

TENTH EDITION

Reading Critically Writing Well

A READER AND GUIDE

b with
INTEGRATED
MEDIA



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Academic Habits of Mind: From Reading Critically to Writing Well

CHAPTER

Imagine yourself on a journey to a part of your country where you have never been. You already know the language and have some background in common with the people, but some of the traditions, customs, and laws are different from what you're accustomed to. When you arrive, you are immersed in a new job with people you haven't met before, but you are expected to know the lay of the land and the rules, including how to communicate, how to produce the products the job involves, and how to deal with difficulties.

This new place is college. Sure, you've been through high school, and you've been accepted into college, so you have what it takes to do well in your courses. But the world of college has its own special requirements and demands, and knowing what they are and how to respond to them will help you succeed.

Your professors will assume you already understand what college requires. In fact, a recent survey of college professors revealed that they expect students already to have what are often called *academic habits of mind*—ways of thinking and inquiring that people in college (and often in the world of work) use every day. As the word *habit* suggests, these skills can be acquired through practice. So what are these habits of mind? Here's a list of what we think are the most crucial habits:

- **Curiosity:** The desire to ask provocative questions, generate hypotheses, and respond to others' ideas thoughtfully and enthusiastically
- **Rhetorical sensitivity:** The understanding of the purposes motivating writers and readers, the expectations of the audience, and the constraints of the genre and medium, including the ability to recognize different genres, or types, of writing (such as laboratory reports and movie reviews) and mediums (print or digital, visual or audio) and know when to use them, as well as to recognize and use vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and spelling that is appropriate to the purpose, audience, genre, and medium in which you are writing

- **Critical analysis:** The willingness to subject your ideas and those of others to critical analysis and to assess evidence — facts, events, texts — accurately and fairly, including sources that support both your own position and opposing positions
 - **Civility:** The ability to treat the ideas of others fairly and respectfully, even when they challenge your own beliefs
- Before reading further, consider which habits of mind you already have and which you will need to develop.

ACTIVITY 1

Exploring Your Habits of Mind

What habits of mind do you already possess as you approach this course? To determine this, think about your high-school study habits or how you mastered a subject, hobby, or technology inside or outside of school. Then write down your answers to the following questions:

- What sparked your interest in the first place?
- What questions did you initially have?
- How did your questions evolve as you learned more?
- How did you go about finding out answers to your questions?
- How did the answers you found lead to further questioning or additional research?

Having looked back on your experience, which habits of mind did you form as you satisfied your curiosity and followed through on your interest? Write down the habits of mind you have acquired; you may see as you read on that you have a head start on the habits expected of college students. At the end of this chapter, you will revisit this activity.

JOINING THE ACADEMIC CONVERSATION

The academic habits of mind we have been discussing are essential to success in all academic areas and disciplines (and most career paths), but these alone are not enough. You may also need to develop skills that will allow you to join the *academic conversation* on issues and concepts important to individual disciplines such as economics or sociology. In your first year or two of college, you will enter a variety of academic conversations by reading textbooks and academic articles

in different disciplines and by participating in discussions in class and with your instructor. You might join the conversation in some disciplines for a term or a year; you might join the conversation in your major permanently. As you read this text, you will find references to these conversations and your role in them. The habits of mind we discussed above — developing curiosity and thinking, reading, and writing critically — will allow you to develop the skills you need to join these conversations.

Thinking and Reading Critically: Developing Curiosity

Read the following four passages on bullying in schools.* All of these passages speculate about *causes* and *effects* (the genre, or type, of readings in Chapter 8). They also

- *assert* (or *claim*) that bullying is a problem,
- *define* bullying, and
- try to determine the *consequences* of bullying.

But each differs in how the authors define the term or what the authors believe the consequences of bullying may be.

As you read the excerpts, ask yourself these questions and write down the answers:

- What are the guiding questions the writers asked themselves as they researched and wrote these texts?
- What questions do you need to ask as a reader to clarify the meaning of each of these passages?

Asking and answering these questions will help you figure out the authors' *perspectives*, as well as what the authors state **explicitly** (or directly), and what they leave **implicit** (implied). Asking questions of the text and the topic, writing notes in the margins, researching answers when you have questions, and figuring out the **assumptions** (underlying beliefs and values) of the author will also help you understand your own perspectives.

