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Writing Guide

with Handbook

Unit 3

Navigating Rhetoric in Real Life

Introduction

Unit 3 is about the **real world**—the world outside the walls of your college or university. There is a common misconception among students that the writing they do in the classroom is not related to the real world. The works of the Trailblazers in this text have argued against this idea. They are all using the genres taught in the text in new and interesting ways as part of their work in the real world. As technology evolves, increasing numbers of platforms are available for people to publish their ideas for professional and personal purposes. However, with these options come new responsibilities to present one's ideas fairly, accurately, and respectfully. Your voice has power, and your developing ability to present it effectively to the public means your journey with writing is really just beginning.

Print or Textual Analysis: What You Read

16

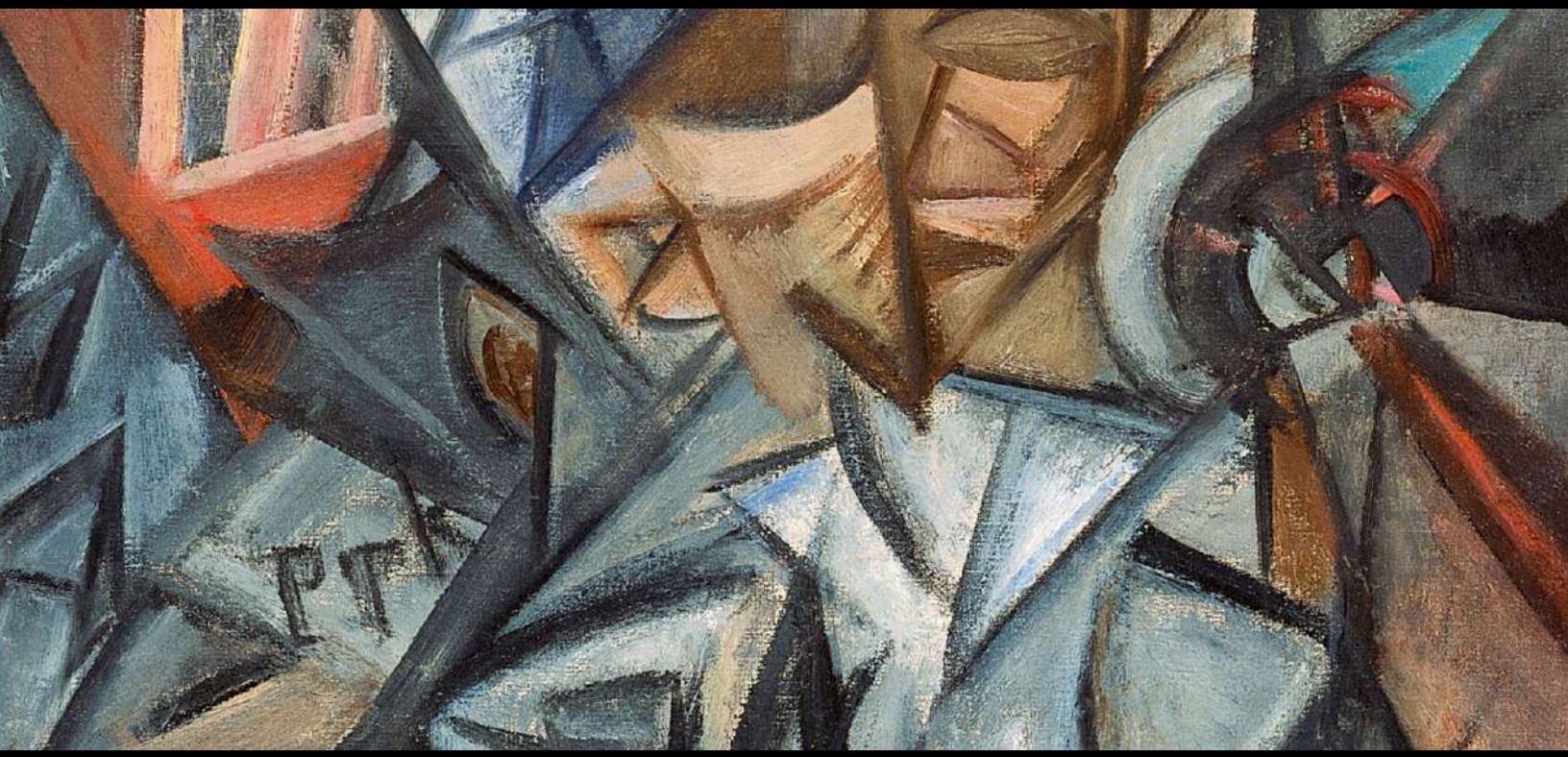

FIGURE 16.1 Consider the subject of this painting, *Man on the Street*, by Russian artist Olga Rozanova (1886–1918). Now, consider the way the subject is presented: cool colors, fragmented lines, distorted perspective. *What is the artist saying about the man on the street by presenting him in this way?* As soon as you begin to answer this question, you are analyzing a visual text. When you read a story, you might ask the following questions: *Why does this character act this way? How would the story be different if it were set in another time or place? What is the author saying about life in general? How does the author make these points?* When you begin to answer these questions about a work of fiction or literary nonfiction, you are analyzing a literary text. (credit: "Man on the Street (Analysis of Volumes)" by Olga Rozanova/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

CHAPTER OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION In the real world, you are surrounded by text—both visual and print. It appears in media,

advertising, and even text messages. Often, text is not one-dimensional, in the sense that words and the ways in which they are used or arranged can have different meanings depending on the relationship between the text and the reader. In such cases, a text is open to analysis and interpretation. Usually, there is no one right way to analyze and interpret a text; readers, like viewers, may understand elements in different ways and draw different conclusions. Whatever they are, however, will be the result of reading critically: examining parts of the text as they relate to the whole, supporting ideas with evidence, and drawing conclusions on the basis of analysis.

The practice of analysis will benefit you in several ways. It can help you enter an ongoing conversation with a new and fresh perspective. It also can help you understand meaning beyond the surface of a text—including historical contexts and cultures, new approaches to thinking, and new knowledge.

Although the word *text* tends to imply words, writing, or books, virtually all works created by human beings can be considered texts that are open to analysis—films, plays, music and dance performances, exhibits, paintings, photographs, sculptures, advertisements, artifacts, buildings, and even whole cultures. In this chapter, you will focus on the analysis of print texts. In Image Analysis: What You See, you will move to the analysis of visual and digital texts.

16.1 An Author's Choices: What Text Says and How It Says It

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Define *textual analysis* and explain its place in academic and real-world contexts.
- Identify the components of textual analysis and compare it to rhetorical analysis.
- Demonstrate critical thinking and communicating in various rhetorical contexts.

