



# The College Writer

A Guide to Thinking, Writing, and Researching

**Seventh Edition**

Van Rys  
Meyer  
VanderMey  
Sebranek



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A Guide to Thinking, Writing, and Researching



Australia • Brazil • Mexico • Singapore • United Kingdom • United States

**Seventh Edition**

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Seventh Edition***

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## Preface

Wherever students are in their writing process or however confident they feel about writing, *The College Writer* is a resource they can turn to for guidance and support. Valuable for student writers of any skill level, this book is a fully updated four-in-one text with major sections on the writing process, modes of writing, research and writing, and grammar, punctuation, and usage. Throughout the text, numerous student and professional writing samples highlight important features of academic writing—from organization to documentation—and model strategies students can use in their own papers.

The seventh edition features increased attention to the role of critical reading and paragraph writing in the composing process, updated sample essays focused on timely and inclusive topics, a stronger emphasis on evaluating and composing multimodal texts, and friendly organization that directly leads students through the process of composing critical academic and research-based essays. The text is available as a multimedia online learning experience, featuring an e-book, audio, video, exercises, models, web links, and bonus chapters on multimodal projects, taking tests, writing for the workplace, and preparing oral presentations.

## New Features

- **Twenty-one NEW sample essays**, 8 from students and 13 from professionals, offer fresh perspectives on relevant, current topics—from embracing identity to culturally significant food to problematizing racialized Internet GIFs. Perfect for discussion, these essays will also inspire students' writing. New professional writers include Fiza Pirani, Thomas King, Abigail C. Saguy, Kumari Devarajan, Arend Hintze, Nina Mukerjee Furstenau, Rob Ruck, William Wordsworth, Josh Wilbur, Naomi Day, Katy Steinmetz, and Kurly Tlapoyawa. New student writers tackle topics such as homelessness, online security, food and identity, and arranged marriages.
- **REORGANIZED chapters in Part 1, "The Writing Process,"** help students fully integrate critical thinking, reading, and viewing into their writing process. The **NEW chapter 2, "Reading Critically,"** introduces students to active-reading strategies for analyzing, evaluating, and responding to texts. This chapter also gives special attention to engaging with social media and detecting bias. The **NEW chapter 3, "Viewing Critically,"** shows students how to actively view, understand, and critique images and video. New pages feature strategies for detecting visual misinformation.
- **An ENHANCED chapter 5, "Drafting: From Paragraphs to Essays,"** features increased attention to crafting opening, body, and closing paragraphs, highlighting how paragraphs serve as a line of reasoning and showing how to link them together into a full essay. Additions to the chapter help students examine paragraphs at the sentence level, showing how different types of sentences—topic, reasoning, evidence, and concluding—can interact to create strong academic paragraphs.

- **Chapters in Part II, “Modes of Writing,” feature REWORKED pedagogy and increased writing instruction** to help students to more effectively produce thoughtful, energetic college-level prose. The chapters now begin with a brief teaching model that introduces students to the mode. Following the teaching model, the chapters include increased instruction on thesis development and mode-specific writing moves and strategies. Students then see those moves in action as they read and respond to exemplary sample essays from student and professional writers. New reading topics address current issues of interest and concern to a diverse student body. As culminating support, students receive process-based writing instructions for creating their own essay within the mode.
- **Each chapter in Part III, “Research and Writing,” now includes a specific form of research writing** that students can complete while they receive instruction on how to find and engage with sources ethically. **NEW research forms include a literature review and annotated bibliography.** The progression of chapters in Part III highlights the interplay of writing and research, not just in the final large research-paper project but throughout the research process.
- **ENHANCEMENTS to chapters in Part III also include additional material on research ethics**, including examining online sources critically, identifying misinformation, recognizing filter bubbles and confirmation bias, and questioning the “fake news” and “alternative facts” concepts.
- **UPDATED instruction in Chapter 24, “APA Style,” aligns with changes in the *APA Style Guide, 7th Edition*.**

## Key Features

- ***The College Writer* provides students with a concise yet complete overview of the writing process.** The text’s unique “at-a-glance” visual format presents each major concept in a one- or two-page spread, with examples illustrating explanations, and then the opportunity for hands-on practice, with writing assignments or practice exercises.
- **Consistent attention to the rhetorical situation**—writer, reader, message, medium, and context—gives students a tool to analyze the works of others and create their own works.
- **“Learning Objectives” at the beginning of each chapter help students focus on key learning points;** main headings throughout the chapter reinforce those points; and “Learning-Objective Checklists” enable students to track their performance.
- **“Common Traits of College Writing,” introduced in chapter 1 and then underlying much of the instruction in the text, help students understand and achieve college-level writing.** These traits are also in sync with the “WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition.”



- **An ENHANCED person-to-person style engages students directly with instruction that connects to the writing that they are doing.** Particularly in chapter openings, direct address aims to thoughtfully and sometimes humorously create a framework for understanding the chapter's topic and its importance.
- **Increased emphasis on thesis creation encourages students to organize their thinking as they write.**
- **Activities and projects help students fully engage with readings, complete their own writing, and extend their learning through critical thinking.** After each sample essay, “Reading for Better Writing” questions ask students to connect the reading to their own life and experiences, show comprehension of the content, study writing moves and strategies within the piece, and brainstorm related topics and approaches for their own project. End-of-chapter activities extend students' learning through applications such as Photo Op, Wise Words, Living Today, Public Texts, Writing Reset, and Major Work.
- **High-interest academic writings from students and professionals help writers understand and create a scholarly tone.** Throughout the text, the authors offer examples of writing for different disciplines as well as in different work contexts.
- **An ENHANCED Chapter 17, “Persuasive Writing: Strategies for Argumentation,” strengthens instruction in argumentative writing.** The chapter includes attention to the contrast between Toulmin and Rogerian approaches to argument, along with a sample argument and a fallacy-focused essay.
- **An ENHANCED Chapter 18, “Persuasive Writing: Positions, Actions, Solutions,” also strengthens instruction in argumentative writing.** The chapter offers more instruction on the principles involved in forms of persuasive writing, along with new sample essays that cluster around the environment, cultural identity, online culture, and drug legalization.
- **The Research section gives students all the tools they need to do twenty-first century research,** including working with digital databases; understanding the differences between primary, secondary, and tertiary sources; working effectively with sources, while avoiding plagiarism; learning to evaluate diverse sources; and documenting their research in MLA (8th edition) or APA (7th edition) format.
- **The Handbook covers key points of grammar, sentence structure, sentence errors, punctuation, mechanics, and usage, as well as multilingual and ESL guidelines.** These topics are reinforced by exercises available both in the text and online.
- **Charts, graphs, and photos help visual learners grasp concepts and cultivate visual literacy in all students.** These elements range from the high-interest chapter-opening photos to mode-specific graphic organizers.
- **The entire text is available as a multimedia eBook, featuring audio, video, exercises, models, and web links.**

## New to This Edition

**New Sample Essays:** Twenty-one new sample essays include works by professionals such as Fiza Pirani, Thomas King, Abigail C. Saguy, Arend Hintze, Nina Mukerjee Furstenau, Rob Ruck, Josh Wilbur, Naomi Day, Katy Steinmetz, and Kurly Tlapoyawa.