We have annotated the first reading to get you started.

1. Ron Banks, "Bullying in Schools"

Writer's question: What does the research tell us about the incidence of bullying and its consequences for the bully?

As established by studies in Scandinavian countries, a strong correlation appears to exist between bullying other students during the school years and experiencing legal or

*A listing of the sources of texts 1–4 can be found at the end of the chapter.

Reader's questions: Is this research reliable — author credible, publication trustworthy, date current? Is Scandinavia comparable to the United States?

Reader's questions: 60 percent sounds like a lot, but is the "criminal conviction" serious? Is there any proof of bullying leads to criminal behavior or just a correlation? Any shared causes underlying both bullying and criminal behavior — such as abuse?

Reader's questions: How can we tell if a bully is? How is bullying defined in this research?

Reader's questions: How do the authors know this? Is the situation in Scandinavia the same as in the United States? Why is bullying even allowed in schools? Isn't there something that can help prevent it?

Writer's questions: Are there consequences to being bullied that go beyond the bully and the bullied? How do these traits develop in other people besides those who have been bullied? Do these traits develop in children who are bullied?

Now Banks relies on statistics as evidence to support his assertions. There are many additional strategies writers use to provide evidence, such as the following:

- Narrating a story
- Providing facts and statistics
- Describing
- Strategizing (providing examples)
- Classifying
- Comparing and contrasting
- Supporting causes or effects
- Summarizing or paraphrasing

See Chapter 5, Explaining Concepts, and Chapter 10, A Catalog of Reading Strategies, for more information about writers' strategies for providing evidence.)

Now take a look at some of the evidence Banks offers and the questions prompted by it:

Is Scandinavia similar enough to the United States that American bullies will have the same rate of criminal conviction?

Who is Olweus? Is this source reliable?

What's the context of this statistic? Is 7 percent a lot? How many skip to have fun, to avoid a test, etc.?

[I]n Scandinavian countries, . . . 60 percent of those characterized as bullies in grades 6–9 had at least one criminal conviction by age 24 (Olweus 1993). . . . As many as 7 percent of America's eighth-graders stay home at least once a month because of bullies.

The source Banks cites — Olweus — is one you could look up and assess for yourself.* (See Chapter 11, Strategies for Research and Documentation.) When considering the statistics Banks provides, consider the context as well: Statistics have little meaning out of context. (See Contextualizing in Chapter 10, A Catalog of Reading Strategies.)

Now read the next excerpt, noting the following:

- The questions the author asks herself
- The assertions (or claims) she makes
- The evidence she supplies to support her assertions/claims
- The assumptions she makes

Keep in mind that the assumptions a writer makes — the ideas and attitudes that he or she takes for granted as commonly accepted truths — may be assumptions of the writer alone or they may reflect the *values* and *beliefs* of a community. They may also reflect the assumptions held by readers or sources cited by the writer. Sometimes the assumptions may be stated explicitly, but often they will only be implied, so you may have to search for the underlying assumptions by analyzing the *tone* or *connotation* of the words the writer chooses or by thinking critically about the examples the writer uses. Ask yourself whose assumption the writer is giving voice to — her or his own, the wider community's, a source's. Here are some additional questions you can ask to bring a writer's assumptions to the surface:

- What are the effects of the assumption, in the context of the essay specifically or in society more generally?
- What do I think about the assumption, and is there anything in the essay that raises doubts about it?

*Olweus, Dan. "A Profile of Bullying at School." *Educational Leadership*. Mar. 2003. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 14 Feb. 2005.

How does the assumption reinforce or critique commonly held views, and are there any *alternative ideas, beliefs, or values* that would challenge this assumption?

Tara L. Kuther, "Understanding Bullying"

Bullying is not a normal part of growing up. Victims of bullying suffer psychological and sometimes physical scars that last a lifetime. Victims report greater fear and anxiety, feel less accepted, suffer from more health problems, and score lower on measures of academic achievement and self-esteem than students who are not bullied. Victims often turn their anger inward, which may lead to depression, anxiety, and even suicide. The experience of bullying is also linked with violence, as the fatal school shootings in Littleton, Colorado, and Jonesboro, Arkansas, have illustrated.

