

College Writing Skills

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Praise for *College Writing Skills*

“The writing style, tone, and level of this text are perfect for my target student audience: the explanations are clear, the reading choices are varied and thought-provoking, and the amount of examples and exercises is just enough to help students but not so much that they feel overwhelmed.”

—**Marcie L. Sims, Green River Community College**

“John Langan’s pedagogical approach makes all kinds of sense to me. The emphasis on reading and structured writing provides students with a solid foundation in composition.”

—**Kristine R. Anderson, Riverside Community College**

“The down-to-earth, believable student samples demonstrate the process of writing absolutely clearly, from a simple prewriting effort into a finished product. A student can identify not only with the content but see concrete examples of the process of writing.”

—**Gloria Jean Kirby, Lincoln Land Community College**

“The structure of the book includes all of the essential content for teaching a freshman English class, and the organization is excellent.”

—**Julia L. Smith, Kennedy-King College**

“The feature that I find the most appealing and useful is, first and foremost, the concept of the four bases. The supplements are also appealing because students can do work on their own, without having to listen too much to me.”

—**Christina Putney, Mott Community College**

“I particularly like the emphasis on the ‘traditional’ (five-paragraph) essay. I view English as a skills course and I always stress tried-and-true approaches to writing that I know will prepare students for the types of essays they will be assigned in other college classes.”

—**J. Christian Tatu, Warren County Community College**

“The text is organized for easy access. I don’t feel like I’m lost or frustrated looking for the material I need when I need it.”

—**Midge Shaw, Rogue Community College**

“I appreciate the concise and clear presentation of grammar and the grammar review tests. Students have ample examples, yet the grammar pages don’t overtake the text.”

—**Lisa Windham, McLennan Community College**

“I like the new edition’s stronger emphasis on the writing process and the inclusion of professional essays.”

—**Judi Salsburg, Monroe Community College**

“I’m especially pleased to see a stronger emphasis on prewriting and revision. As Donald Murray points out—good writing is essentially rewriting.”

—**Danielle True, Manatee Community College**

College Writing Skills

Sixth Edition

John Langan

Atlantic Cape Community College

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Higher Education

COLLEGE WRITING SKILLS

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About the Author



John Langan has taught reading and writing at Atlantic Cape Community College near Atlantic City, New Jersey, for over twenty-five years. The author of a popular series of college textbooks on both writing and reading, John enjoys the challenge of developing materials that teach skills in an especially clear and lively way. Before teaching, he earned advanced degrees in writing at Rutgers University and in reading at Rowan University. He also spent a year writing fiction that, he says, “is now at the back of a drawer waiting to be discovered and acclaimed posthumously.” While in school, he supported himself by working as a truck driver, a machinist, a battery assembler, a hospital attendant, and an apple packer. John now lives with his wife, Judith

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To the Instructor

College Writing Skills is a rhetoric with readings that will help students master the traditional five-paragraph essay and variations of this essay. It is a very practical book with a number of unique features designed to aid instructors and their students.

Key Features of the Book

- *Four principles are presented as keys to effective writing.* These four principles—unity, support, coherence, and sentence skills—are highlighted on the inside front cover and reinforced throughout the book.

Part One focuses on the first three principles and to some extent on sentence skills.

Parts Two and Three show, respectively, how the four principles apply in the different patterns of essay development and in specialized types of writing.

Part Four serves as a concise handbook of sentence skills.

The ongoing success of *College Writing Skills* is evidence that the four principles are easily grasped, remembered, and followed by students.

- *Writing is treated as a process.* The first chapter introduces writing as both a skill and a process of discovery. The second chapter, “The Writing Process,” explains and illustrates the sequence of steps in writing an effective essay. In particular, the chapter focuses on prewriting and revision as strategies to use with any writing assignment. Detailed suggestions for prewriting and revision then accompany many of the writing assignments in Part Two.
- *Activities and assignments are numerous and varied.* For example, in Part One there are more than 90 activities to help students apply and master the four principles, or bases, of effective writing. There are over 250 activities and tests in the entire book. A variety of writing assignments follow each pattern of essay development in Part Two. Some topics are highly structured, for students

who are still learning the steps in the writing process; others are open-ended. Instructors thus have the option of selecting those assignments most suited to the individual needs of their students.

- *Clear thinking is stressed throughout.* This emphasis on logic starts with the opening pages of the book. Students are introduced to the two principles that are the bedrock of clear thinking: *making a point* and *providing support to back up that point*. The focus on these principles then continues throughout the book, helping students learn that clear writing is inseparable from clear thinking.
- *The traditional essay is emphasized.* Students are asked to write formal essays with an introduction, three supporting paragraphs, and a conclusion. Anyone who has tried to write a solidly reasoned essay knows how much work is involved. A logical essay requires a great deal of mental discipline and close attention to a set of logical rules. Writing an essay in which there is an overall thesis statement and in which each of three supporting paragraphs begins with a topic sentence is more challenging for many students than writing a free-form or expressive essay. The demands are significant, but the rewards are great.