You may already be familiar with what is called **textual analysis** in academia. In fact, you do it frequently when you read or interact in other ways with language. It is important, though, to distinguish between what textual analysis *is* and what it is *not*. For example, imagine you and a friend have just finished watching a TV show or movie. You'll probably say whether you liked it and what in particular prompted your opinion. This brief and casual opinion-based conversation is just that, a casual conversation. It is *not* analysis, which goes far beyond liking or disliking a text. Perhaps you continue your conversation. *Do you and your friend agree that everything in the show is obvious and clear or is inconsistent and muddy—characters' motivations, their development over the course of the story, how the setting affects the story, the point the story is making, the extent to which the characters seem realistic or relatable, whether the dialogue seems natural, or any other elements? Or do you and your friend view some of these elements differently? Do you have different views about what you think is the main idea or what a character represents? For instance, do you think the main character represents a force of good, while your friend thinks the main character is a boring wimp?* If you agreed on everything—and everything seems straightforward—then that's that: the film offers little to interpret and most likely is not a strong text for analysis because it doesn't invite interpretation. However, if you *do* have questions about some of the elements or disagree about them, then you are on your way to analyzing and interpreting a text.

Analyzing and Interpreting

What exactly, then, is textual analysis? To analyze a text is to examine its various parts to explain its meaning. Analyzing a text implies that the text can be read in more than one way. Your analysis is your reading of it: your explanation of various text elements, your understanding of the text, and how you understand it in a larger context. Others may read and understand it differently. To find out what a text—fiction or nonfiction—means, you look at its language, examine how it is put together, perhaps compare or contrast it with similar texts or other works, and notice how it affects you or how it fits into events outside it, and you keep asking *why*. Always keep in mind, however, that a textual analysis is not about whether you like a text; it is about the meaning of the text—how the author created it and intended it to be understood.

Any written work can be analyzed as a text. But an editorial or opinion piece or something written, for

example, as part of an ongoing argument of viewpoints is more likely to be looked at for the rhetorical or persuasive strategies it employs to create or change an opinion. (This kind of rhetorical analysis is the focus of Rhetorical Analysis: Interpreting the Art of Rhetoric.) Literary works, whether fiction or nonfiction, film or text, print or digital, are those analyzed as texts. Their impact on real events in real life is likely less direct than that of rhetorical, or persuasive, writing, but many characters and themes that "live" in these works tend to exist for a very long time and are open to analysis as part of a person's growth and education—and even more, a part of and a reflection of the human condition.

Writers have many options when considering what to say and how to say it. The best texts for analysis are those that are most problematic—texts whose meanings seem elusive or complex—because these texts give you the most room to argue for one meaning over another. Like your goal in rhetorical analysis, your goal in textual analysis is to make the best possible case to demonstrate to readers that your analysis is reasonable and deserves serious attention. Remember, too, that *argument* in academic terms means taking a position and supporting it. Therefore, when you analyze a text, you take a position on an aspect (or several aspects) of that text and support it with evidence from the text itself and, if applicable, from borrowed sources, which you acknowledge.

Textual analysis is a complex task that draws on your critical reading, reasoning, and writing skills. Depending on your topic and thesis, you may have to describe real or fictional people and situations, retell events, define key terms, analyze passages and explain how they work in relation to the whole, and examine and interpret contexts and themes—perhaps by comparing or contrasting the text with other texts. Finally, you will "argue" for the meaning as you understand it, rather than another possible meaning. In other words, as you do for most academic writing, you develop a thesis and defend it with sound reasoning and convincing textual evidence.

16.2 Trailblazer

Textual Analysis Trailblazer: bell hooks

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate critical thinking and communicating in varying rhetorical and cultural contexts.
- Integrate the writer's ideas with ideas of others.

FIGURE 16.2 bell hooks (https://openstax.org/r/bell-hooks) (credit: "Bellhooks" by Cmongirl/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

"Writing and performing should deepen the meaning of words, should illuminate, transfix, and transform."

Talking Back

Born Gloria Jean Watkins, bell hooks adopted the name of her great-grandmother, a woman known for speaking her mind. In choosing this pen name, hooks decided not to capitalize the first letters so that audiences would focus on her work rather than her name. However, this stylistic choice has become as memorable as her work.

She is well known for her approach to social critique through textual analysis. The writing interests and research methods hooks uses are wide ranging. They began in poetry and fiction writing and eventually developed into critical analysis. She started writing at an early age, as her teachers (in the church) impressed on hooks the power in language. With this exposure to language, hooks began to understand the "sacredness of words" and began to write poetry and fiction. Over time, hooks's writing became more focused on advancing and reviving the texts of Black women and women of color, for even though "black women and women of color are publishing more… there is still not enough" writing by and about them. Texts live on through others' analyses, hooks argues. Therefore, she believes the critical essay "is the most useful form for the expression" between her thoughts and the books she is reading. The critical essay allows hooks to create a dialogue, or "talk back" to the text. The critical essay also extends "the conversations I have with other critical thinkers." It is this "talking back" that has advanced hooks's approach to literary criticism. This action, for which hooks eventually named a volume of essays, refers to the development of a strong sense of self that allows Black women to speak out against racism and sexism.

Although young hooks continued to write poetry—some of which was published—she gained a reputation as a writer of critical essays about systems of domination. She began writing her first book, *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism*, when she was 19 and an undergraduate student at Stanford University. The book is titled after Sojourner Truth's (1797–1883) "Ain't I a Woman" speech (https://openstax.org/r/Aint-I-a-Woman) given at the Woman's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, in 1851. In this work, hooks examines the effects of racism and sexism on Black women, the civil rights movement, and feminist movements from suffrage to the 1970s. By "talking back" to formerly enslaved abolitionist Sojourner Truth throughout, hooks identifies ways in which feminist movements have failed to focus on Black women and women of color. This work is one of many in which thorough analysis "uncovered" the lived experiences of Black women and women of color.

Discussion Questions

1. What are your thoughts about hooks's approach to analysis through "talking back" to a text? What might this approach look like in an essay or text: how might you "talk back"?
2. What purpose does hooks's approach to entering into conversation with other critical thinkers through critical analysis serve?
3. Much of hooks's work is based on her goal of "reviving" and "uncovering" historically marginalized women's voices. In what ways does critical analysis highlight the work of others?

16.3 Glance at Genre: Print or Textual Analysis

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Define key terms and organizational patterns of textual analysis.
- Explain how genre conventions are shaped by purpose, culture, and expectation.

As a **genre**—or literary category in which works feature similar forms, styles, or subject matter—textual analysis is less of a genre in itself and more of an exploration and interpretation of other genres. That is, textual analysis is explanatory and interpretive. When you receive an assignment to analyze a text, you focus on the elements that give it meaning. Usually your instructor will assign a specific writing task: to analyze and explain certain aspects of a text, to compare or contrast certain elements within a single text or in two or more texts, or to relate certain text elements to historical context or current events (as student writer Gwyn Garrison has done in the Annotated Student Sample). These writing tasks thus explore genre characteristics of fiction, drama, poetry, literary nonfiction, film, and other forms of literary language.