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Modes of Writing

### Exploring an Immigrant Identity

Fiza Pirani is a freelance journalist and editor for *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. Much of her work focuses on mental-health issues. In the following essay published by ZORA, Pirani explores the doubleness of her own immigrant experience as found in her name.

#### It Took Me 18 Years to Embrace My Name

I don't remember how or when FEE-za was born, but I can imagine my reluctance to correct the teachers who, during roll call, would announce this mispronunciation of my Muslim name with a confidence I didn't know a name could hold. There was no "Did I say that right?" No room for even a reluctant plea for rectification, let alone a chance for me to boldly assert myself as the FIZZ-ah my Pakistani mother birthed in my hometown of Indore, India.

The butchering was done with such conviction that I forgot it was a mispronunciation at all. My teachers probably knew better, I thought.

But it didn't take long to internalize the inaccuracy and make it mine.

"It's actually FEE-za," I valiantly told my parents and younger brother, proud of the mispronunciation I'd adopted sometime during my first childhood years in America—somewhere between New York, Texas, or Georgia—at one of the dozen suburban schools I'd end up attending before high school graduation.

My folks didn't seem to care much. "If changing your name makes life easier at your American school, then go for it," their apathy implied.

Ease was the goal, after all. After decades of instilling the importance of assimilation to country, state to state, and city to city to ensure a future for their children, quiet assimilation to White America was the goal in their parents' eyes.

Nikita Redkar, a 26-year-old filmmaker from Atlanta, Georgia, shares her experience in a predominantly White American neighborhood. Like me, Redkar, who goes by Ni-KEY-da, move to Atlanta from a predominantly White American neighborhood. "Teachers would look at my name on attendance sheets and give me a hard time," she says. Afraid to draw attention to herself, a shy Nikita caused the least fuss.

Her parents understood, just as my parents did. "Their mentality was to survive, survive, survive in the '90s."

Generations of immigrants before us have aspired to assimilate. Research has consistently shown that immigrants who assimilate more by shedding their accents or changing their names have a higher chance of success within the labor market.

And if the recent public charge policy tells us anything, it's that an immigrant's success is directly tied to how much we have in common.

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Modes of Writing

### Addressing a Racial Problem

Naomi Day is a software engineer who also writes speculative fiction and Afrofuturist work. In this essay from *OneZero*, a *Medium* publication, Day explains the problems with specific Internet images portraying African Americans, images that on the surface seem harmless.

#### Reaction GIFs of Black People Are More Problematic Than You Think

The Internet is a portal to intercultural awareness. When discussing ramen versus pho, for example, all I have to do is pull out my phone and a quick Google search lets me know the noodle's country of origin, the differences in their broths, and their evolution over time. Now I know what I'm talking about in future discussions about either, and I'm less likely to make potentially harmful assumptions around the cultures from which these foods come.

On the other hand, technology also makes it much easier to borrow elements of other cultures. When we all live behind the relatively anonymous wall of the Internet, we have near-absolute power to display ourselves in whatever manner we like. I can pretend to be an Asian American man living in Wyoming if I want. (I'm not: I'm a Black woman living on the East Coast.)

One prominent problematic example of this is the use of digital blackface in GIFs. While using GIFs is not nearly as extreme as taking on a whole fake online identity, it represents a much more subversive way that cross-cultural blending from the Internet can reinforce negative stereotypes and make us less empathetic when it comes to other races.

#### What is digital blackface?

Depending on whom you ask, digital blackface either refers to non-Black folks claiming Black identities online or to non-Black folks using Black people in GIFs or memes to convey their own thoughts or emotions.

Digital blackface takes its name from real-life blackface. The origins of this harmful tradition lie in mid-19th-century minstrel shows in which white performers darkened their faces and exaggerated their features in an attempt to look stereotypically "Black," while mimicking enslaved Africans in shows performed for primarily white audiences. This trend of putting on Black appearances and acting out insulting stereotypes went a long way toward cementing the damaging white vs. Black narrative that much of the United States is built on.

Digital blackface, while less obviously and intentionally harmful than 19th-century blackface, bears many similarities in the way it reduces Black people to stereotypes and enables non-Black people to use these stereotypes for their own amusement.

There is plenty of discussion on this topic, as the trend of non-Black people using often-exaggerated images of Black emotions or Black culture divorced from the

**Increased Instruction on Crafting Strong Paragraphs:** The seventh edition features support for creating well-developed opening, body, and closing paragraphs, highlighting how paragraphs serve as a line of reasoning and showing how to link them together into a full essay. Additions help students examine paragraphs at the sentence level, showing how different types of sentences can interact to create strong academic paragraphs.

### Use a Basic Pattern for Body Paragraphs

In much of your academic writing, you want to write full-bodied paragraphs—rich like a quality cup of coffee. These paragraphs are typically longer than two or three sentences. And the sentences tend to be substantial—full of careful thinking and discussions of information. Such body paragraphs normally combine these kinds of sentences:

1. **A topic sentence:** Each paragraph typically has one, often the first sentence. It states the focus and main idea of the paragraph while often offering a transition from the previous paragraph.
2. **Reasoning sentences:** These typically elaborate your thinking about the topic sentence—explaining what you mean, what you’ve learned about it. Essentially, reasoning is what’s happening in your head as you reflect on the main idea.
3. **Evidence sentences:** These statements present information in support of your reasoning: facts, statistics, examples, illustrations, quotations, case studies, and more. Evidence is what you’ve gathered through reading, viewing, researching, and experiencing. In that sense, it’s what exists outside your head. You weave evidence sentences into your reasoning. Note: sometimes sentences blend reasoning and evidence. Don’t get hung-up on the distinction: learning to weave reasoning and evidence together is the main lesson.
4. **Concluding sentence:** The final sentence often wraps up the discussion of the paragraph’s topic, summarizing the point that you’ve developed in the reasoning and evidence sentences.

