

John Mauk | John Metz

The
Composition
of **Everyday**
A Guide to Writing
BRIEF SIXTH EDITION
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The Composition of Everyday Life

A Guide to Writing | BRIEF | Sixth Edition

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***The Composition of Everyday Life:
A Guide to Writing, Brief
Sixth Edition***

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Chapter 21: Rhetorical Handbook

Index I-1

Using The Composition of Everyday Life as a Thematic Reader

Here we suggest how readings from different chapters might be grouped together thematically. As you explore a subject (education and learning, for example), you might focus on a particular rhetorical aim (such as evaluating or proposing a solution). Or you might explore a subject area without an aim in mind, eventually discovering a specific topic and rhetorical aim.

EDUCATION AND LEARNING

Are students customers? What is the practical value of studying great works of literature? Is school too easy? The following essays explore the complexity of education and learning. Through reading, writing, and discussion, you might explore and come to think differently about education and its role in people's lives. You might discover an important point about education by exploring a memory, a relationship, an observation, a concept, and so on.

- “Living Like Weasels,” *Annie Dillard* (4)
- “The Default Setting: An Analysis of David Foster Wallace,” *Adrienne Carr* (6)
- “Entitlement Education,” *Daniel Bruno* (9)
- “Have It Your Way: Consumerism Invades Education,” *Simon Benlow* (9)
- “The Power of Failure: J.K. Rowling’s 2008 Harvard Commencement Speech,” *Liz Winhover* (9)
- “Is Google Making Us Stupid?” *Nicholas Carr* (11)
- “Infomania,” *Manoush Zomorodi* (12)
- “Your Kids Bored at School? Tell Them to Get Over It,” *Laura Hanby Hudgens* (12)
- “The Grapes of Mrs. Rath,” *Steve Mockensturm* (20)
- “A Beat Education,” *Leonard Kress* (20)
- “Internet Addiction,” *Greg Beato* (20)
- “Not Homeschooling? What’s Your Excuse?” *Tricia Smith Vaughan* (20)

JUSTICE AND EQUALITY

A quick survey of the readings about justice and equality suggests a range of areas: immigration, Native American rights, body type, the mentally and physically challenged, wildlife, and so on. These readings can help you identify and explain a relationship, analyze a concept (such

as “justice” or “equality”), respond to an argument, identify a cause, propose a solution, and so on. What is justice, and how might exploring the concept of justice in today’s world be of value? What revelatory idea about justice and equality might you discover and share with others?

- “How I Lost the Junior Miss Pageant,” *Cindy Bosley* (2)
- “Unemployed, and Working Hard,” *Simon Wykoff* (13)
- “Americans and the Land,” *John Steinbeck* (3)
- “Why We No Longer Use the ‘H’ Word,” *Dan Wilkins* (20)
- “Cruelty, Civility, and Other Weighty Matters,” *Ann Marie Paulin* (8)
- “This Is What a Feminist Looks Like,” *Barack Obama* (20)
- “Important and Flawed,” *Kareem Abdul-Jabbar* (10)
- “Crimes Against Humanity,” *Ward Churchill* (20)
- “*Star Trek*: Where No Man Has Gone Before,” *Jaren Provo* (10)
- “Not Homeschooling? What’s Your Excuse?” *Tricia Smith Vaughan* (20)
- “Why Are Millennials Weak?” *Quinn Greenwell* (11)
- “An Apology to Future Generations,” *Simon Benlow* (20)

ENVIRONMENT AND ANIMALS

These readings, which offer different ways of looking at the environment and animals, encourage you to explore ideas beyond conventional beliefs. What is your relationship to the land? To the air? To the animals? How might you think differently about that relationship? And what might be the consequence of your new way of thinking?

- “Americans and the Land,” *John Steinbeck* (3)
- “Hive Talkin’: The Buzz around Town about Bees,” *Teresa Scollon* (8)
- “Living Like Weasels,” *Annie Dillard* (4)
- “Dog-Tied,” *David Hawes* (20)
- “The Front Porch,” *Chester McCovey* (4)
- “The Farm on the Hill,” *Evan Proudfoot* (20)
- “Why ‘Natural’ Doesn’t Mean Anything Anymore,” *Michael Pollan* (5)
- “Trees Please,” *Michael Rust* (20)
- “The Dog Delusion,” *April Pedersen* (8)
- “An Apology to Future Generations,” *Simon Benlow* (20)

CONSUMERISM AND ECONOMY

Several readings in this book suggest some fundamental questions about consumerism: What and how do you consume? And what, if anything, do you produce by consuming? As with

other subjects in *The Composition of Everyday Life*, you might spend an entire semester exploring this area, or you might explore it for just one assignment. It could be of great value to spend a semester exploring just one question: What does it mean to be a consumer?

- “Selling Manure,” *Bonnie Jo Campbell* (2)
 “Mugged,” *Jim Crockett* (3)
 “To Fish and Be Fished: A Tinder-fied Game of Love,” *Kellie Coppola* (3)
 “The Front Porch,” *Chester McCovey* (4)
 “Why ‘Natural’ Doesn’t Mean Anything Anymore,” *Michael Pollan* (5)
 “The Real, the Bad, and the Ugly,” *Cassie Heidecker* (5)
 “Rise of the Image Culture: Re-Imagining the American Dream,” *Elizabeth Thoman* (7)
 “Have It Your Way: Consumerism Invades Education,” *Simon Benlow* (9)
 “Is Google Making Us Stupid?” *Nicholas Carr* (11)
 “Why We Binge Watch Television,” *Kevin Fallon* (11)
 “Build the Wall,” *Ed Bell* (13)
 “American Consumerism,” *Jamie Bentley* (20)
 “An Apology to Future Generations,” *Simon Benlow* (20)

AMERICA

These readings deal with America and being American. They allow you to explore the relationship between yourself and your country. (International students may find this subject to be especially interesting as they bring a unique perspective to the topic.) To what degree do the two—individual and country—influence each other? You can make observations, evaluate, identify causes, propose solutions, and so on. And, you can explore how America communicates with and influences you.

- “Americans and the Land,” *John Steinbeck* (3)
 “Rise of the Image Culture: Re-Imagining the American Dream,” *Elizabeth Thoman* (7)
 “Talibanned,” *Benjamin Busch* (10)
 “Build the Wall,” *Ed Bell* (13)
 “The Grapes of Mrs. Rath,” *Steve Mockensturm* (20)
 “Cartoons ’n Comics: Communication to the Quick,” *Joy Clough* (20)
 “Protests with the Mostest: The Art of Opposition with Protest Signs,” *Deanna Krokos* (20)
 “Crimes Against Humanity,” *Ward Churchill* (20)
 “Military Fraud: The Myth of Automatic Virtue,” *Steve Gillman* (20)
 “American Consumerism,” *Jamie Bentley* (20)
 “Reverence for Food,” *Rachel Schofield* (20)
 “Not Homeschooling? What’s Your Excuse?” *Tricia Smith Vaughan* (20)
 “An Apology to Future Generations,” *Simon Benlow* (20)

SELF

Readings in this book encourage you to explore your own life in a way you have perhaps not done before. These readings about self go beyond expressive writing. They encourage you to connect with others, even though—or perhaps *especially when*—you are looking inward at yourself. You can explore how these readings, your own writing, and focused discussion with others helps you to see differently—to learn something about yourself and connect it to the world around you.

- | | |
|--|---|
| “Selling Manure,” <i>Bonnie Jo Campbell</i> (2) | “Cruelty, Civility, and Other Weighty Matters,” <i>Ann Marie Paulin</i> (8) |
| “How I Lost the Junior Miss Pageant,” <i>Cindy Bosley</i> (2) | “Celibate Passion,” <i>Kathleen Norris</i> (13) |
| “Thrill of Victory . . . The Agony of Parents,” <i>Jennifer Schwind-Pawlak</i> (2) | “What the Honey Meant,” <i>Cindy Bosley</i> (20) |
| “Mugged,” <i>Jim Crockett</i> (3) | “This Is What a Feminist Looks Like,” <i>Barack Obama</i> (20) |
| “Black Like I Thought I Was,” <i>Erin Aubry Kaplan</i> (5) | “American Consumerism,” <i>Jamie Bentley</i> (20) |

OTHERS (COMMUNITY)

Can we look at ourselves without looking at our community? Both subjects (self and others) explore relationships between an individual and his or her surroundings. What is community? How is community created? These readings will help you to explore what we commonly call *community*, to consider how it works, and to examine your place in it. An entire writing course might be an exploration of one very important question: What is the relationship between community and communication?

