Fourteenth Edition

Student's Book of College English

Rhetoric, Reader, Research Guide, and Handbook

David Skwire · Harvey S. Wiener

Brief Contents

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Student's Book of College English

RHETORIC, READER, RESEARCH GUIDE, AND HANDBOOK

FOURTEENTH EDITION

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Detailed Contents

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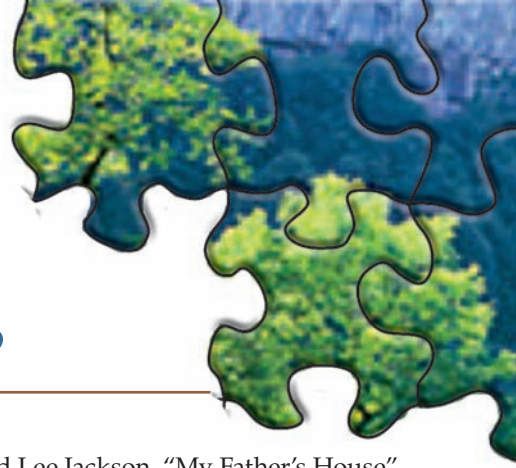

Thematic Contents

Nature and Science in the Spotlight

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Preface

Student's Book of College English has remained popular and well-respected through thirteen editions because it consistently meets the needs of instructors and students. As a four-in-one text, *Student's Book* seamlessly combines the coverage of a rhetoric, a reader, a research guide, and a handbook in one coherent and efficient presentation of the material that instructors deem essential for students in First Year Composition. Students like the text because the pedagogy is articulated in a straightforward and jargon-free style, the examples are clearly and concisely annotated, and the student essays and professional readings are interesting and varied.

The reader component of *Student's Book* includes numerous selections from sources ranging from academia to the Internet on timely topics that pique students' interest. Professional readings accompany concrete suggestions for the critical reading of texts and illustrations and, together with annotated student essays, are also integrated throughout the text to support the coverage of rhetoric—detailed instruction in the writing process and methods of developing an essay. *Student's Book* concludes with in-depth coverage of research methods, including comprehensive examples, and a complete treatment of grammar and usage that serves as a resource for students.

What's New in the Fourteenth Edition

This new edition of *Student's Book* follows the same successful format with additions and improvements that keep the text fresh and fine-tune the focus on academic requirements. Outstanding features of this revision include the following:

- New coverage of academic writing clarifies the requirements for college writing and gives tips and techniques (Ch. 1), and a new section on writing in the third person focuses attention on academic diction (Ch. 2). In addition, nine student essays now feature MLA citations and works cited lists and four professional selections include citations (Ch. 1–17). Finally, *Student's Book* emphasizes academic writing requirements throughout the pedagogy, including, for example, in suggestions for essay topics (Ch. 1–17).
- Thirteen completely new student essays, including two new essays followed from prewriting to final draft, focus on fresh topics of both personal and academic interest to students (Ch. 1–17). As always, two or more sample student

essays in the modes chapters, many annotated, offer twice as many student readings per rhetorical pattern as most other comparable rhetorics and expose students to a variety of options to consider as they plan and develop their own papers.

- Completely revised coverage of research gives step-by-step, detailed treatment of the research paper, including tips and Strategy Checklists for doing research and writing the research paper, "Frequently Asked Questions" about writing the research paper, and coverage of MLA and APA documentation styles. A new, fully annotated model MLA research paper on the topic of video game violence helps students effectively solve some of their most troublesome research problems and learn the skills needed for research writing across the curriculum (Ch. 20 and 21).
- Sixteen new professional readings, of which six include images [3] such as infographics and graphs, now add to a collection that includes work by authors such as Mark Twain, Nikki Giovanni, Barbara Ehrenreich, Willa Cather, and John Grisham (Ch. 1–17). New selections cover up-to-the-minute topics such as minimum wage legislation, Internet privacy, and genetic modification of plants.