**Example:** Read the paragraph below from “Chasing the Stoke” in chapter 13. Notice how Tim Zekveld builds his thinking out of these four types of sentences. Note, too, how the paragraph has forward momentum, moving from A (the topic sentence) to A+ (the concluding sentence), all through the dance of reasoning and evidence.

The diagram shows a paragraph with four types of sentences highlighted in different colors, each with a label in a colored box pointing to the corresponding sentence:

- Topic sentence (orange box):** In Hawaii, surfing began as a joyous thanksgiving to the ocean for its providence and sustenance. Dating as far back as 800 AD, surfing was commonplace in Hawaiian society. Men, women, and children of every social status—from the commoner to the king—would surf regularly as a means of leisure and a form of ritual.
- Reasoning sentences (blue box):** When the ocean had provided food for their clan or had affected the people in a catastrophic way, Hawaiians would, while surfing the face of a wave, turn around and bow, wetting their head in the curl (Peralta). This ritual was a physical act meant to pay homage to the ocean, showing immense humility and reverence to their life force.
- Evidence sentences (green box):** Surfing on carved wooden boards measuring sixteen feet or longer and weighing well over a hundred pounds, the ancient Hawaiians would paddle into waves varying from three to thirty feet (Young 11). Captain James Cook, on viewing a Hawaiian surf in 1777, wrote, “I could not help concluding that this man felt the most supreme pleasure while he was being driven on so fast and so smoothly by the sea” (qtd. in Peralta). The joy that Captain Cook had witnessed, paired with the unfathomable respect that Hawaiians had for the ocean, fused into one term: aloha.
- Concluding sentence (green box):** The joy that Captain Cook had witnessed, paired with the unfathomable respect that Hawaiians had for the ocean, fused into one term: aloha.

**Enhanced Instruction on Reading and Viewing Critically:** Chapter 2, “Reading Critically,” introduces active-reading strategies for analyzing, evaluating, and responding to texts. Special attention is given to engaging with social media and detecting bias. Chapter 3, “Viewing Critically,” shows students how to actively view, understand, and critique images and video. New pages feature strategies for detecting visual misinformation.

## Engaging with Social Media

So far this chapter has introduced you to strategies for close, sustained reading of academic texts, but most of the texts you encounter in your daily life are much shorter and informal. Social media, for example, inundate users with bursts of news and content that compete for your attention. Sifting through information in this fast-paced environment requires a unique set of reading skills.

To engage with social media ethically, follow these strategies.

### Revisit the Rhetorical Situation

Questioning the rhetorical situation can help evaluate social-media content.

#### Writer: Who created or shared the message?

**Discussion:** What are the author’s credentials? Is the person an authority on the topic? See what can you learn from the author’s profile page. Also consider your own relationship with the sender and how it might impact your reading.

#### Message: What does the message say (topic, main point, support)?

**Discussion:** Evaluate the content. What parts capture your attention? Is the information fair and logical? What points of view are shared? Which ones are left out? What other sources—if any—confirm the information? If the message includes a video or link, weigh its information as well.

#### Medium: What site or platform is used to share the information?

**Discussion:** Consider the medium’s strength. Twitter allows for quick and efficient sharing of information that can be shared.

#### Reader: Who is the target of the message?

**Discussion:** Social posts, by their nature, are original intended audience. How might people respond to the same message? How does your reading? Are you a part of the target audience?

#### Context: What is the purpose of the message—to entertain, inform, or persuade?

**Discussion:** Messages that are meant to entertain and unbiased than messages meant to inform or persuade. Even “neutral” messages share one point of view: Who benefits from sending this message?

**fyi** You don’t need to closely read every post that has that kind of time. Save your careful analysis for posts you’re adopting or sharing with others.

## Detecting Misinformation

Rapid advances in technology have provided millions of people with the ability to create and share images and video online. Unfortunately, these same advances allow users to manipulate visual information in ways that distort the truth. For consumers of media, discerning the line between real and fake is becoming increasingly difficult, so much so that you can no longer afford to live by the maxim of *seeing is believing*.

As a critical viewer, you should be aware of common types of visual misinformation and know how to detect them.

### Deepfakes

Deepfakes are falsified videos of people—often celebrities or other public figures—that appear real but have been created using complex algorithms and artificial intelligence. Deepfakes can show people doing things they didn’t actually do and saying things they didn’t actually say. They can create voice clones that sound strikingly similar to a person’s actual voice.

**How to detect deepfakes:** As technology improves, deepfakes will become tougher to spot. However, you can look for these obvious signs of doctoring: poor lip syncing, flickering around the edges of faces, muddled fine features, a lack of blinking, and garbled audio. Performing fact-checks will also help you avoid manipulation. Check to see if other sources confirm the veracity of a video, especially if it involves a person doing or saying something crude or inflammatory.

### Deceptive Edits

Deceptive editing involves cutting and rearranging a video and presenting it as a full narrative. For instance, a political ad may cut out a large portion of an opponent’s speech to make it seem more inflammatory than it really was. Other techniques involve splicing together disparate videos to create a brand new story, or speeding up the frame to make someone’s actions appear more aggressive than they actually were.

**How to detect deceptive editing:** The best way to combat deceptive editing is to view the original video in its full length. Also, go to fact-checkers like Snopes, Media Matters, or *The Washington Post* Fact Checker to get more information.

### Out-of-Context Images

The deceptive editing techniques described above intentionally distort the context of events. Another common form of misplaced context involves recycling old photographs or videos and presenting them as evidence in relation to a current event.

**How to detect out-of-context images:** The best way to discover an image used out of context is to perform a reverse image search. This will show you a list of other places the photo has appeared online. Simply right click on the image, and choose “Search Google for image.” Also, read captions and source information to identify the photographer and the original publisher.

**Increased Instruction in the Modes of Academic Writing:** Chapters in Part II, “Modes of Writing,” feature reworked pedagogy and enhanced writing instruction to help students more effectively produce thoughtful, energetic college-level prose. Each chapter in Part II includes . . .

- A brief teaching model to introduce students to the mode.
- Increased instruction on thesis development and mode-specific writing moves and strategies.
- New exemplary sample essays from student and professional writers showing the mode in action.
- Process-based writing instructions for creating an original essay within the mode.

