chapters 56–60 give guidance on choosing the appropriate print, digital, or spoken medium; designing text; using images and sound; giving spoken presentations; and writing online.
9. **READINGS**. Chapters 61–70 provide readings in 10 genres, plus one chapter of readings that mix genres. Discussion questions are color-coded to refer students to relevant details elsewhere in the book.
10. **HANDBOOK**. At the end of the book is a handbook to help students edit what they write, organized around the intuitive categories of sentences, language, and punctuation to make it easy to use.

## What's Online for Students

**Ebooks.** All versions of *The Norton Field Guide* are available as ebooks and include all the readings and images found in the print books. Highlighted links are active in the ebook so students can quickly navigate to more detail as needed. The ebook is accessible from any computer, tablet, or mobile device and lets students highlight, annotate, or even listen to the text.

**InQuizitive for Writers.** With InQuizitive, students learn to edit sentences and practice working with sources to become better writers and researchers. InQuizitive is adaptive: students receive additional practice on the areas where they need more help. Links to *The Little Seagull Handbook* and explanatory feedback give students advice, right when they need it. And it's formative: by wagering points, students think about what they know and don't know. Visit [inquizitive.wwnorton.com](http://inquizitive.wwnorton.com).

**Norton/write.** Just a click away with no passcode required, find a library of model student papers; more than 1,000 online exercises and quizzes; research and plagiarism tutorials; documentation guidelines for MLA, APA, Chicago, and CSE styles; MLA citation drills—and more. All MLA materials reflect 2016 style. Access the site at [wwnorton.com/write](http://wwnorton.com/write).

## What's Available for Instructors

**A Guide to Teaching with *The Norton Field Guides*.** Written by Richard Bullock and several other teachers, this is a comprehensive guide to teaching first-year writing, from developing a syllabus to facilitating group work, teaching multimodal writing to assessing student writing. Free of charge.

**Coursepacks** are available for free and in a variety of formats, including Blackboard, D2L, Moodle, Canvas, and Angel—and work within your existing learning management system, so there's no new system to learn, and access is free and easy. The *Field Guide* Coursepack includes model student papers; reading comprehension quizzes; reading strategy exercises; quizzes and exercises on grammar and research; documentation guidelines; and author biographies. Coursepacks are ready to use, right from the start—but are also easy to customize, using the system you already know and understand. Access the Coursepack at [wwnorton.com/instructors](http://wwnorton.com/instructors).



**PowerPoints.** Ready-made PowerPoints feature genre organization flowcharts and documentation maps from the book to help you show examples during class. Download the PowerPoints at [wwnorton.com/instructors](http://wwnorton.com/instructors).

**Worksheets** available in Word and PDF can be edited, downloaded, and printed with guidance on editing paragraphs, responding to a draft, and more. Download the worksheets at [wwnorton.com/instructors](http://wwnorton.com/instructors).

## Highlights

**It's easy to use.** Menus, directories, and a glossary/index make it easy for students to find what they're looking for. Color-coded templates and documentation maps even make MLA and APA documentation easy.

**It has just enough detail,** with short chapters that include color-coded links sending students to more detail if they need more.

**It's uniquely flexible for teachers.** Short chapters can be assigned in any order—and color-coded links help draw from other chapters as need be.

**A user-friendly handbook,** with an intuitive organization around sentences, language, and punctuation to make it easy for students to find what they need. And we go easy on the grammatical terminology, with links to the glossary for students who need detailed definitions.

## What's New

**A new part on fields of study** with 3 new chapters on reading and writing in the disciplines (Part 4):

- **A new chapter on the fields of study** surveys the distinctions among the major discipline areas and includes an overview of why a general education matters. (Chapter 24)
- **A new chapter on reading across fields of study** includes short examples drawn from a variety of courses and genres, along with tips, techniques, and key terms specific to each. (Chapter 25)
- **A new chapter on writing in academic fields** includes summaries of the key features of writing in the major disciplines, along with descriptions and short examples of typical writing assignments in each. (Chapter 26)

**New advice on detecting “false news” and unreliable sources**, including how to read sources with a critical eye and how to use the elements of a rhetorical situation to determine whether or not a potential source is genuine and reputable. (Chapter 49)

**A new section on reviews of scholarly literature** with advice on how to develop, organize, and write a literature review. This section also includes an overview of the key features of the genre, as well as a new student example. (Chapter 15)

**New “Taking Stock of Your Work” questions**: each Genre chapter now ends with a series of questions to help students develop their metacognitive abilities by thinking about their writing processes and products.