However, it's not just victims who are hurt by bullying. Bullies fail to learn how to cope, manage their emotions, and communicate effectively — skills vital to success in the adult world. Without intervention, bullies suffer stunted emotional growth and fail to develop empathy. Since bullies are accustomed to achieving their immediate goals by pushing others around, they don't learn how to have genuine relationships with other people. Instead, they externalize and blame others for their problems, never taking responsibility, nor learning how to care for another's needs. Bullies who don't learn other ways of getting what they want develop into adult bullies who are more likely to experience criminal troubles, be abusive toward their spouses, and have more aggressive children, perhaps continuing the cycle of bullying into the next generation.

Now read the next two excerpts, noting the implied and explicit questions authors ask, the conclusions they draw, and whether those conclusions are defensible given the *evidence* the authors provide.

Colleen Newquist, "Bully-Proof Your School"

Recognized as more than just a problem between kids, schools are called upon to put forth a team effort to end bullies' longtime reign of terror.

In *Arthur's April Fool*, Marc Brown's lovable aardvark gets the best of a school bully by playing a joke on him. Lucky for Arthur, the book ends there.

As most children know, and many adults remember, struggles with real-life bullies rarely are resolved so easily. The enormity of those struggles are now recognized, and bullying in schools, once shrugged off with a kids-will-be-kids attitude, has come to be regarded as a serious problem around the world.

The facts about bullying show that 10 to 15 percent of children are bullied regularly, and bullying most often takes place in school, frequently right in the classroom. The facts show, too, that bullying is an equal-opportunity crime — the size of a school, its setting (rural, urban or suburban) and racial composition seem to have no bearing on its occurrence.

Bullying takes a heavy toll on the victims. As many as 7 percent of eighth-grade students in the United States stay home at least once a month because of bullies. Chronic fear can be the source of all-too-real stomachaches and headaches and other stress-related illnesses. According to Norway's Dan Olweus, a leading authority on the subject, being bullied also leads to depression and low self-esteem, problems that can carry into adulthood.

The effects of such behavior are grim for the offender, too. One study by Olweus shows that 60 percent of kids characterized as bullies in sixth through ninth grades had at least one criminal conviction by age 24.

4. Paul R. Smokowski and Kelly Holland Kopasz, "Bullying in School: An Overview of Types, Effects, Family Characteristics, and Intervention Strategies"

Bullying is usually defined as a form of aggression in which one or more children intend to harm or disturb another child who is perceived as being unable to defend himself or herself (Glew, Rivara, & Feudtner, 2000). Typically, a power imbalance exists between the bully and the victim, with the bully being either physically or psychologically more powerful (Nansel et al., 2001). Often, the perpetrator uses bullying as a means to establish dominance or maintain status (Pellegrini, Bartini, & Brooks, 1999; Roberts, 2000). In addition, bullying behaviors tend to occur repeatedly (Nansel et al.). Such behaviors include name calling, physically assaulting, threatening, stealing, vandalizing, slander, excluding, and taunting (Beale, 2001).

Short-Term Effects of Victimization

Victims may gradually see themselves as outcasts and failures. Studies suggest that victimization has a significant positive correlation with several internalizing disorders, such as anxiety and depression (Brockenbrough et al., 2002; Kaltiala-Heino et al., 2000). This link between victimization and internalizing disorders is particularly strong for adolescent girls and may contribute to the development of eating disorders (Bond, Carlin, Thomas, Rubin, & Patton, 2001). One study found that attention-deficit disorder was common among victims (Kumpulainen et al., 2001). This connection with attention-deficit disorder is understandable considering that these children may feel the need to constantly monitor their environment, anxiously anticipating the next victimization episode. Victims of bullying often suffer from one or more of the following: chronic absenteeism, reduced academic performance, increased apprehension, loneliness, feelings of abandonment, and suicidal ideation (Beale, 2001; Roberts & Coursol, 1996).

You can see that even though the authors of the four excerpts above did not directly ask questions in their texts, all of them were curious about the long-term effects of bullying, especially on people who later committed crimes or who

suffered from difficult psychological adjustments in adult life. The questions you asked as you read allowed you to engage with and think critically about the reading selections, necessary steps to take before you can write productively about a reading selection.