- | | |
|---|--|
| “The Front Porch,” <i>Chester McCovey</i> (4) | “Unemployed, and Working Hard,” <i>Simon Wykoff</i> (13) |
| “Cruelty, Civility, and Other Weighty Matters,” <i>Ann Marie Paulin</i> (8) | “The Farm on the Hill,” <i>Evan Proudfoot</i> (20) |
| “Hive Talkin’: The Buzz around Town about Bees,” <i>Teresa Scollon</i> (8) | “Technology, Movement, and Sound,” <i>Ed Bell</i> (20) |
| “Different Jobs,” <i>Dana Stewart</i> (12) | “An Apology to Future Generations,” <i>Simon Benlow</i> (20) |
| “Build the Wall,” <i>Ed Bell</i> (13) | |

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

What is the relationship between language and culture? For example, how does the way that a group of people communicates affect their shared values, beliefs, customs, attitudes, and

practices—and vice versa? (How, for example, does what a group values about education influence the way that group uses, and thinks about, language?) These readings and others will help you step back and explore the relationship between words, ideas, and actions. Through exploration of this subject, you might discover that your college writing class is something more than you had originally imagined it to be.

- “The Real, the Bad, and the Ugly,” *Cassie Heidecker* (5)
- “Why ‘Natural’ Doesn’t Mean Anything Anymore,” *Michael Pollan* (5)
- “The Default Setting: An Analysis of David Foster Wallace,” *Adrienne Carr* (6)
- “Politics and Audience: *The New York Times*’ Appeal to Undecided Voters,” *Alison Block* (6)
- “Rise of the Image Culture: Re-Imagining the American Dream,” *Elizabeth Thoman* (7)
- “An Imperfect Reality,” *Rebecca Hollingsworth* (7)
- “Look on My Works: *Breaking Bad*’s Final Season Trailer,” *Nick Fendinger* (7)
- “The Power of Failure: J.K. Rowling’s 2008 Harvard Commencement Speech” *Liz Winhover* (9)
- “Why Are Millennials Weak?” *Quinn Greenwell* (11)
- “Unemployed, and Working Hard,” *Simon Wykoff* (13)
- “Why We No Longer Use the ‘H’ Word,” *Dan Wilkins* (20)
- “This Is What a Feminist Looks Like,” *Barack Obama* (20)
- “Protests with the Mostest: The Art of Opposition with Protest Signs,” *Deanna Krokos* (20)
- “Cartoons ’n Comics: Communication to the Quick,” *Joy Clough* (20)
- “Crimes against Humanity,” *Ward Churchill* (20)

GENDER AND IDENTITY

What does it mean to be male or female? How does gender affect our identities? What influence can we have on issues of gender and identity? This group of readings can be used in combination with other reading groups—from America or pop culture, for example. Instead of exploring just gender and identity, you might narrow your focus to readings that relate to gender and identity *and* pop culture.

- “Selling Manure,” *Bonnie Jo Campbell* (2)
- “How I Lost the Junior Miss Pageant,” *Cindy Bosley* (2)
- “The Thrill of Victory . . . The Agony of Parents,” *Jennifer Schwind-Pawlak* (2)
- “To Fish and Be Fished: A Tinder-fied Game of Love,” *Kellie Coppola* (3)
- “Cruelty, Civility, and Other Weighty Matters,” *Ann Marie Paulin* (8)
- “Important and Flawed,” *Kareem Abdul-Jabbar* (10)
- “*Star Trek*: Where No Man Has Gone Before,” *Jaren Provo* (10)
- “Celibate Passion,” *Kathleen Norris* (13)

“This Is What a Feminist Looks Like,”
Barack Obama (20)

“Are Female Long-Distance Runners More
Prone to Suicidal Depression?” *Emily de la
Bruyere* (20)

PARENTS AND FAMILY

What role do our parents play in our lives? Such a question might be explored endlessly with interesting results for both writer and readers. You might spend an entire semester exploring issues about parents and family. Such a simple subject area can prove to be far more complicated—and interesting—than you first imagined. What might be the value of thinking analytically and finding public resonance regarding the subject of parents and family?

“Selling Manure,” *Bonnie Jo Campbell* (2)

“How I Lost the Junior Miss Pageant,” *Cindy
Bosley* (2)

“The Thrill of Victory . . . The Agony of
Parents,” *Jennifer Schwind-Pawlak* (2)

“The Front Porch,” *Chester McCovey* (4)

“Black Like I Thought I Was,” *Erin Aubry
Kaplan* (5)

“The Dog Delusion,” *April Pedersen* (8)

“Cruelty, Civility, and Other Weighty
Matters,” *Ann Marie Paulin* (8)

“Unemployed, and Working Hard,” *Simon
Wykoff* (13)

“What the Honey Meant,” *Cindy Bosley* (20)

“American Consumerism,” *Jamie Bentley* (20)

“An Apology to Future Generations,” *Simon
Benlow* (20)

POPULAR CULTURE

What is the relationship between an individual and his or her popular culture? In what ways are we products of our own pop culture? From beauty pageants to theme parks, these readings allow you to consider the world that surrounds you from a fresh perspective. You can explore the *why* of your own behavior, considering how you and others are influenced by pressures of which you are both very aware and barely aware.

“How I Lost the Junior Miss Pageant,” *Cindy
Bosley* (2)

“Tinder, You, Me,” *Kellie Coppola* (3)

“The Front Porch,” *Chester McCovey* (4)

“Why ‘Natural’ Doesn’t Mean Anything Any-
more,” *Michael Pollan* (5)

“The Default Setting: An Analysis of David
Foster Wallace,” *Adrienne Carr* (6)

“Politics and Audience: *The New York Times*’
Appeal to Undecided Voters,” *Alison Block* (6)

“Rise of the Image Culture: Re-Imagining the
American Dream,” *Elizabeth Thoman* (7)

- “An Imperfect Reality,” *Rebecca Hollingsworth* (7)
- “Look on My Works: *Breaking Bad*’s Final Season Trailer,” *Nick Fendinger* (7)
- “Cruelty, Civility, and Other Weighty Matters,” *Ann Marie Paulin* (8)
- “Have It Your Way: Consumerism Invades Education,” *Simon Benlow* (9)
- “The Power of Failure: J.K. Rowling’s 2008 Harvard Commencement Speech” *Liz Winhover* (9)
- “Talibanned,” *Benjamin Busch* (10)
- “*Star Trek: Where No Man Has Gone Before*,” *Jaren Provo* (10)
- “Is Google Making Us Stupid?” *Nicholas Carr* (11)
- “A *Beat* Education,” *Leonard Kress* (20)
- “Cartoons ’n Comics: Communication to the Quick,” *Joy Clough* (20)
- “American Consumerism,” *Jamie Bentley* (20)
- “Reverence for Food,” *Rachel Schofield* (20)

TECHNOLOGY

We cannot overlook technology. How does it influence the way we live? Through reading, writing, and discussion, you can explore beyond your initial thoughts and perceptions to consider the complex relationship in today’s world between an individual and technology—or between one individual and another *because of technology*. What idea about technology might you discover and share with others, helping them to think or act differently?

- “Americans and the Land,” *John Steinbeck* (3)
- “To Fish and Be Fished: A Tinder-fied Game of Love,” *Kellie Coppola* (3)
- “The Front Porch,” *Chester McCovey* (4)
- “Cruelty, Civility, and Other Weighty Matters,” *Ann Marie Paulin* (8)
- “Have It Your Way: Consumerism Invades Education,” *Simon Benlow* (9)
- “Talibanned,” *Benjamin Busch* (10)
- “*Star Trek: Where No Man Has Gone Before*,” *Jaren Provo* (10)
- “Is Google Making Us Stupid?” *Nicholas Carr* (11)
- “An Apology to Future Generations,” *Simon Benlow* (20)

Note to Instructors

Like most college writing instructors, we see English composition as a vital component of an academic career. Without a transformative composition experience, many college students will struggle, fumble, or worse. And beyond the college classroom, we see writing instruction as intimately connected to students' everyday lives. We believe that composition courses are not only preparation for more academic work but also a genuine study of one's own rhetorical situations. More specifically, we assume that student writing should do two things:

1. It should emerge from the discursive entanglements of students' everyday lives. Student writing is often stiffened by the popular-but-distant topics of the day: gun control, abortion, cloning, cell phone use, and so on. Of course, for some students, these topics intersect with everyday life, but for the vast majority, they are glorified encyclopedic preformulations. They offer no possibility for new connections, no possibility for radical rethinking, no hope for discovery, and no exigence whatsoever. They are dead. Therefore, we hope to offer a pedagogy that genuinely guides students into the tensions, cracks, and unseen notches of their own lives. Perhaps, then, they will see that this whole enterprise is worthy of the immense intellectual energy it requires.
2. It should prompt students to invent ideas. We believe the only reason to write an essay is to generate a better way of thinking about a topic. In professional academic work, essays are not written to prove grammatical prowess or syntactic proficiency, but to share an important new insight, to contribute to an ongoing conversation, to reveal an otherwise hidden position or viewpoint. In a composition course, it should be no different. And it's been our experience that classroom engagement increases dramatically when students understand this rhetorical mission.