**New guidelines for peer review** with detailed advice on how to read and respond to peers’ drafts. (Chapter 32)

**Expanded coverage of synthesizing ideas**: a new sample essay that shows students how to synthesize multiple sources. (Chapter 50)

**New advice on arguing with a hostile audience**, including how to use Rogerian argument techniques to engage with audiences who may not share students’ perspectives or values. (Chapter 38)

**12 new readings in the rhetoric**: new essays in nearly every genre, including a literacy narrative on working in an auto repair shop, a report on popcorn, a rhetorical analysis of a speech by former president Barack Obama, a profile of the modern-day plastic straw, and many more. In addition, there is a new APA research paper on the benefits of nurseries in women’s prisons.

**21 new readings in the anthology**: at least one new essay in every genre, including an illustrated literacy narrative, a text analysis about Disney princesses, a profile of a plastic cooler, a proposal for a playground, and many more.

## Ways of Teaching with *The Norton Field Guide to Writing*

*The Norton Field Guide* is designed to give you both support and flexibility. It has clear assignment sequences if you want them, or you can create your own. If, for example, you assign a position paper, there’s a full chapter. If you want students to use sources, add the appropriate

research chapters. If you want them to submit a topic proposal, add that chapter.

**If you're a new teacher**, the Genre chapters offer explicit assignment sequences—and the color-coded links will remind you of detail you may want to bring in. The instructor's manual offers advice on creating a syllabus, responding to writing, and more.

**If you focus on genres**, there are complete chapters on all the genres college students are often assigned. Color-coded links will help you bring in details about research or other writing strategies as you wish.

**If you organize your course thematically**, a Thematic Guide will lead you to readings on 23 themes. Chapter 29 on generating ideas can help get students thinking about a theme. You can also assign them to do research on the theme, starting with Chapter 48 on finding sources, or perhaps with Chapter 27 on writing as inquiry. If they then write in a particular genre, there will be a chapter to guide them.

**If you want students to do research**, there are 9 chapters on the research process, including guidelines and sample papers for MLA and APA styles.

**If you focus on modes**, you'll find chapters on using narration, description, and so on as strategies for many writing purposes, and links that lead students through the process of writing an essay organized around a particular mode.

**If you teach a stretch, ALP, IRW, or dual credit course**, the academic literacies chapters offer explicit guidelines to help students write and read in academic contexts, summarize and respond to what they read, and develop academic habits of mind that will help them succeed in college.

**If you teach online**, the book is available as an ebook—and a companion Coursepack includes exercises, quizzes, video tutorials, and more.

## Acknowledgments

As we've traveled around the country and met many of the students, teachers, and WPAs who are using *The Norton Field Guide*, we've been gratified to hear that so many find it helpful, to the point that some students

tell us that they aren't going to sell it back to the bookstore when the term ends—the highest form of praise. As much as we like the positive response, though, we are especially grateful when we receive suggestions for ways the book might be improved. In this fifth edition, as we did in the fourth edition, we have tried to respond to the many good suggestions we've gotten from students, colleagues, reviewers, and editors. Thank you all, both for your kind words and for your good suggestions.

Some people need to be singled out for thanks, especially Marilyn Moller, the guiding editorial spirit of the *Field Guide* through all five editions. When we presented Marilyn with the idea for this book, she encouraged us and helped us conceptualize it—and then taught us how to write a textbook. The quality of the *Field Guide* is due in large part to her knowledge of the field of composition, her formidable editing and writing skills, her sometimes uncanny ability to see the future of the teaching of writing—and her equally formidable, if not uncanny, stamina.

Editor Sarah Touborg guided us through this new edition with good humor and better advice. Just as developmental editor John Elliott did with the third and fourth editions, Sarah shepherded this fifth edition through revisions and additions with a careful hand and a clear eye for appropriate content and language. Her painstaking editing shows throughout the book, and we're grateful for her ability to make us appear to be better writers than we are.

