SEVENTH EDITION

THE CONCISE ST. MARTIN'S GUIDE TO WRITING

Rise B. Axelrod
Charles R. Cooper

Brief Contents

The Concise St. Martin's Guide to Writing

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SEVENTH EDITION

The Concise St. Martin's Guide to Writing

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Acknowledgments

Preface

When we first wrote *The Concise St. Martin's Guide to Writing*, our goal was to provide students with the clear guidance and practical strategies they needed to harness their potential as writers—an achievement that will be key to their success in college, at work, and in the wider world. We also wanted to provide instructors with the hands-on tools they needed to help their students write with a clear understanding of their rhetorical situation. Our goals have remained the same, and so *The Concise St. Martin's Guide* retains the core features that over the years have drawn so many instructors and programs to the *Concise Guide*. But now it also includes many new features that we believe will keep the *Concise Guide* the most practical hands-on text for teachers and students.

Core Features of the *Concise Guide*

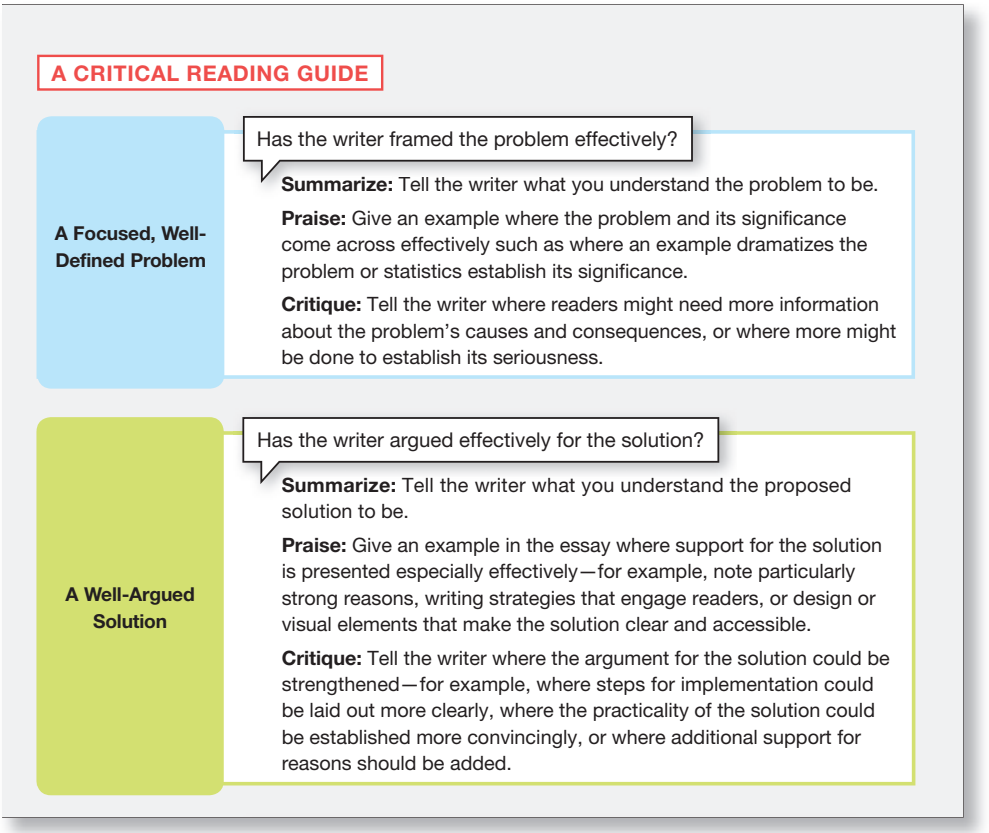
The Concise St. Martin's Guide retains its emphasis on active learning—learning by doing—by providing practical guides to writing, promoting genre awareness to aid the transfer of writing skills from one genre or context to another, and integrating reading and writing through hands-on activities of critical thinking, reading, and analysis.

Practical Guides to Writing

Each chapter in Part One offers practical, flexible guides that help students draft and revise essays in a variety of analytical and argumentative genres. Commonsensical and easy to follow, these writing guides teach students to

- assess the rhetorical situation, focusing on their purpose and audience, with special attention to the genre and medium in which they are writing;
- ask probing analytical questions;
- practice finding answers through various kinds of research, including memory search, field research, and traditional source-based research.

These flexible guides to writing begin with a **Starting Points** chart to offer students multiple ways of finding the help they need when they need it. Each also includes a **Critical Reading Guide** to help students assess their own writing and the writing of their classmates and a **Troubleshooting Guide** to help students find ways to improve their drafts. All these guides are organized and color-coded to emphasize the genre's basic features. In short, the Guides to Writing help students make their writing thoughtful, clear, organized, and compelling—in a word, effective for the rhetorical situation.



Genre Awareness

Each chapter in Part One introduces a genre of writing. By working through several genres, students learn how writers employ the basic features and strategies of a genre to achieve their purpose with their readers. The Arguing a Position essay, for example, teaches students to examine critically their views on a controversial issue, as well as those of their prospective readers, with an eye toward developing an argument that not only is well reasoned and well supported but also responds constructively to readers' likely questions and concerns. Studying multiple genres—as well as multiple examples of each genre—helps students gain genre awareness that helps them understand how we actually communicate with one another in a variety of contexts and situations. Genre awareness makes us better communicators, better readers and writers, in whatever medium we are using.

Systematic Integration of Critical Reading and Reflective Writing

Students are asked to read and analyze essays in the genre they are learning to write. The activities following the professional reading selections prompt students to read actively

by asking them to reflect on the essay and relate it to their own experience, and to read like a writer, paying attention to the strategies the writer uses to convey his or her ideas and communicate effectively with readers.

