



CENGAGE

Fourth Edition



The *new*
HARBRA
CE
GUIDE
Genres for Composing

CHERYL
GLENN

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Preface

Preface for the Instructor

The fourth edition of *The New Harbrace Guide* brings student-friendly support for first year writing, co-req, dual enrollment, and integrated reading-writing courses with its trademark approach to writing in multiple media. As with previous editions, this rhetoric, reader, and research manual, now with a brief handbook, is based on current rhetorical theory, providing step-by-step guidance and sustained attention to the rhetorical situation in a variety of genres.

New chapters include information on writing powerful paragraphs (Chapter 14), stylish sentences (Chapter 16), and editing for common problems (Chapter 17). Special features of the new edition also focus on analysis and persuasion (Chapter 2), academic literacy and the literacy narrative (Chapter 3), and an expanded section on creating strong thesis statements (Chapter 13). Its contemporary approach includes 36 fresh new readings on topics from veganism and apolitical food to how young people are changing the climate conversation.

The book is also dedicated to promoting intellectual curiosity, writing confidence, and rhetorical power by helping students transfer the reading and writing skills learned in this course—through a Knowledge Transfer feature for each writing project—to writing in other college courses, the workplace, and the community.

Key Features

The New Harbrace Guide distinguishes itself from other writing guides by its sustained focus on the rhetorical situation and the question, “Why Write?” The rhetorical approach focuses on understanding that the reasons for writing are as integral to the rhetorical situation as are audience and purpose. Identifying opportunities where writing can create a change of heart, mind, or action reinforces the vitality of the writing process, whether in or out of school. Guidance on specific rhetorical techniques for writing effective introductions, bodies, and conclusions is provided to help students shape ideas into language that is best suited for each writing project, with an emphasis in each chapter on analysis, synthesis, and writing persuasively for different media. The key features of *The New Harbrace Guide* include

- **A Rhetorical Approach.** By emphasizing rhetorical techniques that will help students understand how to evaluate a rhetorical situation, identify and respond to an opportunity for change, and address a problem rhetorically, this introduction to rhetoric teaches principles that have empowered readers, speakers, and writers for millennia—techniques that are transferable to other writing tasks, whether in school, the workplace, or the community. Part 1 introduces the rhetorical principles that underlie all writing situations and provides a basic method for using those principles in the digital, print, and multimodal spheres of composing.
- **A Guide to Genres and Persuasion.** The principles outlined in Part 1 are also reinforced for each genre (memoir, profile, investigative report, position argument, proposal, evaluation, critical analysis), with a featured **Writing Guide** for composing persuasively. Following a demystified step-by-step process, each Writing Guide breaks down composing into manageable tasks that build toward a larger writing project. These Writing Guides for each genre use simple, direct, and incremental advice to help students create forceful, persuasive introductions, bodies, and conclusions for a variety of genres.
- **Integrated Multimodal/Multimedia Coverage.** Today, all writers take into consideration the most effective medium (print, digital, verbal, visual, multimodal) for delivering their message. *The New Harbrace Guide* supports effective, twenty-first-century composing practices in Part 1 with a chapter on rhetorical success in a digital age that builds on the knowledge of rhetoric and media that students bring with them to the classroom—from text messages to Facebook profiles to Internet searches and more—with multimodal examples and guidance for each genre to help them choose when and how to use digital, verbal, visual, and print media for various audiences, purposes, and situations. Sections on **Writing in Three Media**, and **Additional Assignments: Knowledge Transfer** present a number of multimodal possibilities for each genre.
- **An Emphasis on Revision and Peer Review** continues to offer robust coverage and advice on using peer review in sections on **Revision and Peer Review** in each genre.

New features include

- **“The Mandalorian,” Baby Yoda memes, and Star Wars controversies.** New examples are included in Chapter 1 to engage students in coverage of the rhetorical situation, reasons for writing, and how rhetoric can be used as an opportunity to create change.
- **A Focus on Analysis from Day 1.** After an introduction to the rhetorical situation that includes Analyzing the Rhetorical Situation activities and a

writing assignment (Chapter 1), Chapter 2 enhances this coverage with an emphasis on analyzing rhetorical choices in a context of problem-solving and persuasion, including an emphasis on the classic rhetorical appeals (logos, pathos, ethos) and an assignment on writing a rhetorical analysis.