Other Features of *Student's Book*

In preparing the fourteenth edition, we have retained many time-tested features that help students improve their writing skills and produce good essays:

- **Comprehensive coverage of the writing process** addresses all aspects of writing, from prewriting and outlining to developing a thesis statement, to drafting and revision. Frequent examples and annotations of student drafts help demystify writing.
- **A comprehensive chapter on outlining** (Ch. 4), unique in rhetorics organized by rhetorical patterns, offers students a reliable strategy to help them progress from their prewriting and their thesis statements into their rough drafts, helping them build coherence in their papers from the very first draft. Furthermore, in Chapter 20, Student's Book features outlining as a key part of the process of planning a research paper.
- **Sample student essays on a range of topics** help inspire students to find ideas for writing in their own personal and academic experiences.
- **More than 85 readings** that include both classic and contemporary essays, photographs, cartoons, and Web-based selections provide students with material for response in their own writing as well as models for different rhetorical strategies.

- **Annotated professional samples** illustrate for students how critical readers interact with texts.
- **An "In the World Around You" feature** provides an example of each method of development in a real-world context plus an activity to help students connect composition strategies they learn in college with the writing they see beyond the classroom. (Ch. 7–15).
- **"Tips"** provide guidance for each method of development, such as discussions of prewriting, audience, purpose, topic selection, outlining, supporting details, structure, revising, and proofreading (Ch. 7–15).
- **Argument writing prompts, "Having Your Say,"** throughout the text ask students to think about a high-interest or controversial topic about which they have read and argue a position, strengthening their argumentation skills as a component of each chapter's writing assignments.
- **Critical Thinking activities, "Crosscurrents,"** at the end of the readings in each chapter in Part Two, encourage students to connect themes, ideas, and issues presented in the textbook.
- **"Collaborative Learning" activities** create opportunities for students to learn in groups as they discuss reading selections and student samples.
- **Step-by-step, detailed treatment of the research paper** includes useful tips and Strategy Checklists. "Frequently Asked Questions" about writing the research paper, coverage of MLA and APA documentation styles, and a fully annotated student research paper help students effectively solve some of their most troublesome research problems and learn the skills needed for research writing across the curriculum.
- **The Handbook in Part Six** also offers exercises that allow students to practice and evaluate their progress, and a streamlined Glossary of Problem Words covers essential vocabulary and usage issues.
- **"ESL Pointers: Tips for Non-Native Writers"** features helpful instruction and exercises in key trouble spots for students learning English as a second language.
- **The alternate thematic table of contents** for readings, visual texts, and student writing supports instructors who want another way to approach the reading selections.

Plan of the Book

In **Part One, "Getting Started: The Principles of Good Reading and Writing,"** we explore critical reading, the requirements of academic writing, prewriting strategies, drafting, and revising, and provide extensive practice on outlining,

drafting, and developing a thesis. We show student writing at various stages of development and offer commentary to guide the reader's appreciation of how a paper progresses from start to finish.

Part Two, "Methods of Development," contains ten chapters, one devoted to each of the key rhetorical modes, beginning with description and narration, then working through example, process, comparison and contrast, classification and division, cause and effect, definition, and argumentation. Each chapter contains a discussion of how to write in the particular mode, professional and student examples and readings, and a large number of analytical and generative exercises ("For Writing or Discussion" questions follow every selection). Many readings in Part Two are new. We've tried to incorporate new readings that reflect the interests of today's student body. As a culminating chapter in Part Two, we provide full instruction in using mixed modes so that students see and practice how to integrate different rhetorical strategies in a single paper.

To add to the practicality of the book, all chapters in Part Two include a writing assignment with suggested writing topics and end with strategy checklists to serve as reminders and chapter summaries. Another popular feature in Part Two, "Crosscurrents," points out even more possibilities for writing topics by directing students' attention to thematic parallels between and among writing selections in different parts of the book.

Part Three, "Special Writing," includes a chapter on literary analysis and a chapter on writing essay exams, as well as an overview of business writing.

Part Four, "Research," gives considerable attention to essential research instruction. We include research with online databases, computerized card catalogs, and the Web, as well as significant coverage of the writing process, incorporating sources into one's own writing, avoiding plagiarism, and revising. *The MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing, Third Edition*, and the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition*, guide our instruction in citation and documentation. Illustrated source samples of a book, a journal article, and a Web page help students see where to find citation information.