What's New

Although the seventh edition of the *The Concise St. Martin's Guide to Writing* builds on the success of previous editions, many of the strategies the *Concise Guide* employs have changed in order to connect more effectively with a new generation of teachers and students. Even in the years since the publication of the previous edition, there have been increasingly burdensome demands on the time, attention, and energy of teachers and students and tremendous growth in access to and reliance upon the Internet. So the guiding principle for this edition has been to maximize **active learning** by enhancing the book's **visual rhetoric,** giving students more opportunities for **hands-on learning,** and providing students and instructors with **more readings** and more interactive activities than ever before: more showing, more doing, more options, more learning.

More Readings

In addition to new professional and student writing selections (and resources to access even *more* student essays), the new LaunchPad Solo for *The Concise St. Martin's Guide to Writing* features e-readings that come alive online with video, Web sites, comics, and more. The e-readings offer multimodal content and interactive activities in the online workspace students prefer, making it possible for us to include more diverse reading selections and writing instruction in the *Concise Guide* than ever before:

- **More student essays** are available in both print and LaunchPad Solo. Each is accompanied by a headnote identifying the student writer and describing the assignment that the essay was written to fulfill. Additional student essays are also available in *Sticks and Stones,* a collection of student essays from across the country that is available free to adopters.
- **Multimodal readings** take advantage of what the Web can do to give instructors more choices than ever before (see Desmond-Harris on the next page). Each reading is accompanied by a headnote describing the writer and the venue in which the selection originally appeared, and each is followed by Analyze & Write and Reflect activities that ask students to think and write about how the selection employs a basic feature of the genre.
- **For additional information** about LaunchPad Solo, see page xix and a list of the contents in the back of your book.
- **New professional readings** give instructors more opportunity to engage students with interesting topics and strong models of writing. Each reading is accompanied by a headnote describing the writer and the venue in which the selection originally appeared, and each is followed by Analyze & Write activities and a Consider Possible Topics feature that ask students to think and write about the basic features of the genre.

Jenée Desmond-Harris | *Tupac and My Non-thug Life*

Courtesy of Jenée Desmond-Harris

JENÉE DESMOND-HARRIS is a staff writer at the *Root*, an online magazine dedicated to African American news and culture. She writes about the intersection of race, politics, and culture in a variety of formats, including personal essays. She has also contributed to *Time* magazine, MSNBC's *Powerwall*, and *xoJane* on topics ranging from her relationship with her grandmother, to the political significance of Michelle Obama's hair, to the stereotypes that hinder giving to black-teen mentoring programs. She has provided television commentary on CNN, MSNBC, and Current TV. Desmond-Harris is a graduate of Howard University and Harvard Law School. The following selection was published in the *Root* in 2011. It chronicles Desmond-Harris's reaction to the murder of gangsta rap icon Tupac Shakur in a Las Vegas drive-by shooting in 1996. She mentions Tupac's mother, Afeni, as well as the "East Coast–West Coast war"—the rivalry between Tupac and the Notorious B.I.G. (Biggie), who was suspected of being involved in Tupac's murder. As you read, consider the photograph that appeared in the *Root* article and that is reproduced here:

- What does it capture about the fifteen-year-old Desmond-Harris?
- What does its inclusion say about Desmond-Harris's perspective on her adolescent self and the event she recollects?

1 I learned about Tupac's death when I got home from cheerleading practice that Friday afternoon in September 1996. I was a sophomore in high school in Mill Valley, Calif. I remember trotting up my apartment building's stairs, physically tired but buzzing with the frenetic energy and possibilities for change that accompany fall and a new school year. I'd been cautiously allowing myself to think during the walk home about a topic that felt frighteningly taboo (at least in my world, where discussion of race was avoided as delicately as obesity or mental illness): what it meant to be biracial and on the school's mostly white cheerleading team instead of the mostly black dance team. I remember acknowledging, to the sound of an 8-count that still pounded in my head as I walked through the door, that I didn't really have a choice: I could memorize a series of stiff and precise motions but couldn't actually dance.

2 My private musings on identity and belonging—not original in the least, but novel to me—were interrupted when my mom heard me slam the front door and drop my bags: "*Your friend died!*" she called out from another room. Confused silence. "*You know, that rapper you and Thea love so much!*"

Mourning a Death in Vegas

3 The news was turned on, with coverage of the deadly Vegas shooting. Phone calls were made. Ultimately my best friend, Thea, and I were left to our own 15-year-old devices to mourn that weekend. Her mother and stepfather were out of town. Their expansive, million-dollar home was perched on a hillside less than an hour from Tupac's former stomping grounds in Oakland and Marin City. Of course, her home was also worlds away from both places.

4 We couldn't "pour out" much alcohol undetected for a libation, so we limited

Active Learning

Leaner chapters make it easier for instructors to get and keep students reading and to focus their attention on what matters most. This edition of *The Concise St. Martin's Guide to Writing* is tighter and more focused than ever.

A new design helps guide students through the chapters, with **headings** that show students where they are, where they've been, and where they're going in the chapter and that **help students identify the activities** and **understand the purpose they serve in active learning**.

GUIDE TO READING
GUIDE TO WRITING
THINKING CRITICALLY

winning football team, with a particular religious orientation, with opportunities for undergraduates to do scientific research?

- How would comparing the criteria you used with the criteria your classmates used help you better understand the ideology—values and beliefs—behind your choices?

ANALYZE Use the basic features.