FIGURE 16.3 Like scientists who analyze components of a substance, writers of textual analysis examine a fiction or literary nonfiction work to understand and interpret its meaning by looking at its components. (credit: "Complexometric titration" by Alina.Popova.26/Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 4.0)

When you write a textual analysis, ask yourself questions such as these:

- In what ways can this text be read?
- What are some different ways of reading it?
- Which reading makes the most sense to me?
- Which passages in the text support this reading?
- Whom does my analysis need to convince? (Who is my audience?)

Textual Analysis and Interpretive Communities

How you read and analyze a text depends on who you are. Who you are depends on the influences that have shaped you, or the communities to which you belong. Everyone belongs to various communities: families, social and economic groups (e.g., students or teachers, middle or working class), organizations (e.g., Democratic or Republican Party, Masons, Habitat for Humanity), geographic locales (e.g., rural or urban, north or south), and institutions (e.g., school, church, fraternity). Your membership in one or more communities may determine how you view and respond to the world. The communities that influence you most are called **interpretive communities**; they influence the meaning you make of the world. People who belong to the same community may well have similar assumptions and therefore are likely to analyze texts in similar ways.

Before writing an interpretive or textual analysis essay, it is helpful to ask, *Who am I when writing this piece?* Be aware of your age, gender, race, ethnic identity, economic class, geographic location, educational level, or political or religious persuasion. Ask to what extent and for what purpose any of these identities emerges in your writing. Readers will examine the biases you may bring to your work, understanding that everyone views the world—and, consequently, texts—from their own vantage point.

College is, of course, a large interpretive community. The various smaller communities that exist within it are called disciplines: English, history, biology, business, art, and so on. Established ways of interpreting texts exist within disciplines. Often when you write a textual analysis, you will do so from the perspective of a traditional academic interpretive community or from the perspective of one who challenges that community.

Whether you deliberately identify yourself and any biases you might bring with you in your essay depends on the assignment you are given. Some assignments ask you to remove your personal perspective as much as possible from your writing, others ask that you acknowledge and explain it, and others fall somewhere in between.

FIGURE 16.4 The individuals in this group of student volunteers and staff represent both similar and different cultural and interpretive communities. (credit: “Alternative Spring Break (ASB) group from Rice University, volunteer

at Mason Neck State Park" by Virginia State Parks/Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 2.0)

Conventions of Textual Analysis

When asked to analyze or interpret a literary work, whether fiction or nonfiction, you will likely focus on some of these literary elements to explain how an author uses them to make meaning.

- **Alliteration:** literary device consisting of repetition of initial consonant sounds. ("Away from the steamy sidewalk, the children sat in a circle.")
- **Analysis:** close examination and explanation of a text, supported by reasoning and evidence.
- **Antagonist:** character or force opposing the main character (protagonist) in a story.
- **Climax:** moment of emotional or intellectual intensity or a point in the plot when one opposing force overcomes another and the conflict is resolved.
- **Epiphany:** flash of intuitive understanding by the narrator or a character in a story.
- **Figurative language:** language that suggests special meanings or effects. Similes and metaphors are examples of figurative, rather than literal, language. ("She stands like a tree, solid and rooted.")
- **Imagery:** language that appeals to one (or more) of the five senses. ("The cicadas hummed nonstop all day, but never loud enough to dull the roar of the leaf blowers.)
- **Metaphor:** direct comparison between two unlike things. ("She is a sly fox in her undercover work for the government.")
- **Narrator:** someone who tells a story. A character narrator is a part of the story, whereas an omniscient narrator tells a story about others.
- **Persona:** mask to disguise or cover the author's real self when presenting a story or other literary work.
- **Plot:** sequence of events in a story or play.
- **Point of view:** vantage point from which a story or event is perceived and told. The most frequently used points of view are first person and third person. In first person, the narrator is a character or observer in the story (fiction) or the author of it (nonfiction). In third person, the narrator has no part in the story other than telling it.
- **Protagonist:** main character or hero in a story.
- **Rhyme:** repetition of sounds, usually at the ends of lines in poems, but also occurring at other intervals in a line.
- **Rhythm:** rise and fall of stressed sounds within sentences, paragraphs, and stanzas.
- **Simile:** indirect comparison of unlike things using the word *as* or *like*. ("When he does undercover work, he is as sly as a fox.")
- **Symbol:** object that represents itself and something else at the same time. A red rose is both a rose of a certain color and the suggestion of something romantic.
- **Theme:** meaning or thesis of a literary text.

16.4 Annotated Student Sample: "Artists at Work" by Gwyn Garrison

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of how conventions are shaped by purpose, language, culture, and expectation.
- Demonstrate critical thinking and communicating in varying rhetorical and cultural contexts.
- Make connections between ideas and patterns of organization.
- Evaluate literary elements and strategies used in textual analysis.

Introduction

Student Gwyn Garrison wrote this textual analysis for a first-year composition class. In the essay, Garrison extends her analysis beyond the texts to discuss outside events and real individuals, making connections among them.

LIVING BY THEIR OWN WORDS

The Power of Language

Language is the medium through which the communication of ideas takes place. One of language's many attributes is its ability both to reflect and to shape social attitudes. Language has the power to perpetuate oppression when dominant social groups choose the ways in which rebellious behavior is described. Thus, people in power historically have used language as propaganda to perpetuate the ideas that they want to reiterate. For example, if a woman in modern society is described as *ladylike,* the message is that she conforms to traditional gender expectations of politeness, modesty, and deference. However, if a woman is called a *whore,* the message is that the woman does not conform to these traditional gender standards. In recent years, oppressed social groups have learned that they can reclaim the language of the oppressor by redefining such words and their connotations.

Gwyn Garrison uses reaction—reflection or thinking—to introduce the "big idea" of the thesis: language has the power to shape cultural and social attitudes.

> American authors such as Kate Chopin and Shirley Jackson, sociopolitical activists such as Hillary Clinton and Chrissy Teigen, and California rape survivor Chanel Miller— artists/writers in their own ways—take on this essential work of reclaiming language on behalf of all women. This confiscation of the tools of the oppressor is an essential step toward building a society in which women may be free to be who they are. Negative stereotypical labeling no longer has the effect of disempowering women because language can be reclaimed from the oppressor as a form of empowerment.

Garrison's thesis statement highlights her analytical approach. She makes a connection between women's rights and a series of texts by significant women.

> Writers can use the short story form to shift perception away from the lens of the status quo and focus perception in a new way. In Kate Chopin's 1898 short story "The Storm" (text follows this discussion), protagonist Calixta engages in a passionate extramarital affair with an old friend, Alcée. Readers may argue that Calixta's actions should be labeled as immoral by both societal and religious standards because she breaks the social and religious contract defined by her marriage vows. Yet every other action of Calixta's complies with traditional gender roles: she is a wife, mother, and caretaker. In some ways, committing this one social transgression seems completely out of character when she meets traditional gender expectations in all other areas of her life.

Garrison provides publication information as well as a brief plot summary and context for the story. You can read "The Storm" in its entirety at the end of this feature.