At the same time that students learn and practice the rules of the five-paragraph essay, professional essays representing the nine patterns of development show them variations possible within the essay form. These essays provide models if instructors decide that their students will benefit from moving beyond the traditional essay form.

- *Lively teaching models are provided.* The book includes two high-interest student essays and one engaging professional essay with each chapter in Part Two. Students then read and evaluate these essays in terms of the four bases: unity, support, coherence, and sentence skills. After reading vigorous papers by other students as well as papers by professional authors and experiencing the power that good writing can have, students will be encouraged to aim for a similar honesty, realism, and detail in their own work.
- *The book is versatile.* Since no two people use an English text in exactly the same way, the material has been organized in a highly accessible manner. Each of the four parts of the book deals with a distinct area of writing. Instructors can therefore turn quickly and easily to the skills they want to present.

Changes in the Sixth Edition

Here is an overview of what is new in the sixth edition of the book:

- The most substantial change in the book is *its greater emphasis on purpose and audience*. The introductory chapter of the text signals this new emphasis with a

segment titled “Writing as a Way to Communicate with Others.” A new section, “Considering Purpose and Audience,” has been added to each of the nine rhetorical pattern chapters in Part Two. This new section deepens students’ understanding of the purpose of each mode and teaches them to adjust their writing to suit the needs and expectations of their audience. Finally, each mode chapter in Part Two now concludes with a special writing assignment titled “Writing for a Specific Audience and Purpose.” This assignment encourages students’ creativity and helps them connect their work in the classroom with writing needs in the outside world.

- Another addition is *an increased attention to writing thesis statements*. Four new practice activities have been added to Chapter 3, and the chapter also expands its coverage of common mistakes in thesis writing and helpful strategies for avoiding such mistakes. More examples of effective and ineffective thesis statements are now included.
- The book features *two new readings*: new model essays for Chapter 12 (cause and effect) and Chapter 13 (comparison and contrast). Chosen for their appeal and relevance to today’s students, these new essays address the widespread anger in our culture and what to do about it and the differences between the sexes that are so profound they may perhaps be hard-wired.
- The new edition includes an *expanded treatment of plagiarism*. Added cautions to students will help instructors deal with the widespread availability of information on the Internet. An activity is now provided to sharpen students’ understanding of what is acceptable paraphrase and/or summary and what is plagiarism.
- Among a number of revisions to the library and research chapters are new model entries for electronic sources and added attention to the evaluation of Internet sources.
- Practice materials, example items, and activities have been revised and updated throughout the book, with special emphasis on Part Four. In particular, the chapter titled “ESL Pointers” has been expanded with four new activities to address common concerns of ESL Learners.
- A new full-color design adds visual appeal for students while highlighting key material for them and helping them make connections and find the information they need. In addition, one assignment in each of the modes chapters is now illustrated with a photograph to give today’s visually oriented students even more help with choosing a topic.

About the Media Links

The sixth edition of *College Writing Skills* includes icons that link the text and its class-tested media supplements: *College Writing Skills*' Student CD-ROM and Online Learning Center; *AllWrite!* 2.0, McGraw-Hill's acclaimed grammar tutorial software; and the new *Virtual Workbook*, which offers additional online activities. Each of the 45 chapters in this edition features marginal icons that alert students to additional exercises, extended explanations, and supplemental resources for the topic at hand.



- **Learning Objectives/Chapter Outlines/Key Terms/Visuals:** A list of learning objectives, chapter outlines, definitions of key terms, and PowerPoint slides and other visuals supplement each chapter of the textbook.



- **Writing Online and Offline:** Online activities encourage students to activate new concepts in writing—for example, one exercise in Chapter 12 foregrounds cause and effect by asking students to relate the plot of a favorite movie.



- **Interactive Exercises:** Crossword puzzles, matching exercises, and true-false and multiple-choice questions reinforce comprehension of key concepts and grammar rules.



- **Additional Resources:** Offerings include a comprehensive glossary; guides to using the Internet, avoiding plagiarism, and doing electronic research; a study skills primer, and more.



- **AllWrite!** has more than 3,000 interactive exercises, complete with video clips and animations, to help students get grammar right. (The number tells you exactly which chapter and section of *AllWrite!* to consult; for instance, the icon at left refers to Chapter 15, Section 4.)



- **The Virtual Workbook** includes online activities and tests that supplement activities and tests in the book. (For more information on this new supplement, see below.)

New Technology: The CWS Virtual Workbook and CWS, Online Edition

With the Sixth Edition of *College Writing Skills*, we are pleased to introduce two new technology-based options that offer you an unprecedented opportunity to increase your students' motivation and engagement while simplifying your grading and course administration responsibilities: a *Virtual Workbook* to accompany *College Writing Skills*, and *College Writing Skills, Online Edition*.