A WELL-PRESENTED SUBJECT: INTRODUCING A COMPLICATED SUBJECT

Every year, *U.S. News* publishes a special edition that ranks colleges and universities across the nation. In his essay, Gladwell does not simply evaluate one year's ratings; he evaluates the ranking system itself. But he begins by focusing on the ranking system of another magazine, *Car and Driver*.

ANALYZE & WRITE

Write a paragraph or two analyzing and evaluating how Gladwell introduces *U.S. News*'s ranking system:

1. Reread paragraph 1. Why do you think Gladwell begins his evaluation of *U.S. News*'s college ranking system by discussing the system used by another magazine to rank cars? How is Gladwell's evaluation of *Car and Driver*'s ranking system preparing the reader for his evaluation of *U.S. News*'s ranking system?
2. Now reread paragraph 2. What cues does Gladwell provide to help readers follow his transition from the ranking system of *Car and Driver* to that of *U.S. News*?
3. What does Gladwell mean when he describes *U.S. News*'s ranking system as striving to be both comprehensive and heterogeneous?

A **mini table of contents** and a **Starting Points** chart at the opening of each Guide to Writing section in Part One help students find the information they need. **Starting Points, Critical Reading,** and **Troubleshooting** guides use speech bubbles to prompt students to reflect on, interrogate, and revise their writing on their own.

GUIDE TO WRITING

The Writing Assignment

Write an essay arguing a controversial position: Start by learning more about the issue and the debate surrounding it, and then take a position. Present the issue so readers recognize that it merits their attention, and develop a well-supported argument that will confirm, challenge, or change your readers' views.

This Guide to Writing is designed to help you compose your own position argument and apply what you have learned from reading other position arguments. This Starting Points chart will help you find answers to questions you might have about composing a position argument. Use the chart to find the guidance you need, when you need it.

STARTING POINTS: ARGUING A POSITION

A Focused, Well-Presented Issue

How do I come up with an issue to write about?

- Consider possible topics. (pp. 162–63, 170)
- Choose a controversial issue on which to take a position. (p. 173)
- Test Your Choice (p. 174)

How can I effectively frame the issue for my readers?

- Assess the genre's basic features: A focused, well-presented issue. (pp. 147–49)
- A Focused, Well-Presented Issue: Framing an Argument for a Diverse Group of Readers (pp. 160–61)
- A Focused, Well-Presented Issue: Reframing through Contrast (p. 168)
- Frame the issue for your readers. (pp. 174–75)
- A Troubleshooting Guide: A Focused, Well-Presented Issue (p. 184)

A Well-Supported Position

How do I come up with a plausible position?

- Assess the genre's basic features: A well-supported position. (pp. 149–50)
- Formulate a working thesis stating your position. (p. 176)
- Develop the reasons supporting your position. (pp. 176–77)
- Research your position. (p. 177)
- Use sources to reinforce your credibility. (pp. 177–78)

(continued)

Color-coded highlighting and annotations *show* students the techniques writers use to communicate effectively with their readers.

In addition to asserting the thesis, writers sometimes preview the reasons in the same order they will bring them up later in the essay, as in this example of a *forecasting statement by* Jessica Statsky:

Transition / Reason 1 / Reason 2 / *Reason* 3

. . . too often played to adult standards, which are developmentally inappropriate for children and can be both physically and psychologically harmful. Furthermore, because they . . . , they are actually counterproductive for developing either future players or fans. Finally, because they . . . *provide occasions for some parents and coaches to place their own fantasies and needs ahead of children's welfare.* (par. 2)

Integrated sentence strategies foreground the sentence patterns writers use to communicate effectively with their readers. Examples from the reading selections demonstrate the flexibility of the pattern.

A FOCUSED, WELL-PRESENTED ISSUE: REFRAMING THROUGH CONTRAST

Writers sometimes have to remind their readers why an issue is controversial. Beginning with the title, Solove works to undermine the widely held assumption that the erosion of privacy should not be a concern. He does this primarily by contrasting two different ways of thinking about threats to privacy, which he calls Orwellian and Kafkaesque, based on the novels *1984*, by George Orwell, and *The Trial,* by Franz Kafka. To present this contrast, Solove uses sentence patterns like these:

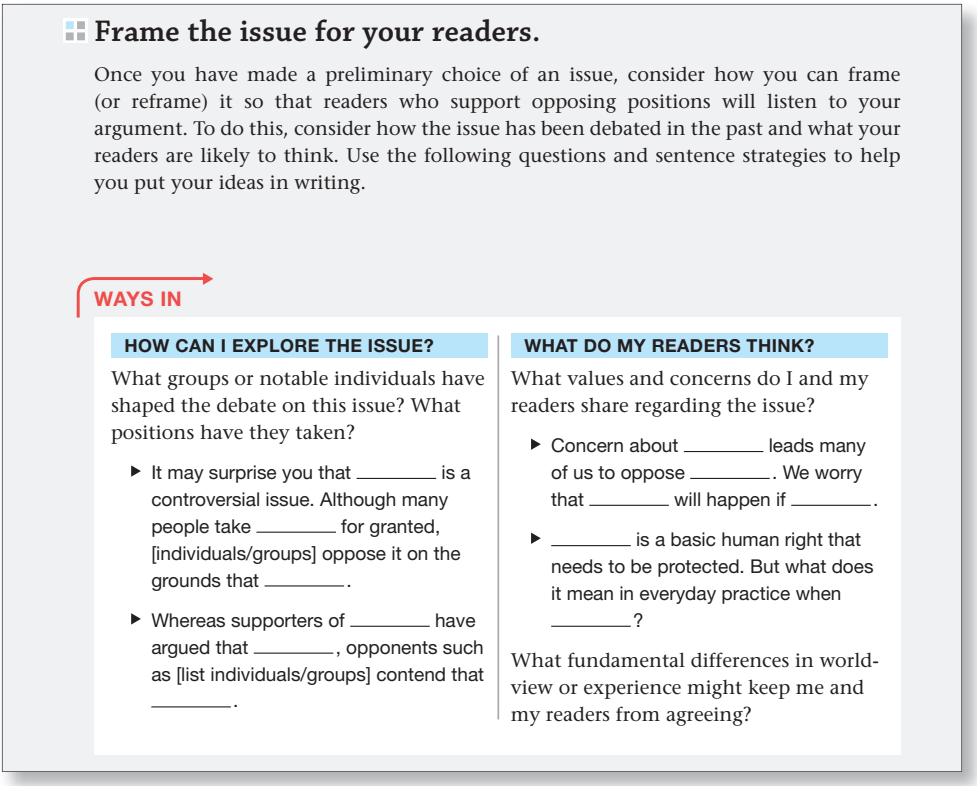
- Not _____, but _____.
- _____ focus on _____, which is characterized by _____, and they don't even notice _____, which is characterized by _____.

