

Third Edition

Includes the
2016
MLA updates

THE *new*
HARBURACE
GUIDE

Genres for Composing

CHERYL GLENN

Third Edition

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GUIDE

Genres for Composing

CHERYL GLENN

The Pennsylvania State University



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

***The New Harbrace Guide: Genres for
Composing, Third Edition***
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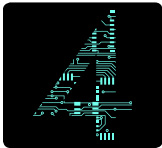
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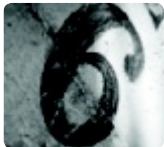
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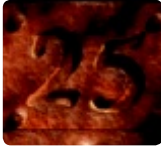
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Preface

Composing in a Digital Age

“Digital Natives.” That’s the term frequently used to refer to your generation of college students, you who have always read and written—communicated—using digital media. Accompanying the technological developments that have led to ubiquitous cell phones, satellite television, and the Internet are developments in the ways in which people actually create and circulate information. With the growing accessibility of the Internet, increasing numbers of people communicate their ideas and information about their lives through blogs, Facebook, Twitter, podcasts, Reddit, and YouTube. Somehow, the flurry of their online activities enhances their influence compared to that of people with little or no access to technologies such as computers, Internet connections, and digital and audio production equipment.

Given the demands and expectations of your digital generation, *The New Harbrace Guide: Genres for Composing*, Third Edition, helps by guiding your composing in today’s college, workplace, and community environments. *The New Harbrace Guide* will introduce you to or expand your knowledge of online courses, web content, podcasts, video links, course-management systems, PowerPoint presentations, and other kinds of electronic aids. Composing with all these various media (multimedia composing) is here to stay. For example, *The New Harbrace Guide* will help you understand the principles behind collaborating effectively with community-service agencies or businesses in order to fulfill their expectations for research and writing; it will also help you conduct scholarly collaborative projects via social-networking sites and compose in any one of a variety of other, largely digital or multimodal situations. Understanding these principles and practices will help you productively employ *rhetoric*—the strategy of communicating persuasively—as you address and resolve problems, whether those problems are social, academic, or work-related.

Key Features

The New Harbrace Guide distinguishes itself from other writing guides on the market by its sustained focus on a rhetorical situation, one that establishes an opportunity for using language to make change. Guidance on specific rhetorical

techniques is provided to help you shape your ideas into language that is best suited for your audience and purpose, as well as most appropriate for the media that are now routine for composing different kinds of writing. Thus this guide to composing is theoretically sophisticated yet easily practical: you will come to see the ways that using language purposefully (whether you're writing or speaking) is an integral part of your daily life, in and out of school. In addition, this comprehensive and richly flexible writing guide includes a rhetoric, a research manual, and a reader. Its key features include

- **A Rhetorical Approach.** By emphasizing rhetorical techniques that will help you 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 your other writing tasks, whether in school, the workplace, or the community. Part 1 introduces you to the rhetorical principles that underlie all writing situations and provides you with 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. By 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 you create forceful, persuasive compositions.
- **Integrated Multimodal/Multimedia Coverage.** Your writing today needs to take into consideration the most effective medium (print, digital, verbal, visual, multimodal) for delivering your 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 rhetorical knowledge of media you bring to the classroom—from text messages to Facebook profiles to Internet searches and more—with multimodal examples and guidance for each genre to help you choose when and how to use digital, verbal, visual, and print media for various audiences, purposes, and situations. **Identifying an Opportunity for Change, Writing in Three Media,** and **Additional Assignments: Knowledge Transfer** present a number of multimodal possibilities for each genre.

In short, then, *The New Harbrace Guide* guides you through various composition processes and genres that will enhance your education as well as your success in the workplace and your 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 you to locate quickly the information you 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 for your writing projects, and blue for advice on conclusions. You'll find this 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. To locate this information more easily, a new 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.

What Will You Find Online?

MindTap® English helps you stay engaged with real-world writing assignments and motivated by information that shows where you stand at all times—both individually and compared to the highest performers in class. MindTap® English eliminates the guesswork, focusing on what's most important to your instructor with a learning path designed specifically by your instructor and for your English course. Improve your college writing and research skills with built-in tools, such as a professional tutoring service, a database of scholarly sources and interactive videos to support your research papers, a dictionary, and tools to keep you organized and on track.

- **Additional Online Readings** are available if you would like to explore topics further, see additional examples, or use vetted and trustworthy sources for your research.
- **Grammar and Usage Resources** appear in an online handbook and a glossary of usage.

What Is a Rhetorical Approach?

The book has been carefully designed with many practical, specific tips as well as step-by-step guidance so that you can respond strategically and effectively to your writing assignments in your first-year composition course. That said, *The New Harbrace Guide* has also been designed to help you develop skills you can transfer to other rhetorical situations, whether you find yourself writing for another class, for a social or civic setting, or for the workplace.