Part Five, "Style," includes three chapters: Chapter 22 helps students understand how to choose the right words to convey their meaning; Chapter 23 on effective sentences highlights those stylistic issues directly involved with creation of effective sentences; and Chapter 24 on stylistic problems and solutions offers students practical writing advice, including guidelines for avoiding sexist language.

Part Six, "Handbook, Glossary, and ESL Pointers," is easily accessible through alphabetical arrangement of entries, a colored bar at the end of the pages, and tabs with symbols that correspond to the list of Correction Symbols and Abbreviations at the back of the book. The inside back cover contains guides to the text's planning, writing, and revising coverage, and a guide to the Handbook and Glossary, for quick reference. Student writers can find answers to most questions they have about grammar, sentences, punctuation, and mechanics in the Handbook and Glossary. Exercises in Part Six enable students to demonstrate their

command of the basics. A section called "ESL Pointers: Tips for Non-Native Writers" addresses many stumbling blocks faced by English-as-a-second-language student writers.

Supplements for Students and Instructors

- **Instructor's Manual.** The Instructor's Manual, revised by Angela R. Morales of Glendale College, features additional discussion on teaching strategies, including sample syllabi, portfolio instruction, and collaborative activities. In addition, the new manual contains an updated and expanded analysis of each essay. [6]
- MyWritingLab™ MyWritingLab is an online homework, tutorial, and assessment program that provides engaging experiences to today's instructors and students. By incorporating rubrics into the writing assignments, faculty can create meaningful assignments, grade them based on their desired criteria, and analyze class performance through advanced reporting. For students who enter the course underprepared, MyWritingLab offers a diagnostic test and personalized remediation so that students see improved results and instructors spend less time in class reviewing the basics. Rich multimedia resources, including a text-specific ebook in many courses, are built in to engage students and support faculty throughout the course. Visit www.mywritinglab.com for more information.
- **Interactive E-book.** The e-book version of *Student's Book of College English* is also available in MyWritingLab. The *Student's Book of College English* MyWritingLab course uses the many resources of MyWritingLab to create an enriched, interactive learning experience for writing students.
- **CourseSmart E-book.** *Student's Book of College English* is also available as a CourseSmart e-textbook. This is an exciting new choice for students, who can subscribe to the same content online and search the text, make notes online, print out reading assignments that incorporate lecture notes, and bookmark important passages for later review. For more information, or to subscribe to the CourseSmart e-textbook, visit www.coursesmart.com.

Acknowledgments

We are proud and grateful for the more than thirty years that our textbook has served college writers throughout the country. Our deepest thanks go to the faculty, students, and, we are certain, some of those students' children who have honored us with their trust and attention.

The planning and preparation of this edition, as well as earlier editions, have benefited enormously from the essential insights of Joseph Opiela, our editor and long-time colleague, as well as from Lauren A. Finn, and Eben W. Ludlow, our former editors. We want to express special appreciation to Linda Stern, our developmental editor, whose careful reading and wise editing of our book made this revision possible. We would also like to thank editorial assistant Amanda Norelli for all her support. And we owe a special debt of thanks to Eric Jorgensen, who guided us over the rough spots of digital production with calm and intelligence, and to Shannon Kobran, our project manager.

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David Skwire

Harvey S. Wiener

About the Authors

David Skwire, with degrees from the University of Wisconsin—Madison and Cornell University, taught composition, creative writing, and American literature at Cuyahoga Community College for twenty-five years. He also served on the faculties of Tufts University and Temple University. He acknowledges, however, that his job of most interest to students was a two-year stint as a writer of humorous greeting cards. In addition to his coauthorship of *Student's Book of College English*, he is author of the successful *Writing with a Thesis*. Now retired, Skwire lives near Cleveland.

Harvey S. Wiener taught for many years as professor of English at LaGuardia Community College. He has served in a variety of administrative positions, most recently as Vice President at Marymount Manhattan College. Dr. Wiener has directed the basic writing program at Pennsylvania State University and has taught at Teachers College, Columbia University, Brooklyn College, Queensborough Community College, and the State University of New York at Stony Brook. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Brooklyn College, Wiener holds a Ph.D. in Renaissance literature from Fordham University. He was founding president of the Council of Writing Program Administrators and was chair of the Teaching of Writing Division of the Modern Language Association. Wiener is the author of many books on reading and writing for college students and their teachers, including *The Writing Room*. His book for parents, *Any Child Can Write*, was a Book-of-the-Month Club alternate. His most challenging writing assignment was a test to qualify as Chief Writer for a network soap opera by developing the content for six weeks of episodes. He does not regret having lost the job to someone else.