Here are a couple of examples from Solove's position argument:

> The problems are not just Orwellian but Kafkaesque. (par. 10)

> Legal and policy solutions focus too much on the problems under the Orwellian metaphor—those of surveillance—and aren't adequately addressing the Kafkaesque problems—those of information processing. (par. 9)

In the Guide to Writing, **sentence strategies are integrated into the Ways In activities** to invite students to use them for their own rhetorical purpose and to make them their own as they revise.



Frame the issue for your readers.

Once you have made a preliminary choice of an issue, consider how you can frame (or reframe) it so that readers who support opposing positions will listen to your argument. To do this, consider how the issue has been debated in the past and what your readers are likely to think. Use the following questions and sentence strategies to help you put your ideas in writing.

WAYS IN

HOW CAN I EXPLORE THE ISSUE?

What groups or notable individuals have shaped the debate on this issue? What positions have they taken?

- It may surprise you that _____ is a controversial issue. Although many people take _____ for granted, [individuals/groups] oppose it on the grounds that _____.
- Whereas supporters of _____ have argued that _____, opponents such as [list individuals/groups] contend that _____.

WHAT DO MY READERS THINK?

What values and concerns do I and my readers share regarding the issue?

- Concern about _____ leads many of us to oppose _____. We worry that _____ will happen if _____.
- _____ is a basic human right that needs to be protected. But what does it mean in everyday practice when _____?

What fundamental differences in worldview or experience might keep me and my readers from agreeing?

Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA) Outcomes Statement

The Concise St. Martin's Guide to Writing, Seventh Edition, helps students build proficiency in the four categories of learning that writing programs across the country use to assess their students' work: rhetorical knowledge; critical thinking, reading, and writing; writing processes; and knowledge of conventions. The chart on the following pages shows in detail how the *Concise Guide* helps students develop these proficiencies.

Note: This chart aligns with the latest WPA Outcomes Statement, ratified in July 2014.

WPA OUTCOMES	RELEVANT FEATURES OF *THE CONCISE ST. MARTIN'S GUIDE*
Rhetorical Knowledge	
Learn and use key rhetorical concepts through analyzing and composing a variety of texts	Chapter 1, "Thinking about Writing," prepares students to communicate in various rhetorical situations. From there, students **read, analyze,** and **compose a variety of texts** in Part 1, "Writing Assignments" (Chs. 2–7). In each of these chapters, a Guide to Reading asks students to analyze texts (including professional articles, student essays, and multimodal e-readings), in terms of **purpose, audience,** and **genre features.** Each Guide to Writing (in Chs. 2–7) supports student composers with detailed help for responding to different rhetorical situations: remembering events, writing profiles, explaining concepts, arguing a position, proposing a solution, and justifying an evaluation. See also Part 2, "Strategies for Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing" (Chs. 8–13). In particular, Chapter 12, Analyzing Visuals, guides students in evaluating visual texts including advertisements and photographs.
Gain experience reading and composing in several genres to understand how genre conventions shape and are shaped by readers' and writers' practices and purposes	See above. In addition, a rich collection of **multimodal e-readings** give students practice in reading various **genres** in various **rhetorical contexts.** Chapter-opening features (in Pt. 1, Chs. 2–7)—In College Courses, In the Community, and In the Workplace—show students how genres work in different settings. The **readings** in Part 1, which represent a range of texts and genres, are annotated and framed with comments and questions that **focus students on key aspects of genres** and help spark ideas for their own compositions. The **composing practice** in Part 1 is built around six genre assignments. Students are asked to create texts in which they remember an event; profile a person, activity, or place; explain a concept; argue a position; propose a solution; and justify an evaluation. These chapters emphasize the connection between **reading and composing in a particular genre:** Each begins with a group of readings with apparatus that introduces students to basic features and conventions of the genre; then a Guide to Writing leads them through the process of applying these features to an essay of their own.
Develop facility in responding to a variety of situations and contexts, calling for purposeful shifts in voice, tone, level of formality, design, medium, and/or structure	In Part 1, students **practice responding** to a variety of rhetorical situations and contexts, as noted above. These chapters also point out what makes a text structurally sound, while the Guides to Writing help students systematically develop their own processes and structures. Sentence Strategies sections in these chapters help composers deal with issues of **voice, tone, and formality.** In Part 2, Chapter 14, "Designing Documents," takes students through the **rhetorical choices** involved in the **design** of any text.
Understand and use a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences	One of the book's assumptions is that most students compose in digital spaces for varied audiences and use different media for doing so. This is woven throughout, especially in Chapters 2 through 7. Further, online tutorials include **how-tos for using technology:** e.g., digital writing for specific **audiences** and purposes, creating presentations, integrating photos, and appealing to a prospective employer. E-readings include samples of Web, video, and other multimodal models.
Match the capacities of different environments (e.g., print and electronic) to varying rhetorical situations	Multimodal e-readings, addressing a variety of rhetorical situations, represent digital-first texts and also show how **genres can be adapted** to a visual or online format. (See the table of contents.)