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. You'll also notice that many of the examples in Part 1 are by students, to reinforce that none of these skills is beyond your reach as a first-year student.

- **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. **Analyzing the Rhetorical Situation** prompts also occur throughout the book to guide you.
- **Chapter 2, Responding to the Rhetorical Situation**, 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, The Writer as Reader**—new to this edition—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 providing an opportunity for writing and for 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. Tips for **Researching** for each genre (Researching a Memoir, Evaluation, Profile, Position Argument, and so forth) and for **Using Synthesis and Analysis** are also included in each of the assignments in this book.

- **Chapter 4, Rhetorical Success in a Digital World**, gets us back to where we started at the beginning of this Preface, the idea that as “digital natives” you are part of a brave, new world of writing. Chapter 4 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.

Why Focus on Genres and Media?

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, etc.), 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 have been restructured and streamlined, breaking 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.
- **Plentiful Examples** beginning with a “micro” example of a subtype of the genre (such as a food memoir, a public service announcement, or a film review) in the new **Genre in Focus** section and an annotated example—often by a student—in the new sections on **Reading Rhetorically**. These examples help you identify the **Key Characteristics** of that genre and provide guidance on **Using Synthesis and Analysis**. 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. The Writing Guide 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.

- **Revision and Editing Support** takes you from your first draft to what will become your final paper or media project. Each **Writing Guide** includes 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**. You will also find a **Grammar in Context** feature to help you and your peers revise and edit your drafts. A full handbook and glossary of usage are available through MindTap.
- **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.

Finding Your Writing Process

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.

Whatever your 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. In **Chapter 14, Rhetorical Methods of Development**, 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. You'll also find these methods cross-referenced in the margins of the text when one of these rhetorical strategies is particularly useful for a particular assignment in Part 2. Taken together, these two chapters provide additional support for successful composing to be used as needed as you develop your writing process.

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**, 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 EasyBib and Questia in MindTap—premier tools for researching sources and formatting your research papers.

Part 4, A Guide to Research, presents research as an effective way of responding to certain rhetorical opportunities, rather than as a set of rules and requirements. Guidance is provided on developing a research question, and because different research questions require different research methods, *The New Harbrace Guide* includes coverage of library, online, and field research. In addition, you'll find help reading sources critically as well as summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting sources. *The New Harbrace Guide* also includes two separate chapters—with sample papers—on formatting papers in styles for MLA (Modern Language Association) according to the eighth edition of the *MLA Handbook* (2016) and APA (American Psychological Association). Research can be daunting, so *The New Harbrace Guide* continues to focus on the ways students experience the research process by including **Tricks of the Trade** tips from fellow students throughout these chapters.

Part 5, A Thematic Reader, includes readings and themes, contemporary and thought-provoking clusters, that will appeal to your interest in analyzing

yourself and the world around you. We have returned to popular themes such as **Food and the (Cultural) Experience of Taste (Chapter 21)**, **The Millennial Generation (Chapter 22)**, and **Taking Up (Public) Space (Chapter 23)**, while introducing new ones that reviewers have embraced, addressing issues such as race in **Whose Lives Matter? (Chapter 24)** and science in **STEM vs. STEAM (Chapter 25)**. The readings can be used as additional examples for each genre or as topics for your research. Assignments are included so that you can use these readings as the basis for writing in a particular genre or to connect writing to making a change in your community. More readings on each topic are available online on MindTap.

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.

For Instructors: A Note about Online Course Materials

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

- Interactive activities on grammar and mechanics promote application to student writing.
- An easy-to-use paper management system helps prevent plagiarism and allows for electronic submission, grading, and peer review.
- A vast database of scholarly sources with video tutorials and examples supports every step of the research process.
- Professional tutoring guides students from rough drafts to polished writing.
- Visual analytics track student progress and engagement.
- Seamless integration into your campus learning management system keeps all your course materials in one place.

MindTap lets you compose your course, your way.

The Instructor's Manual for Glenn's *The New Harbrace Guide: Genres for Composing, Third Edition*, includes detailed sample syllabi and chapter-by-chapter suggestions for using the guide in your classroom. The detailed syllabi comprise three annotated course plans that can be followed or consulted when teaching with this text in programs that focus on academic writing, writing in the disciplines, or service learning. Activities, exercises, and journal-writing prompts are provided for each class meeting, along with suggested goals and materials for instructors to review.