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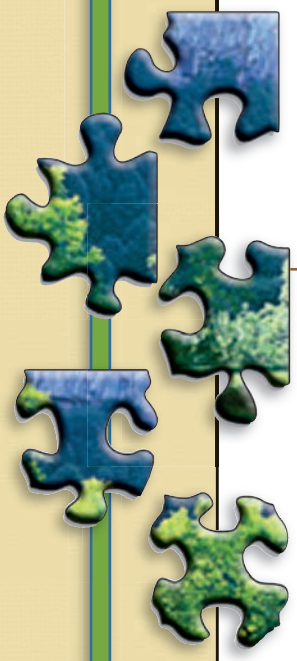
PART ONE

Getting Started: The Principles of Good Reading and Writing



CHAPTER 1

Critical Reading

In this chapter you will

- examine and apply the elements that contribute to critical reading
- analyze a sample of critical reading in action
- examine academic writing
- explore reading for inquiry
- practice collaborative learning
- apply critical reading to visual images such as photographs, advertisements, graphs, tables, charts, cartoons, and Web sites
- analyze a sample critical reading with visuals

Why Read?

Even a few decades ago, the question "Why read?" would rarely have crossed anyone's mind. The essential way to gaining wisdom and enlightenment, to understanding issues and reacting wisely to world events, to filling time with pleasurable activity, was to read books, magazines, journals, and newspapers. Reading brought knowledge; reading brought delight; reading brought comfort and self-awareness.

In an age of multimedia, however, the question "Why read?" has urgency. After all, televisions, DVD players, computers, video game consoles, MP3 players, and cell phones all compete to fill our time with exciting visual and auditory presentations. We can watch and listen to an extraordinary range of information without turning a page of paper.

So, why read? One set of responses to this question is obvious, of course. We read traffic signs and warning signs. We read recipes and directions for putting together a toy or installing an air conditioner. We read menus and sales brochures. Furthermore, we also read in various electronic media. Television images frequently include words that we have to read. Text messaging on a cell phone involves reading and writing. E-mail, instant messages, blogs, and Web sites usually require us to decode written language. So, reading skills, such as dealing with new vocabulary, figuring out the meaning of a message, and using inference, regularly come into play. At the very least, being an attentive reader is important for survival as we go about our daily lives.

But beyond these practical instances, why should you try to improve your reading competence, especially in college, where you can address innumerable topics and questions through nonbook sources?

Much of the world's collected knowledge still resides in print that dwells in non-cyber libraries and bookstores. To maximize your learning experience, you'll have to read books handed down across centuries, do required textbook reading in your courses, and research newspapers and magazines that may not be online. These print media have a permanence that cyberspace often lacks.

What we have to say about reading in this chapter will help you read in any of the media demanded by your college programs. To be a successful college reader, you have to be a critical reader. Critical reading means reading actively.

Many college students are passive readers. They start reading with little advanced thought. They expect the words and sentences on a page to produce meaning without the reader's help. Passive readers do little to build a partnership with the writer and the text in order to understand what the writer says.

Active readers, critical readers, on the other hand, know that they have to work at getting meaning from words and sentences. They take conscious steps to engage what they read. The writer and the reader together create meaning.

TIPS for Reading Critically

- **Have a reason for reading.** Think in advance about what you expect to gain from your reading. You can read to learn new concepts and vocabulary. You can read to prepare for a class lecture or discussion or to learn someone's opinions on a controversial topic. You can read to stimulate your own writing for a required essay, to explore essential scholarship for a research paper, or to examine rhetorical and other writing strategies as an aid to honing your own skills. Without a purpose, you risk a passive stance as a reader, and that puts you at risk of never truly interacting with the words before you.