(continued)

WPA OUTCOMES	RELEVANT FEATURES OF *THE CONCISE ST. MARTIN'S GUIDE*
Rhetorical Knowledge (continued)	
	Chapter 14, "Designing Documents," provides guidance on how to make effective **rhetorical choices** with electronic documents, from academic formatting and font sizes to adding visuals and screen shots.
Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing	
Use composing and reading for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating in various rhetorical contexts	See the Processes section above, Part 1 (Chs. 2–7), and also Part 2, **"Strategies for Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing"** (Chs. 8–13). Chapter 8, "Strategies for **Invention** and **Inquiry,**" and Chapter 9, "Strategies for Reading Critically," prompt students to engage actively in reading and writing actively. Analyze and Write activities in Part 1 (Chs. 2–7) ask students to evaluate each professional reading and develop their ideas in paragraphs. Make Connections, a recurring section in the apparatus following the professional readings in Part 1 (Chs. 2–7), encourages students to put what they've read in the context of the world they live in. These preliminary reflections come into play in the Guides to Writing, in which students are asked to draw on their experiences in college, community, and career in order to begin writing. Thinking Critically sections, which conclude Chapters 2 through 7, ask students to reconsider what they have learned, often in a social/political context.
Read a diverse range of texts, attending especially to relationships between assertion and evidence, to patterns of organization, to interplay between verbal and nonverbal elements, and how these features function for different audiences and situations	See the Rhetorical Knowledge section above, especially the first two sections that discuss **texts, genres,** and **rhetorical situations.** Each Guide to Reading highlights Basic Features of each genre and always directs attention to supporting details and evidence as well as a clear, logical organization. Further, each chapter in Part 1 includes a multimodal selection in the online e-readings which demonstrates how purpose and medium interact. The Concise Guide is also available as an **e-book;** adopters of print or digital versions also have access to **online tutorials** and activities in **LearningCurve,** an adaptive game-like quizzing tool.
Locate and evaluate primary and secondary research materials, including journal articles, essays, books, databases, and informal Internet sources	Chapters 16 and 17 offer extensive coverage of **finding, evaluating,** and **using** print and electronic resources with guidance for responsibly using the Internet, e-mail, and online communities for research. Chapter 16 addresses **primary** and secondary **research.**
Use strategies—such as interpretation, synthesis, response, critique, and design/redesign—to compose texts that integrate the writer's ideas with those from appropriate sources	Chapter 11, "Analyzing and Synthesizing Arguments," focuses specifically on evaluating ideas and finding common ground among sources in order to support an argument. Chapter 18, "Using Sources to Support Your Ideas," offers detailed **strategies** for **integrating research into a composition.** Specifically, there is advice on how to integrate and introduce quotations, how to cite paraphrases and summaries so as to distinguish them from the writer's own ideas, and how to avoid plagiarism. Sentence strategies and research coverage in several Part 1 chapters offer additional support. In Chapters 6 through 8, which cover argument, there is also extensive discussion of the need to **anticipate opposing positions** and readers' objections to the writer's thesis. These chapters are complemented by argument strategies for making assertions, offering support, avoiding logical fallacies, and using sentence strategies in Chapter 13, "Arguing."

WPA OUTCOMES	RELEVANT FEATURES OF *THE CONCISE ST. MARTIN'S GUIDE*
Processes	
Develop a writing project through multiple drafts	The need for the critical reading and **revision of drafts** is emphasized in Chapter 1. In Chapters 2 through 7, Guides to Writing prompt students to compose and revise. They are offered specific steps for inventing, researching, planning, and composing—and for evaluating and improving their work over the course of **multiple drafts.**
Develop flexible strategies for reading, drafting, reviewing, collaboration, revising, rewriting, rereading, and editing	The Guides to Writing in Chapters 2 through 7 offer extensive, genre-specific advice on **rethinking and revising** at multiple stages. Ways In activities, Starting Points charts, and Troubleshooting charts in Part 1 chapters encourage students to discover, review, and revise their own process(es) of writing. Activities urge students to start from their strengths, and Starting Points and Troubleshooting charts offer specific, targeted advice for students with different challenges. These chapters also offer genre-specific coverage of invention and research, getting a critical reading of a draft (peer review), revising, editing, and proofreading. See also, section below: "Experience the **collaborative** and social aspects of writing processes." A dedicated Chapter 8, "Strategies for Invention and Inquiry," offers numerous helpful suggestions for idea generation.
Use composing processes and tools as a means to discover and reconsider ideas	Central to Chapters 2 through 7 is the idea of using **composing to discover ideas.** Students are offered specific steps for inventing, researching, planning, and composing—and for evaluating and improving their work over the course of multiple drafts. Specifically, the Guides to Writing in Chapters 2 through 7 break writing assignments down into doable focused thinking and writing activities that engage students in the **recursive process of invention** and research to find, analyze, question, and synthesize information and ideas. See also, Chapter 8, "Strategies for Invention and Inquiry" and Chapter 15, "Planning a Research Project."
Experience the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes	This goal is implicit in several **collaborative activities:** Practicing the Genre activities at the beginning of the chapter, Make Connections activities after the readings, and, in the Guides to Writing, Test Your Choice activities in the Critical Reading Guide.
Learn to give and act on productive feedback to works in progress	The Evaluating the Draft, Critical Reading Guide, Improving the Draft, and Troubleshooting Guide sections in the Guides to Writing in each Part 1 chapter all offer students **specific advice on constructively criticizing**—and praising—their own work and the work of their classmates, then reflecting and acting upon the comments they've received.
Adapt composing processes for a variety of technologies and modalities	As noted in the Rhetorical Knowledge section above, one of the book's assumptions is that most students compose in digital spaces for varied audiences and use different media for doing so. This is woven throughout, especially in Chapters 2 through 7. Further, integrated digital tutorials include online **how-tos for using technology:** e.g., digital writing, creating presentations, integrating photos, and appealing to a prospective employer. E-readings include samples of Web, video, and other multimodal models.
Reflect on the development of composing practices and how those practices influence their work	See the section above: "Use composing processes and tools as a means to discover and reconsider ideas."