> When Calixta acts outside of societal norms, however, she discovers the freedom of self-expression and passion.

This transitional topic sentence supports the overall thesis while also identifying what the paragraph will be about.

> All parts of her womanhood that have no place in the society in which she lives have been repressed until this one moment. In this scene, Chopin takes possession of the term *whore* and redefines Calixta's behavior as a transformative awakening.

This explanation makes a reference to the language of the text and explains the significance of the scene as it relates to the entire story and to Garrison's thesis.

> Chopin's diction evokes a spiritual transcendence that allows Calixta to live momentarily outside social norms present only in the physical plane of existence: "when he possessed her, they seemed to swoon together at the very borderland of life's mystery."

Here, Garrison correctly cites textual evidence—an example of the protagonist's diction— to support her reasoning.

> The affair becomes a vehicle that allows Calixta to get to a place of true self-expression. The storm, an aspect of nature or the natural world, acts as the catalyst in Calixta's natural self-realization of womanhood. As the storm breaks externally, it also breaks internally for Calixta. Chopin's depiction of Calixta's sexual liberation and fulfillment outside of her marriage is an early step in the fight to bridge the gap between women's bodies and their sociopolitical lives. By presenting female sexuality in a way that is enlightening rather than degrading, Chopin helps destigmatize labels such as *whore,* which have been used to shame women for acting outside of traditional gender expectations.

Garrison further elaborates on the significance of the textual evidence and connects it to the topic sentence and thesis. In this case, it is the storm—an element of both plot and setting as well as a symbol.

> In Shirley Jackson's novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle,* Merricat and her sister Constance are rumored to be witches who, according to village gossip, eat children. The label of *witch* has long been a device to oppress women who do not conform to traditional gender roles. In Salem, Massachusetts, during the 17th-century witch trials, women who could read or write, who refused marriage, or who practiced alternative religions often were labeled as witches and burned to death.

Introducing a second text for comparison, Garrison revisits the idea of language reclamation introduced earlier.

> In Jackson's novel, Merricat embraces the notion of being labeled a witch. In fact, she facilitates the rumors by burying talismans, identifying magical words, and talking to her cat, Jonas. In contrast to the witch trials, Merricat burns her own house to rid it of her male cousin. And she survives the fire, purging herself and her sister of the family's patriarchal tendencies. By claiming the role of witch, Merricat insulates herself and her sister from their patriarchal family and society. In the end, Merricat creates a space where she and Constance can live together in a woman-centered territory outside the reach of the villagers.

Focusing on language and its implications, Garrison discusses the use of witch, a label the character is happy to embrace as a means of asserting her womanhood.

> With this story, Jackson does the important work of reclaiming the word *witch,* stripping it of its oppressive power and redefining it for womankind.

In the section that follows, Garrison moves outside literary texts and extends her analysis to language use in contemporary political situations, thus connecting literature with reality. Notice that Garrison has used the literary present tense in discussing both Chopin's and Jackson's fiction. She switches and uses mostly past tense now in discussing nonliterary events.

> Similarly, in a more recent political climate, former U.S. president Donald Trump employed stereotypical derogatory language against women whom he considered dissenters. He used phrases like "such a nasty woman" (Ali) to describe former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and "filthy mouthed wife" (@realDonaldTrump) to describe model Chrissy Teigen to try to shame women with social influence into submission. It is noteworthy, too, that he describes Teigen by her role in relation to a man rather than by her name, which would indicate her individuality. Both Clinton and Teigen, along with millions of women around the world, have worked to empower women by redefining such language. Almost immediately following the accusation of "such a nasty woman," women and girls around the country donned t-shirts and ball caps with the phrase, showing their pride in being "nasty" (Ali). In this context, the term came to describe women who speak truth to power. Although Teigen acknowledges that she had previously been blocked by Trump for trolling him, she shot back defiantly at him with a tweet that read in part: "lol what p— a— b—" (@chrissyteigen). Shortly thereafter, the phrase was trending as a Twitter hashtag (Butler). In this instance, people, particularly women, appreciated Teigen's ability to respond to female shaming with language that Trump himself was recorded using and that is also traditionally used to shame and degrade women. This time, however, it was directed toward a powerful man. This reclamation of power through language is one step women have taken to revise the social gender narrative for a modern context.

Again, Garrison introduces texts for comparison, bringing her argument regarding the reclamation of language into the modern day.

> After four years of being known as "the girl raped by Stanford swimmer Brock Turner," sexual assault survivor Chanel Miller has reclaimed the narrative of her story with the publication of her memoir *Know My Name.* After a Stanford University fraternity party in January 2015, Turner assaulted (with intent to rape) an intoxicated and unconscious Miller behind a dumpster at approximately 1:00 a.m. Some passing students interrupted the act, and Turner was taken by the police after the students restrained him. He was later brought to trial and found guilty. The sympathetic male judge sentenced Turner to only six months in county jail, from which he was released after three months for good behavior. When speaking on television to *60 Minutes* on September 22, 2019, Miller expressed outrage that media coverage during the trial had focused not on what Miller had already lost but on what Turner had to lose if found guilty—his education, his swimming career, his Olympic prospects (Miller). Because Miller remained anonymous during the trial, the media and Turner's lawyers controlled how she was perceived to the world—as a girl who got drunk and put herself into a compromising situation.

Garrison emphasizes the role of language in Miller's telling her story and ceasing to feel ashamed.

> This male-centric characterization of events left Miller feeling ashamed and disempowered. By writing her book and reclaiming her story, Miller took a vital step in healing and trauma management, emphasizing that she now controls the language of her narrative. She is not a girl who deserves what she got, as some would argue. Miller readily acknowledges she deserved a hangover for her actions, but never a rape.

Notice the switching of tenses to indicate events in the past and present. Notice, too, that Garrison returns to the literary present tense in the paragraph that follows.

> Miller's story is all too common in the college partying scene, and the regularity of such attacks contributes to the perpetuation of an environment in which women are made to feel responsible for being attacked and men are free to act as they choose. The awareness of Miller's story and, more importantly, her published story, reframe the narrative around rape culture so that the victims are not further victimized, as women work to educate men so that these attacks stop.

Garrison introduces a final contemporary text for comparison. By citing multiple texts across time, Garrison strengthens her argument.

> Artists and writers such as Chopin, Jackson, Clinton, Teigen, and Miller engage in the gritty work of social reform that cannot be achieved through any other medium because culture cannot change unless the language in which people talk about the culture changes. This socially reformed reality is conceived only from the creativity of intelligent minds that are able both to envision and then to describe the world as it is yet to exist. In this way, artists who work with the medium of language become the prophets.

This conclusion looks to the future, which is a productive rhetorical or persuasive technique to give the audience an idea about what they can take away from this project.

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Garrison follows MLA guidelines to cite her sources.