Over the editions of this book, we've been asked: Why such focus on invention? What led us to place invention at the center of the pedagogy? Initially, this focus came from understanding our own students—from witnessing how they struggle, succeed, and fail. We asked ourselves some basic questions: What do we value but fail to teach explicitly? What do other writing instructors value and assess? What are the gaps between proficient high school writing and proficient college writing? What we discovered was a type of hidden curriculum. Instructors want revelation, discovery, depth, rigor, and intellectual richness. But such qualities are not taught explicitly and consistently at the high school level. Students entering college often lack the discursive tools for generating the richness and complexity that college composition instructors hope to see. Our conclusion: Students need specific guidance in developing that complexity.

As we looked closely at our students, we noticed that successful writers tend to:

- Start thinking about their topics and their own responses early on
- Turn ideas and positions around—investigating intellectual possibilities
- Rethink based on the values, assumptions, and claims of others
- Address and even envelop opposing ideas

In short, successful writers invent. They do what the classical rhetoricians taught: use language to explore what's possible.

Contrarily, unsuccessful writers skip invention. Their relationship with language is at best tentative—at worst, antagonistic. And they often carry some counterproductive notions about thinking and writing: ideas emerge fully formed from an individual's head; good writers do not struggle or rethink; the only way to develop an idea is by adding facts; an essay is good if it's properly arranged and grammatically correct. Such assumptions work against writers—even more than their unfamiliarity with grammatical conventions. Before they even begin a course or an assignment, these quiet notions stymie many students' foray into an intensive writerly experience.

With *The Composition of Everyday Life*, we hope to vitalize students' assumptions about writing, and to dramatize a simple but crucial point: Language is not merely a conduit for expression but a tool for developing ideas. We hope that students imagine writing as an act of public exploration, a process of inventing and sharing what can be thought, what can be said, what can be known. This book, then, is grounded in and driven by a set of principles that we've deemed *invention pedagogy*. It emerges not only from our understanding of students but also from the pre-Socratic Greek sophists—those folks who invented rhetoric (and the practice of democracy). The broader goal is to help students to develop increasingly sophisticated ideas. More specific goals are related to chapter sections:

Point of Contact sections encourage students to slow down and notice the nuances of life around them while considering possibilities for writing topics. The questions pull students away from stiff and distant topics and toward the real entanglements of their own lives.

Analysis sections help students develop meaning and significance while prompting them to explore their topics with questions and dialogic activities.

Public Resonance sections draw attention to the rhetorical situation—to the assumptions, values, and beliefs of others. Writers are prompted to explore what others believe and how the particular writing project can influence common belief.

Thesis sections in each invention chapter help students to hone their ideas to a fine edge. Each section contains prompts, sample thesis statements, common thesis

problems, and “Evolution of a Thesis” subsection, which illustrates the gradual development of an idea.

Rhetorical Tools sections explain the support strategies that are most applicable and appropriate to the writing situation. The sections teach students that all rhetorical tools (such as narration, argumentative appeals, allusions, and so on) can be applied according to the writer’s particular needs.

Revision sections suggest ways to work back through essay drafts, applying even more invention strategies. Each section also features chapter-specific questions for peer reviewers.

Reflection sections ask students to articulate ideas about how their essays work. These prompts get students writing about writing, dealing metacognitively with the particular intellectual maneuvers required/prompted in that chapter. Many of the “Reflection” sections also invite students to go “Beyond the Essay”—to take their ideas from the chapter and recast them in some other format: a poster, a cartoon, and so on.

As they work through the sections, students may feel their ideas getting more complex, even unwieldy. That’s okay. In fact, if we are doing our jobs well, our students’ thinking will likely get messier. But if we walk through the entire intellectual journey (that is, an assignment) with them, students may see their ideas regain focus. They may see assignments as intellectual pathways.

As all writers know, good ideas require intellectual grappling, occasional cognitive slippage, and plenty of revision. We think students at this point in history, in these economic and cultural times, must learn how to grapple and rethink. We cannot assume that such critical and nuanced skills will seep into student consciousness—that some lucky students will “pick up on” the most crucial discursive moves. If writing instructors value rigorous (*inventive, rich, deep, intensive, analytical, critical*) thinking, and if we reward it with a grade, then we owe students the tools for making it happen. We cannot simply provide interesting samples and expect them to extract the epistemology. If we value invention, we must teach students how to explore, how to unpack their initial thoughts, and how to persist beyond the commonplace.

A quick glance at the economy, labor relationships, world politics, and demographic shifts portends a new kind of literacy: people will need intellectual agility; they will have to think around topics, beyond themselves, beyond their initial assumptions, to simply get along in a fast-changing cultural landscape. Having an opinion and writing it neatly in five coherent paragraphs will be its own kind of illiteracy. Those who can only say what they think will get left behind. Those who can invent new intellectual postures for themselves and others will thrive.

NEW TO THIS EDITION

New Reading Selections: Fifteen new and diverse readings illustrate the rhetorical tools essential to inventive writing. The latest additions include widely celebrated writers such as Michael Pollan and Annie Dillard as well as some high-profile figures such as Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Barack

Obama. In keeping with previous editions, this edition includes new student writing—vibrant analytical essays that show real students developing highly sophisticated and revelatory ideas.

Refined Invention Sections: As with each edition, the Invention sections in Chapters 2–13 have been refined to maximize students’ engagement with the driving elements of the pedagogy: the Invention Questions. This time around, chapter sections guide students to the most (intellectually) energizing questions—those designed to move thinking forward.

Streamlined Chapter 1: Inventing Ideas: Because students in composition courses should get writing as quickly as possible, Chapter 1 has been streamlined. It focuses on the most critical elements, those necessary to help students’ writing become more inventive, more connected to their everyday lives, and more resonant with the world around them.

Chapter Objectives: Each chapter now begins with specific learning objectives so teachers can better determine how the material will align with their curriculum.

Latest MLA Guidelines and Updated Research Papers: Chapter 16: Integrating and Documenting Sources includes the updated documentation guidelines put forth in the eighth edition of the *MLA Handbook* (2016). It also features revised and updated student essays in MLA and APA style.

KEY FEATURES

Emphasis on Invention: Unlike any other writing guide, *The Composition of Everyday Life* offers thirteen invention chapters, guiding students to be inventive thinkers and writers. In addition, “Point of Contact” sections encourage students to slow down and notice the nuances of life around them while considering possibilities for writing topics.

Step-by-step Invention Instruction: Included in each invention chapter, “Point of Contact” sections will help students discover a topic from everyday life. “Analysis” will launch them beyond initial thoughts and help explore the topic. “Public Resonance” will help students extend the topic outward, to make the topic relevant to a community of readers. “Thesis” will help you focus students’ thinking and develop a revelatory point. “Rhetorical Tools” will help students support their point with a variety of common strategies.

Thorough Revision and Editing Coverage: “Peer Review” activities specific to each chapter as well as “Public Resonance” sections illustrate that writing is public in nature, and help students shape their writing for their audience. Adding an intensive editing step to the invention process, the new Chapter 19: Vitalizing Sentences explains and illustrates particular strategies for pruning, weeding, trimming, and giving life to students’ writing.

Beyond the “Final” Draft: Prompting students into some theorizing about their own language and intellectual moves, the “Reflection” sections can help students transfer to other writing situations what they have learned while writing a single essay. These activities can also help students identify areas for revision toward a course portfolio.

Attractive Design in a Concise Package: *The Composition of Everyday Life* still offers the clean and elegant design students and instructors value, but the look and feel are lighter and more approachable.

INSTRUCTOR RESOURCES

MindTap® English for Mauk/Metz, *The Composition of Everyday Life*, 6th edition is the digital learning solution that powers students from memorization to mastery. It gives you complete control of your course—to provide engaging content, to challenge every individual, and to build their confidence. Empower students to accelerate their progress with MindTap. MindTap: Powered by You.