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It's customary to conclude by expressing gratitude to one's spouse and family, and for good reason. Writing and revising *The Norton Field Guide* over the past several years, we have enjoyed the loving and unconditional support of our spouses, Barb, Peter, and Larry, who provide the foundation for all we do. Thank you. We couldn't have done it without you.



# How to Use This Book

There's no one way to do anything, and writing is no exception. Some people need to do a lot of planning on paper; others write entire drafts in their heads. Some writers compose quickly and loosely, going back later to revise; others work on one sentence until they're satisfied with it, then move on to the next. And writers' needs vary from task to task, too: sometimes you know what you're going to write about and why, but need to figure out how to do it; other times your first job is to come up with a topic. *The Norton Field Guide* is designed to allow you to chart your own course as a writer, offering guidelines that suit your writing needs. It is organized in ten parts:

1. **ACADEMIC LITERACIES**: The chapters in this part will help you know what's expected in the reading and writing you do for academic purposes, and in summarizing and responding to what you read. One chapter even provides tips for developing habits of mind that will help you succeed in college, whatever your goals.
2. **RHETORICAL SITUATIONS**: No matter what you're writing, it will always have some purpose, audience, genre, stance, and medium and design. This part will help you consider each of these elements, as well as the particular kinds of rhetorical situations created by academic assignments.
3. **GENRES**: Use these chapters for help with specific kinds of writing, from abstracts to lab reports to memoirs and more. You'll find more detailed guidance for four especially common assignments: literacy narratives, textual analyses, reports, and arguments.
4. **FIELDS**: The chapters in this part will help you apply what you're learning in this book to your other general education courses or courses in your major.

5. **PROCESSES**: These chapters offer general advice for all writing situations—from generating ideas and text to drafting, revising and rewriting, compiling a portfolio—and more.
6. **STRATEGIES**: Use the advice in this part to develop and organize your writing—to write effective beginnings and endings, to guide readers through your text, and to use comparison, description, dialogue, and other strategies as appropriate.
7. **RESEARCH / DOCUMENTATION**: Use this section for advice on how to do research, work with sources, and compose and document research-based texts using MLA and APA styles.
8. **MEDIA / DESIGN**: This section offers guidance in designing your work and using visuals and sound, and in deciding whether and how to deliver what you write on paper, on screen, or in person.
9. **READINGS**: This section includes readings in 10 genres, and one chapter of texts that mix genres—42 readings in all that provide good examples of the kinds of writing you yourself may be assigned to do.
10. **HANDBOOK**: Look here for help with sentence-level editing.

## Ways into the Book

*The Norton Field Guide* gives you the writing advice you need, along with the flexibility to write in the way that works best for you. Here are some of the ways you can find what you need in the book.

**Brief menus.** Inside the front cover you'll find a list of all the chapters; start here if you are looking for a chapter on a certain kind of writing or a general writing issue. Inside the back cover is a menu of all the topics covered in the **HANDBOOK**.

**Complete contents.** Pages xxiii–xlv contain a detailed table of contents. Look here if you need to find a reading or a specific section in a chapter.

**Guides to writing.** If you know the kind of writing you need to do, you'll find guides to writing 14 common genres in Part 3. These guides are designed to help you through all the decisions you have to make—from coming up with a topic to editing and proofreading your final draft.

**Color-coding.** The parts of this book are color-coded for easy reference: light blue for **ACADEMIC LITERACIES**, red for **RHETORICAL SITUATIONS**, green for **GENRES**, pink for **FIELDS**, lavender for **PROCESSES**, orange for **STRATEGIES**, blue for **RESEARCH/DOCUMENTATION**, gold for **MEDIA/DESIGN**, apple green for the **READINGS**, and yellow for the **HANDBOOK**. You'll find a key to the colors on the front cover flap and also at the foot of each left-hand page. When you see a word highlighted in a color, that tells you where you can find additional detail on the topic.

**Glossary/index.** At the back of the book is a combined glossary and index, where you'll find full definitions of key terms and topics, along with a list of the pages where everything is covered in detail.

**Directories to MLA and APA documentation.** A brief directory inside the back cover will lead you to guidelines on citing sources and composing a list of references or works cited. The documentation models are color-coded so you can easily see the key details.