- **Academic Literacy.** Chapter 3 has been thoroughly revised to marry ample advice on reading for college to academic literacy skills, with several new examples, including Frederick Douglass’s learning-to-read-and-write literacy narrative from his *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*. Chapter 13 also includes a new section on **Expectations for Academic Writing**, and **Tips for Analyzing Assignments**.
- **Thesis Statement.** The section on **Crafting a Working Thesis Statement** has been considerably expanded and now includes more instruction, numerous examples, and **Tips for Developing A Working Thesis Statement**.
- **The Power of Paragraphs** (Chapter 14). This new chapter to the fourth edition includes twenty-five examples of paragraphs and abundant guidance on topic sentences, transitions, unity and coherence, and creating strong introductions and conclusions.
- **Style: An Essential Guide to Effective Sentences** (Chapter 16). This new chapter to the fourth edition includes the basics of sentence structure for avoiding mismatched sentence parts and creating complete sentences and focuses on the most important attribute of academic style—clarity. Guidance also includes coverage of sentence variety, precision, and inclusive language.
- **Strategies for Editing Common Problems** (Chapter 17). This brief handbook, rhetorically oriented toward editing, supports instructor guidance by helping strengthen student editing skills with coverage of the 15 most common sentence-level problems.
- **Updated APA Style:** American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines in Chapter 23, Acknowledging Sources in APA Style, reflect updates in the *2020 APA Publication Manual*, 7th edition, which simplifies the APA documentation style in citing diverse print, online, and oral sources.
- **36 new readings.** New examples for the **Genre in Focus** feature include: The Social Media Profile (Chapter 6, Profiles); opposing film reviews of the newest *Little Women* remake (Chapter 8, Evaluations), and Roxane Gay’s analysis of media coverage and race in “A Tale of Two Profiles” (Chapter 11, Critical Analyses). New annotated examples include: Sandy Banks’ “How Coronavirus Turned Supermarket Workers into Heroes” (Chapter 6, Profiles); Michael Rosen’s “Why Reading Aloud Is a Vital Bridge to Literacy” (Chapter 9, Proposals); and Pat Mora’s poem, “Sonrisas,” with a poetry blog analysis by AP student Gabriella Fiorenza and a sample student analysis by Alex Sibó.

- **Four new high-interest themes.** Chapter 25, Social Media and the Possibilities of Gender, explores the various ways social media has affected gender (and vice versa). Chapter 26, Navigating Safety in Public Spaces, includes readings on school shootings, pandemic shaming, disability, “hostile” [anti-homeless] architecture, and Michael-Aime Musoni’s thoughtful memoir on “Being an 18-Year-Old Black Man a Year after Mike Brown.” Chapter 27, Im/Migration, Displacement, Asylum Seeking: A Global Phenomenon, examines repercussions on Asians due to the COVID crisis, the economic impact of immigration, and a longer profile on border communities like El Paso to help students practice sustained reading of longer works. Chapter 28, How Young People Are Changing the Climate Conversation, includes weird weather that creates droughts, fires, and hurricanes, Greta Thunberg, young evangelicals and young farmers, and a longer piece by Elaine Kamarck, “The Challenging Politics of Climate Change,” which includes infographics and notes to help students use sustained reading and academic literacy skills. These themes and selections have been specially selected as models of the genres in this book and to engage and inspire student interest as the articles and topics jumpstart their writing.
- **Learning Objectives.** Each chapter now begins with Learning Objectives to help students focus their efforts and understand how the skills they are being taught are useful beyond the first-year writing courses. These same learning objectives can help instructors assess the effectiveness of student work.

In short, then, *The New Harbrace Guide* guides students through various composition processes and genres that enhance student success across college, the workplace, and the community.

How Does the Book Work?

In this new streamlined edition, you’ll find many innovations (large and small) that have helped to create a more user-friendly, portable, and easy-to-access guide (both in print and through an online MindTap version).

- **Colorful Tabs** help students quickly locate the information they need in the book. Each chapter has a tab, color-coded by the part of the book where the chapter is located. These tabs can be seen at the top of the page and when you flip through the book.
- **Color-Coded Writing Guidance** uses purple for advice on creating effective introductions, green for advice on creating coherent bodies of text, and blue for advice on conclusions. This is especially useful in the annotated essay example in each chapter in Part 2 and in the corresponding Writing Guides in each chapter.

- **Writing Guides** in each chapter in Part 2 provide step-by-step guidance for creating effective compositions, broken down by advice on the introduction, body, and conclusion of each genre. To locate this information more easily, a tab runs down the entire page so you can easily locate the Writing Guides in each chapter.
- **Marginal Glossary Definitions** for rhetorical terms are placed next to the term for easy reference.
- **Marginal Cross-References** to other parts of the book are provided where a refresher—or additional information—on particular topics might come in useful.
- **Thematic Readings Cross-Referenced for Each Genre** so students have plenty of examples to jumpstart their writing.

What Will You Find Online?

MindTap® English for Glenn’s *The New Harbrace Guide: Genres for Composing, Fourth Edition*, engages your students to become better thinkers, communicators, and writers by blending your course materials with content that supports every aspect of the writing process.

Key Features

- **“Check Your Understanding” exercises** after each chapter help students and instructors assess learning by asking students to apply what they have learned to very short scenarios of writing. Problems are auto-graded and report to the gradebook.
- **“Collaborate” activities** can be used in the online and face-to-face classroom. These two different versions provide specific, comprehensive directions for students. Assignment worksheets give students a way to record their ideas, and optional individual reflection questions ask students to summarize what they have learned about the subject, the process of collaboration itself, or themselves.
- **Writing Organizers in Part II** and **Research Organizers in Part IV** are worksheets with open-ended questions that help students stay organized and focused on the most important elements of what they need to do. These Word docs can be downloaded, printed, or filled out onscreen, and then uploaded to the instructor if desired.
- **The “Just in Time Plus” series** includes foundational topics that range from writing an essay, to using commas correctly, to paraphrasing, summarizing, and quoting. Each unit includes instruction, a video, and auto-graded assessment.