MindTap gives you complete ownership of your content and learning experience. Customize the interactive assignments, emphasize the most important topics, and add your own material or notes in the E-book.

- 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.
- A collection of vetted, curated student writing samples in various modes and documentation styles to use as flexible instructional tools.
- 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® English comes equipped with the diagnostic-guided JUST IN TIME PLUS learning module for foundational concepts and embedded course support. The module features scaffolded video tutorials, instructional text content, and auto-graded activities designed to address each student's specific needs for practice and support to succeed in college-level composition courses.

The Resources for Teaching folder provides support materials to facilitate an efficient course setup process focused around your instructional goals: The MindTap Planning Guide offers an inventory of MindTap activities correlated to common planning objectives, so that you can quickly determine what you need. The MindTap Syllabus offers an example of how these activities could be incorporated into a 16-week course schedule. The Instructor's Manual provides suggestions for additional activities and assignments.

MindTap® English for Mauk/Metz, *The Composition of Everyday Life*, 6th edition also includes the following book-specific features:

- Auto-graded quizzes for select readings in Chapters 2–13 provide quick comprehension checks to keep students on track.
- Rhetorical Handbook offers comprehensive coverage of grammar, punctuation, style, and usage. Available online only in MindTap.

MindTap for The Composition of Everyday Life

The MindTap version includes twenty-one chapters of E-book content—rhetoric, research guide, reader, and handbook and tools and resources to take advantage of digital affordances.

It can be paired with these print products:

The Composition of Everyday Life: A Guide to Writing, Brief Sixth Edition

The brief version of *The Composition of Everyday Life* includes twenty chapters, including the rhetoric, research guide and reader.

The Composition of Everyday Life: A Guide to Writing, Concise Sixth Edition

The concise version of *The Composition of Everyday Life* includes nineteen chapters, including the rhetoric and research guide.

Instructor’s Manual

The instructor’s manual for the sixth edition of *The Composition of Everyday Life* has been revised. Teaching tips, syllabus planning, and lesson organization are all included.

WPA Outcomes Correlation Guide

“Using *The Composition of Everyday Life: A Guide to Writing* to Meet WPA Outcomes” is a guide that clearly specifies the ways *The Composition of Everyday Life* supports the primary outcomes of the Council of Writing Program Administrators’ (WPA) Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition. It is included in the frontmatter of the book and also in the Resources for Teaching folder in MindTap.

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Using *The Composition of Everyday Life*: A Guide to Writing to Meet WPA Outcomes (v3.0)

An Instructor's Guide

By Goretta Vianney-Benca
SUNY Ulster

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Using *The Composition of Everyday Life* to Meet WPA Outcomes (v3.0)

When the Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA) first began discussing an outcomes statement for first-year writing, the goal was to help collegiate writing programs outline national expectations for students who have completed a first-year composition course. In addition to being a standard for assessment, it also outlined a set of common objectives to establish professional accountability for collegiate writing courses across the country. The five WPA outcomes draw attention to “common knowledge, skills, and attitudes” that are representative for students completing first-year composition courses.

The purpose of this instructor’s manual is to highlight how *The Composition of Everyday Life* addresses these outcomes both in content and approach and to serve as a guide for instructors who are incorporating the WPA outcomes into their day-to-day teaching, assignment design, and course assessment practices. Different parts of the book speak to the outcomes in a unique way, lending flexibility to instructors using the book as an assessment tool.

WPA Outcomes	<i>The Composition of Everyday Life</i>
➤ Rhetorical Knowledge	✓ Chapters 1–13, 20
➤ Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing	✓ Chapters 1–13, 14–15, 17, 20
➤ Processes	✓ Chapters 2–13, and 17–19
➤ Knowledge of Conventions	✓ Chapters 14–17, and 21 (online only)

The information that follows details the WPA outcomes and identifies assignments, readings, and class activities in *The Composition of Everyday Life* that may help you meet primary course goals. Lastly, it’s worth noting that many of these outcomes overlap in effective writing assignments. So although suggestions are often linked to specific outcomes, they do not exist independently of any single outcome and are often appropriate for overall assessment of the WPA outcomes.

For a full copy of the WPA statement, visit: <http://wpacouncil.org/positions/outcomes.html>. The most current “WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition (v3.0)” was adopted on July 17, 2014.

The WPA and *The Composition of Everyday Life* Approach: A Quick-Start Guide

Suggestions for Assessing Rhetorical Knowledge

From the start, *The Composition of Everyday Life* sets the stage for a conversation about rhetoric that investigates why people write and how writers respond to this call based on the rhetorical situation.

Rhetorical Knowledge	<i>The Composition of Everyday Life</i>
<p>By the end of first-year composition, students should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learn and use key rhetorical concepts through analyzing and composing a variety of texts. 	<p>Chapter 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In <i>CEL</i>, <i>invention</i> is more than finding a topic; it involves committing to an idea, exploring it in depth, and discovering its worth or resonance. Chapter 1 discusses how ideas come about, how they emerge from language, how they thicken and deepen through questioning and dialogue. It gives students the most direct and crucial element of <i>rhetorical knowledge</i>: an understanding that language is generative, that it makes ideas. ✓ Chapter 1 also emphasizes the importance of understanding the values and expectations of an <i>academic audience</i>, that is, the prevailing attitudes that instructors and peers bring to their writing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gain experience reading and composing in several genres to understand how genre conventions shape and are shaped by readers' and writers' practices and purposes. 	<p>Chapter 2–13:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chapters 2–12 each focus on a different <i>purpose or aim of communication</i>—to narrate, explain, observe, analyze, argue, evaluate, and more. Students read professional and student selections that exemplify these different purposes and are asked to identify the rhetorical moves made by each writer. “Invention” sections then guide students through the process of creating compositions that exemplify these various purposes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop facility in responding to a variety of situations and contexts calling for purposeful shifts in voice, tone, level of formality, design, medium, and/or structure. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Match the capacities of different environments (e.g., print and electronic) to varying rhetorical situations. 	

- ✓ The “Invention” sections of Chapter 2–13 include several components that focus on *key rhetorical concepts*:
 - “Analysis”—encourages students to explore a topic with questions and dialogic activities. These sections also often include explanation of rhetorical concepts that students need to understand in order to effectively analyze.
 - “Public Resonance”—invites students to consider their rhetorical situation, to analyze how people think about a topic, and discover a topic’s worth or resonance
 - “Rhetorical Tools”—reviews common strategies that students can use in their compositions. These sections teach students that all rhetorical tools (such as narration, argumentative appeals, allusions, and so on) can be applied according to the writer’s particular needs.
- ✓ In a couple chapters, the “Invention” sections also include a spotlight on how to write in specific *genres*—the literacy narrative in Chapter 2, and an ethnography in Chapter 4.
- ✓ Each chapter ends with a “Beyond the Essay” assignment that invites students *to use and compose in various media and genres*—create a cover image for an essay, a conceptual map, a video briefing, and more.

Chapter 20:

- ✓ This “Anthology” chapter includes a broad variety of essays. These additional readings are framed by introductions and questions, so that students can read them critically and closely.

Individual Assessment: At the beginning of the term, challenge the students' basic rhetorical knowledge by assigning the students to find, read, and bring in to class an academic journal article (or you could provide one for the students). You can limit the scope to the theme of your course or to the students' majors. Ask the students to write a short summary of the article focusing on how the author's point of view is being conveyed. Ask the students to record whether or not the essay was effective in influencing their understanding of the topic and why/why not. This can be submitted to the instructor for feedback, shared with the rest of the class, or shared in small groups. By asking students to choose a piece of writing and to analyze the rhetorical situation, you will begin pushing them to work closely with a text to understand a writer's purpose and audience. Return to this assignment throughout the semester, adding new genres and different types of texts to the discussion. As a final project, ask students to write a rhetorical analysis essay. Students could use the Reflection section in Chapter 6 (page 185) as a guide. A sample prompt for a rhetorical analysis essay follows:

After you've completed the final draft of your essay project, please develop a brief but intensive rhetorical analysis. In a two-page essay, describe the rhetorical moves in your argument: various support strategies, counterarguments, concessions, etc. The goal is not to re-argue your point or sum up your essay, but to describe the machinery of argument, to analyze its rhetoric.