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### Patterns for Compare-Contrast Essays: Thesis Thinking

The thesis for your compare-contrast essay offers your central observation as you look at things side by side. What are the essential similarities and/or differences, and what do they mean? In the example below, the writer aims to make sense of the differences between traditional and online bullying by building on the distinction between urban and rural bullying.

**Example:** In some ways, when it comes to bullying, the Internet has made the world more rural. Before the Internet, bullying ended when you withdrew from whatever environment you were in. But now, the bullying dynamic is harder to contain and harder to ignore.

**A Thesis Template:** If it's helpful, you might use a template that stresses similarities and the second differences.

Whereas [subjects A and B] appear quite similar, they show important similarities in that \_\_\_\_\_.

Whereas [subjects A and B] appear quite similar, they are essentially different in that \_\_\_\_\_.

**Example:** While *Zero Dark Thirty* and *Dun & Kravitz*'s portrayal of events is more historical than \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

**From Weak to Strong:** In chapter 4, you learned about writing a thesis that is stronger. You can do the same with the thesis for your compare-contrast essay. We don't know if any of these ideas are true. We made \_\_\_\_\_.

**Weak Thesis:** obvious, shallow, or one-sided. Compared with a civil ceremony, a destination wedding is a monumental waste of money, IMHO!

**Good Thesis:** sound idea about the essential differences. While a destination wedding can be much more expensive than a traditional religious ceremony—whatever that means—the communal importance and serious nature of the ceremony is what makes it worth it.

**Excellent Thesis:** offers surprising, insightful differences. Compared with a civil ceremony or even a traditional religious ceremony, destination weddings can be enormously expensive and logistically challenging. How can they possibly be worth it? It turns out that \_\_\_\_\_.

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destination-wedding-couples are ten times more likely to stay married (possibly because they spend the rest of their lives paying for the wedding).

### Patterns for Compare-Contrast Essays: Writing Moves

The structure you create for your compare-contrast essay should grow naturally out of your thesis. If, for example, you are aiming to emphasize differences, you might begin with the apparent similarities (treating them briefly) and then dig into the differences at greater length, arranging those, perhaps, from simplest to most complex. You could use the reverse approach if your thesis stresses similarities. So, one of your choices has to do with the overall arrangement of similarities and differences, as well as the order in which you sequence specific points. As the compare-contrast blueprints show (Figure 14.3), you might also consider two other patterns:

- **Whole vs. whole**, also called the block method, discusses items separately, giving a strong overview of each. This pattern works well with short comparisons, as it requires readers to remember what they read about the first item in the first “block” after moving on to the second item in the second “block.”
- **Point by point**, also called the ping-pong method, discusses items together, side by side so to speak, criterion by criterion back and forth (hence ping-pong). This pattern stresses fine distinctions, making sense for long, complex comparisons, especially in papers presenting numbers, charts, or statistics.

Whichever overall structure you choose, remember that the glue that holds it together are compare-contrast words such as *more*, *less*, *similarly*, *in comparison*, *likewise*, *on the other hand*, *in contrast*, *however*, *still*, and *although*. Additional glue is created by comparative form of adjectives: *stronger*, *faster*, *higher*, *smarter*, *taller*, *smaller*.

**Compare-Contrast Blueprints**

Point by Point	Whole vs. Whole	Similarities-Differences
Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
Point A Subject 1    Subject 2	Subject 1	Similarities
Point B Subject 1    Subject 2	Subject 2	Differences
Ending	Ending	Ending

Fig. 14.3

**Updated Chapter 24 Instructions on APA Documentation and Style (7th edition):** Clear instructions and illustrations help students understand and use the current APA system for documenting research writing. The new system is introduced through an easy-reference quick guide, presented through clear examples, and modeled in new student essays.

## APA Documentation: Quick Guide

The APA system involves two parts: (1) an in-text citation within your paper when you use a source and (2) a matching bibliographic entry at the end of your paper. Note these features of the APA author-date system:

- **It uses signal phrases and parenthetical references** to set off source material from your own thinking and discussion. A signal phrase names the author and places the material in context (e.g., “As Jung described it, the collective unconscious . . .”).
- **It’s date-sensitive.** Because the publication dates of resources are especially important in social-science research, the publication year is included in the parenthetical reference and after the authors’ names in the reference entry.
- **It’s smooth, unobtrusive, and orderly.** APA in-text citations identify borrowed material while keeping the paper readable. Moreover, alphabetized reference entries at the end of the paper make locating source details easy.

You can see these features at work in the example below. The parenthetical material “Pascopella, 2011, p. 32” tells the reader these things:

- The borrowed material came from a source authored by Pascopella.
- The source was published in 2011.
- The specific material can be found on page 32 of the source.
- Full source details are in the reference list under the surname Pascopella.

### 1. In-Text Citation in Body of Paper

In newcomer programs, “separate, relatively self-contained educational interventions” (Pascopella, 2011, p. 32) are implemented to meet the academic and transitional needs of recent immigrants before they enter mainstream English Language Development.

### 2. Matching Reference Entry at End of Paper

Pascopella, A. (2011). Successful strategies for English language learners. *District Administration*, 47(2), 29-44.

## In-Text Citation: The Basics

Follow these basic rules for in-text citation.

1. Refer to the author(s) and date of publication by using one of these methods:

#### Last name(s), publication date in parentheses:

ELLs normally spend just three years in 30-minute “pull-out” English language development programs (Calderón et al., 2011).

#### Last name(s) cited in text with publication date in parentheses:

In “Key Issues for Teaching English Learners in Academic Classrooms,” Carrier (2005) explained that it takes an average of one to three years to reach conversational proficiency in a second language, but five to seven years to reach academic proficiency.

**New Forms of Research Writing and Increased Attention to Research Ethics:** Each chapter in Part III, “Research and Writing,” now includes a specific form of research writing that students can complete while they receive instruction on how to find and engage with sources ethically. The progression of chapters in Part III highlights the interplay of writing and research, not just in the final large research-paper project but throughout the research process.

### Part III Research Focus

### Writing Form

- |                                |        |  |
|--------------------------------|--------|--|
| 19. Planning Your Research     | .....▶ | <i>Research Proposal</i>                         |
| 20. Doing Research             | .....▶ | <i>Annotated Bibliography</i>                    |
| 21. Practicing Research Ethics | .....▶ | <i>Literature Review</i>                         |
| 22. Drafting Research Papers   | .....▶ | <i>Humanities Essay and Science IMRAD Report</i> |
| 23. MLA Style                  | .....▶ | <i>MLA Paper</i>                                 |
| 24. APA Style                  | .....▶ | <i>APA Paper</i>                                 |

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Research and Writing

## Research Ethics: A Primer

When it comes to the wise and fair treatment of information, we live in complicated times. Consider both your participation in the larger information culture and your specific responsibilities in your research writing.