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At Cengage, Senior Content Developer Leslie Taggart oversaw the progress of the project, relying (as we all have) on the good sense and keen insights of Product Director Monica Eckman, Content Project Manager Rebecca Donahue, and English Product Manager Laura Ross. New to our team in this edition, Kina Lara has already demonstrated her marketing prowess. Editorial assistant Claire Branman helped launch the substantive improvements to this edition. For their painstaking production of this book, I thank Rosemary Winfield, who, upon retiring, handed it off to Corinna Dibble and Rebecca Donahue, Cengage production editors; Angela Williams Urquhart and Kathy Smith, Editorial Director and copy editor at Thistle Hill Publishing Services; Ann Hoffman, tireless intellectual property analyst; Erika Mugavin, tireless

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And for this third edition, I'm grateful for the thoughtfulness of the comments by so many who reviewed this book. Their good suggestions helped make this book better, especially when hard decisions needed to be made about how to shorten the book while retaining and enhancing the most useful content.

Emory Abbott, *Georgia Perimeter College*
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Janet Zepernick, *Pittsburg State University*

Cheryl Glenn
June 2016

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

I really like the reorganization and condensing in this new version.

—Beth Sherman, San Diego State 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

THE *new*
HARBRACE
GUIDE

GUIDE TO IDENTIFYING THE ELEMENTS OF ANY RHETORICAL SITUATION

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



Maartje van Caspel/Getty Images

- **Opportunity** Identify the opportunity for change that 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 or 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.

MindTap[®] Understand the goals of the chapter and complete a warm-up activity online.

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**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, smart-phone, tablet, or computer screen). Beside each entry, jot down the reason and audience for that type of writing. Be prepared to share your answers with the rest of the class.



IDENTIFYING AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CHANGE

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

Every time an issue, problem, or situation motivates you to write or speak, you have identified a **rhetorical opportunity**, an occasion to make change through language, whether visual, written, or spoken. For instance, by asking a question, your instructor creates an opportunity for change in the classroom (usually a change in everyone’s understanding). Similarly, if your company wants to grow its online business, it will need to update its website and online marketing plan—through language. And if you and your friend have argued, you might not want to put your feelings into writing; you might want to phone to say, “I’m sorry.” These rhetorical opportunities all call for the kinds of change that language can make possible.

Unless you perceive something as an opportunity, you cannot respond to it. 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.
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 a problem.

ACTIVITY

What Is an Opportunity for Change?

Decide whether each problem listed below is also a rhetorical opportunity for change. 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're 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 U.S. politics: health care, the wars, 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 ENGAGE

The most important feature of any rhetorical opportunity is the **writer** or speaker, who believes that language (spoken, written, 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

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

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.

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.

ACTIVITY

To Engage or Not to Engage

1. Describe a time when you identified an opportunity to address a problem but either did not respond at all or did not respond well. If you could do it over, how might you respond? How would you take into consideration each element of the rhetorical situation in order to come as close to persuasion as conditions allowed?
2. Describe a rhetorical opportunity to which you felt compelled to respond. Describe the features of the rhetorical situation and how you took them all into consideration in your response. Share your response with the rest of the class.

message the main point of information shaped to influence an audience

audience those who receive and interpret the message of a communication

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 *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (Figure 1.2, p. 8).



© Cengage Learning

Figure 1.1 The writer must design the message so that it reaches the intended audience, whether it is delivered verbally, orally, with images, in print, or digitally.

MindTap[®] Interact with the Rhetorical Triangle online.

The Force Awakens // NOVEMBER 4, 2015



Lucasfilm/Bad Robot/Walt Disney Studios/The Kobal Collection at Art Resource, NY.

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. Take a look at their posts and check out the full posters below!

Stay tuned to StarWars.com for more on *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, coming to theaters December 18, 2015!

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

With museum exhibitions, television commercials, trailers, and spoilers, the creators of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* are leveraging the features of the rhetorical situation for the explicit purpose of stimulating worldwide ticket sales. Online, the *Star Wars* website features the latest news (global and national) about the film, as well as updates on its progress, the characters, and the actors themselves. There is an online community, which features photographs of its members when they meet f2f (face to face), as well as background on the various characters and the history of the saga itself.

But to stay as wildly successful as it already is, the franchise needs to deliver its message in other media as well. Online, televised, and print news sources are featuring controversies surrounding the much-anticipated film: CNN asks, “Does the ethnically diverse cast mean the film is ‘anti-white?’” Print newspapers and magazines carry stories on the film, with accompanying visuals; television features an animated *Star Wars* program and *Star Wars* advertising introducing young boys playing with light sabers. The franchise has also pushed its message into retail, with tie-ins of books, comics, toys, games, posters, apps, costumes, and even *Star Wars* themed events at the Disney parks. The creators are purposefully sending their message to a broad audience, composed of people of all ages, races, cultures, and nationalities, long-time and new fans alike. The message is that everyone and anyone should see *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*—because they will love it.



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 the occasion? 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.