Course Level Assessment: At the end of the term, students should showcase their work from throughout the semester in a portfolio; this can be an e-portfolio or a physical collection of their work. Ask students to write a letter introducing their portfolios and the work they've completed in various genres. The letter should craft an argument that addresses the objectives set forth in the Rhetorical Knowledge outcome, as well as reflect on what they have learned about composing for different purposes and in various genres. Students should use examples from their portfolios as evidence.

Suggestions for Assessing Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing

Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing	<i>The Composition of Everyday Life</i>
<p>By the end of first-year composition, students should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use composing and reading for inquiry, learning, critical thinking, and communicating in various rhetorical contexts. 	<p>All Chapters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ If there is one point made most consistently in <i>CEL</i>, it is that <i>writing is a mode of thinking and learning</i>. From the first page to the last, <i>CEL</i> explains and models how specific, learnable, and deliberate discursive acts make ideas.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read a diverse range of texts, attending especially to relationships between assertion and evidence, to patterns of organization, to the interplay between verbal and nonverbal elements, and how these features function for different audiences and situations. 	<p>Chapters 2–13:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Each of these chapters contains one auto-graded reading comprehension quiz in the MindTap program.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Locate and evaluate (for credibility, sufficiency, accuracy, timeliness, bias, and so on) primary and secondary research materials, including journal articles and essays, books, scholarly and professionally established and maintained databases or archives, and informal electronic networks and Internet sources. 	<p>Chapters 2–13, 20:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The extensive “Invention” sections, the many professional and student readings and models, and the questions that accompany the readings in Chapters 2–13 all consistently emphasize the idea that <i>writing is an act of inquiry</i>. CEL helps students see that they can make their ideas more sophisticated by asking key questions, reflecting on their own claims, and inspecting their own language. ✓ In Chapters 2–13, “Reflection” sections encourage students to think about their own work and composing processes. These prompts get students writing about writing and practicing metacognition, with a focus on the intellectual maneuvers discussed in the chapter.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use strategies—such as interpretations, synthesis, response, critique, and design/redesign—to compose texts that integrate the writer’s ideas with those from appropriate sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In Chapters 2–13, the “Reflection” sections encourage students to think about their own work and composing processes. These prompts get students writing about writing and practicing metacognition, with a focus on the intellectual maneuvers discussed in the chapter.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In Chapters 2–13, the “Rhetorical Tools” discussion reviews key strategies that students can use to integrate others’ ideas with their own. ✓ Students have opportunities to read selections that model various rhetorical purposes and genres in Chapters 2–13 and 20. These professional and student selections each include an introductory headnote and questions (“Writing Strategies,” “Exploring Ideas,” and “Ideas for Writing”) that call attention to the development of ideas and the rhetorical moves in each selection.

	<p>Chapters 14–15, 17:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chapters 14 and 15 cover finding primary and secondary sources and then working to synthesize those sources, evaluate them, and integrate them appropriately through paragraph, summary, or quotation. Chapter 15 includes two sample essays that model the strategies of synthesis and source evaluation. ✓ Chapter 17 also addresses integrating outside sources into a composition, and ways to engage with other’s ideas by counterarguing.
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Individual Assessment: Ask small groups of students to research, design, and implement a PowerPoint presentation introducing a rhetorical tool (such as an appeal, allusion, or a form of evidence). This collaborative learning exercise combines critical thinking, reading, and writing skills, as well as various methods for research and presentation, allowing students to effectively communicate course knowledge to a peer audience.

Course Level Assessment: At the end of the term, assign a research paper that presents a particular position on a topic. This project asks students to find outside examples. Or, you can make this an in-class essay with pre-chosen texts. This final assignment builds on the critical thinking, reading, and writing skills demonstrated in the individual presentations and assesses the retention and translation of genre knowledge past an individual assignment.

Suggestions for Assessing Processes

The Composition of Everyday Life calls on students to analyze writing as a collaborative and reflective process that requires initiative, social responsibility, and an awareness of differing perspectives.

Processes	<i>The Composition of Everyday Life</i>
<p>By the end of first-year composition, students should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a writing project through multiple drafts. 	<p>Chapters 2–13, 17–19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Each of the main project chapters (2–13) guides students through a thorough but recursive process—one in which they are encouraged and shown how to build ideas with their own language. The “Analysis,”

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop flexible strategies for reading, drafting, reviewing, collaborating, revising, rewriting, rereading, and editing. 	<p>with their own language. The “Analysis,” “Public Resonance,” “Thesis,” and “Rhetorical Tools” sections especially help students to ask vital questions about their thinking—and to keep generating throughout the process, even all the way to final editing and polishing.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use composing processes and tools as a means to discover and reconsider ideas. 	<p>✓ Chapters 2–13 teach students dialogic knowledge making. “Invention Workshop” prompts invite students to enlist the help of others <i>throughout the composing process</i>—not simply at the end of the process when ideas tend to already be solidified.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learn to give and act on productive feedback to works in progress. 	<p>✓ Chapters 2–13 also end with a “Revision” section that guides students through specific self-assessment and peer review. Questions are focused on the specific rhetorical nuances and possibilities associated with that chapter.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adapt composing processes for a variety of technological modalities. 	<p>✓ “Reflection” assignments in Chapters 2–13 get students writing about writing and practicing metacognition.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reflect on the development of composing practices and how those practices influence their work. 	<p>✓ The chapters on writer’s voice, vitality, and organizational strategies (Chapters 17–19) show students specific academic conventions. These chapters always present strategies as decisions that writers can make and continue the point established in the first chapter: that each decision impacts both the writer and readers’ relationship with the ideas.</p>

Individual Assessment: Implement regular oral and written reflections throughout the writing process and at the end of each writing assignment. Use the “Reflection” prompts at the end of Chapters 2 through 13 (example: Chapter 3, page 90) to have students assess the writing process and the roles they played with their teacher and peers throughout the review. Reflections can be completed as in-class writing, discussion, or formal writing assignments.

Course Level Assessment: Use writing portfolios to track process and assess progress in your writing class. Students should complete written “Reflection” assignments after each project. At the end of the course, ask students to use their drafts, projects, and reflections to

write a piece of commentary examining the writing process throughout the term. Students can comment on any or all parts of the process, from invention to reflection, and should use their individual writing projects and reflections for research and development.

Suggestions for Assessing Knowledge of Conventions

Knowledge of Conventions	<i>The Composition of Everyday Life</i>
<p>By the end of first-year composition, students should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop knowledge of linguistic structures, including grammar, punctuation, and spelling, through practice in composing and revising. 	<p>Chapters 14–16:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ These chapters teach <i>information literacy</i>—not simply the acts of summary, quotation, paraphrase, documentation, and so on, but also the intellectual work behind each of these acts. ✓ Chapter 16 addresses the ethical use of others’ words and ideas and offers strategies for avoiding plagiarism. The chapter also provides instruction and models for how to cite and use sources in accordance with MLA and APA style conventions. <p>Chapter 17, “Organizing Ideas”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chapter 17 addresses integrating outside sources into a composition, ways to engage with other’s ideas by counterarguing, separating problems and solutions, developing effective introductions and conclusions, and more. This chapter consistently makes the point that conventions of format and structure are alive, brimming with possibility, and contingent on the project and situation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand why genre conventions for structure, paragraphing, tone, and mechanics vary. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gain experience negotiating variations in genre conventions. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learn common formats and/or design features for different kinds of texts. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore the concepts of intellectual property (such as fair use and copyright) that motivate documentation conventions. 	<p>Chapter 21, “Rhetorical Handbook”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This handbook chapter is available only online in MindTap for <i>The Composition of Everyday Life</i>. The chapter begins with a review of basic grammatical elements, and then moves through the conventions of standard academic English—as applied to words, sentences, and paragraphs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice applying citation conventions systematically in their own work. 	

Individual Assessment: Conduct a writing workshop that puts the knowledge of conventions in the hands of the students. As a class, read the “Revision” and “Peer Review” sections of Chapters 2–13 (e.g., Chapter 3, pages 88–90). Discuss the “Peer Review” questions at the end of each of these chapters as a class, and use your personal course emphases on writing conventions and documentation to guide the discussion. From there, ask students to complete a peer workshop in pairs, using the “Peer Review” questions to assess their partner’s work.

Course Level Assessment: As a final project in conventions, ask students to apply the questions at the end of Chapter 18, “Developing Voice” (pages 550–551), to a paper or project (or portfolio) they have composed.