- **Explore what you know about the topic before you read.** Before you read anything below the title, try to connect the title with any related information you may have seen or heard. Look at any subtitles, photographs, illustrations, graphs, charts—and all the accompanying captions—before you begin reading. Think a moment about the author's name and about any information provided about the author. When you start reading, stop after you complete the first paragraph or two. Think again about how you can relate what you already know to the topic the writer is investigating.

- **As you read, record your responses.** Write down what the selection makes you think of or what it makes you feel. Write out any questions you

have. Copy out phrases that stimulate, challenge, annoy, thrill, puzzle, or ignite you. Make notes in the margins of books you own.

- **Establish the writer's thesis.** All good readers try to determine the main point of a reading. Sometimes the writer will tell you very directly what the thesis is, and before the end of the first few paragraphs—sometimes at the end of the very first sentence—you'll know exactly what the piece is about. But in other cases, no single statement or statements will tell you the thesis precisely. Here you have to state the writer's thesis in your own words. The various sentences and paragraphs in an essay will contribute information that you must use to define the thesis yourself.

- **Pay attention to the words the writer chooses.** Words are alive with both denotative (the dictionary definition) and connotative (the implied or suggested definition) meanings. A writer naming a person who is about thirteen years old can use one of these words that, roughly speaking, would do the job: *youngster, child, adolescent, teenager, kid, eighth grader, prepubescent, young adult*. Critical readers always consider the implications of word choice and think about why a writer selects one word instead of another.

- **Determine the writer's purpose and audience.** Writers have many reasons for writing: to inform, to entertain, to challenge, to complain, to convince, to describe, to tell a story, to call for action—there are others certainly. As you read, you should be able to figure out the intended purpose. Related to the writer's purpose is the audience the writer has in mind, which influences the writing markedly. For example, to write about steps for preventing the spread of AIDS, a writer would use wholly different strategies if writing for eighth-grade kids in a suburban classroom, for social workers in Chicago, or for health care workers in Africa.

- **Consider the way that the writer has constructed the essay.** Look at the sentences to see if they relate to the main point. Look at the introductions and conclusions, the essay's opening and closing doors. Do they achieve their ends? Do they satisfy you? How do the parts of the essay hold together? Do all the ideas seem to relate to the central point? Do the sentences connect smoothly with each other? And how has the writer accomplished these near-magical feats? Attending to the structure of what you read will help you learn strategies for your own writing.

- **Be aware of the writer's tone.** *Tone* is the writer's attitude toward the subject. For example, one writer writing about the high incidence of guns in schools could approach the topic with shock and horror; another, with anger; another, analytically; another, clinically, simply describing or chronicling

events; another, sentimentally, longing for the good old school days with no weapons and with well-behaved kids. Thoughtful readers always keep an eye on the tone. Like purpose and audience, it influences word choice, sentence structure, and style.

Critical Reading in Action

Look at the following selection and note in the margins the questions and comments that show how a critical reader treated the piece "Everything Is Illuminated." The selection is about new technology that can identify a range of materials instantly by means of laser beams. Note the steady interaction between the reader and the essay regarding language and content—the student-reader cross-examines the piece, acknowledges important or difficult words, raises questions, and comments on the writing.

LOUISE LEVATHES

Everything Is Illuminated

With lights? Or just making something clear?

Sergeant Kris Gilbert of the Polk County, Florida, narcotics squad is teaching his officers to use a new device that's going to make their job a lot easier. It looks like a vintage cell phone and weighs about 13 ounces. Held against a bag of white powder, it emits a beam of laser light that—in 20 seconds—can tell the officers at a crime scene whether the bag contains crack cocaine, methamphetamine, or baby powder. The device is programmed to recognize 100 narcotics. "Once the courts accept this new evidence," says Gilbert, "it could replace the chemical kits we currently use to test drugs in our labs." 1

Legal issues may be a problem?

What would Spock say?

What has brought this *Star Trek* wonder scanner to life is Raman spectroscopy: a quick, easy, and non-invasive tool that tells users in seconds what something *really* is at the molecular level. Recent improvements in technology have shrunk the once expensive, unwieldy tabletop device into an array of smaller, more commercially viable Raman scanners, such as the handheld drug detector by DeltaNu, which costs $15,000 and is being tested by police departments in several states. About 1,000 portable devices that identify hazardous materials are also in use. Within 10 years, DeltaNu expects its handheld devices to be in every police squad car in the country, as ubiquitous as the breathalyzer. 2

Thesis?