- **Focused Support for Key Topics** includes nine topics in argument, evaluating sources, and critical thinking. Each unit includes a reading of instructional text; a video example of a student working with the topic; an auto-graded review activity; an annotated student essay; and two professional readings with discussion questions.
- **A “50 Readings” module features readings on ten current themes**, ranging from Fake News on Social Media and The Value of College to Cultural Appropriation and Gender Identity. Each reading includes auto-graded comprehension and discussion questions.

Instructor Resources

Additional instructor resources for this product are available online. Instructor assets include an Instructor’s Manual and Educator’s Guide. Sign up or sign in at www.cengage.com to search for and access this product and its online resources.

Preface for the Student

Your writing process is as individual as you are. You may be a writer who especially likes composing the first draft—by hand or keyboard. Maybe you enjoy the tactile sensation of writing with a gel pen on a yellow legal pad or the friction of moving a felt-tipped pen across pulpy paper. Maybe you draft at your computer, entertaining yourself by connecting particular fonts with particular ideas in your draft.

Or maybe you’re one of those writers who is relieved when she finishes a draft so that she can use her energy to work with and against that draft. You may like to print out your piece, sit back in a comfortable chair, and read it line by line, penciling in new sentences, crossing out entire sections, fiddling with your word choice, and drawing arrows to reorganize your paragraphs. However you write and revise, you’ll want to find a way to enjoy polishing your writing until you’re proud to submit it. As internationally known writer Susan Sontag put it:

You write in order to read what you’ve written and see if it’s OK and, since of course it never is, to rewrite it—once, twice, as many times as it takes to get it to be something you can bear to reread.

**—Susan Sontag, “Directions: Write, Read, Rewrite.
Repeat Steps 2 and 3 as Needed.”**

For writers like Sontag, the enjoyment they get from rereading their revised work is the best part, whether or not they send it on to someone else to read.

What Is a Rhetorical Approach?

Ever since you began thinking of your audience when you asked for something or proposed an idea, you've been taking a rhetorical approach to speaking and writing. And you're bringing your rhetorical knowledge to this course. *The New Harbrace Guide* has been carefully designed so that you can respond strategically, effectively, and yes, rhetorically, to your writing assignments in your first-year composition course, co-req, or AP English course. That said, *The New Harbrace Guide* is designed to help you develop skills you can transfer to other rhetorical situations beyond your class, whether you find yourself writing for another class, for a social or civic setting, or for the workplace.

Part 1: Entering the Conversation

As you get started with *The New Harbrace Guide*, you'll notice that **Part 1, Entering the Conversation**, introduces you to the rhetorical principles that underlie all writing situations and provides you with a basic method for using those principles. The examples in Part 1 reinforce the skills that every first-year student can reach.

- **Chapter 1, Understanding the Rhetorical Situation**, focuses on understanding writing as an opportunity to create change. This is the most powerful part of answering the age-old question: Why write? Through analyzing strategically your rhetorical context you will understand better when and how your writing can create a change of heart, mind, or action. Activities that prompt **Analyzing the Rhetorical Situation** also occur in this chapter and throughout the book to reinforce your understanding of the rhetorical situation.
- **Chapter 2, Analyzing Rhetorical Choices**, focuses on persuasive writing. When you understand how writing can change you and your audience, you will be better able to recognize when purposeful writing delivered in any of its forms is the best, most persuasive response to a rhetorical situation. Examples of persuasive writing in a variety of media help make concrete the principles of persuasion (commonly referred to as *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*). These principles are part of the guidance in each of the assignments in this book.
- **Chapter 3, Academic Literacies: Reading Rhetorically**, provides a foundation for reading both critically and rhetorically and for using the skills of synthesis and analysis that are required in college writing and beyond. This new chapter shows how analyzing what you read rhetorically is helpful both in understanding what you read and in creating those broader thinking skills that are embedded in persuasive writing practices. Rhetorical reading also assists you in conducting research in college and in life on those occasions when you bring sources together that must be weighed, reflected on, explained, and often challenged.

- **Chapter 4, Rhetorical Success in a Digital World**, helps you identify and analyze the rhetorical elements of multimedia compositions and recognize when multimedia is part of a fitting response. Today, choosing a medium that effectively reaches the audience you hope to change is part and parcel of being a successful citizen of the world, and this emphasis is reflected in all the assignments included in this book.

Part 2: Writing Projects

Examples, examples, examples. We all learn best when the desire to create a change is married to an example of how to do it. A genre is a type of writing with identifiable characteristics that have emerged over time. The assignments in **Part 2, Writing Projects: Rhetorical Situations for Composing**, provide eight writing projects anchored in the fluid concept of a genre (such as memoir, position argument, critical analysis), each chosen because it exercises specific skills that should be helpful as part of your toolkit for responding to a broad range of writing situations. The strategies you use to create a memoir (storytelling or the use of poignant personal examples) might find their way into a position argument and vice versa. To say you are writing one genre or another is to identify the primary purpose and social context for your writing and your audience—especially since no single genre limits the rhetorical strategies you can employ in response to a rhetorical opportunity for change.