## Ways of Getting Started

**If you know your genre,** simply turn to the appropriate genre chapter. There you'll find model readings, a description of the genre's Key Features, and a Guide to Writing that will help you come up with a topic, generate text, organize and write a draft, get response, revise, edit, and proofread. The genre chapters also point out places where you might need to do research, use certain writing strategies, design your text a certain way—and direct you to the exact pages in the book where you can find help doing so.

**If you know your topic,** you might start with some of the activities in Chapter 29, Generating Ideas and Text. From there, you might turn to Chapter 48, for help Finding Sources on the topic. When it comes time to narrow your topic and come up with a thesis statement, Chapter 36 can help. If you get stuck at any point, you might turn to Chapter 27, Writing as Inquiry; it provides tips that can get you beyond what you already know about your topic. If your assignment or your thesis defines your genre, turn to that chapter; if not, consult Chapter 27 for help determining the appropriate genre, and then turn to that genre chapter.



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# Academic Literacies

Whenever we enter a new community—start a new job, move to a new town, join a new club—there are certain things we need to learn. The same is true upon entering the academic world. We need to be able to **READ** and **WRITE** in certain ways. We're routinely called on to **SUMMARIZE** something we've heard or read and to **RESPOND** in some way. And to succeed, we need to develop certain **HABITS OF MIND**—everyday things such as asking questions and being persistent. The following chapters provide guidelines to help you develop these fundamental academic literacies—and know what's expected of you in academic communities.

# Academic Literacies

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# Writing in Academic Contexts

1

Write an essay arguing whether genes or environment do more to determine people's intelligence. Research and write a report on the environmental effects of electricity-generating windmills. Work with a team to write a proposal and create a multimedia presentation for a sales campaign. Whatever you're studying, you're surely going to be doing a lot of writing, in classes from various disciplines—the above assignments, for example, are from psychology, environmental science, and marketing. Academic writing can serve a number of different purposes—to **ARGUE** for what you think about a topic and why, to **REPORT** on what's known about an issue, to **PROPOSE A SOLUTION** for some problem, and so on. Whatever your topics or purposes, all academic writing follows certain conventions, ones you'll need to master in order to join the conversations going on across campus. This chapter describes what's expected of academic writing—and of academic writers.

▲ 157–84  
131–56  
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## What's Expected of Academic Writing

**Evidence that you've considered the subject thoughtfully.** Whether you're composing a report, an argument, or some other kind of writing, you need to demonstrate that you've thought seriously about the topic and done any necessary research. You can use various ways to show that you've considered the subject carefully, from citing authoritative sources to incorporating information you learned in class to pointing out connections among ideas.



**An indication of why your topic matters.** You need to help your readers understand why your topic is worth exploring and why your writing is worth reading. Even if you are writing in response to an assigned topic, you can better make your point and achieve your purpose by showing your readers why your topic is important and why they should care about it. For example, in the prologue to *Our Declaration*, political philosopher Danielle Allen explains why her topic, the Declaration of Independence, is worth writing about:

The Declaration of Independence matters because it helps us see that we cannot have freedom *without* equality. It is out of an egalitarian commitment that a people grows—a people that is capable of protecting us all collectively, and each of us individually, from domination. If the Declaration can stake a claim to freedom, it is only because it is so clear-eyed about the fact that the people’s strength resides in its equality.

The Declaration also conveys another lesson of paramount importance. It is this: language is one of the most potent resources each of us has for achieving our own political empowerment. The men who wrote the Declaration of Independence grasped the power of words. This reveals itself in the laborious processes by which they brought the Declaration, and their revolution, into being. It shows itself forcefully, of course, in the text’s own eloquence.

By explaining that the topic matters because freedom and equality matter—and language gives us the means for empowering ourselves—Allen gives readers reason to read her careful analysis.

**A response to what others have said.** Whatever your topic, it’s unlikely that you’ll be the first one to write about it. And if, as this chapter assumes, all academic writing is part of a larger conversation, you are in a way adding your own voice to that conversation. One good way of doing that is to present your ideas as a response to what others have said about your topic—to begin by quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing what others have said and then to agree, disagree, or both.