### Participation in Information Culture

We are all citizens of a larger information culture—a world of stories, news, studies, social media posts, blogs, documentaries, advertising campaigns, politics, and more. What should citizenship look like? We might start with the Golden Rule and how it applies to this world: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. It begins with respect, tolerance, and neighborliness in the spaces where information gets shared, discussed, and debated.

Consider a difficult and controversial topic such as the COVID-19 pandemic. What would a healthy information culture look like? Here are some principles:

**Seek out, rely on, and share ethically-sourced information:** Learn where information comes from. It's easy to passively rely on social media as a source, as it often feeds us what we want to hear—a lot of it junk-food information. Instead, become a more active information consumer—seeking out trustworthy, respected, ethically-produced sources. These typically come from organizations that have the well-being of individuals and society, as well as advancing knowledge, as part of their mission: government agencies, universities, nonprofits, media entities with high standards and moderate leanings. They're not perfect, but they do what's humanly possible to share information people can count on.

**Example:** To get reliable information on COVID-19, you would go to a source such as the CDC—the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a government agency whose mission is “Saving Lives, Protecting People.” Be suspicious of resources such as the video, “Plandemic: The Hidden Agenda Behind COVID-19”—produced by a well-known conspiracy theorist, featuring a discredited scientist from the National Cancer Institute, and spread on social media.

**Avoid misinformation:** Put simply, don't believe it, create it, or share it. Of course, you need to recognize misinformation when you see it. Develop your nose for falsehood, a healthy suspicion, so that you can practice the smell test: Does something seem too good to be true? Too crazy? Too connected to the source's self-interest? Bottom line: Never call a lie the truth, the truth a lie. When you hear phrases such as “That's just your opinion” or “It's all relative” or “These are just alternative facts,” don't accept them: While it's sometimes difficult to get at, truth exists. If you need help knowing whether something is misinformation, turn to fact-checking organizations (e.g., FactCheck.org and PolitiFact), as well as reliable sources that might confirm or counter the information in question.

**Example:** To test the truth-content of the video “Plandemic,” a quick Google search will take you to reputable news articles and a Wikipedia entry that explain the falsehoods and errors in the film.

## MindTap© English for *The College Writer*, 7th Edition

The MindTap for *The College Writer*, Seventh Edition, engages students with additional activities, videos, worksheets, modules, and readings to help them succeed.

### Activities for Understanding and Applying Chapter Content

- “Check Your Understanding” exercises after each chapter help students and instructors assess learning by asking students to apply what they have learned to very short scenarios of writing. Students get three sets of activities, so they have ample practice. Problems are auto-graded and report to the gradebook.
- “Collaborate” activities can be used in the online and face-to-face classroom. In the face-to-face classroom, collaborative activities are designed to take up to 30 minutes to complete. Online, the focus is on completing an activity, asynchronously, within one week. Worksheets give students a way to record their ideas, and optional individual reflection questions ask students to summarize what they have learned about the subject, the process of collaboration itself, or themselves.

### Videos That Offer Writing and Research Help

- “Watch a Video” activities in most Part II chapters show students how authentically the need to use rhetorical strategies arises. Animated stories are used to provoke thought and summarize key elements of each mode.
- In Part III on research and documentation, “Watch a Video” activities consist of very short videos with 10-item, auto-graded quizzes afterward. Videos are narrated by instructors from across the curriculum.

### Worksheets to Help Students Stay Focused and Organized

- “Writing Organizers” in Part II chapters are worksheets with open-ended questions that help students stay organized and focused on the most important elements of what they need to do. These Word docs can be downloaded, printed or filled out onscreen, and then uploaded to the instructor if desired. “Thesis Templates” help students draft well-formed thesis statements for each mode.
- “Research Organizers” in Part III chapters perform the same function as the Writing Organizers. Topics include developing a search strategy, evaluating sources using the CRAAP test, and editing and proofreading MLA and APA citations.

### Modules for Both Foundational and Advanced Topics

- The Just in Time Plus series includes 43 units on foundational topics that range from writing an essay to using commas correctly to paraphrasing, summarizing, and quoting. Each unit includes an introductory Video Tutorial (4-5 minutes), a Quick Review of instructional text (2-5 pages), and an Assignment (10-15 minutes) to check understanding of the topic. Assignments are auto-graded. A diagnostic pre-test and post-test help the instructor determine which students should study which units. Students get a report of their results, and instructors see reports for individual students and for the entire class.



- Focused Support for Key Topics includes 9 topics in argument, evaluating sources, and critical thinking. Each unit includes a Reading of instructional text; a Video Example of a student working with the topic; an auto-graded Review Activity; an annotated student essay; and two professional readings with discussion questions.

### 50 More Readings to Customize Your Course

- Ten themes, each with five readings, are supported by two kinds of apparatus for maximum flexibility: an extensive set of open-ended questions for before, during, and after reading, including annotation guides; and a separate, short (5-item) reading comprehension quiz that is auto-graded.
- The themes are Fake News on Social Media, Media Bias, The Value of College, Social Justice, Cultural Appropriation, Place and Identity, Nature and the Environment, Gender Identity, Writing About Writing, and Public Discourse.
- Readings range from 1100 to 1300L, or approximately 9th grade reading level to 13.5.

## Resources for Teaching

The MindTap for *The College Writer*, Seventh Edition, includes a full suite of instructor resources to help you plan and implement your course:

### For Setting Up the Course

- “MindTap Table of Contents with Learning Objectives” can help you quickly locate the resources you want to include to meet your course objectives.
- “Sample Syllabi” for courses that integrate MindTap resources are available for 4-week, 8-week, and 16-week courses. Syllabi for the co-req section are also provided.
- “Instructor’s Manual” provides syllabi for the course using only the print text, along with teaching tips applicable to a variety of teaching contexts.
- “Customizing Your MindTap Course” is a video narrated by an English instructor on how to add, move, and hide content to arrive at the exact course configuration that will help your students the most.

### For Teaching the Course

- “Reading Instruction in the Writing Classroom” helps instructors quickly get up to speed on how to teach reading and writing together.
- “Co-Req Activities You Can Do on the Spot” are five- to twenty-minute activities organized by topic that can be done in the co-req section with no instructor preparation.
- “Success with Collaborative Activities” is a brief guide to setting up groups and running them, and it includes talking points and answer keys for the Collaborate activities.
- “Discussion Board Prompts” are prompts that require critical thinking at the application, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy. These can be used in class or in an LMS discussion board.
- “50 Readings Answer Key” provides answers and talking points to the open-ended questions in the 50 Readings module.