These chapters break down the writing process into incremental steps that are straightforward and manageable. Each chapter includes

- **Identifying an Opportunity for Change** at the beginning of the chapter with advice on a consideration of the visual, audio, digital, and print options for each genre.
- **Color Coded and Annotated Examples.** Each chapter begins with a short example of the genre (such as a food memoir, a public service announcement, or a film review) in the **Genre in Focus** section and then a full-length annotated example—often by a student—in the sections on **Reading Rhetorically**. These annotations help you identify the **Key Characteristics** of that genre and provide guidance on **Using Synthesis and Analysis**. The readings are also color-coded to further support well-developed essays, with strategies for introductions in purple, bodies in green, and conclusions in blue. Additional examples can be found in MindTap, the Thematic Reader, and the **Writing in Three Media** examples in each chapter.
- **Step-by-Step Writing Support** for each of these eight chapters provides tips for research in that genre, helps you develop a topic, and guides you in identifying your rhetorical audience and purpose so that you can make effective rhetorical choices given the advantages and limitations each genre

allows. These chapters also include guidance for revision, your own as well as your peers'. You may find yourself required to evaluate the writing of a fellow student ("peer"), or you might want your peers to advise you on your own work. To that end, you will find a section titled **Revision and Peer Review**.

- **Writing Guides.** A **Writing Guide**—color-coded to correspond with the sample essay in each chapter—breaks down into manageable tasks specific guidance on writing persuasively and walks you through writing a strong introduction, a well-supported body, and a meaningful conclusion.
- **Knowledge-Transfer Assignments** will also help you recognize the specific ways your academic assignments prepare you for composing in other contexts (work and community) as well as in different print, visual, audio, and digital media.

Part 3: Processes and Strategies for Composing

Whatever your writing process, **Part 3, Processes and Strategies for Composing**, provides a number of tips that could save you time and strengthen your writing practice.

Chapter 13, From Tentative Idea to Finished Project, includes examples for getting started if you've hit a writing block as well as for writing a thesis statement, creating a structure for your writing, drafting, revising, and editing.

As you adapt your own habits to writing for college, you will also find abundant advice on the development of paragraphs in **Chapter 14, The Power of Paragraphs**, and **Chapter 15, Rhetorical Strategies for Development**, where you'll find examples of additional strategies for developing skills in narrative, description, definition, exemplification, comparison-contrast, classification and division, process analysis, cause-and-effect analysis, and argument. These methods are cross-referenced in the margins of the text when one of these rhetorical strategies is particularly useful for a particular assignment in Part 2.

Your style in writing largely comes down to the way your words and sentences are put together. Just as paragraphs are the building blocks of essays, your sentences define your writing style. **Chapter 16, Style: An Essential Guide to Effective Sentences** helps you make sure your sentences are complete, varied, and precise. The guidance in this chapter will also help you achieve clarity with your writing. Clear writing is interesting, varied, and understandable—not *dull*. This chapter will help you flavor your writing so that your reader enjoys learning what you have to say.

Chapter 17, Strategies for Editing Common Problems, is a brief guide to help you avoid fifteen of the most common writing problems. While the word *grammar* may make you think of the word *rules*, grammar rules provide you with beneficial advice on how to achieve success as a writer. It might be more useful

to think of grammar rules as statements about how language is commonly used, ways you already use language, even if you haven't yet developed the vocabulary for what, exactly, you're doing. At the editing stage, your focus will be on sentence-level problems, language issues, and punctuation. But as you check for missing words and appropriate apostrophes, you might find yourself rewriting a sentence, so do not be surprised if editing reveals the need to add more information or to rethink some of your ideas entirely.

Taken together, the chapters in Part 3 provide additional support to be used as needed as you develop your writing process.

Part 4: A Guide to Research

This research guide opens with thinking rhetorically about research, which presents research as an effective way of responding to certain rhetorical opportunities, rather than as a set of rules and requirements. Not only is there guidance on finding and evaluating sources for their credibility and usefulness for college research, there is also a full chapter on synthesizing sources to help you avoid plagiarism by citing your sources correctly. *The New Harbrace Guide* also includes two separate chapters—with sample papers—on formatting papers in the most up-to-date styles in MLA (Modern Language Association) and APA (American Psychological Association), two of the most common styles used for citing sources. Research can be daunting, so *The New Harbrace Guide* also includes **Tricks of the Trade** tips from fellow students throughout these chapters.

Part 5: A Thematic Reader

The reader in *The New Harbrace Guide* includes high-interest readings and themes chosen to inspire you with exemplary models of good writing and to jumpstart your own writing process. Each chapter includes five readings on a contemporary topic (from Chapter 24, Food and the (Cultural) Experience of Taste to Chapter 28, How Young People Are Changing the Climate Conversation), and most of the readings are new to this edition. You'll find articles on veganism and apolitical food, social media and the end of gender, safety issues in schools from Parkland journalists, pandemic shaming, border culture for a cheer team in El Paso, and young evangelicals and young farmers on the march against climate change.