The Virtual Workbook



The *Virtual Workbook* (ISBN 0-07-299419-3), an online supplement for students, offers brand-new activities that reinforce the skills students learn in Part Four of *College Writing Skills*. Authored by Donna Matsumoto, Leeward Community College, each interactive, Web-based activity in the *Virtual Workbook* corresponds to a key section or chapter in Part Four, giving students additional opportunities for practice in grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. A *Virtual Workbook* icon in the margins of *College Writing Skills* makes the interactive activities easy for instructors to integrate into their courses and for motivated students to consult on their own. The *Virtual Workbook* is supported by a powerful array of Web-based instructor's tools, including an automated online gradebook, and assessment, analysis, and classroom management tools.

College Writing Skills, Online Edition

Ideal for distance learning or lab-based courses, *College Writing Skills Online Edition* (ISBN 0-07-299417-7), represents an *alternative* to the traditional print textbook. Instructors opting to use the *Online Edition* in their courses give students online access to the contents of the printed textbook—over 2,500 activities, exercises, and writing assignments—in an interactive, Web-based format. To facilitate hybrid courses and ease the transition to Web-based courses and textbooks, each *Online Edition* is accompanied by a free copy of the *Offline Companion*, a printed supplement that contains activities and readings instructors have told us simply work better on the printed page. The *Online Edition* is accompanied by an array of Web-based features for instructors, including an automated online gradebook and assessment, analysis, and classroom management tools. To learn more about *College Writing Skills, Online Edition*, consult your local sales representative or send an e-mail to english@mcgraw-hill.com.

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Helpful Learning Aids Accompany the Book

Supplements for Instructors

- *The Instructor's Edition* (ISBN 0-07-287136-9) consists of the student text complete with answers to all activities and tests, followed by an Instructor's Guide featuring teaching suggestions and a model syllabus. The Instructor's Edition of *College Writing Skills* also includes three new diagnostic/achievement tests: two 40-question tests (A and B), and, for added flexibility, a single 60-question test (C) derived from A and B. These tests, along with their scoring keys, are included in print form in the back of the book. The tests are also available via

the *College Writing Skills* Online Learning Center (www.mhhe.com/langan). Instructors directing students to take the tests online can have students' scores and assessment e-mailed to them directly. (Students taking these tests will receive their final scores and an assessment, but not the correct answers to individual responses.)

- An *Online Learning Center* (www.mhhe.com/langan) offers a host of instructional aids and additional resources for instructors, including a comprehensive computerized test bank, the Instructor's Manual and Test Bank, online resources for writing instructors, and more.
- An *Instructor's CD-ROM* (0-07-287134-2) offers all of the above supplements in a convenient offline format.
- *PageOut!* helps instructors create graphically pleasing and professional web pages for their courses, in addition to providing classroom management, collaborative learning, and content management tools. PageOut! is **FREE** to adopters of McGraw-Hill textbooks and learning materials. Learn more at www.mhhe.com/pageout.

Supplements for Students

- A free *Student CD-ROM* (ISBN 0-07-287137-7) offers a host of instructional aids and additional resources for students, in addition to all of the resources of the Students' Online Learning Center in a convenient offline format.
- An *Online Learning Center* (www.mhhe.com/langan) offers self-correcting exercises, writing activities for additional practice, a PowerPoint grammar tutorial, guides to doing research on the Internet and avoiding plagiarism, useful Weblinks, and more.
- *AllWrite!* is an interactive, browser-based tutorial program that provides an online handbook, comprehensive diagnostic pre-tests and post-tests, and extensive practice exercises in every area.
- The *Skills Virtual Workbook* (ISBN 0-07-299415-0), which has been developed to accompany both the printed and online versions of the text, includes additional practices. Icons in the margin let students know when they can find an additional activity in the *Virtual Workbook*.

Dictionary and Vocabulary Resources

- *Random House Webster's College Dictionary* (ISBN 0-07-240011-0) This authoritative dictionary includes over 160,000 entries and 175,000 definitions. The most commonly used definitions are always listed first, so students can find what they need quickly.

- *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (ISBN 0-07-310057-9) Based on the best-selling *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, the paperback dictionary contains over 70,000 definitions.
- *The Merriam-Webster Thesaurus* (ISBN 0-07-310067-6) This handy paperback thesaurus contains over 157,000 synonyms, antonyms, related and contrasted words, and idioms.
- *Merriam-Webster's Vocabulary Builder* (ISBN 0-07-310069-2) This handy paperback introduces 3,000 words, and includes quizzes to test progress.
- *Merriam-Webster's Notebook Dictionary* (ISBN 0-07-299091-0) An extremely concise reference to the words that form the core of English vocabulary, this popular dictionary, conveniently designed for 3-ring binders, provides words and information at students' fingertips.
- *Merriam-Webster's Notebook Thesaurus* (ISBN 0-07-310068-4) Conveniently designed for 3-ring binders, this thesaurus helps the student search for words they might need today. It provides concise, clear guidance for over 157,000 word choices.
- *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary and Thesaurus, Electronic Edition* (ISBN 0-07-310070-6) Available on CD-ROM, this online dictionary contains thousands of new words and meanings from all areas of human endeavor, including electronic technology, the sciences, and popular culture.

You can contact your local McGraw-Hill representative or consult McGraw-Hill's web site at www.mhhe.com/english for more information on the supplements that accompany *College Writing Skills, Sixth Edition*.

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