Throughout this book, readings are followed by a section called *Reading for Meaning*, which is divided into three activities based on the kinds of questions you asked of the texts you just read:

- *Read to summarize* involves asking yourself what the main point of the reading is.
- *Read to respond* asks you to explore your reactions to the text and bring to it your own knowledge and experience.
- *Read to analyze assumptions* asks you to uncover the authors' perspectives, values, and beliefs as well as to probe your own. Often, you will have to **infer** (or figure out) an author's assumptions because they are not stated explicitly.

Various approaches to thinking and reading critically are addressed in detail with illustrative examples in Chapter 10, A Catalog of Reading Strategies.

Thinking and Reading Critically: Developing Rhetorical Sensitivity

Rhetoric means the ways writers make their ideas understandable and seek to influence their readers. When you develop rhetorical sensitivity, you understand the writer's purpose, audience, context, and genre, and you recognize that the decisions the writer makes—including the types of evidence the writer includes, the kinds of vocabulary he or she chooses, and the *writing strategies* he or she uses—grow out of the rhetorical situation.

You probably already have a fairly sophisticated understanding of rhetorical situations: You wouldn't write a thank-you note to your great-aunt using the same tone or vocabulary that you would use when posting a Facebook update about a concert you attended, because you know your purpose, audience, context, and genre are very different in these two situations. Your ability to analyze the rhetorical situation—to identify the writer's purpose, audience, context, and genre—and to adapt your writing to your rhetorical situation is central to your success in college and beyond. Your teachers will expect you to analyze the rhetorical situation in each discipline, and by doing so, you will cultivate the skills necessary to join their academic conversation. We explore how to examine the rhetorical situation later in this chapter.

You may have noticed that the excerpts on bullying above were written in different styles. The texts that were written for an academic audience assumed their readers were familiar with the terminology (vocabulary) and concepts characteristic of the discipline—what we call the discipline's **discourse**—as well as its genre **conventions** (typical ways of organizing material and using sources). For

example, readers familiar with scientific discourse (biology, for example) would expect a scientific report to include technical descriptions of the methods used and the results obtained and to be organized with separate sections for methods, results, discussion, and references. If the same experiment were discussed in an article for a general audience, however, readers would expect little, if any, technical detail. They would expect specialized concepts to be defined, they would not expect detailed descriptions of methods or results in separate sections with headings, and they would not expect a list of sources.

Readers also take note of the *tone* of a reading. Authors of academic discourse try to keep their tone objective and courteous, so they will be taken seriously and not provoke an emotional (and perhaps unreasonable) reaction in the reader. Less formal authors may allow passion into their writing, or they may write in a chatty tone, with informal language and direct addresses to the reader. (Note, for instance, how some of the authors refer to bullied people as “kids,” while others refer to them as “children.” Such words provide a key to the tone.)

ACTIVITY 2

Developing Your Rhetorical Sensitivity

To develop your rhetorical sensitivity for academic writing, look again at the excerpts on bullying above to identify one that you think was written for a general audience and one written for an academic audience. What characteristics can you identify for the two types of writing? List the characteristics of the two excerpts in facing columns:

Excerpt for more general audience	Excerpt for academic audience

Now write a paragraph or two explaining the features that led you to identify the different audiences for these two excerpts.

Thinking and Reading Critically: Analyzing Ideas with Critical Analysis and Civility

In college, you will deepen and extend your critical thinking and reading skills by reading a variety of texts that may expose you to wholly new ideas, make you question your own value system, and help you see different points of view. You will also often have opportunities to discuss what you read with your professors

and classmates, and doing so will introduce you to additional critical reading strategies that can enhance your existing habits of mind. In order to get the most from texts and discussions, participants in the academic conversation examine all the ideas — their own and others' — critically but also with civility, whether they agree with them or not.

To see this process in action, read the two excerpts below, which include definitions of and discuss the prevalence of bullying in school. The first is from the *Journal of the American Medical Association* — an academic journal — and the second is from a 2004 book on bullying written for the general public and for people who work in schools. As you read, make notes about the following:

1. Any ideas that are new to you, especially those that challenge what you currently think about bullying
2. Any references to assumptions that are contrary to the writers' beliefs. Look especially for references by the authors to the beliefs other people might have that differ from their own, or to values that may be currently accepted but are open to question
3. How the writers handle assumptions that are contrary to their own

Tonja R. Nansel, Mary Overpeck, Ramani S. Pilla, W. June Ruan, Bruce Simons-Morton, and Peter Scheidt, "Bullying Behaviors among U.S. Youth: Prevalence and Association with Psychosocial Adjustment"