A Value Proposition

Of course, textbooks are expensive. What is the “value proposition” that makes *The New Harbrace Guide* worth it? In addition to the specific writing advice, *The New Harbrace Guide* includes a **Guide to Research**, a **Thematic Reader**, a brief handbook in **Strategies for Editing Common Problems**, and unparalleled

digital support in **MindTap**. The added value of MindTap includes the text itself online—with enhanced media support for your learning and writing—as well as additional online readings and an online handbook. For research, you’ll find the Gale College Collection in MindTap—a premier tool for researching sources and formatting your research papers.

What Does This Mean for You?

So far, I’ve been telling you about all the ways that this *Guide* will support your academic writing, the kind of writing that too often intimidates new college students. But you shouldn’t feel intimidated; after all, you’ve been writing almost all your life. When you were a small child, you grabbed crayons, felt-tip markers, or chalk and wrote on whatever surfaces you could find: paper, coloring books, sidewalks, chalk boards, table tops, walls, lampshades. As you think back on your earliest memories of composing, keep in mind the process of composing that you practiced then. You gathered up your materials and set to work. The entire process—from start to finish—was simple, often fun. Like the human animal you are, you were marking your territory—leaving messages for the people who entered your world. Award-winning author Joyce Carol Oates cannot recall a time when she wasn’t writing:

Before I could write what might be called human words in the English language, I eagerly emulated grown-ups’ handwriting in pencil scribbles. My first “novels” . . . were tablets of inspired scribbles illustrated by line drawings of chickens, horses and upright cats.

**—Joyce Carol Oates, “To Invigorate Literary Mind,
Start Moving Literary Feet”**

Like the writing you did as a child, let college composing be satisfying, even when it isn’t *always* fun, let alone easy. The process might, at times, seem demanding, but the results are often exhilarating, something you’re proud of. If that weren’t the case, you wouldn’t worry about writing well or care what your teacher thought of your writing. Perhaps the best way to make composing a pleasurable activity is to build on what you already do well and enjoy as you write. Use this book as your guide as you fulfill your assignments for this class—it is designed to do that—but also use the book to discover the skills you already have and use them as you prepare to write outside of class.

For writers like you, the enjoyment you get from writing may be learning to develop your thinking into clear words and images, submitting your essays to instructors who respond with proof that they’ve actually read your words, or transforming your ideas into a multimedia message for your friends. Writing

doesn't require any one specific satisfaction but often calls up many overlapping ones. Here's hoping that your college writing launches your thinking, creativity, and intellectual curiosity as you write your way through college and on into the workplace and community.

Acknowledgments

All books demand time, talent, and plenty of hard work. I could not have produced this textbook without the help and support of a number of colleagues, friends, and students. I found myself calling on their expertise at various times throughout the creation of this book. Emily Nicole Smith and Ray Rosas provided me examples of successful student essays, for which I'm grateful, including the essay by Alex Sibó. In addition, both Emily and Ray gave generously of their time and wisdom as teachers, scholars, and writers. Emily did the heavy lifting so far as finding hard-to-find examples of perfect APA and MLA documentation. She also helped me conduct research into multimedia sources and locate new readings as well as contributors for various parts of the book. Mohammed Samy allowed us to reprint an infographic on how a genre comes to be (which he had originally composed for Professor Pavel Zemliansky's composition course at the University of Central Florida). I remain grateful to them all, as well as to those whose work as students comes to us from previous editions: Caledonia Adams, Grace Randolph, and the Viz-a-GoGo web creators from Texas A&M University, whose work appears in Part 1; Anna Seitz, Alicia Williams, and Alexis Walker, who contributed papers to Part 2; Anastasia Simkanin, who allowed us to see her process as well as her paper in Part 3; and for Part 4, Cristian Nuñez and Keith Evans, for tips in "Tricks of the Trade," Jacob Thomas, for his summary of "DoubleSpeak," Greg Coles, whose paper appears in the MLA chapter, and Catherine L. Davis, whose paper appears in the APA chapter. I am especially grateful to Malcolm Aime-Musoni, who wrote his essay while still a student himself. Likely there are others I've missed, but suffice it to say this book would not have been possible without the contribution of students to the book and to my teaching and learning.

At Cengage, Senior Content Manager Rachel Kerns oversaw the progress of the project, relying (as we all have) on the good sense and keen insights of Product Team Manager Catherine Van Der Laan, Product Manager Matt Filamonov, and Learning Designer Leslie Taggart. Executive Marketing Manager Kina Lara has already demonstrated her marketing prowess. For their painstaking production work, I thank the team at SPi Global, especially project manager Praveen Kumar RS. But my biggest thanks goes to my editor extraordinaire, Lisa Colleen Moore, whose intellect and publishing sense have far exceeded my

greatest expectations. What a pleasure it's been to spend a second tour with such a terrific intellectual companion in developing this new edition.

And for this fourth edition, I'm grateful for the thoughtfulness of the comments by those who reviewed this book. Their good suggestions helped make this book better.

Gregory J. Underwood, *Pearl River Community College*

Karen Campbell, *Grayson College*

Jody Jones, *Alabama A & M University*

Abigail Crew, *Colorado Mountain College*

Cheryl Glenn

October 2020

Praise for *The New Harbrace Guide: Genres for Composing*

It's the best treatment of rhetoric I've seen in any text in 8 years of teaching.