# I. The Writing Process



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# Getting Started

At the start of her wonderful book, *The Writing Life*, Annie Dillard says, “When you write, you lay out a line of words.” Writing is that simple, isn’t it? And that complicated.

As a student, you know how difficult it can be to arrive at a line of words that sound right and make sense. Getting there requires a whole process. Done well, it’s a process of discovery. Your line of words becomes what Dillard calls “a miner’s pick, a woodcarver’s gouge, a surgeon’s probe.” That’s the aim of the writing process—discovery, both for you and your reader. Discovery happens when you give ample time to each step in the process.

This chapter introduces the writing process and then focuses on helping you start any writing project through prewriting strategies. As with many things in life, completing the first step right sets you up for the whole journey.

**Visually Speaking** Painting is the process of converting infinite possibilities into a single image. How is writing similar? How is it different? What is the starting point for painting? For writing? Consider these questions as you examine Figure 1.1.

## Learning Objectives

By working through this chapter, you will be able to

- outline the writing process.
- determine how to follow the process for different projects.
- summarize seven traits of strong, college-level writing.
- analyze the rhetorical situation behind writing tasks.
- interpret the nature and requirements of specific writing assignments.
- generate topics for writing projects.
- conduct research for writing projects.

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fig. 1.1



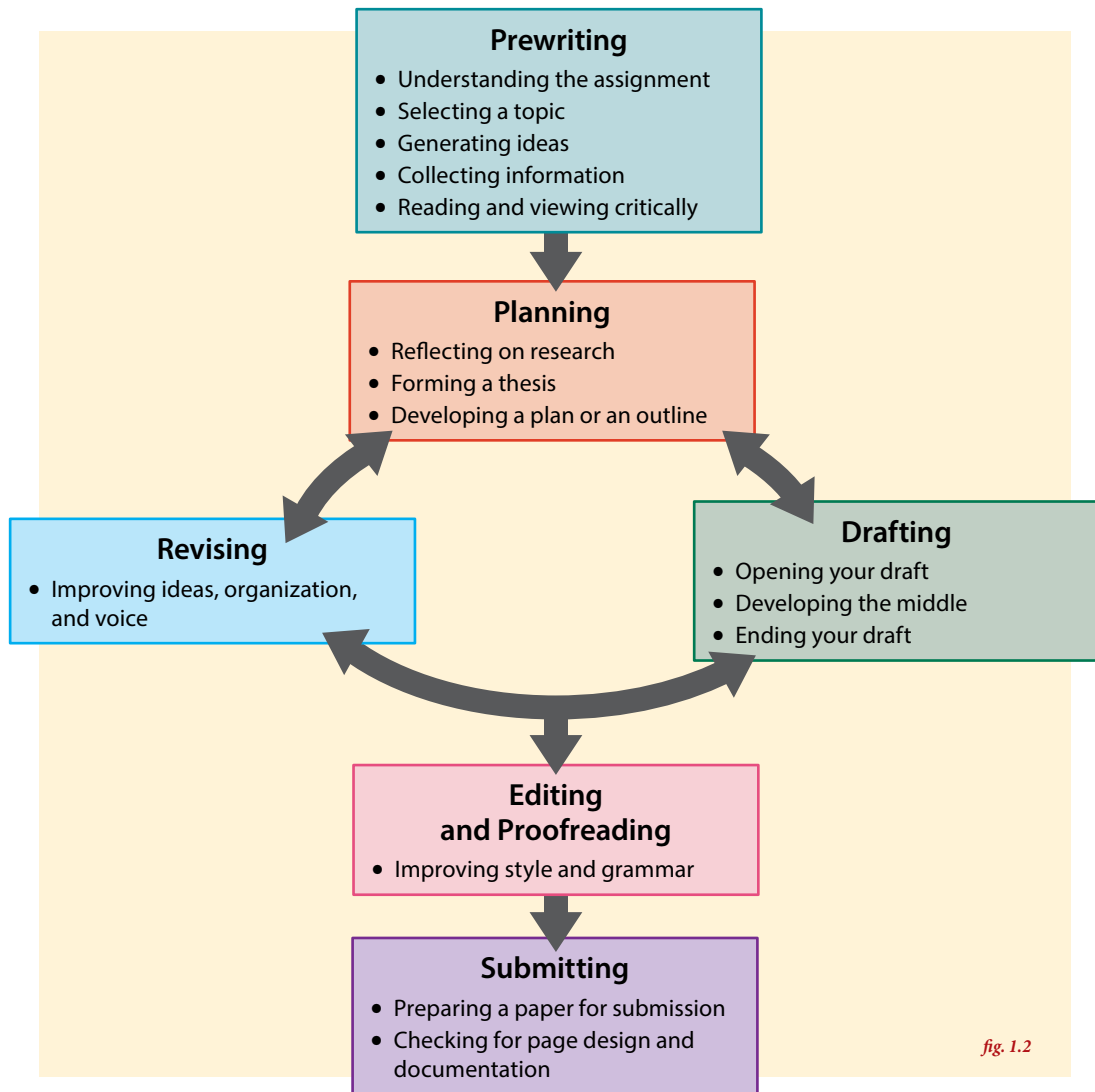
## The Writing Process: From Start to Finish

It's easy to feel overwhelmed by a writing project—especially if the form of writing is new to you, the topic is complex, or the paper must be long. However, using the writing process will relieve some of that pressure by breaking down the task into manageable steps.

### Consider the Writing Process

Figure 1.2 maps out the basic steps in the writing process. As you work on your writing project, periodically review this diagram to keep yourself on task.

#### Steps in the Writing Process



## Adapt the Process to Your Project

The writing process shown on the previous page is flexible, not rigid. As a writer, you need to adapt the process to your situation and assignment. To do so, consider these essential principles.