Ubiquitous? Look up.

3 Raman devices work by shooting a laser beam at an object. The laser light interacts with the object's electrons, making the atoms vibrate and shifting the energy of the laser photons up or down. The shift creates a visual pattern—the Raman effect, named after C. V. Raman, the Indian scientist who discovered it in the 1920s. Almost every material has its own unique Raman pattern, based on how strongly its atoms are bonded.

This is how it works.

4 Raman, who won a Nobel Prize for his discovery, realized that this scattering of light offered an alternative to X-ray diffraction as a means of identifying compounds. But not until the advent of more powerful, less expensive lasers in the 1970s and '80s and advances in digital imaging in the 1990s, spurred by NASA and the telecommunications industry, did scientists begin researching applications for Raman spectroscopy.

Inventor Raman won Nobel Prize. Important stuff. X-rays obsolete in the future?

5 At about the same time, Richard Van Duyne, a chemistry professor at Northwestern University, found that the intensity of the Raman signal was proportional to the electromagnetic field on the surface of an object, and that enhancing the electromagnetic field with gold or silver or copper would boost the Raman signal considerably. In fact, a device using "surface-enhanced Raman spectroscopy" can detect traces of less than one part per billion. As a result, it can be used to identify minute quantities of explosives in liquids or deadly bacteria on a table in a meatpacking plant. Rick Cox, the head of business development at Delta Nu, estimates that while Raman technology is now a $150 million business, within five to 10 years, handheld Raman instruments selling for less than $5,000 will be available to everybody to identify just about anything.

Expert testimony: chem professor. How could gold improve Raman signal?

What is this?

Big expense. Worth it? But price will come down: good advance

6 The potential medical applications of Raman technology are perhaps the most exciting. Researchers at Stanford University are experimenting with it as a non-invasive tool to diagnose breast, lung, and other cancers. River Diagnostics, in Rotterdam, is marketing a bacteria-strain analyzer to identify pathogens in real time and combat hospital-acquired infections. Diabetics may someday be able to monitor their glucose without poking themselves to get a drop of blood. Allergy sufferers may be able to instantly detect which pesky pollens are in the air and respond accordingly.

What is DeltaNu? And RiverDiagnostics? Commercial labs? Search online for these.

Device goes beyond criminal drug detection into health care issues

7 But to identify materials, you need databases of Raman patterns. "We are in the midst of another tremendous era of reclassification—like the scientists of the 18th century," says Robert Downs, a mineralogist who with his University of Arizona colleague Bonner Denton, a chemist, has spearheaded the development of Raman technology.

Huge job, classifying all patterns. Is it really doable?

8 Over the past five years, Downs and his team have identified the Raman patterns of about half the Earth's 4,000 minerals. So far, other scientists have generally been willing to share their knowledge, but Downs is troubled by the prospect of companies' putting exorbitant user fees on their databases. "The

Song of a bird like DNA? A stretch? Well, maybe not. Nice image.

Raman effect is part of the innate quality of matter—like DNA," he told me. "No one owns the song of a bird."

FOR WRITING OR DISCUSSION MyWritingLab

1. What is the main point of the selection?
2. How do the marginal notes demonstrate critical reading?
3. Where does the reader call attention to issues of language?
4. Where do you find evidence of the reader's prior knowledge applied to the reading?
5. What additional comments or questions would you raise about this piece?

Reading Academic Writing

Reading for your college courses presents a variety of challenges. Most academic writing is in the third person (see Chapter 2) and contains a range of vocabulary specific to the discipline you're reading about. Academic texts have it as their main purpose to provide as much factual information as possible without too much regard for style. Writers of such texts expect you to come away from the chapters with a complete understanding of the content, enough to take and pass an examination on the material or to write a paper on some element of the reading or at the very least to frame thoughtful questions about what you've read for a classroom discussion or recitation with your instructor.