—Justin Jory, Salt Lake Community College

The “knowledge transfer” sections highlight re-purposing possibilities for projects to be delivered to different audiences with multimodal opportunities. This is an attractive feature.

—Jerry Peterson, Utah Valley University

Quite honestly, the best outline/guide structure I have seen yet in a text.

—Jamie Sadler, Richmond College

I like the student-friendly language and step-by-step guidance.

—Tyler Farrell, Marquette University

User friendly. Current. I like the structure!

—Anna Maheshwari, Schoolcraft College

I really liked the focus on rhetorical situations as opportunities for change. I think that is a great emphasis for helping students understand the importance of writing well for different audiences and purposes.

—Craig Bartholomaeus, Metropolitan Community College

The book takes a rhetorical stance to writing, offering students clear advice for how several different genres can be rhetorically persuasive.

—Jeremiah Dyehouse, University of Rhode Island

This book makes critical thinking relevant to students.

—Krysten Anderson, Roane State Community College

GUIDE TO IDENTIFYING THE ELEMENTS OF ANY RHETORICAL SITUATION

As you enter any rhetorical conversation—from friendly texting to college papers to hallway exchanges and business presentations—consider the elements of the rhetorical situation to help you shape a persuasive message.



AJ_Watt/Getty Images

- **Opportunity** Identify the issue, problem, or situation where writing provides an opportunity for change. Identifying an opportunity where writing (or speaking) can make a difference encourages you to enter the rhetorical situation. Ask yourself: What is it that tugs at me? Why do I feel the need to speak, write, take a photo, share an image? What attitude, action, or opinion do I want to change?
- **Purpose** Connect the opportunity for change with your purpose (and then your audience). Ask yourself: What can I accomplish with rhetoric? How do words or visuals allow me to respond to this opportunity?
- **Audience** Knowing that your purpose is to stimulate change in a specific audience, carefully consider the character of that audience: Who are its members? What opinions and values do they hold? And, most important, how might they help you address or resolve the problem?
- **Stance** The success of your message often depends on the attitude you project toward your topic and your intended audience. A respectful tone toward your topic and audience is often the most effective.
- **Genre** Each genre is distinguished by well-established yet flexible features and formatting, so determine what form will best convey your message—an academic essay, an evaluation, a memoir, report, proposal, profile, résumé, letter, or review. The genre you choose should not only fulfill your purpose but also be familiar to your audience.
- **Medium** Your choice of materials and medium—spoken or written (perhaps with additional visual elements)—depends on the elements of the specific rhetorical situation, especially the ability of your audience to access that medium.



Understanding the Rhetorical Situation

The prime characteristic of the rhetorical situation is identifying an opportunity for change.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify the key components of the rhetorical situation.
- Explain the function of those key elements.
- Assess the suitability of genre and media given your audience and purpose.
- Analyze various rhetorical situations.

»» RHETORIC SURROUNDS US

Too often, the word *rhetoric* implies empty words, manipulation, deception, or persuasion at any cost. But rhetoric and rhetorical situations are frequently neutral, often positive. They are everywhere—as pervasive as the air we breathe—and play an essential role in our daily lives as we work to get things done efficiently and ethically.

Rhetoric is the purposeful use of language and images. That definition covers a great deal of territory—practically every word and visual element you encounter every day. But it's the word *purposeful* that will guide you through the maze of words and images that saturate your life. When you use words or images to achieve a specific purpose—such as explaining to your instructor why you must miss class—you are speaking, writing, or conveying images rhetorically.

rhetoric
communication to
achieve a specific
purpose with a
specific audience

ACTIVITY: Analyzing the Rhetorical Situation

Your Writing Experience

Take a few minutes to list the kinds of writing you do every day. Include all instances when you write down information (whether on paper, whiteboard, chalkboard, smartphone, tablet, or computer screen). Beside each entry, jot down reasons for, and the potential audience for, that type of writing. Be prepared to share your answers with the rest of the class.

»» IDENTIFYING A REASON TO WRITE

We speak, write, listen, and watch all day long. Most often we don't enter the rhetorical situation, but when we do it's because we have a reason. After all, when you have an issue, problem, or situation that you want to change, language can help you do it. Maybe you and your friend have argued. You might want to phone to say, "I'm sorry," motivated by a desire to change the situation between you and your friend. Or you might need to ask a question in class, prompting a change in the classroom (usually a change in your own understanding but often also everyone's understanding in the class). It is similar with written language, when used to change understanding, opinions, or behavior. In the business world, for example, your company may want to grow its online business. To do so, it will need to update its website and online marketing plan—through language. In your personal life, you may want to write a letter of condolence, motivated by a desire to comfort someone who is grieving a loss. In college, you will likely be asked to write an essay, report, analysis, or proposal. Situations such as updating a website, writing a letter, or researching a paper for college are opportunities to use language to make a difference. In this book, we call this an opportunity for change.