For example, in an essay arguing that organ sales will save lives, MIT student Joanna MacKay says, “Some agree with Pope John Paul II that the selling of organs is morally wrong and violates ‘the dignity of the human



person.’” But she then responds—and disagrees, arguing that “the morals we hold are not absolute truths” and that “peasants of third-world countries” might not agree with the pope.

**A clear, appropriately qualified thesis.** When you write in an academic context, you’re expected to state your main point explicitly, often in a **THESIS STATEMENT**. Joanna MacKay states her thesis clearly in her essay “Organ Sales Will Save Lives”: “Governments should not ban the sale of human organs; they should regulate it.” Often you’ll need to **QUALIFY** your thesis statement to acknowledge that the subject is complicated and there may be more than one way of seeing it or exceptions to the generalization you’re making about it. Here, for example, is a qualified thesis, from an essay evaluating the movie *Juno* by Ali Heinekamp, a student at Wright State University: “Although the situations *Juno*’s characters find themselves in and their dialogue may be criticized as unrealistic, the film, written by Diablo Cody and directed by Jason Reitman, successfully portrays the emotions of a teen being shoved into maturity way too fast.” Heinekamp makes a claim that *Juno* achieves its main goal, while acknowledging at the beginning of the sentence that the film may be flawed.

**Good reasons supported by evidence.** You need to provide good reasons for your thesis and evidence to support those reasons. For example, Joanna MacKay offers several reasons why sales of human kidneys should be legalized: there is a surplus of kidneys, the risk to the donor is not great, and legalization would allow the trade in kidneys to be regulated. Evidence to support your reasons sometimes comes from your own experience but more often from published research and scholarship, research you do yourself, or firsthand accounts by others.

Compared with other kinds of writing, academic writing is generally expected to be more objective and less emotional. You may find *Romeo and Juliet* deeply moving or cry when you watch *The Fault in Our Stars*—but when you write about the play or the film for a class, you must do so using evidence from the text to support your thesis. You may find someone’s ideas deeply offensive, but you should respond to them with reason rather than with emotional appeals or personal attacks.

◆ 387–89

◆ 388–89



**Acknowledgment of multiple perspectives.** Debates and arguments in popular media are often framed in “pro/con” terms, as if there were only two sides to any given issue. Once you begin seriously studying a topic, though, you’re likely to find that there are several sides and that each of them deserves serious consideration. In your academic writing, you need to represent fairly the range of perspectives on your topic—to explore three, four, or more positions on it as you research and write. In her report, “Does Texting Affect Writing?,” Marywood University student Michaela Cullington, for example, examines texting from several points of view: teachers’ impressions of the influence of texting on student writing, the results of several research studies, and her own survey research.

**A confident, authoritative stance.** If one goal of academic writing is to contribute to a larger conversation, your tone should convey confidence and establish your authority to write about your subject. Ways to achieve such a tone include using active verbs (“X claims” rather than “it seems”), avoiding such phrases as “in my opinion” and “I think,” and writing in a straightforward, direct style. Your writing should send the message that you’ve done the research, analysis, and thinking and know what you’re talking about. For example, here is the final paragraph of Michaela Cullington’s essay on texting and writing:

On the basis of my own research, expert research, and personal observations, I can confidently state that texting is not interfering with students’ use of standard written English and has no effect on their writing abilities in general. It is interesting to look at the dynamics of the arguments over these issues. Teachers and parents who claim that they are seeing a decline in the writing abilities of their students and children mainly support the negative-impact argument. Other teachers and researchers suggest that texting provides a way for teens to practice writing in a casual setting and thus helps prepare them to write formally. Experts and students themselves, however, report that they see no effect, positive or negative. Anecdotal experiences should not overshadow the actual evidence.

Cullington’s use of simple, declarative sentences (“Other teachers and researchers suggest . . .”; “Anecdotal experiences should not overshadow . . .”)



and her straightforward summary of the arguments surrounding texting, along with her strong, unequivocal ending (“texting is not interfering with students’ use of standard written English”), lend her writing a confident tone. Her stance sends the message that she’s done the research and knows what she’s talking about.