TIPS for Reading Academic Course Material

- **Examine any questions or directions that your instructor has provided.** This step can help you orient your reading to the discipline and prepare you for class lecture or recitation.
- **Set your own focus questions.** Like our general recommendation to establish a purpose for reading, if you develop some questions whose answers you'll try to discover as you read, you'll have an easier time understanding and remembering factual information.
- **Determine the main idea of the selection.** All the facts in a piece generally support an important point that the writer is attempting to make, and you should try to establish that point as soon as possible in your reading.

- **Be aware of discipline-based vocabulary, drawn especially from your class notes and readings that you've done before.** All disciplines have their own terminology, and the more you understand key terms that may have emerged in lectures or class discussions, the easier you will find following the text.

- **Use underlining and highlighting sparingly.** Some studies have questioned the value of underlining or highlighting textual elements as you read. Yet many readers rely on these strategies. The key is to use them sparingly to call attention only to essential ideas that you discover in your reading. When you go back to the selection for review, the essential ideas will stand out.

- **Take notes.** A successful way to learn academic materials is to take notes as you read. When you take notes, be sure to put what you've read into your own words; this approach helps you digest material and convert it into language that you understand.

- **Use headings and subheadings as aides to understanding.** An academic text will often extract key information and turn it into a heading that highlights the main idea of a section that follows.

- **Break down complex sentences into smaller thought units.** Academic texts can contain long paragraphs and highly complex sentences, and you have to condense them into components that you understand.

- **Pay careful attention to visual images, like charts, graphs, photographs, Web sites, and tables.** (See pages 15–27.) Many academic texts rely on visual presentations to provide critical information. Resist the temptation to skip over a chart or graph; you often will not find visual information repeated somewhere else in the selection you're reading.

EXERCISE

Read the following selection from "When Germs Travel," and apply some of the principles presented in "Tips for Reading Academic Course Material" above.

HOWARD MARKEL

When Germs Travel

1 History teaches us that society has no shortage of means available to dehumanize "undesirable" groups. The grave risks of this process are magnified when combined with the threat of infectious disease. At such moments, rhetorical scapegoating may be transformed into a mentality of quarantine. Not only does the disease become the "enemy"; so, too, do the human beings (and their contacts) who have encountered the microbe in question. A common symptom of the quarantine mentality is to do everything possible to prevent the spread of an epidemic disease, often neglecting the human or medical needs of those labeled infectious.

2 The annals of human migration have long been intertwined with the history of infectious disease. As humans have roamed and conquered, so have the germs that travel within them. One of the most striking results of the international exploration that began in antiquity and reached its zenith during the Renaissance and Enlightenment eras was the progressive and deadly spread of communicable diseases around the globe. The concept of quarantine–shutting the gates of a town or port to all foreign persons and cargo, and forbidding all residents to leave, in order to stem the tide of an epidemic–was a response to the outbreak of bubonic plague, known as the black death, which killed a fourth of Europe's population in the fourteenth century. In the American experience, one of the most infamous examples of the way germs can travel was the ravaging of Indian populations by the many infections that arrived with explorers from the Old World.

3 In its relatively brief history, the United States has episodically experienced deadly epidemics that sometimes originated from within its borders (diphtheria, measles, typhus fever, poliomyelitis, smallpox) and sometimes came from without (cholera, plague, yellow fever). But regardless of the germ's origin, or even of the scientific understanding of disease transmission, a consistent scapegoat for public.health crises in American history has been the newly arrived immigrant. Early nineteenth-century Irish and German newcomers were supplanted only a few generations later by Jews, East Europeans, Italians, Asians, and Mexicans. Manifestations of immigrant scapegoating, unhappily, have continued to the present.

4 The United States welcomed more than twenty-five million immigrants to its shores between 1880 and 1924. This great wave of American immigration remains one of the most significant pathways of population movement in world history. Not all Americans greeted the newcomers with open arms. The most frequently sounded objection to immigration during this period was an economic one–the perennial fear that immigrants would push Americans out of their jobs, drive down wages, and overuse an already strapped patchwork system of public assistance. A close second objection was tied to racist sentiment, often expressed as apprehension about untoward political beliefs (socialism or anarchism) or the presumed inability of new groups to assimilate into American society. But the most insidious objection that has appeared across our history involves the issue of safeguarding the nation's public health against infections potentially imported by immigrants.