Discussion Questions

1. How might Gwyn Garrison have used action to introduce her thesis? Dialogue? Is reaction the best choice? Why or why not?
2. What reasoning does Garrison offer to support her thesis?
3. What textual evidence does Garrison offer to support her thesis?
4. How does Garrison connect literary elements—particularly language and character—with real-world events? Explain why you think these connections are valid or not.
5. Are you convinced or unconvinced of the validity of the thesis? Why or why not?

For Reference: "The Storm" by Kate Chopin (1850–1904)

FIGURE 16.5 American author Kate Chopin, 1894 (credit: "KATE O'FLAHERTY BEFORE HER MARRIAGE TO OSCAR CHOPIN" by J.A. Scholten/The State Historical Society of Missouri, Photograph Collection, Public Domain)

The leaves were so still that even Bibi thought it was going to rain. Bobinôt, who was accustomed to converse on terms of perfect equality with his little son, called the child's attention to certain sombre clouds that were rolling with sinister intention from the west, accompanied by a sullen, threatening roar. They were at Friedheimer's store and decided to remain there till the storm had passed. They sat within the door on two empty kegs. Bibi was four years old and looked very wise.

"Mama'll be 'fraid, yes," he suggested with blinking eyes.

"She'll shut the house. Maybe she got Sylvie helpin' her this evenin'," Bobinôt responded reassuringly.

"No; she ent got Sylvie. Sylvie was helpin' her yistiday," piped Bibi.

Bobinôt arose and going across to the counter purchased a can of shrimps, of which Calixta was very fond. Then he returned to his perch on the keg and sat stolidly holding the can of shrimps while the storm burst. It shook the wooden store and seemed to be ripping great furrows in the distant field. Bibi laid his little hand on his father's knee and was not afraid.

II

Calixta, at home, felt no uneasiness for their safety. She sat at a side window sewing furiously on a sewing machine. She was greatly occupied and did not notice the approaching storm. But she felt very warm and often stopped to mop her face on which the perspiration gathered in beads. She unfastened her white sacque at the throat. It began to grow dark, and suddenly realizing the situation she got up hurriedly and went about closing windows and doors.

Out on the small front gallery she had hung Bobinôt's Sunday clothes to dry and she hastened out to gather them before the rain fell. As she stepped outside, Alcée Laballière rode in at the gate. She had not seen him very often since her marriage, and never alone. She stood there with Bobinôt's coat in her hands, and the big rain drops began to fall. Alcée rode his horse under the shelter of a side projection where the chickens had huddled and there were plows and a harrow piled up in the corner.

"May I come and wait on your gallery till the storm is over, Calixta?" he asked.

"Come 'long in, M'sieur Alcée."

His voice and her own startled her as if from a trance, and she seized Bobinôt's vest. Alcée, mounting to the porch, grabbed the trousers and snatched Bibi's braided jacket that was about to be carried away by a sudden gust of wind. He expressed an intention to remain outside, but it was soon apparent that he might as well have been out in the open: the water beat in upon the boards in driving sheets, and he went inside, closing the door after him. It was even necessary to put something beneath the door to keep the water out.

"My! what a rain! It's good two years since it rain' like that," exclaimed Calixta as she rolled up a piece of bagging and Alcée helped her to thrust it beneath the crack.

She was a little fuller of figure than five years before when she married; but she had lost nothing of her vivacity. Her blue eyes still retained their melting quality; and her yellow hair, dishevelled by the wind and rain, kinked more stubbornly than ever about her ears and temples.

The rain beat upon the low, shingled roof with a force and clatter that threatened to break an entrance and deluge them there. They were in the dining room—the sitting room—the general utility room. Adjoining was her bedroom, with Bibi's couch alongside her own. The door stood open, and the room with its white, monumental bed, its closed shutters, looked dim and mysterious.

Alcée flung himself into a rocker and Calixta nervously began to gather up from the floor the lengths of a cotton sheet which she had been sewing.

"If this keeps up, *Dieu sait* if the levees goin' to stan it!" she exclaimed.

> "What have you got to do with the levees?"

> "I got enough to do! An' there's Bobinôt with Bibi out in that storm—if he only didn' left Friedheimer's!"

> "Let us hope, Calixta, that Bobinôt's got sense enough to come in out of a cyclone."

> She went and stood at the window with a greatly disturbed look on her face. She wiped the frame that was clouded with moisture. It was stiflingly hot. Alcée got up and joined her at the window, looking over her shoulder. The rain was coming down in sheets obscuring the view of far-off cabins and enveloping the distant wood in a gray mist. The playing of the lightning was incessant. A bolt struck a tall chinaberry tree at the edge of the field. It filled all visible space with a blinding glare and the crash seemed to invade the very boards they stood upon.

> Calixta put her hands to her eyes, and with a cry, staggered backward. Alcée's arm encircled her, and for an instant he drew her close and spasmodically to him.

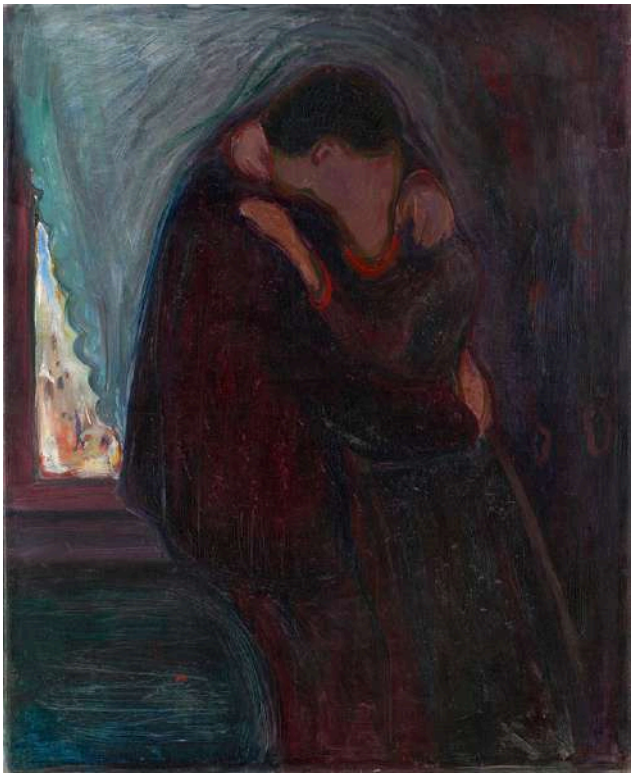

FIGURE 16.6 *The Kiss*, 1887, by Norwegian painter Edvard Munch (1863–1944) (credit: "Edvard Munch - The Kiss" by Google Art Project/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

> "Bonté!" she cried, releasing herself from his encircling arm and retreating from the window, "the house'll go next! If I only knew w'ere Bibi was!" She would not compose herself; she would not be seated. Alcée clasped her shoulders and looked into her face. The contact of her warm, palpitating body when he had unthinkingly drawn her into his arms, had aroused all the old-time infatuation and desire for her flesh.