(continued)

WPA OUTCOMES	RELEVANT FEATURES OF *THE CONCISE ST. MARTIN'S GUIDE*
Processes (continued)	
	In addition, a Thinking Critically section concludes each Part 1 (Chs. 2–7) chapter and asks students to reflect on what they've learned about the genre and about their own composing experiences.
Knowledge of Conventions	
Develop knowledge of linguistic structures, including grammar, punctuation, and spelling, through practice in composing and revising	Genre-specific **editing** and **proofreading** appears in the Editing and Proofreading sections in each chapter in Part 1. Additional practice activities of sentence-level skills are featured in the **LearningCurve quizzing,** available in the online media.
Understand why genre conventions for structure, paragraphing, tone, and mechanics vary	Chapters 2 through 7 present several basic **features of a specific genre,** which are introduced up front and then consistently reinforced throughout the chapter. **Genre-specific issues of structure,** paragraphing, tone, and mechanics are also addressed in the Sentence Strategies and Editing and Proofreading sections of each Guide to Reading.
Gain experience negotiating variations in genre conventions	Students **read, analyze,** and **compose a variety of texts** in Part 1, "Writing Assignments" (Chs. 2–7). In each of these chapters, a Guide to Reading asks students to analyze texts (including ads, student essays, and multimodal e-readings), in terms of **purpose, audience,** and **Basic Features** (or genre conventions). Each Guide to Writing (in Chs. 2–7) supports student composers with detailed help for responding to different rhetorical situations: remembering events, writing profiles, explaining concepts, arguing a position, proposing a solution, and justifying an evaluation.
Learn common formats and/or design features for different kinds of texts	Document design is covered in a dedicated Chapter 14. Examples of specific formats for a range of texts appear on pages 457–65 (research paper) and pages 391–93 (table, diagram, graph, chart, map, and other figures).
Explore the concepts of intellectual property (such as fair use and copyright) that motivate documentation conventions	The book's research coverage (mainly Chs. 18–20) teaches specific strategies of evaluating and integrating source material—and **citing the work of others.** A dedicated section, "Acknowledging Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism," appears on pages 428–29.
	Chapter 9, "Strategies for Reading Critically," covers various strategies useful in working with sources, including annotating, summarizing, and synthesizing. Chapter 18, **"Using Sources to Support Your Ideas,"** offers detailed coverage of finding, evaluating, using, and acknowledging primary and secondary sources, while Chapter 15, "Planning a Research Project," instructs students on creating an annotated bibliography.
Practice applying citation conventions systematically in their own work	Chapter 18 offers detailed advice on how to integrate and introduce quotations, how to cite paraphrases and summaries so as to distinguish them from the writer's own ideas, and how to avoid plagiarism. Chapters 19 and 20 offer coverage of **MLA and APA documentation** in addition to an annotated sample student research paper. Chapter 12, "Analyzing Visuals," also offers a complete student paper with MLA documentation. In addition, research sections in each Guide to Writing in the Part 1 chapters help students with the details of using and appropriately documenting sources by providing genre-specific examples of what (and what not) to do.

Acknowledgments

We owe an enormous debt to all the rhetoricians and composition specialists whose theory, research, and pedagogy have informed *The Concise St. Martin's Guide to Writing*. We would be adding many pages to an already long book if we were to name everyone to whom we are indebted; suffice it to say that we have been eclectic in our borrowing.

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Rise dedicates this book to two young women whose writing she very much looks forward to reading: Sophie and Amalia Axelrod-Delcampo.

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Contents

The Concise St. Martin's Guide to Writing

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1

Introduction: Thinking about Writing

More people are writing today than ever before, and many are switching comfortably from one genre or medium to another—from tweeting to blogging to creating multimedia Web pages. Learning to be effective as a writer is a continuous process as you find yourself in new writing situations using new technologies and trying to anticipate the concerns of different audiences. "The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write," futurist Alvin Toffler predicted, "but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn."

Learning anything—especially learning to communicate in new ways—benefits from what we call reflection, thinking critically about *how* as well as *what* you are learning. Extensive research confirms what writers have known for a long time: that reflection makes learning easier and faster. In fact, recent studies show that writing even a few sentences about your thoughts and feelings before a high-stress paper or exam helps students reduce stress and boost performance. That is why in this chapter and throughout this book, we ask you to think about your experience as a writer, and we recommend using writing to explore and develop your ideas. The activities that conclude this chapter invite you to compose a **literacy narrative,** a multifaceted exploration of yourself as a writer.

To get started thinking about writing, we will look at some of the important contributions writing makes. Then, we'll preview how *The Concise St. Martin's Guide to Writing* can help you become a better, more confident, and more versatile writer.

Why Write?