Bullying among school-aged youth is increasingly being recognized as an important problem affecting well-being and social functioning. While a certain amount of conflict and harassment is typical of youth peer relations, bullying presents a potentially more serious threat to healthy youth development. The definition of bullying is widely agreed on in literature on bullying.¹⁻⁴ Bullying is a specific type of aggression in which (1) the behavior is intended to harm or disturb, (2) the behavior occurs repeatedly over time, and (3) there is an imbalance of power, with a more powerful person or group attacking a less powerful one. This asymmetry of power may be physical or psychological, and the aggressive behavior may be verbal (e.g., name-calling, threats), physical (e.g., hitting), or psychological (e.g., rumors, shunning/exclusion). . . .

Bullying takes many forms, and findings about the types of bullying that occur are fairly similar across countries. A British study involving 23 schools found that direct verbal aggression was the most common form of bullying, occurring with similar frequency in both sexes.¹³ Direct physical aggression was more common among boys, while indirect forms were more common among girls. Similarly, in a study of several middle schools in Rome, the most common types of bullying reported by boys were threats, physical harm, rejection, and name-calling.¹⁴ The most common forms for girls were name-calling, teasing, rumors, rejection, and taking of personal belongings. . . .

Notes

1. Boulton MJ, Underwood K. Bully/victim problems among middle school children. *Br J Educ Psychol*. 1992;62:73-87.
2. Olweus D. *Aggression in the Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys*. Washington, DC: Hemisphere Publishing Corp; 1978.
3. Salmivalli C, Kaukiainen A, Kaistaniemi L, Lagerspetz KM. Self-evaluated self-esteem, peer-evaluated self-esteem, and defensive egoism as predictors of adolescents' participation in bullying situations. *Pers Soc Psychol Bull*. 1999;25:1268-1278.
4. Slee PT. Bullying in the playground: The impact of inter-personal violence on Australian children's perceptions of their play environment. *Child Environ*. 1995;12:320-327.
13. Rivers I, Smith PK. Types of bullying behaviour and their correlates. *Aggressive Behav*. 1994;20:359-368.
14. Baldry AC. Bullying among Italian middle school students. *Sch Psychol Int*. 1998;19:361-374.

Barbara Coloroso, "The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander"

In a study conducted in 2001 by the Kaiser Foundation, a U.S. health care philanthropy organization, in conjunction with the Nickelodeon TV network and Children Now, a youth advocacy group, almost three-quarters of pre-teens interviewed said bullying is a regular occurrence at school and that it becomes even more pervasive as kids start high school; 86 percent of the children between the ages of twelve and fifteen said that they get teased or bullied at school — making bullying more prevalent than smoking, alcohol, drugs, or sex among the same age group. More than half of children between the ages of eight and eleven said that bullying is a "big problem" at school. "It's a big concern on kids' minds. It's something they're dealing with every day," reports Lauren Asher of the Kaiser Foundation . . . (p. 12).

Individual incidents of verbal, physical, or relational bullying can appear trivial or insignificant, nothing to be overly concerned about, part of the school culture. But it is the imbalance of power, the intent to harm, the threat of further aggression, and the creation of an atmosphere of terror that should raise red flags and signal a need for intervention. Sadly, even when the [se] four markers of bullying are clearly in evidence, adults have been known to minimize or dismiss the bullying, underestimate its seriousness, blame the bullied child, and/or heap on additional insult to injury (p. 22).

Considering the ideas that are new to you, think about what you expect from the authors after they have raised these ideas: Do you want more information about what *causes* bullying? About *where* it happens and *what to do about it*? Do you need more evidence of the *problem* before you can be convinced of its importance?

Reread these two excerpts to consider where and how the authors respond to their statements and assumptions of people with whom they disagree. (See Look-For Patterns of Opposition in Chapter 10, A Catalog of Reading Strategies.) For example, note that Nansel and her coauthors *acknowledge* the common idea that “boys must be boys” or that “all kids tease each other” when they write, but see how they introduce this *concession* and then *refute* it.

Cue/Concession While a certain amount of conflict and harassment is typical of youth peer relations, bullying presents a potentially more serious threat to healthy youth development.