> "Calixta," he said, "don't be frightened. Nothing can happen. The house is too low to be struck, with so many tall trees standing about. There! Aren't you going to be quiet? say, aren't you?" He pushed her hair back from her face that was warm and steaming. Her lips were as red and moist as pomegranate seeds. Her white neck and a glimpse of her full, firm bosom disturbed him powerfully. As she glanced up at him the fear in her liquid blue eyes had given place to a drowsy gleam that unconsciously betrayed a sensuous desire. He looked down into her eyes and there was nothing for him to do but to gather her lips in a kiss. It reminded him of Assumption.

> "Do you remember—in Assumption, Calixta?" he asked in a low voice broken by passion. Oh! she remembered; for in Assumption he had kissed her and kissed her; until his senses would well nigh fail, and to save her he would resort to a desperate flight. If she was not an immaculate dove in those days, she was still inviolate; a passionate creature whose very defenselessness had made her defense, against which his honor forbade him to prevail. Now—well, now—her lips seemed in a manner free to be tasted, as well as her round, white throat and her whiter breasts.

> They did not heed the crashing torrents, and the roar of the elements made her laugh as she lay in his arms. She was a revelation in that dim, mysterious chamber; as white as the couch she lay upon. Her firm, elastic flesh that was knowing for the first time its birthright, was like a creamy lily that the sun invites to contribute its breath and perfume to the undying life of the world. The generous abundance of her passion, without guile or trickery, was like a white flame which penetrated and found response in depths of his own sensuous nature that had never yet been reached.

> When he touched her breasts they gave themselves up in quivering ecstasy, inviting his lips. Her mouth was a fountain of delight. And when he possessed her, they seemed to swoon together at the very borderland of life's mystery.

> He stayed cushioned upon her, breathless, dazed, enervated, with his heart beating like a hammer upon her. With one hand she clasped his head, her lips lightly touching his forehead. The other hand stroked with a soothing rhythm his muscular shoulders.

> The growl of the thunder was distant and passing away. The rain beat softly upon the shingles, inviting them to drowsiness and sleep. But they dared not yield.

> The rain was over; and the sun was turning the glistening green world into a palace of gems. Calixta, on the gallery, watched Alcée ride away. He turned and smiled at her with a beaming face; and she lifted her pretty chin in the air and laughed aloud.

III

> Bobinôt and Bibi, trudging home, stopped without at the cistern to make themselves presentable.

> "My! Bibi, w'at will yo' mama say! You ought to be ashame'. You oughta' put on those good pants. Look at 'em! An' that mud on yo' collar! How you got that mud on yo' collar, Bibi? I never saw such a boy!" Bibi was the picture of pathetic resignation. Bobinôt was the embodiment of serious solicitude as he strove to remove from his own person and his son's the signs of their tramp over heavy roads and through wet fields. He scraped the mud off Bibi's bare legs and feet with a stick and carefully removed all traces from his heavy brogans. Then, prepared for the worst—the meeting with an over-scrupulous housewife, they entered cautiously at the backdoor.

> Calixta was preparing supper. She had set the table and was dripping coffee at the hearth. She sprang up as they came in.

> "Oh, Bobinôt! You back! My! but I was uneasy. W'ere you been during the rain? An' Bibi? he ain't wet? he ain't hurt?" She had clasped Bibi and was kissing him effusively. Bobinôt's explanations and apologies which he had been composing all along the way, died on his lips as Calixta felt him to see if he were dry, and seemed to express nothing but satisfaction at their safe return.

> "I brought you some shrimps, Calixta," offered Bobinôt, hauling the can from his ample side pocket and laying it on the table.

> "Shrimps! Oh, Bobinôt! you too good fo' anything!" and she gave him a smacking kiss on the cheek that resounded, "*J'vous réponds*, we'll have a feas' to-night! umph-umph!"

> Bobinôt and Bibi began to relax and enjoy themselves, and when the three seated themselves at table they laughed much and so loud that anyone might have heard them as far away as Laballière's.

IV

> Alcée Laballière wrote to his wife, Clarisse, that night. It was a loving letter, full of tender solicitude. He told her not to hurry back, but if she and the babies liked it at Biloxi, to stay a month longer. He was getting on nicely; and though he missed them, he was willing to bear the separation a while longer—realizing that their health and pleasure were the first things to be considered.

V

> As for Clarisse, she was charmed upon receiving her husband's letter. She and the babies were doing well. The society was agreeable; many of her old friends and acquaintances were at the bay. And the first free breath since her marriage seemed to restore the pleasant liberty of her maiden days. Devoted as she was to her husband, their intimate conjugal life was something which she was more than willing to forego for a while. So the storm passed and everyone was happy.

16.5 Writing Process: Thinking Critically About Text

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Develop a writing project focused on textual analysis.
- Complete the stages of the writing process, including generating ideas, drafting, reviewing, revising, rewriting, and editing.
- Integrate the writer's ideas with ideas of others.
- Collaborate in the peer review process.

When analyzing a text, writers usually focus on the content of the text itself and deliberately leave themselves in the background, minimizing personal presence and bias. To write this way, they avoid first-person pronouns and value judgments. In reality, of course, writers do reveal their presence by the choices they make: what they include, what they exclude, and what they emphasize. Although your own subjectivity and situation will likely affect your inferences and judgments, recognizing these potential biases will help you keep the focus on your subject and off yourself.

Summary of Assignment

Write an analytical essay about a short story or another short text of your choice, either fiction or literary nonfiction. If desired, you may choose "The Storm" by Kate Chopin, reprinted above. Consider the author's form and organization, tone, or stylistic choices, including diction and sensory or figurative language. You might also consider the historical or social context, the theme, the character development, or the relation between setting and plot or characterization. If you are free to choose your own text and topic, consider the following approaches:

- Analyze the literary components mentioned and focus your essay on their significance in the work.
- Like student author Gwyn Garrison, choose one or several components and examine how different authors use them and how they relate to broader contexts.

Convincing textual analysis essays usually include the following information:

- overview of the text, identifying author, title, and genre
- very brief summary
- description of the text's form and structure
- explanation of the author's point of view
- summary of the social, historical, or cultural context in which the work was written

- assertion or thesis about what the text means: your main task as an analyst

When writing about a novel or short story, explain how the main elements function:

- narrator (who tells the story)
- plot (what happens in the story)
- one or more characters (who are acting or being acted upon)
- setting (when and where things are happening)
- theme (the meaning of the story)

Keep in mind that the author who writes the story is different from the narrator and invented characters in it. Keep in mind, too, that what happens in the story—the plot—is different from the meaning of the story—the theme. Understanding what happens will help you discover what the text means.

The elements (https://openstax.org/r/elements) of literary or narrative nonfiction are similar to those of a fictional story *except* that everything in the text is supposed to have really happened. For this reason, the author and the narrator of the story may be one and the same. Informational nonfiction—essays, reports, and textbook chapters—is also meant to be believed; here, however, ideas and arguments must be strong and well supported to be convincing. When analyzing nonfiction, pay special attention to the author's thesis or claim and to how it is supported through reasoning and evidence. Also note interesting or unusual tone, style, form, or voice.