- **Writing tends not to follow a straight path.** While writing begins with an assignment or a need and ends with a reader, the journey in between is often indirect. The steps in the Figure 1.2 flowchart show that when you write, you sometimes move back and forth between steps, meaning that the process is recursive. For example, during the revision phase, you may discover that you need to draft a new paragraph or do more research.
- **Each assignment presents distinct challenges.** A personal essay may develop best through clustering or freewriting; a literary analysis through close reading of a story; a lab report through the experimental method; and a position paper through reading of books and journal articles, as well as through careful and balanced reasoning. Moreover, an assignment may or may not involve extensive research and working with sources.
- **Writing can involve collaboration.** From using your roommate as a sounding board for your topic choice to working with a group to produce a major report, college writing is not solitary writing. In fact, many colleges have a writing center to support you.
- **Each writer works differently.** Some writers do extensive prewriting before drafting, while others do not. You might develop a detailed outline, whereas someone else might draft a brief list of topics. Experiment with the strategies introduced in chapters 1–7, adopting those that help you.
- **Good writing can't be rushed.** Although some students regard pulling an all-nighter as a badge of honor, good writing takes time. A steady, disciplined approach will generally produce the best results. For example, by brainstorming or reading early in a project, you stimulate your subconscious mind to mull over issues, identify problems, and project solutions—even while your conscious mind is working on other things. Similarly, completing a first draft early enough gives you time to revise objectively.
- **Different steps call for attention to different writing issues.** As you use the writing process, at each stage keep your focus where it belongs:
  1. While getting started, planning, and drafting, focus on global issues: ideas, structure, voice, format, and design.
  2. During revising, fix big content problems by cutting, adding, and thoroughly reworking material. (Our experience is that students benefit the most from revising—but spend the least time doing it!)
  3. While editing and proofreading, pay attention to specific details—word choice, sentence smoothness, and grammatical correctness. Worrying about these issues too early in the writing process interrupts the flow of drafting and wastes time on material that may later be deleted.

## Aiming for Writing Excellence

What makes your writing strong enough to engage and enlighten readers? You can measure writing excellence by the depth of what you learn through writing, as well as by what your reader gains through reading. However, while the world of writing is so diverse that no formula or prescription can state definitively what makes for strong writing, we can point to common traits that describe such writing. Consider the relevance of these traits at the beginning of any writing project.

### Common Traits of College Writing

Quality writing shows strengths in the traits below, which range from global issues to local, sentence-level issues.

- **Strong ideas** are what you discover and develop through your writing. They are what make your content substantial and meaningful. These elements include a clear, sharp thesis or theme; strong and balanced reasoning; and accurate, supportive information that is properly credited.
- **Logical organization** creates the structure and flow of your writing. Through organization, reasoning is delivered through a clear chain of ideas, a unified whole. Typically, an engaging opening focuses discussion, the middle effectively develops the main idea, and a closing offers conclusions and points forward—all in paragraphs that are well developed (unified, coherent, and complete).
- **Engaging voice** refers to how your writing “sounds” to readers—the attitude, pacing, and personality that come through. An engaging voice sounds authentic and natural, engaged with the topic. Moreover, the tone—whether serious, playful, or sarcastic—is confident but also sincere and measured, fitting the writing occasion.
- **Clear word choice** carries your meaning. In your writing, the vocabulary should fit the topic, purpose, and audience. Phrasing should be clear throughout—language that readers will understand, using precise terminology and plain English whenever possible.
- **Smooth sentences** express complete thoughts in a good blend of sentence lengths (short and punchy, long and thoughtful) and patterns (loose, balanced, and periodic). Such sentences use phrases and clauses in logical and expressive ways—energetically, economically, gracefully.
- **Correct writing** follows the conventions of language (grammar, punctuation, mechanics, usage, and spelling), as well as standards of citation and documentation (e.g., MLA, APA).
- **Professional document design** refers to the appearance of your writing on the page, the screen, and so on. Such design includes the document’s format (e.g., essay, lab report, presentation, website), its page layout (e.g., margins, headings, bullets, white space), its typography (typefaces, type sizes, and type styles), and its use of tables and visuals.

## Common Traits in Action

What do these common traits look like in a typical piece of academic writing? Study the process essay below to discover how it represents strong freshman-level college writing.

**Ideas**  
Clear focus, engaging thesis, and precise content (including visual)

### Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow

1

Imagine a field of grass covered with two layers of soil: first a layer of clay, and on top of that a layer of rich, black dirt. Then imagine that 100,000 little holes have been poked through the black dirt and into the clay, and at the bottom of each hole lies one grass seed.

**Organization**  
Lively opening, well-structured middle, and thoughtful closing

Slowly each seed produces a stem that grows up through the clay, out of the dirt, and up toward the sky. Now and then every stem stops for a while, rests, and then starts growing again. At any time about 90 percent of the stems are growing and the others are resting. Because the field gets shaggy, sometimes a gardener comes along and cuts the grass.

2

**Voice**  
Informed and engaging tone

Your skull is like that field of grass, and your scalp (common skin) is like the two layers of soil. The top layer of the scalp is the epidermis, and the bottom layer is the dermis. About 100,000 tiny holes (called follicles) extend through the epidermis into the dermis.

3

**Words**  
Precise, lively, and clear phrasing, including in the title

At the base of each follicle lies a seed-like thing called a papilla. At the bottom of the papilla, a small blood vessel drops like a root into the dermis. This vessel carries food through the dermis into the papilla, which works like a little factory using the food to build hair cells. As the papilla makes cells, a hair strand grows up through the dermis past an oil gland. The oil gland greases the strand with a coating that keeps the hair soft and moist.

4

**Sentences**  
Smooth, varied, and graceful constructions

Most of the hairs on your scalp grow about one-half inch each month. If a strand stays healthy, doesn't break off, and no barber snips it, the hair will grow about 25 inches in four years. At that point hair strands turn brittle and fall out. Every day between 25 and 250 hairs fall out of your follicles, but nearly every follicle grows a new one.

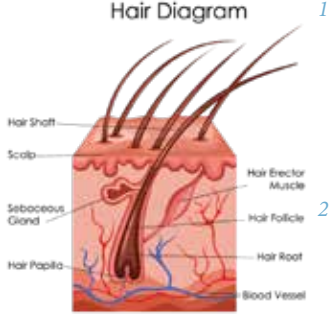
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**Correctness**  
Error-free prose

Around the clock, day after day, this process goes on . . . unless your papillae decide to retire. In that case you reach the stage in your life—let's call it "maturity"—that others call "baldness."