Refutation

The authors introduce the concession with a transition indicating contrast *although, but, or however* to indicate that an exception, refinement, or conclusion is coming. The structure looks like this:

While _____ may be true, _____ is more likely to contribute to _____.

Although _____, I think _____.

_____ may be true in some circumstances, but not in others.

Researchers X and Y provide some evidence that _____ occurs in some settings; however, they don’t offer sufficient evidence that it occurs in all settings.

As a reader, you can decide whether you need more evidence to convince (see Evaluating the Logic of an Argument in Chapter 10, A Catalog of Reading Strategies). Review the excerpt from Coloroso to see if you find a similar concession-refutation structure.

Now consider the tone Nansel et al. use in the example above. Their sentence selects careful word choices that will not offend the professional writers with whom they disagree or any members of their audience who might share their views. They hedge their statement with *qualifying terms*, such as “a certain amount” and “potentially,” to avoid making a stronger claim than they can prove in the evidence. A stronger claim may put off their readers. The hedges also constrain the writers’ willingness to engage in conversation about this subject. Barbara Coloroso’s text, written for a popular audience, maintains a courteous one but takes a firmer stance:

Terms that suggest the writer’s point of view and undermine the writer’s neutrality. Sadly, even when the[se] four markers of bullying are clearly in evidence, adults have been known to minimize or dismiss the bullying, underestimate its seriousness, blame the bullied child, and/or heap on additional insult to injury.

Writers, though — even those endeavoring to be courteous — find that some of the authors of alternative arguments use sources that are not convincing. It is their job to question or challenge those questionable sources. For example, of the authors cited in the Banks excerpt (pp. 3–4), Olweus, concludes in his

own article that while girls suffer from bullying and bully others too, they do not do *more* bullying than boys: “Our research data . . . clearly contradict the view that girls are the most frequent and worst bullies, a view suggested by such recent books as *Queen Bees and Wannabes* (Wiseman 2002) and *Odd Girl Out* (Simmons 2002).”*

ACTIVITY 3

Honing Ideas through Discussion

Once you have analyzed the way Nansel and colleagues and Coloroso respond to others, try discussing bullying with your classmates, friends, or family to develop your own definition of bullying, as well as to develop your ideas about what causes it and what schools could do about it. Work hard to analyze these ideas carefully while retaining an objective and courteous tone. By discussing your reading and speculating about other ways of looking at the problem, you generate and test your *hypotheses*, improving them as you refine them.

FROM READING CRITICALLY TO WRITING WELL

As the successful novelist Stephen King says: “If you want to be a writer, you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot. There’s no way around these two things that I’m aware of, no shortcut.” All college students have experience with reading and writing for school, and many of you have extensive experience with informal writing as well, especially in technology-based forums such as blogs, Twitter, and Facebook. This kind of online writing can make you more comfortable with the written word and help you become more aware of who your audience is, because your writing is directed to a variety of people other than your teachers. But for academic writing to be effective, it must grow out of the same habits of mind discussed so far in this chapter:

- **Curiosity:** The desire to explore ideas before writing and to revise your ideas as your thinking and writing on a topic evolve
- **Rhetorical sensitivity:** The ability to write and revise to make your writing the most effective it can be, given your purpose, genre, and *stance* (your perspective and attitude), your audience, and the medium you choose.

*Olweus, Dan. “A Profile of Bullying at School.” *Educational Leadership* Mar. 2003. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 14 Feb. 2005.

Critical analysis: The willingness to think hard about a topic and to subject your ideas and the ideas of others to critical scrutiny, including both views

Civility: The ability to treat those who disagree with you fairly and respectfully

explore and revise ideas fully, to analyze critically, and to demonstrate courage and rhetorical sensitivity, academic writers can take advantage of the *writing* process, writing and revising multiple times. This process allows them to shape hone their writing until it expresses their ideas clearly and effectively, andifies (and perhaps even surpasses) the expectations of their audience.

THE WRITING PROCESS

Chapters 2 through 9 of *Reading Critically, Writing Well*, questions following reading selections help you move from analyzing the selection to writing it. Each chapter also includes a Guide to Writing to help you explore and develop the ideas you express in your *drafts* and then revise those drafts deeply in response to feedback from other readers.