"Why write?" is an important basic question, especially today, when many people assume technology has eliminated the need to learn to write well. Obviously, writing enables you to communicate, but it also helps you think and learn, enhances your chances of success, contributes to your personal development, and strengthens your relationships.

Write to communicate effectively in different rhetorical situations.

Writing is a powerful means of communicating with diverse audiences in different genres and media. We use the term **rhetorical situation** to emphasize the fact that writing is social and purposeful. The rhetorical situation includes four interrelated factors:

Why?	Your *purpose* for writing
Who?	The *audience* you are addressing
What?	The *genre* or type of text you are writing
How?	The *medium* in which your text will be read

Writing with an awareness of the rhetorical situation means writing not only to express yourself but also to reach out to your readers (audience) by engaging their interest and responding to their concerns. You write to influence how your readers think and feel about a subject and, depending on the genre, perhaps also to inspire them to action.

Writing with genre awareness affects your composing decisions—what you write about (subject choice), the claims you make (thesis), how you support those claims (reasons and evidence), and how you organize it all. **Genres** are simply ways of categorizing texts—for example, we can distinguish between fiction and nonfiction; subdivide fiction into romance, mystery, and science fiction genres; or break down mystery even further into hard-boiled detective, police procedural, true crime, and classic whodunit genres. Each genre has a set of conventions or **basic features** readers expect texts in that genre to use. Although individual texts within the same genre vary a great deal—for example, no two *proposals*, even those arguing for the same solution, will be identical—they nonetheless follow a general pattern that provides a certain amount of predictability. Without such predictability, communication would be difficult, if not impossible. But these conventional patterns should not be thought of as recipes. Conventions are broad frameworks within which writers are free to be creative. Most writers, in fact, find that working within a framework makes creativity possible. Depending on the formality of the rhetorical situation and the audience's openness to innovation, writers may also play with genre conventions, remixing features of different genres to form new mash-ups, as you will see in the integrated media selections for each Part One chapter.

Like genre, the medium in which you are working also affects many of your design and content choices. For example, written texts can use color, type fonts, charts, diagrams, and still images to heighten the visual impact of the text, delivering information vividly and persuasively. If you are composing Web pages or apps, you have many more options to make your text truly multimedia—for example, by adding hyperlinks, animation, audio, video, and interactivity to your written text.

Write to think.

The very act of writing—crafting and combining sentences—helps you think creatively and logically. You create new ideas by putting words together to make meaningful

sentences and by linking sentences with *logical transitions,* like *however* or *because,* to form a coherent chain of meaning. Many writers equate thinking with writing: "How can I tell what I think," the novelist E. M. Forster famously wrote, "till I see what I say?" Other writers have echoed the same idea. Columnist Anna Quindlen, for example, put it this way: "As a writer, I would find out most clearly what I thought, and what I only thought I thought, when I saw it written down." Finally, here's the way physicist James Van Allen explained the connection between writing and thinking: "The mere process of writing is one of the most powerful tools we have for clarifying our own thinking."

"How can I tell what I think," the novelist E. M. Forster famously wrote, "till I see what I say?"

Write to learn.

As a student, you are probably keenly aware of the many ways writing can help you do well in courses throughout the curriculum. The physical act of writing—from simply making notes as you read, to listing main points, to summarizing—is a potent memory aid. Writing down your rudimentary ideas and posing questions can lead to deeper understanding. *Analyzing* and *synthesizing* ideas and information from different sources can extend your learning. Most important, thinking about what you are learning and how—what are called *methodologies* in many disciplines—can open up new directions for further learning.

Write to succeed.

Writing contributes to success in school and at work. We've already suggested some of the ways writing can both help you think analytically and logically and aid your learning and remembering. In school, you need to use writing to demonstrate your learning. You will be asked to write essays *explaining* and *applying concepts* and to construct academic *arguments* using sources and other kinds of evidence. Your skill at doing these things will most likely affect your grades. Writing also helps in practical ways as you apply for internships, admission to professional school, and a job. At work, you may need to write for a variety of rhetorical situations—for example, to *evaluate* staff you supervise, to collaborate with colleagues *proposing* a new project, to e-mail suggestions for resolving conflicts or ideas about new initiatives, or to prepare year-end reports *justifying* expenditures and priorities. Just as your achievement in school is influenced by your ability to write well, so, too, may your professional success depend on your ability to write effectively to different audiences in varied genres and media.

Write to know yourself and connect to other people.

Writing can help you grow as an individual and also help you maintain and build relationships with friends and colleagues. Journal writing has long been used as a means of self-discovery. Many people blog for the same reason. Becoming an author confers *authority,* giving you confidence to assert your ideas and opinions. Whether

you're tweeting to let friends know what's happening, posting comments on a Web site, taking part in a class discussion, or participating in political debate and decision making, writing enables you to offer your own point of view and invites others to share theirs in return.

How *The Concise St. Martin's Guide to Writing* Helps You Learn to Write

There are many myths about writing and writers. Perhaps the most enduring myth is that people who are good at writing do not have to learn to write—they just naturally know how. Writing may be easier and more rewarding for some people, but no one is born knowing how to write. Writing must be learned. To learn to write, as Stephen King explained, "you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot." That is precisely how the *Concise Guide* works—by providing both a Guide to Reading and a Guide to Writing for each genre you will be writing.

To learn to write, as Stephen King explained, "you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot."

Learn to write by using the Guides to Reading.

These guides teach you to analyze how texts work in particular rhetorical situations. By analyzing several texts in the genre you will be writing in, you can see how writers employ the genre's basic features differently to achieve their purpose with their audience. In other words, you will see in action the many strategies writers can use to achieve their goals.

Learn to write by using the Guides to Writing.