Another Lens 1. In writing from a personal or subjective viewpoint, the writer and their beliefs and experiences are necessarily part of your analysis and may need to be expressed and examined. For example, you may write subjectively and compare and contrast your situation with that of the author or a character. You might explain how your personal background causes you to read the text in a particular way that is meaningful to you. If you choose this option, be sure to analyze the text as you would for a more objective analysis before focusing on your personal views.

Another Lens 2. A leading contemporary example of narrative nonfiction writing is Jon Krakauer's (b. 1954) *Into the Wild* (https://openstax.org/r/Into-the-Wild), the story of Chris McCandless (1968– c. 1992), a young college graduate who lived at subsistence level in the backwoods of Alaska for 113 days. The text is somewhat similar thematically to Henry David Thoreau's (1817–1862) *Walden* (1854), written more than a century earlier and discussed later in this section. Both are about dropping out of society to create a meaningful life. After reading the excerpt of *Into the Wild* linked above, you may choose to write a textual analysis of it either on its own or in light of the sample analysis of Thoreau's writings later in this section. Consider comparing and contrasting McCandless's situation with Thoreau's life in Walden and how Krakauer and Thoreau use various literary elements in their writing. Topics for analysis might be setting, character traits, motives, cultural communities, historical context, and attitudes toward life and society.

Quick Launch: Start with Your Thesis

For textual analysis, your thesis should be a clear, concise statement that identifies your analytical stance on which readers will expect you to elaborate.

Develop a working thesis

A working thesis is referred to as such because the thesis is subject to revision. You may have to revisit it later in the writing process, for it is almost impossible to craft a thesis without having analyzed some of the text first. Your thesis, therefore, will come from the element(s) you choose to analyze, such as the following:

- an aspect or several aspects of form and structure and their significance
- social, historical, or cultural context in which the text was written and its significance
- style elements such as diction, imagery, or figurative language and their significance
- aspects of characters, plot, or setting

- overall theme of a single work or more than one work
- comparison or contrast of elements within one or more works
- relation to issues outside the text

To develop a working thesis, use the formula shown in Table 16.1, basing your answers on one of the bulleted items listed above.

What are you doing? + Why are you doing it?
What are you doing? Analyzing Kate Chopin's short story "The Storm"
+
Why are you doing it? "To argue that…"
=
In the short story "The Storm," author Kate Chopin uses linguistic variety to add to the character development.

TABLE 16.1

You can also start with an analytical question: *For what reason(s) does Chopin use linguistic variety?* Your initial answer might yield the thesis above. Or you can ask another analytical question, such as this one: *In what ways do the plot and setting of "The Storm" reinforce its theme?*

Drafting: Explore Possible Areas of Analysis for Fiction: Approach 1

Analytical essays (https://openstax.org/r/Analytical-essays) begin by answering basic questions: *What genre is this text—poem, play, story, biography, memoir, essay? What is its title? Who is the author? When was it published?*

Identify and Summarize the Text

In addition to the basic questions, analytical essays provide a brief summary of the plot or main idea. Summarize briefly, logically, and objectively to provide a background for what you plan to say about the text. This information may be incorporated into the introduction or may follow it.

Explain the Form and Organization

To analyze the organizational structure of a text, ask: *How is it put together? Why does the author start here and end there? Why does the author sequence information in this order? What connects the text from start to finish?* For example, by repeating words, ideas, and images, writers call attention to these elements and indicate that they are important to the meaning of the text. No matter what the text, some principle or plan holds it together and gives it structure. Fiction and nonfiction texts that tell stories are often, but not always, organized as a sequence of events in chronological order. Poems may have formal structures or other organizational elements. Other texts may alternate between explanations and examples or between first-person and third-person narrative. You will have to decide which aspects of the text's form and organization are most important for your analysis.

For example, this student analyzes the point of view of Gwendolyn Brooks's poem "We Real Cool (https://openstax.org/r/We-Real-Cool).".

> Gwendolyn Brooks writes "We Real Cool" (1963) from the point of view of members of a street gang who speak as one voice. The boys have dropped out of school to spend their lives hanging around pool halls—in this case "The Golden Shovel." These guys speak in slangy lingo, such as "Strike straight," that reveals their need for a melded identity in their rebellious attitude toward life. The plural speaker in the poem, "We," celebrates what adults might call adolescent hedonism—but the speaker, feeling powerful in the group identity, makes a conscious choice for a short, intense life over a long, safe, and dull existence.

Place the Work in Context

To analyze the context of a text, ask: *What circumstances (historical, social, political, biographical) produced this text? How does this text compare or contrast with another by the same author or with a similar work by a different author?* No text exists in isolation. Each was created by a particular author in a particular place at a particular time. Describing this context provides readers with important background information and indicates which conditions you think were most influential.

For example, this student analyzes the social context of Gwendolyn Brooks's poem "We Real Cool."

> From society's viewpoint, the boys are nothing but misfits—refusing to work, leading violent lives, breaking laws, and confronting police. However, these boys live in a society that is dangerous for Black men, who often die at the hands of police even when they are doing the right thing. The boys are hopeless, recognizing no future but death, regardless of their actions, and thus "Die soon."

Explain the Theme of the Text

To analyze the theme of a text, determine the implied theme in fiction, poetry, and narrative nonfiction. One purpose for writing a textual analysis is to point out the theme. Ask yourself: *So what? What is this text really about? What do I think the author is trying to say by writing this text? What problems, puzzles, or ideas are most interesting? In what ways do the characters change between the beginning and end of the text?* Good ideas for a thesis arise from material in which the meaning is not obviously stated.

For example, this student analyzes one theme of Gwendolyn Brooks's poem "We Real Cool."

> For the "Seven at the Golden Shovel," companionship is everything. For many teenagers, fitting in or conforming to a group identity is more important than developing an individual identity. Brooks expresses this theme through the poem's point of view, the plural "We" repeated at the end of each line.

Analyze Stylistic Choices

To analyze stylistic choices, examine the details of the text. Ask yourself: *Why does the author use this word or phrase instead of a synonym for it? In what ways does this word or phrase relate to other words or phrases? In what ways do the author's figurative comparisons affect the meaning or tone of the text? In what ways does use of sensory language (imagery) affect the meaning or tone of the text? In what ways does this element represent more than itself? In what ways does the author use sound or rhythm to support meaning?*

For example, this student analyzes the diction of Gwendolyn Brooks's poem "We Real Cool."

> Brooks chooses the word *cool* to open the poem and build the first rhyme. Being cool is the code by which the boys live. However, the word *cool* also suggests the idiom "to be placed 'on ice,'" a term that suggests a delay. The boys live in a state of arrested development, anticipating early deaths. In addition, the term *to ice* someone means "to kill," another reference to the death imagery at poem's end. The boys are not suggesting suicide; they expect to be killed by members of society who find them threatening.

Support Your Analysis

Analytical interpretations (https://openstax.org/r/Analytical) are built around evidence from the text itself.