Adopting WPA Outcomes for Assessing Your First-Year Writing Course

The Big Picture: An Overview of Outcomes-Based Assessment in Your Course

1. Determine what you want to assess: Assessing writing is a difficult task worthy of many arguments in the composition world; however, using the WPA outcomes makes the instructor’s job a bit clearer. In adopting the WPA outcomes for first-year composition, you are starting with a general idea of the knowledge that students should have when exiting your first-year writing course. Although writing can be a subjective discipline, the WPA agrees that there is specific knowledge students *should* be working toward, and in an outcomes-based education, this knowledge is assessable. With that in mind, outcomes such as rhetorical knowledge and processes move from abstract ideas to concrete objectives that can be evaluated using writing assignments from *The Composition of Everyday Life*.

2. Write and establish course objectives: These objectives will probably be a combination of the WPA outcomes with your specific program and course goals. Think about what skills or knowledge of writing your school’s population of students *should* have when they leave your course. How is this knowledge similar to or different from the five WPA outcomes? Where do they overlap? Where are there conflicts? How might you compromise to work with the WPA outcomes? Writing course objectives is not an easy task; however, the clearer you can be with what you want to accomplish, the easier it will be to use *The Composition of the Everyday* to meet those expectations.

3. Design assignment sequences: After you have determined course objectives, think about how you might achieve those objectives. What needs to happen in and out of class for you to reach these goals? Start with the larger writing projects first and work backward. Working backward will ensure that you’ve covered all material for the assignment. For example, have the students just write an essay—this can be done as homework or as an in-class assignment—without worrying about the essay being completely polished. Then, work through the appropriate chapter backward, moving

from “Reflection,” to “Revision,” to “Rhetorical Tools,” to “Thesis,” to “Public Resonance,” to “Analysis,” and finally to “Point of Contact.” By reversing the process, the students will be able to break down the writing process to further develop ideas and their ability to convey ideas more effectively. This kind of reverse process could also be used if you are assigning a “Beyond the Essay” project.

Taking Action: Using Outcomes as Pedagogy for Lesson Plans

Now that you’ve established the big-picture goals, you can create lesson plans based on your outcomes-based pedagogy.

Working with Students

When dealing with assessment, it is easy to get caught up in the outcomes and objectives, but it is important not to forget who this assessment directly affects: the students. Explaining the course objectives at the start of the semester, and frequently returning to these goals, will help students comprehend how each assignment works to further their knowledge in the course. Students often misinterpret writing assessment as one teacher’s subjective grade on a finished paper. However, putting an emphasis on the WPA outcomes as an education in writing that students should develop and acquire throughout the first year will help to diffuse the misconception that students need to write assignments “for the instructor” because “each instructor grades differently.” Adopting a clear set of objectives based on the WPA outcomes and showing how *The Composition of Everyday Life* can help students develop this knowledge is one way to turn that subjective point of view into a more tangible and objective evaluation process.

Sample Student Assignment Handout

One way in which to effectively convey outcomes to students is to translate your weekly lesson plans into detailed assignment sequences that explain the course objectives and tasks for each writing project. This is illustrated in the following model.

English 110: Intro to Writing

Week One: An Introduction to the Writing Process

Objective: To gain an understanding that students should

- develop a writing project through multiple drafts.
- develop flexible strategies for reading, revising, drafting, reviewing, collaborating, revising, rewriting, rereading, and editing.
- use composing processes and tools as a means to discover and reconsider ideas.
- experience the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes.
- learn to give and act on productive feedback to works in progress.
- reflect on the development of composing practices and how those practices influence their work.

(Continued)

English 110: Intro to Writing (Continued)

Day 1: Students should arrive to class already having read Chapter 1. Discuss what an “essay” is as a class based on the reading in Chapter 1. Provide students with an example of an academic journal article. Do the “Activity” on page 6 as a class. Continue working with this same article and discuss the article using the prompts in the “Readings” section of Chapter 2, page 27. Homework: Complete the “Exploring Ideas” section on pages 29–30 in Chapter 2. Students should come to the next class with the completed assignment and be prepared to share their writing with a small group of peers, and students should be ready to continue working with this piece to develop it into a longer writing sample. Students should also read Chapter 2.

Day 2: As students arrive to class, resume the same groups from the previous class meeting. Students will share their writing sample to the rest of the group. Using the prompts in Chapter 2’s “Ideas for Writing” (page 30), students will begin to revise writing samples. This will take up the entire class period. Homework: Students should revise their writing sample for submission and grading the next class meeting. Drafts and notes should be included in the final submission for review. This further emphasizes the importance of working through the writing process.

Day 3: In Chapter 2, using the readings as samples or models, students choose a topic for their next essay. Instructor will guide the students through the prompts, but students are to come up with their own topics. Remember that as you move through the remaining sections of the chapter, writing throughout the process is essential; a notebook must be kept so that all drafts and notes can be reviewed as part of the assessment process. Before the class is dismissed, peer review partners will be assigned. Homework: Draft essay.

Daily Exercises from *The Composition of Everyday Life* That Work with WPA Outcomes

WPA Outcomes	<i>The Composition of Everyday Life</i>
Rhetorical Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reading selections in Chapters 2–13 and 20, and accompanying questions ✓ Activities and short assignments in “Public Resonance,” “Analysis,” and “Rhetorical Tools” sections in Chapters 2–13 ✓ “Beyond the Essay” assignments in Chapters 2–13

Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reading selections in Chapters 2–13 and 20, and accompanying headnotes and questions ✓ Activities and questions in “Rhetorical Tools” and “Reflection” sections in Chapters 2–13. ✓ Activities and assignments in Chapters 14, 15, and 17
Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Extensive “Invention” process sections in Chapters 2–13, including “Point of Contact,” “Analysis,” “Public Resonance,” “Thesis,” “Revision,” and “Reflection” discussions and activities. ✓ “Invention Workshops” in Chapters 2–13 ✓ Chapters 17–19
Knowledge of Conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Activities and assignments in Chapters 14–16. ✓ Chapter 17 ✓ Activities in Chapter 21: Rhetorical Handbook (available online only in MindTap for CEL)

Sample Lesson Plan: Introduction to Argument Writing

- WPA Outcomes for Assessment: Processes and Rhetorical Knowledge
- Outcomes-based Course Objective: Writing is a process requiring multiple drafts, research, and collaborative critiques to communicate a message to an audience.
- Task: Making Arguments, *The Composition of Everyday Life*, Chapter 8

Objectives		Tasks from <i>The Composition of Everyday Life</i>
Week One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Knowledge and conventions of the rhetorical mode ✓ Working draft of the project 	<p>Read: Chapter 8, Making Arguments, Introduction, page 223; April Pedersen, “The Dog Delusion,” page 225; Ann Marie Paulin, “Cruelty, Civility, and Other Weighty Matters,” page 230; Teresa Scollon, “Hive Talkin’: The Buzz around Town about Bees,” page 240</p> <p>Discuss: “Writing Strategies” and “Exploring Ideas” after each of the readings in the chapter</p> <p>Write: Choose one of the “Ideas for Writing” after each of the readings in the chapter</p> <p>Homework: Choose a topic and begin drafting topic for argument essay</p>

<p>Week Two</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Further exploration of rhetorical mode ✓ Awareness of writing processes ✓ Revision methods 	<p>Read: Chapter 8, “Making Arguments,” Invention, page 245; “Point of Contact,” page 245; “Analysis,” page 247; “Public Resonance,” page 249; “Thesis,” page 251; “Rhetorical Tools,” 254; “Reflection,” page 264</p> <p>Discuss: Application of the “Rhetorical Tools” and organizational strategies to students’ drafts</p> <p>Write: Revise drafts</p> <p>Homework: Revise drafts</p>
<p>Week Three</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Revised assignment ✓ Peer review ✓ Knowledge of genre in a new context 	<p>Read: Chapter 8, “Making Arguments,” “Invention Workshop,” page 259; “Revision,” page 263; “Reflection,” page 264; “Beyond the Essay,” page 264</p> <p>Discuss: Peer review of drafts</p> <p>Write: Revise drafts</p> <p>Homework: Revise drafts for submission for grading</p>

Evaluating Multiple Genres

The Composition of Everyday Life connects academic writing with real-life situations and topics in which students will need strong and effective written communication skills. Yet, with such varied forms of writing, the question of evaluation often looms in the classroom, as both students and teachers try to negotiate how to grade items from personal exploratory essays to more formal research-based argument essays with the same set of guidelines. Translating the WPA outcomes into a rubric for evaluation is one way to tackle this issue. Instead of grading each assigned genre only by its conventions and mechanics, instructors can construct a rubric that assesses all written projects on the same composition plane. Depending on course and assignment design, rubrics can be focused and personalized to meet instructor goals, while still addressing the WPA outcomes—and also assessing the independent genre projects.