In college, much of the writing you submit will be formal, academic discourse in specific genres (such as research reports and essay exams). The activities in the Guides to Writing will help you develop the ideas and language that will use in those formal writing assignments, with example paragraphs and evidence strategies demonstrating effective methods for presenting your ideas responding to evidence. As writers, we rarely if ever begin with a complete understanding of our subject or a clear, detailed plan for writing about it. Instead, we write to learn, using the questions and unexpected complexities that arise e writing to inspire more writing and, nearly always, generate further ideas deeper insights.

As you write, remember that the writing process is *recursive*: it does not proceed smoothly in a straight line from beginning to end, but rather may be chaotic. steps in the process may include the following:

Generating and researching ideas

Drafting your essay

Getting feedback from others

Revising deeply

Editing and proofreading

may find yourself rethinking, rearranging, and rewriting much of your final text, so you may revisit one or more of these stages several times for one

Using Writing and Researching to Generate Ideas

There are many different ways to generate and research ideas, and the activities in the Guides to Writing will introduce you to some of them. For example, you can brainstorm on paper or with a friend or a group to get a firmer grasp of your ideas and where they might lead you. You can figure out what others have said and how that relates to your ideas. You can discover which genre would be best for presenting your ideas—or, if you have chosen your genre, you can examine its *basic features* to include those necessary for your writing. You can explore what you know about your audience so you can tailor your writing to their needs. And you can gather material for your writing so you can support your claim when you figure out what it is. While you are researching, you may need to *summarize, paraphrase, or synthesize* material to be able to use it in your essay. For guidance on doing these writing tasks well, refer to Chapters 10 and 11, where there are instructions and examples of these and other common academic tasks. The activities in Chapters 10, 11, and 12, A Catalog of Reading Strategies, Strategies for Research and Documentation, and Strategies for Analyzing Visuals, also suggest fruitful ways to generate ideas.

ACTIVITY 4

Freewriting to Develop Ideas

To understand how writing can help you generate ideas, try the following activity. For fifteen minutes, write nonstop—keep your pen on the paper or your fingers on the keyboard—in response to one of these two statements about your own experiences with bullying:

- I have had firsthand experience with bullying, and . . .

Or

- I haven't had firsthand experience with bullying, but . . .

Don't take time to make corrections or revisions—just keep writing as ideas occur to you, even if you write how stupid you think this exercise is. You will likely think you have nothing further to write after about seven or eight minutes, but it is the struggle to get through the blank minutes that usually yields the most interesting and helpful material.

Note that you need not share your response with anyone else, including your instructor or classmates, although you may choose to do so. You can write exactly what occurs to you—uncensored—because no one else will see it.

Now reread what you have written. Does anything surprise you—did you write anything that you hadn't planned to write, but that emerged from the experience of writing? If so, you've now seen how writing itself can help you generate ideas. If not, keep trying: the more you write, the more likely you will discover new ideas.

(continued)

Experienced writers have learned to trust this unstructured writing as a discovery process because they know that writing is an unparalleled way of thinking. Writing helps you discover, explore, develop, and refine your ideas in a way that not compare with just sitting around and thinking about a subject. Because writing leaves a record of your thinking, it reduces the burden of remembering and allows you to direct all your mental energy toward other tasks. By rereading what you have written, you can figure out where you became derailed, recall what you forgot were important, or see new possibilities you did not notice before.

Coloring the Rhetorical Situation

Coloring and answering the following questions when reading *and* when writing will help you explore the rhetorical situation:

- What is the author's purpose?
- Who is the audience?
- What is the author's stance — perspective and attitude toward the material?
- What is the genre?
- What is the best medium or design for this text?
- Among these questions while reading will help you develop a writer's eye, will you notice the maneuvers and strategies that writers use to communicate ideas. (Reread pp. 3–4 to recall the differences between reader's and writer's questions.) The Reading Like a Writer questions following each reading selection will help you learn how to ask the “writer's questions” that will help shape your writing. Asking these questions about your own writing will help you develop the activity you will need to revise effectively.

ACTIVITY 5

Asking Writer's Questions

Choose one of the readings from earlier in this chapter, and ask writer's questions about the excerpt. Consider the rhetorical situation and explore how you know the writer's answers to these questions. For example, you quickly know that Nansel et al.'s article is written for a specialist audience — but how do you know that? Is it the language? The evidence of research? The kinds of research? What are the indications that let you know your writer's questions are being answered?