Unless you have an authentic reason to do so, you probably will not respond to the **rhetorical opportunity**, that is an opportunity to enter the rhetorical conversation and use language to make a difference. In other words, *something* needs to stimulate or provoke your interest and call for your response. When you take an essay examination for an American history midterm, you might be given the choice of answering one of two questions:

1. The great increase in size and power of the federal government since the Civil War has long been a dominant theme of American history. Trace the growth of the federal government since 1865, paying particular attention to its evolving involvement in world affairs and the domestic economy. Be sure to support your analysis with relevant historical details.

rhetorical opportunity the issue, problem, or situation that motivates the use of language to stimulate change

2. Compare and contrast the attempts to create and safeguard African American civil rights in two historical periods: the first Era of Reconstruction (post–Civil War years to the early twentieth century) and the second Era of Reconstruction (1950s to 1970s). Consider government policies, African American strategies, and the responses of white people to those strategies.

If you are lucky, one of these questions will spark your response and engage your intellectual energy. Think of every college writing situation as a rhetorical opportunity for you to use language in order to resolve or address an issue, problem, or situation.

ACTIVITY: Analyzing the Rhetorical Situation

What Is an Opportunity for Change?

Decide whether the issues, problems, or situations listed below are opportunities where writing can help change an attitude, opinion, or action. Be prepared to share the reasoning behind your responses with the rest of the class.

- The Internal Revenue Service is charging you \$2,000 in back taxes, asserting that you neglected to declare the income from your summer job.
- Your college library has just sent you an e-mail informing you that you are being fined for several overdue books, all of which you returned a month ago.
- After Thanksgiving dinner is served, your brothers and mother resume their ongoing argument about Black Lives Matter, healthcare, the pandemic, and the economy.
- In the student section at the football stadium, some fans throw empty soda cans, toss beach balls, boo the opposing team, and stand during most of the game. You're quickly losing interest in attending the games.

»» DECIDING TO WRITE

The most important feature of any rhetorical opportunity is the **writer** or the author or speaker, who believes that language, spoken, written, or visual, can bring about change. If you witness a car accident, for example, you are an observer; you may decide to volunteer to testify about it and thus engage in the opportunity as a speaker. If you identify an old friend from a newspaper photograph, you may decide to e-mail him. You might hear a song and decide to perform it and post a video of your performance on YouTube. Or you might decide to begin introducing yourself to people participating in an online video game. Whatever the opportunities are and however they are delivered (whether spoken, printed, online, or in some other way), you can decide how or whether you want to act on them.

writer someone who uses language to bring about change in an audience

Every day, you encounter dozens of rhetorical opportunities to make a change by engaging with language. If your good friend applies for and gets the job of her dreams, you have an opportunity to engage with a response. How will she know that you are happy for her unless you send her a congratulatory card, give her a phone call, invite her to a celebratory lunch—or all three? The death of your neighbor creates an opportunity to respond with a letter to the family or a bouquet of flowers and an accompanying condolence note. A friend’s illness, an argument with a roommate, a tuition hike, an essay exam, a sales presentation, a job interview—these are all opportunities for change through spoken or written words or with visuals.