Single Outcome Rubric

Rhetorical Knowledge Rubric	<i>excellent</i>	<i>above average</i>	<i>meets standards</i>	<i>insufficient</i>
Attention to Audience				
Responds to Rhetorical Situation				
Knowledge of Genre Conventions				
Appropriate Use of Language and Tone				

Multiple Outcomes Rubric

Grading Rubric for Argument Writing Assignment	Comments
Rhetorical Knowledge: demonstrates a rhetorical awareness through audience appeal, writing persona, genre knowledge, and context	
Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing: uses research for communicating, synthesizing ideas, and integrating multiple perspectives	
Processes: demonstrates evidence of critique and large-scale revision through a peer-review and self-evaluation process	
Knowledge of Conventions: employs a knowledge of genre conventions, formal mechanics, and style	

E-Portfolios, WPA Outcomes, and *The Composition of Everyday Life*

Electronic portfolios are an increasingly popular method of assessing student work not only for single courses but also for long-term measurements over a student's educational career. Likewise, for a two-semester course or a multi-course assessment program, e-portfolios can be useful for collecting data and tracking the progress of groups and individuals. Using e-portfolios in coordination with the WPA outcomes and *The Composition of Everyday Life* will require the same representative sample of student writing that would accompany a print portfolio. The difference and perks of e-portfolios come in the convenience and organization of the various assignments (no more large stacks of folders to carry) and also in the critical connections that students can make, linking texts and peer commentary to revisions and reflections via the functions of electronic folders.

E-portfolios allow students to easily retain writing projects from all steps in the writing process to access them for later analysis and assessment. The writing assignments in *The Composition of Everyday Life* begin with invention and lead students through multiple drafts and critiques to an eventual writing reflection at the end of the chapter. In addition to a representative sample of writing, students could also include a reflective letter, revised writing assignments, a case study of a single writing assignment, peer commentary, or commentary on collaborative learning. *The Composition of Everyday Life's* approach to analyzing rhetorical situations creates an easy platform for this type of assessment because it forces students to locate and evaluate their own writing in the same way they've been reading and critiquing the work of their peers all semester. Asking students to design and complete a written analysis of the e-portfolio to show knowledge of (a) rhetoric, (b) critical thinking, reading, and writing, (c) processes, and (d) conventions requires the same critical approach used in the "Peer Review" and "Reflection" sections of Chapters 2 through 13. This culminating assignment applies all of the elements that have been introduced throughout the course and emphasizes the importance of the composing process while allowing students to showcase their work. In addition, e-portfolios raise student awareness of the idea that a "finished" draft does not mean the writing is done. When asked to compile a portfolio, the writing is reborn, revisited, and redefined through the organization and rewriting involved in the e-portfolio project. Suddenly the documents become part of a public and professional presentation of their writing identity.

The Composition of Everyday Life

1

Inventing Ideas

John Metz



Chapter Objectives

This chapter will help you to:

- Use writing as a means of inquiry.
 - Apply invention questions and collaborate with others to develop increasingly sophisticated ideas.
 - Seek out layers of meaning, significance, tension, and complexity in a range of topics.
 - Identify opportunities for discovery and revision in your own writing.
 - Evaluate sources of information.
 - Integrate a range of sources into your own writing.
 - Develop increasingly focused claims.
 - Apply support strategies most appropriate for the text, situation, and audience.
 - Use a range of media to communicate sophisticated ideas.
 - Experiment with voice, organization, and syntax to enhance persuasiveness and vitality of your writing.
 - Apply common revision and editing strategies to intensify your writing.
-

“Writing is not simply a one-way flow of information from the brain to the hand. Quite the opposite . . .”

INTRODUCTION

Thousands of students across the country are required to take introductory college writing courses. These courses are nearly universal requirements, and it seems reasonable to ask: Why? What’s the purpose of these courses, and more specifically, what’s the purpose of writing? How does writing well relate to engineering, nursing, photography, business management, or aviation? Why do business and governmental leaders throughout the country want all students to take more, not less, writing? If students will not be writing essays in their jobs, why should they write essays in college?

When asked such questions, people tend to respond that writing is important for two reasons: because it helps to *express* thoughts and *communicate* ideas. However, they

often forget a third point. Beyond expression and communication, there is another, perhaps far more powerful, reason: Writing is an invention tool. It helps us to generate new ideas and add dimension to the ideas we already have. Writing is not merely the performance or expression of something we know or believe. It's also an *act of inventing, developing, and reinventing what can be known*.

Writing is not simply a one-way flow of information from the brain to the hand. Quite the opposite: It actually produces new ideas, changes everyday life, and vitalizes the thinking of writers, readers, and the people who interact with them both. These are the reasons that writing is a nearly universal requirement in college. And it is not simply because our culture needs better communicators, but because we will always need better ideas and better ways of thinking about the situations we face every day.

Have you ever asked yourself where ideas come from? Do they pop out of thin air? Do they come from divine beings whispering in our ears? Do they come from lab experiments? From someone's heart? Another organ? Most scholars who wrestle with such questions believe that ideas come from language, that people build, refine, pull apart, and rebuild ideas with words. And although we can use words silently in our heads, the act of writing dramatizes and amps up the whole idea-making process. In other words, writing is like an idea calculator. It allows us to put ideas "out there" on a page or a screen and then process them—adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing. Writing allows us to put an idea into a formula, add exponents, and radicalize. It allows us to keep several abstractions floating around at once, to link thoughts, to collapse them, to evaluate them, and even to cancel them out. Granted, some people can do these operations to some degree just by using language inside their heads. But the act of writing greatly increases almost everyone's ability to process ideas.

At the individual level, inside one's own head, writing is the act of developing a better relationship with ideas. When we develop a point in writing, we get distance from it and see it in front of us. Like a painter, a writer cannot simply hold his or her ideas in the mind. They must be drawn out, in language. Then the writer can add color, shading, sky, ground, background—or redraw from a different perspective.

At the social level, writing can be an invitation, a convergence of many minds. In fact, in academia, writing is seen as a tool for creating social and institutional momentum: for directing people's energies, for guiding policies, for urging on new and better enterprises. Writing changes the way people act, spend, vote, teach, think, and hope—which means this is all pretty serious and heavy business.

ASKING QUESTIONS

One of the most powerful ways to invent ideas is to ask questions. For instance, let's explore a basic concept such as *freedom*. We might ask, *What is it?* First, we might write out some initial thoughts:

What is freedom?

Freedom is the ability to do whatever one wants. It's the feeling we get when we know that we can do whatever we want.

But can we go further? What else can be known or thought about freedom? Let's apply more questions, the kinds of questions you'll encounter in Chapters 2 through 13:

What particular behaviors are associated with freedom?

Politically speaking, voting, protesting, speaking one's mind, worshipping whatever or whomever one desires—or not worshipping at all. Personally, free people do what they want whenever they want. They make their own choices: what they want to buy or drive or eat, how they want to spend their time, where they want to go, what they want to read, whom they want to love or marry.

What responsibilities come with freedom?

Maybe none. If people are free, they do what they want and let others clean up the mess or worry about the consequences. That sounds somehow wrong or bad, but that's what true freedom is. There's no impending rule that says one must do something or think something. Put this way, freedom—true freedom—might be pretty messy. People would get away with murder. Literally.

What hidden role does freedom play in people's lives?

Most people are always trying to get free—from work, duty, homework, etc. They want to be “done” with the things other people assign to them. They want Saturday afternoon—when no one is saying, “Be here and do this.” And politically (again), people throughout the world are dying for it. They stand in front of tanks, blow up government buildings, or pack their families onto wagons and trudge for hundreds of miles so they can experience freedom. So those are the obvious ways freedom works. But “a hidden role”? Is freedom hidden? Do we hide it from ourselves? Why would we do that? Don't we want it? I think most Americans spend their time in some kind of duty—work, school, both. When they're not working under someone else's guidelines, they look to fill up the freedom time. They schedule it. I wonder if people know what to do with freedom . . . with time not gobbled up by duty. Skateboard? Listen to music? Read? Watch TV? Is that what freedom is? What about retirement? Isn't that supposed to be total freedom? If so, why do people get lonely? Why do senior citizens want something to do? Why do they volunteer? (They're always the ones at polling locations, libraries, bake sales, etc.) Maybe people want to be given things to do. Maybe they want to be a part of something. Beyond having the right to speak, marry, vote, work, and travel at will, people want to feel commissioned—to be of some good use. And in some way, that's the opposite of freedom. People yearn for freedom but suffer when they experience it in the extreme.