These guides help you apply to your own writing what you are learning from reading and analyzing examples of the genre. They provide a scaffold to support your writing as you develop a repertoire of strategies for using the genre's basic features to achieve your purpose with your audience.

Each Guide to Writing begins with a Starting Points chart that will enable you to find answers to your composing questions. You can follow your own course, dipping into the Guide for help when you need it, or you can follow the sequence of exploratory activities, from Writing a Draft through Evaluating the Draft to Improving the Draft. Although many people assume that good writers begin with their first sentence and go right through to their last sentence, professional writers know that writing is a process of discovery. Most writers begin with preliminary planning and exploratory writing that at some point turns into a rough draft. Then, as the draft takes shape, they may reconsider the organization, do additional research to fill in gaps, rewrite passages that need clarification, or continue drafting. Essayist Dave Barry describes his typical writing process this way: "It's a matter of

piling a little piece here and a little piece there, fitting them together, going on to the next part, then going back and gradually shaping the whole piece into something."

Essayist Dave Barry describes his typical writing process this way: "It's a matter of piling a little piece here and a little piece there, fitting them together, going on to the next part, then going back and gradually shaping the whole piece into something."

A challenge for most writers comes when they have a draft but don't know how to improve it. It is sometimes hard for them to see what a draft actually says as opposed to what they want to convey. Instructors often set aside class time for a draft workshop or ask students to do an online peer critique. Each chapter's Guide to Writing includes a Critical Reading Guide for this purpose. You may find that reading someone else's draft can be especially helpful to you as a writer because it's often easier to recognize problems and see how to fix them in someone else's draft than it is to see similar problems in your own writing. The Critical Reading Guide is also keyed to a Troubleshooting Guide that will help you find ways to revise and improve your draft. The Guide to Writing also includes advice on proofreading and editing that you can use to check for sentence-level errors.

THINKING CRITICALLY

In addition to modeling good writing and providing guides for reading and writing, *The Concise St. Martin's Guide to Writing* helps you think critically about your writing. Each writing assignment chapter in Part One of the *Concise Guide* includes many opportunities for you to think critically and reflect on your understanding of the rhetorical situation in which you are writing. In addition, a section titled Thinking Critically concludes each chapter, giving you an opportunity to look back and reflect on how you used your writing process creatively and how you expanded your understanding of the genre. The following activity gives you the opportunity to reflect on your own experience with reading and writing, your own literacy narrative. Why not start now to become a better writer by thinking critically about your own experience?

REFLECTION

A Literacy Narrative

Write several pages telling about your experience with writing. Consider the following suggestions:

- Recall an early experience of writing: What did you write? Did anyone read it? What kind of feedback did you get? How did you feel about yourself?
- Think of a turning point when your attitude toward writing changed or crystallized. What happened? What changed?

- Recall a person — a teacher, a classmate, a family member, a published writer, or someone else — who influenced your writing, for good or ill. How was your writing affected?
- Cast yourself as the main character of a story about writing. How would you describe yourself — as a talented writer, as someone who struggles to write well, or somewhere in between? Consider your trajectory, or *narrative arc*: Over the years, would you say you have showed steady improvement? Ups and downs? More downs than ups? A decline?
- Think about literacy more broadly and write about how you acquired academic literacy (perhaps focusing on how you learned to think, talk, and write as a scientist or a historian), workplace literacy (perhaps focusing on how you learned to communicate effectively with customers or managers), sports literacy (perhaps as a player, coach, or fan), music literacy (perhaps as a performer or composer), community literacy (perhaps focusing on how you learned to communicate with people of different ages or with people who speak different languages or dialects), or any other kind of literacy you have mastered.

PART 1

Writing Activities

2 Remembering an Event

Writing about the memorable events and people in our lives can be exhilarating. This kind of writing can lead us to think deeply about why certain experiences are meaningful and continue to touch us. It can help us understand the cultural influences that helped shape who we are and what we value. It can also give us an opportunity to represent ourselves and connect with others. In college courses, we can use our experience to better understand what we are studying; in the community, we can use personal stories for inspiration; and in the workplace, we can use experience to catalyze needed change.

IN COLLEGE COURSES

For a linguistics course, a student writes an essay analyzing a recent conversation with her brother in light of a book she read for the class: Deborah Tannen's *Gender and Discourse*, in which Tannen argues that when discussing problems, women tend to focus on the problem and their feelings about it, while men typically cut short talk about feelings and focus on possible solutions. The student begins her essay by reconstructing the conversation with her brother, quoting some dialogue from her diary and paraphrasing other parts from memory. Then she analyzes the conversation. Using Tannen's ideas, she discovers that what bothered her about the conversation was less its content than her brother's way of communicating.

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IN THE COMMUNITY

As part of a local history series in a newspaper serving a small western ranching community, an amateur historian helps an elderly rancher write about the winter of 1938, when a six-foot snowfall isolated the rancher's family for nearly a month. The rancher talks about how he, his wife, and the couple's infant survived, including an account of how he snowshoed eight miles to get word to relatives. The details the rancher includes, like the suspenseful description of his exhausting trek, make the event vivid and dramatic for the newspaper's readers.

IN THE WORKPLACE

A respected longtime regional manager gives the keynote speech at the highway department's statewide meeting on workplace safety. He opens his speech with a dramatic recounting of a confrontation he had with a disgruntled employee who complained bitterly about his work schedule and threatened the safety of the manager and his family. Setting the scene (a lonely office after hours) to help audience members enter into his experience, he describes the taste of fear in his mouth and his relief when a contractor entered the office. The manager follows the anecdote with data showing the frequency of such workplace incidents nationwide and concludes by calling for new departmental guidelines on how to defuse such confrontations effectively.