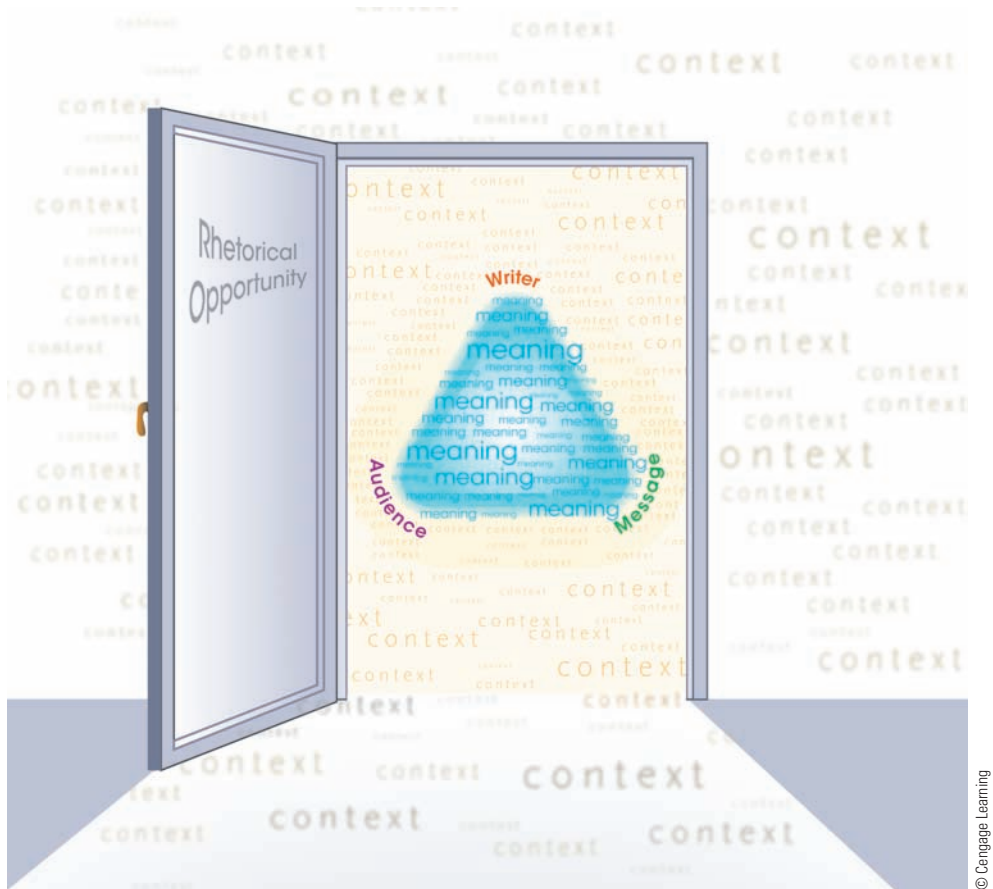


Figure 1.1 When a writer enters a rhetorical situation, she composes a purposeful message for a specific audience and chooses whether to deliver the message verbally, orally, with images, in print, or digitally.

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As the writer or speaker, you engage the opportunity with a **message** that includes content you have shaped in a way that stimulates change (Figure 1.1). What information must you include to teach, please, and change your **audience**, those readers, viewers, or listeners you are trying to influence with your message? Consider the message in the release of posters for the first movie of the final Skywalker trilogy, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (Figure 1.2).

The Force Awakens // NOVEMBER 4, 2015



Photo 12 / Alamy Stock Photo

message the main point of information shaped to influence an audience

audience those who receive and interpret the message of a communication

Figure 1.2 Star Wars: The Force Awakens – Character Posters Revealed.

See stunning new images of Rey, Leia, Kylo Ren, Han Solo, and Finn!

Star Wars: The Force Awakens is almost here—and now you can get an up-close look at the film’s classic and new characters.

The official character posters for Rey, Leia, Kylo Ren, Han Solo, and Finn were revealed today, featuring powerful portraits and a striking design motif. Rey holds her staff defiantly; Leia confidently peers through a data screen; Kylo Ren’s lightsaber crackles; a grim Han Solo holds his blaster at the ready; and Finn looks stoic with a blue-bladed Jedi weapon.

Carrie Fisher, Daisy Ridley, and John Boyega each revealed their own posters via Twitter and Instagram.

StarWars.com. All Star Wars, all the time.

With museum exhibitions, television commercials, trailers, and spoilers, the creators of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* leveraged the features of various rhetorical situations for the purpose of stimulating worldwide ticket sales for the new trilogy of films in the franchise. Online, the *Star Wars* website featured the latest news (global and national) about the films, as well as updates on the characters and actors. The online community features photographs of its members when they meet face to face, as well as background on the various characters in the saga.

With the new trilogy, the franchise creators wanted not to just tell a riveting story, but to expand its audience domestically and internationally. The films brought back fan favorites but also introduced a female protagonist and a more diverse cast of characters. Online, televised, and print news sources, however, highlighted controversies surrounding the much-anticipated film: CNN asked, “Does the ethnically diverse cast mean the film is ‘anti-white?’” The controversy continued with the release of the second film in the trilogy, *The Last Jedi*, as commentators affiliated with ultraconservative political points of view criticized the installment for featuring not only diverse characters but a storyline that many saw as feminist. Actress Kelly Marie Tran, who played the character of Rose Tico (Figure 1.3), the first major female character to also be a minority, would end up withdrawing from social media after an onslaught



Photo 12/Alamy Stock Photo

Figure 1.3 Rose Tico, played by Kelly Marie Tran, in *The Last Jedi*.

of online harassment. Her reduced visibility in the third film, *The Rise of Skywalker*, although explained by the filmmakers, was viewed by many as yielding to the pressure of hostile online trolls. Such tensions illustrate the complexities of managing global entertainment brands in the face of a volatile cultural landscape.

»» ANALYZING THE ELEMENTS OF THE RHETORICAL SITUATION

When you decide to engage a rhetorical opportunity, understanding the elements of the **rhetorical situation** helps you shape the content of your message to enhance your chances of changing your audience’s attitude, action, or opinion. Creating change through language is not about overpowering your audience or winning an argument. Rather, creating change involves understanding the rhetorical situation you are entering. Before speaking or writing, taking the time to analyze the elements of your rhetorical situation is a first step in discovering what you might say or write.

rhetorical situation the context that influences effective communication

Opportunity What is happening? What has motivated you to engage in a rhetorical opportunity for change?

Purpose How might your message change your audience in some way? What do you want your language to accomplish? What action do you want to occur because of what you compose?

Audience To whom are you writing (or speaking)? What is your relationship to the person or group of people? After all, you will direct your writing, speaking, or visual display to a specific audience in an attempt to change some opinion, attitude, or action.

Stance How do you view your message and its recipients? Your attitude toward your audience and topic is revealed through your word choice and tone and can be positive, negative, neutral, reasonable, unreasonable, or something else.

Genre Which format should your message follow? The well-established yet flexible features and formatting of each genre—profile, memoir, analysis, biography, proposal, evaluation, and so on—help you frame your message, connect with your audience, and achieve your purpose.

Medium How will the medium of delivery (online, visual, print, oral) enhance or detract from your message? Are you sure that your audience can receive (access) your message through this medium?