These questions—Invention Questions—help to launch our thinking. They help the writer uncover hidden layers of a seemingly simple concept. The writer discovers a potentially negative quality of freedom—that unmitigated freedom could be ugly. After the third question, the writer gets past the obvious, taken-for-granted layer and digs up some interesting ideas.

Obvious Layer: Freedom is about escaping duty.

Deeper Layer: Escaping all duty comes with a price.

This process is invention. Asking questions and writing responses makes writers go from an obvious idea (*Freedom is doing whatever one wants*) to something less obvious (*Freedom is the sometimes spiritually hollow lack of duty*). And in academic writing, readers are hoping for something less obvious. The goal isn't to state what most people, or even some people, already think. Rather, it is to bring hidden layers to the surface.

This is no easy task. The process requires endurance—a willingness and ability to continue thinking through intellectual walls and past the easy answers. In other words, inventive writers do not imagine having answers stored up inside their heads. Instead, they imagine the questions as highways, backroads, alleys, and off-road trails. Offering a quick answer to an Invention Question is like starting out on a cross-country trip and stopping at the first rest area—and never leaving.

Imagine these excerpts about freedom as part of a larger exploration that involved more writing and thinking. Much of that invention work (not shown here) stalled out, went in new directions, hit dead ends, started up again, and eventually *through persistence* led to discoveries. Writers should not expect a few sentences or paragraphs to automatically create a new idea. It might take a few paragraphs or pages to work through their initial thinking, then more paragraphs or pages to break through the wall to less obvious, more insightful ideas.

ACTIVITY

With a small group, take a concept (such as education, individuality, authority, crime, or art) and try to dig up something new—some hidden layer or less obvious quality, something that others in your class may not imagine. Use the following questions:

- What is it?
- What particular behaviors are associated with it?
- What responsibilities come with it?
- What hidden role does it play in people's lives?

RE-INVENTING EDUCATION

Some may ask, *Why go through all this work? Why not just write a draft of the first idea that comes to our heads? Why twist and turn the ideas and potentially get confused?* The answers lie in the broader goals of education and of writing courses. In the twentieth century, public

education in the United States emphasized getting things in the right order. It was the age of factory thinking. In writing classrooms, students wrote essays to demonstrate their mastery of a format. But such thinking, assignments, and assumptions about good work are fading into history.

The world is changing at an exponential pace. The information students learn today becomes outdated more quickly than before, and graduates' jobs and careers will change more often and markedly throughout their lives. Many students will have jobs that don't even exist today, in industries or services that are not currently imagined. In this shifting professional life, workers, leaders, employees, and employers who can invent new ways of thinking will thrive. Good thinkers will be in high demand!

While students who can invent ideas will thrive in their academic and professional lives, we must stress that invention is difficult work. The act of writing is an intellectual struggle to shape thoughts and make connections that seem, at first, *impossible*. Good writers do not look for the easy topics, and they understand that valuable ideas do not jump out at them. Instead, they must seek out these ideas. Because the human brain is not a *linear* machine producing thoughts in a simple straight line, writers know their ideas must be formed then re-formed. In that process, they turn frustration into inquiry and find insights in moments of uncertainty.

And we should note that invention does not belong only to academic and professional life. It is a vital practice in everyday life. An inventive thinker asks probing questions that explore possibilities, not just for a college writing assignment but for life's inevitabilities:

- How can I calm my mother-in-law's anger about my religious views?
- Why does my roommate think I'm against her?
- How do we get out of this constant battle with the neighbor's teenage kids?
- Which candidate will really change the economy for the better?

What we call *invention* was not created for schoolwork, essay assignments, or business. It was conceived 2,400 years ago by the ancient Greeks as a tool for analyzing and debating everyday issues. Invention was the first part of a bigger practice called *rhetoric*—the study or art of persuasion. The Greeks had the radical notion that common people, not just holy or military leaders, could think for themselves and make policies best suited for their own affairs. In other words, the Greeks invented what we now call democracy. And when they started to solve problems and debate issues publicly, some people realized that successful thinkers and speakers employed certain moves; they weren't just the loudest talkers or the most charming personalities. It didn't take them long to realize that good thinking was about inventing new insights, not simply rephrasing a common opinion in fancy words. Good thinkers could ask hard questions. They could use language to show complexity and possibility. It was soon obvious to the Greeks that everyday life in a democracy requires good, *inventive* thinking.

READING FOR RHETORIC

If your situation is like that of nearly every other college student, instructors will ask you to read essays that have little or no obvious connection to your life. You may be interested in football, and your college English instructor may assign an essay about the punk movement in Europe or vineyards in Washington. Why? Why should urban students read about agricultural practices, rivers, or forests? Why should rural students read about the streets of Chicago, the Manhattan subway, or the opera? Why should twenty-year-olds read about the role of the World War II generation in shaping the suburbs? Is it because instructors want students to get specific information on those topics? Probably not. Reading assignments in college English courses are often connected to a larger academic goal: to broaden students' perspectives.

Most readers ask themselves questions, and two questions seem to arise consistently:

Do I like this essay?

Can I relate to this information?

But those questions can limit readers. If they're the *only* questions available, they put readers at a big disadvantage by limiting what they can learn. Most instructors want students to think about topics from different angles, and to examine life outside of their own spheres. In other words, instructors hope that students gain some *intellectual agility*—the ability to move from position to position without tremendous difficulty, to imagine a realm of experience and perspective beyond their own biases and reflexes.

If readers have some other questions in mind, some other reasons to continue (besides liking something or relating to it), they might discover something and gain intellectual agility. Imagine, for instance, how the following questions might take a reader somewhere more valuable than the two preceding questions:

How does this essay prompt me to think?

What new idea does it offer?

What new connections does it make?

Why am I resisting the point? Why do I agree with the point?

Where is this essay taking me? How far will it go?

With such questions swirling in their heads, good readers are more apt to push onward through foreign ideas, to examine new assumptions, to carry away something significant.

Good readers do more than read. They read and monitor their own thinking as they move through the text, and they allow themselves to go further than their

personal likes or ability to relate. They tolerate (and maybe even bask in) intellectual discomfort. They consider ideas and assumptions that might seem foreign, weird, abstract, or provocative.

So the purpose of reading in college goes beyond the two most common questions readers may ask themselves. In an academic setting, we do not read merely to relate or associate with the information. We read to rethink issues, to discover positions we had not previously imagined, to revise common perceptions. And to fulfill such goals, we must expect to work through ideas, even struggle at times. Most importantly, we must expect to be surprised, to have our tidy mental rooms messed up occasionally. Reading in academia means being intellectually adventurous and expecting something new or radically different.

Another goal of reading assignments involves the *rhetorical* layer: Behind the obvious content of an essay, there lurks a complex set of *rhetorical tools*—strategies that persuade readers to accept the writer’s ideas. Even though an essay may be about pollution, cats, childhood obesity, or any other topic, it has another dimension, a rhetorical dimension. You might think of this as the machinery of the essay, the stuff that makes it go. And most often, that rhetorical dimension is the reason instructors assign particular essays. It’s not the “information” that instructors want students to focus on, but the way information is dealt with (analyzed, revised, dramatized, and radicalized). For example, in Chapter 4, Annie Dillard’s essay “Living Like Weasels” focuses on her surprise encounter with a weasel. The essay is widely read in college writing courses but not because instructors love small rodents or because people who teach writing love nature. It must have some other appeal. It must be up to something other than celebrating the mighty weasel. And that something must be important to college writing—and to higher education. What is that something?

The answer lies in Dillard’s rhetorical prowess: her ability to persuade readers to think differently, to yank readers’ attention away from the mundane aspects of everyday life and conventional ways of thinking:

I would like to learn, or remember, how to live. I come to Hollins Pond not so much to learn how to live as, frankly, to forget about it. That is, I don’t think I can learn from a wild animal how to live in particular—shall I suck warm blood, hold my tail high, walk with my footprints precisely over the prints of my hand?—but I might learn something of mindlessness, something of the purity of living in the physical senses and the dignity of living without bias or motive.

It wouldn’t matter if the essay were about weasels, house flies, or moths. What’s important are Dillard’s strategies for nudging readers to think—to re-see themselves, their lives, their biases, and their prejudices. So when you get to the Dillard essay, don’t be fooled. *It ain’t about the weasel.*