Writing a Draft

Having devised a *main idea* (or *thesis*) and developed different kinds of reasons and evidence to support it, you have already begun writing a draft. You will develop the draft by drawing on the language and ideas you generated and researched earlier. (See p. 4 to refresh your mind about effective forms of evidence.) You should have a clear sense of who your readers are and what they need to know to be persuaded by your observations, and you should have some grasp of their values and beliefs, so you can appeal to *common ground* between them and you. You can always return to idea-generating activities as you determine what else you might need.

Getting Feedback from Others

Writers need feedback from others to determine the strengths and weaknesses of their early draft(s). You may turn to a friend, your classmates, a tutor in your writing center or online, or your instructor to get constructive criticism. Ask questions like those below so you get the feedback you need:

- Is my main idea /thesis clear?
- What evidence is most persuasive? Least?
- Are there places where you can't follow my reasoning, and can you explain why?
- Do I show evidence of having practiced the habits of mind expected of college students: curiosity, rhetorical sensitivity, critical analysis, and civility? Please point it out.

Ask your readers to review Reading a Draft Critically — found in each chapter's Guide to Writing — before they finish.

Revising Deeply

Many writers spend more time revising than writing their original draft, another indication that writing generates ideas. You may find that you have to revise your whole thesis in light of the feedback you receive from reviewers or expand on your ideas, sharpen your reasons, augment your evidence, answer possible objections or questions, reorganize in light of readers' confusion, trim bloated parts, or rework your ideas into a more reader-friendly form. You may have to augment your ideas; it's common for reviewers to ask questions that require answers you haven't yet considered, so you may have to do more research and more idea-generating.

Editing and Proofreading

What would your reaction be to reading material that was difficult to follow, had inconsistent references, and included misspellings and grammatical errors for no apparent reason—in short, writing that seemed to disregard the needs of a reader? Of the excerpts in this chapter are in final, polished form, with correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation, and with vocabulary appropriate to the audience for which they are written. In fact, this is true of every reading selection in this book, as well as the text supporting it. Academic and professional authors work hard to ensure that their written work is as perfect as they can make it when they submit it to publishers: Most authors revise several times until their writing satisfies them, and often they give it to a friend, family member, or colleague—sometimes to several people—for review. Their publishers also edit the work, carefully scrutinizing the writing before setting it before the public. This care and attention to detail yield writing that deserves the careful consideration of those reading it—whether they are specialists, members of the general public, or, in the case of student writing, professors.

When you reach the stage in your draft where you think you have

- properly expressed your purpose,
 - considered the needs and ideas of your audience,
 - supported your position on your subject with a clear thesis and substantial evidence,
 - decided on the appropriate genre, and
 - determined the most successful medium for publication,
- you are ready to clean and polish it. This often means even further rewriting, though if you've been attentive to your habits of mind and revised your writing through several stages, you may have been making editing and polishing decisions all along.
- To edit and proofread effectively, you need to read your essay through the eyes of your reader. This is no time to be lazy! Rigorously check sentences and paragraphs to make sure your writing includes the following:

- A clear thesis placed in a prominent place
- Transitions between sentences and between paragraphs to help your reader follow your line of thinking
- Vocabulary appropriate to the subject and audience's needs
- Correct grammar so you can communicate effectively and not confuse or annoy your reader
- Correct spelling so your reader knows exactly what word you mean

- Sentence construction that helps your reader understand your points (If you struggle with reading your own sentences, your reader will probably just give up and move on or, worse yet, stop reading altogether.)
- An appropriate tone given your approach to your subject and your audience

ACTIVITY 6

Pulling It All Together

Look back at what you wrote for Activity 1, where you speculated about the academic habits of mind you already practice. Think now about what you have learned about the habits of mind that lead to successful thinking, reading, and writing in college and beyond. To solidify your understanding, write a note to a person—a friend, a colleague, a sibling, your own child—who is preparing for college. In a page or two, describe the habits of mind you think this person should start (or continue) practicing to ensure his or her success in college and career. Feel free to use examples from this chapter, but try as well to draw on your own experience to support your assertions. As you write, bear in mind the writing process we've just described. By the time you finish this short essay, you should be ready to begin the next stage of your course, beginning with Chapter 2, Autobiography, or any other chapter your teacher chooses to work on first.

Sources for Texts on pp. 3–7 and 10–11

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