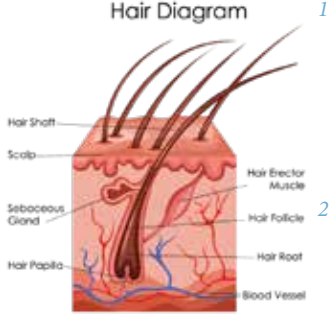
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**Design**  
Attractive format, page layout, and diagram



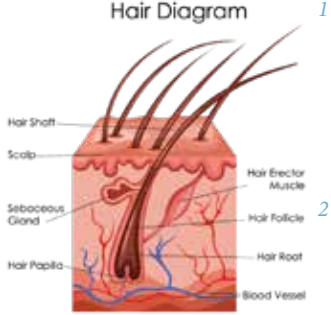
1

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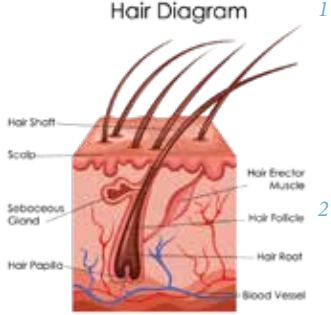
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**Design**  
Attractive format, page layout, and diagram



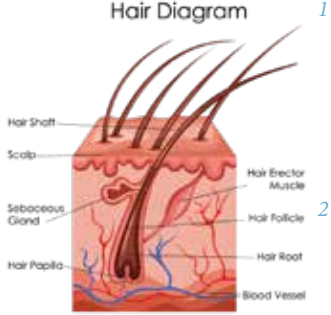
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**Design**  
Attractive format, page layout, and diagram



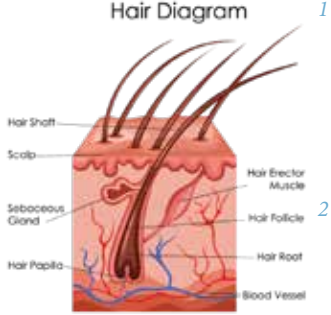
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**Design**  
Attractive format, page layout, and diagram



6

**Design**  
Attractive format, page layout, and diagram



7



## Understanding Your Project

To start strong, you need to spend some time getting your writing project in focus. What exactly is the nature of your writing task? Answering this question will set you on the right path for your writing. Two steps will help you get off on the right foot: analyzing the rhetorical situation and studying the assignment.

### Analyze the Rhetorical Situation

Rhetoric is the art of using language effectively. Your writing is effective when it fits the rhetorical situation: your role, goal, audience, and context. Discover the rhetorical situation (Figure 1.3) for your specific project by answering the questions that follow.

#### The Rhetorical Situation

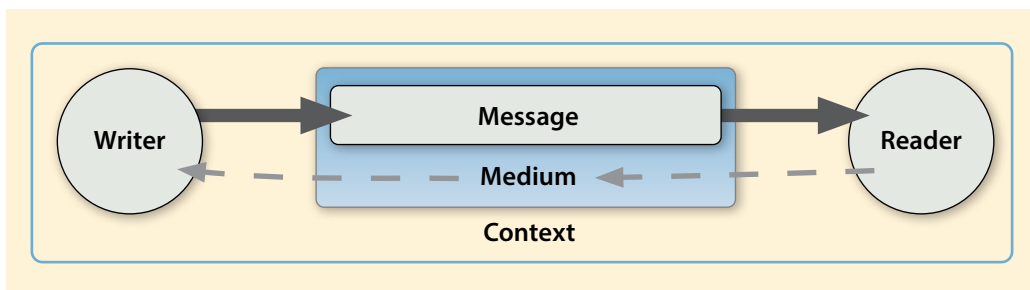


fig. 1.3

- **What's your role as the writer in this project?** Are you writing as a concerned citizen, a student, a friend relating a story, a reporter providing news, or a blogger giving an opinion? Your role affects the level of language you should use, the voice you adopt, the kinds of information you'll include, and so on.
- **What's your goal?** What do you want to happen because of your writing? Is your goal to inform, entertain, or persuade? Some combination of these? What actions and outcomes do you want to result from this project? Your goals determine your approach.
- **Who are your readers?** Consider whether it's your instructor, your classmates, or some other group. Then reflect on questions like these, which will help you make choices about what to include in your writing and how to organize it, as well as your voice and style:
  - What do my readers know about my topic, and what do they need or want to know?
  - What are their attitudes toward the topic and toward me?
  - How well do they read English, at what level, especially in relation to the special language of this topic?
  - How will they use my writing—for enjoyment, instruction, debate, something else?
- **What's the medium for your message?** What form of writing is your project? A traditional essay? A research paper, case study, or lab report? Or is it a multimodal project—some combination of written report, audio or video segments, web page, presentation, and so on? In what context will you develop and share your project?

## Study the Assignment

College instructors generally personalize their writing assignments, but most will spell out these essentials: (1) the objective, (2) the task, (3) the requirements, and (4) suggested approaches and topics. An important step in your prewriting, then, is to study the assignment carefully so you can meet or exceed the expectations. Use these questions to guide you:

- **What are the key words?** Certain words—especially verbs—explain what main action you must perform in your writing. Pay attention to these signals:

**Analyze:** Break down a topic into subparts, showing how those parts relate.

**Argue:** Defend a claim with logical arguments.

**Classify:** Sort a large group into well-defined subgroups.

**Compare/contrast:** Point out similarities and/or differences.

**Define:** Give a clear, thoughtful explanation or meaning of something.

**Describe:** Show in detail what something is like.

**Evaluate:** Weigh the truth, quality, or usefulness of something.

**Explain:** Give reasons, list steps, or discuss the causes of something.

**Interpret:** Tell in your own words what something means.

**Reflect:** Share your well-considered thoughts about a subject.

**Summarize:** Restate someone else's ideas very briefly in your own words.

**Synthesize:** Connect facts or ideas to create something new.

- **What are the choices, restrictions, and deadlines?** The assignment may offer a list of options and approaches related to topics, while also restricting those options in some way. Your assignment will undoubtedly specify a due date, but it may also set interim deadlines for topic selection, research, a first draft, etc. Include these in your planning.
- **What types of writing does the assignment specify?** Perhaps it's a traditional essay, but it could also be any number of forms: a personal reflection, a research report, a creative alternative or experimental piece. What are the specific qualities and features of the form? And what are the expectations about how you will submit and/or present your project?
- **How does the assignment fit in the course?** Consider the value of the project as a percentage of the final grade. Explore its connection to course learning outcomes, as well as to earlier and later assignments.
- **How will the assignment be evaluated?** Look for assessment criteria in the assignment. Have these expectations clearly in mind as you move forward with the project.



Your project will likely be more successful—as well as more meaningful and enjoyable—if you can discover or cultivate a personal interest in the assignment. Consider ways to connect the project to your curiosity, your chosen field of study, or your life outside of school.