**Carefully documented sources.** Clearly acknowledging sources and documenting them carefully and correctly is a basic requirement of academic writing. When you use the words or ideas of others—including visuals, video, or audio—those sources must be documented in the text and in a works-cited or references list at the end. (If you’re writing something that will appear online, you may also refer readers to your sources by using hyperlinks in the text; ask your instructor if you need to include a list of references or works cited as well.)

**Careful attention to correctness.** Whether you’re writing something formal or informal, in an essay or an email, you should always write in complete sentences, use appropriate capitalization and punctuation, and check that your spelling is correct. In general, academic writing is no place for colloquial language, slang, or texting abbreviations. If you’re quoting someone, you can reproduce that person’s writing or speech exactly, but in your own writing you try hard to be correct—and always proofread carefully.

## What’s Expected of College Writers: The WPA Outcomes

Writing is not a multiple-choice test; it doesn’t have right and wrong answers that are easily graded. Instead, your readers, whether they’re teachers or anyone else, are likely to read your writing with various questions in mind: does it make sense, does it meet the demands of the assignment, is the grammar correct, to name just a few of the things readers may look for. Different readers may notice different things, so sometimes it may seem to you that their response—and your grade—is unpredictable. It should be good to know, then, that writing teachers across the nation have come to some agreement on certain “outcomes,” what college stu-





dents should know and be able to do by the time they finish a first-year writing course. These outcomes have been defined by the National Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA). Here's a brief summary of these outcomes and how *The Norton Field Guide* can help you meet them:

### Knowledge of Rhetoric

- **Understand the rhetorical situation of texts that you read and write.** See Chapters 5–9 and the many prompts for Considering the Rhetorical Situation throughout the book.
- **Read and write texts in a number of different genres, and understand how your purpose may influence your writing.** See Chapters 10–22 for guidelines on writing in thirteen genres and Chapter 23 on mixing genres.
- **Adjust your voice, tone, level of formality, design, and medium as is necessary and appropriate.** See Chapter 8 on stance and tone and Chapter 9 for help thinking about medium and design.
- **Choose the media that will best suit your audience, purpose, and the rest of your rhetorical situation.** See Chapters 9 and 56.

### Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing

- **Read and write to inquire, learn, think critically, and communicate.** See Chapters 1 and 2 on academic writing and reading, and Chapter 27 on writing as inquiry. Chapters 10–23 provide genre-specific prompts to help you think critically about a draft.
- **Read for content, argumentative strategies, and rhetorical effectiveness.** Chapter 7 provides guidance on reading texts with a critical eye, Chapter 11 teaches how to analyze a text, and Chapter 49 shows how to evaluate sources.
- **Find and evaluate popular and scholarly sources.** Chapter 48 teaches how to use databases and other methods to find sources, and Chapter 49 shows how to evaluate the sources you find.



- **Use sources in various ways to support your ideas.** Chapter 38 suggests strategies for supporting your ideas, and Chapter 51 shows how to incorporate ideas from sources into your writing to support your ideas.

### Processes

- **Use writing processes to compose texts and explore ideas in various media.** Part 5 covers all stages of the processes writers use, from generating ideas and text to drafting, getting response and revising, and editing and proofreading. Each of the thirteen genre chapters (10–22) includes a guide that leads you through the process of writing in that genre.
- **Collaborate with others on your own writing and on group tasks.** Chapter 28 offers guidelines for working with others, Chapter 32 provides general prompts for getting and giving response, and Chapters 10–23 provide genre-specific prompts for reading a draft with a critical eye.
- **Reflect on your own writing processes.** Chapters 10–23 provide genre-specific questions to help you take stock of your work, and Chapter 31 offers guidance in thinking about your own writing process. Chapter 34 provides prompts to help you reflect on a writing portfolio.

### Knowledge of Conventions

- **Use correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.** Chapter 33 provides tips to help you edit and proofread for your writing. Chapters 10–23 offer genre-specific advice for editing and proofreading.
- **Understand and use genre conventions and formats in your writing.** Chapter 7 provides an overview of genres and how to think about them. Part 3 covers thirteen genres, describing the key features and conventions of each one.
- **Understand intellectual property and document sources appropriately.** Chapter 52 offers guidance on the ethical use of sources, Chapter 53 provides an overview of documentation styles, and Chapters 54 and 55 provide templates for documenting in MLA and APA styles.