You'll note the quotations in the examples above. Summarize larger ideas in your own language to conserve space. Paraphrase more specific ideas, also in your own words, and quote directly to feature the author's diction. See Editing Focus: Paragraphs and Transitions and Writing Process: Integrating Research for more information about summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting directly. If you include outside information for support, comparison, or contrast, document the sources carefully: MLA Documentation and Format.

Use a graphic organizer such as Table 16.2 to gather ideas for drafting.

Genre	Analysis	Your Ideas
If you've chosen to analyze poetry,	Consider the role of... Word choice (imagery) Structure of lines and stanzas Sound (meter, rhyme, rhythm) Figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification)	Why does the author... ? What is the effect on meaning, tone, or audience?
If you've chosen to analyze drama,	Consider the role of... Characters and dialogue Setting Plot and conflict Theme Structure of acts, scenes, and stage directions	Why does the author... ? What is the effect on meaning, tone, or audience?
If you've chosen to analyze fiction or narrative nonfiction,	Consider the role of... Characters (narrator or author in narrative nonfiction) Setting Plot (or real events in narrative nonfiction) and conflict Theme Diction Structure (chronology, flashback or forward, foreshadowing, chapters)	Why does the author... ? What is the effect on meaning, tone, or audience?

TABLE 16.2 Ideas for drafting a textual analysis essay

Drafting: Explore Possible Areas of Analysis for Literary Nonfiction: Approach 2

Although similar to fiction, narrative or literary nonfiction has a basic orientation toward exposition: relating real events in a creative way rather than inventing fictional events and characters. In reading and analyzing expository prose, you also may encounter literary language, narrative structure, characters, setting, theme, and plot development, depending on the type of prose. Therefore, your approach to analyzing nonfiction will call on many of the same strategies you use to analyze fiction. Two basic differences, however, are that literary nonfiction may have less dialogue, depending on the genre, and that the author and narrator may be the same. In other words, no intermediary or artistic filter may exist between the author and the work. The nonfiction author is assumed to be speaking a truth, which may be serious, comic, controversial, or neutral. Fictional characters, on the other hand, are creations of an author's mind; they think and speak as they were created to do.

Planning the Essay

In writing your essay, you will need to present the same kinds of text evidence as you would when analyzing fiction to give credibility to your claims and to support your thesis. And you'll need to keep in mind the rhetorical situation—purpose, audience, stance, context, and culture—as well, for it remains the building block of an effective analysis. As in most academic essays, body paragraphs refer to the thesis through topic sentences and move consistently toward supporting it before you finally arrive at a convincing conclusion that has grown out of the analysis. In nonfiction, because you assume you are dealing with a truthful explanation of facts and views, your task should be to give a new view and understanding of something that already may be familiar to readers. In writing your analysis, consider the following plan:

- Begin your analysis of nonfiction with an introductory overview in which you include the work's genre, title, author, and publication date.
- Identify the literary point of view, if relevant: first person—*I* or plural *we*—or third-person—*he, she*, or *they*.
- Continue with a brief summary of the work, and place it in context: the work's social, historical, and cultural background will help readers follow your points about its theme.
- Present your thesis near the end of the introduction. It should be argumentative, in an academic sense, so that you can "prove" your points.
- Support your thesis with well-elaborated body paragraphs, as you do with all thesis-based writing. Include paraphrases, summaries, and quotations from the text (and outside sources, if you do research for the assignment). Body paragraphs support the topic sentences, which in turn support the thesis.
- Conclude by restating your thesis (using different words and an appropriate transition). Add a general statement about the work and its significance or, if applicable, its relation to culture, history, current events, art, or anything else outside it.

Use the applicable suggestions in Table 16.3 in planning your essay (https://openstax.org/r/planning):

Title	
Introduction	Title(s), author(s), publication date(s), historical context, summary, thesis
Body paragraphs (as many as needed; minimum of 3)	Transition Claims and supporting evidence: your ideas, paraphrases and/or quotations from text
Counterclaim (if any)	Addressing opposing or negative ideas
Conclusion	Restatement of thesis, broader generalization

TABLE 16.3 Literary nonfiction planner

Literary Nonfiction Model

A frequent theme in literary nonfiction is the examination of alternative ways of living, often solitary and away from society, and finding truth in individualism and self-sufficiency. Although most people live in social groups and willingly accept the identity and security that communities offer, dropping out and going it alone have long been a part of emotional as well as physical life for some.

You have the option to analyze the nonfiction accounts of writers exploring solitary human behavior in American life. If you select **Another Lens 2**, you will read an excerpt from the story of Chris McCandless (1968–c. 1992), who chose a brief and uncomfortable solitary existence in Alaska. Or you can read the following section dealing with the works of Henry David Thoreau, the American philosopher and author who dropped out of society temporarily, largely because of his strong opposition to government policies he believed to be morally wrong and because of his refusal to conform to social practices and expectations he found objectionable.

Introduction

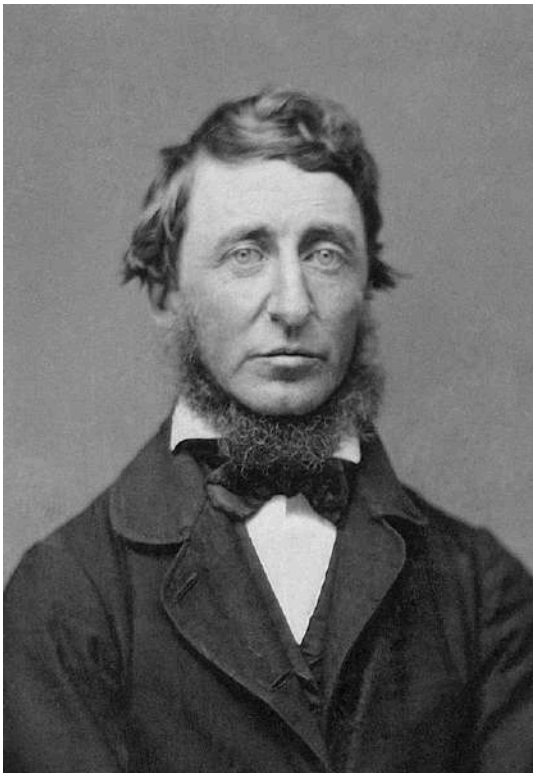

FIGURE 16.7 Henry David Thoreau, American naturalist, philosopher, and writer (credit: "Henry David Thoreau - Restored – greyscale" by Benjamin Maxham [1821–1899]/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862) is best known as a thinker and writer on nature, as reflected in his two famous works, the highly influential Civil Disobedience (https://openstax.org/r/Civil-Disobedience) (1849) and *Walden; or, Life in the Woods* (1854). Both works celebrate individual freedoms: the right to protest against what one believes is morally or ethically wrong and the choice to live as one believes. In describing his life over a period of precisely two years, two months, and two days in a 10-by-15-foot cabin he built on Walden Pond, 20 miles northwest of Boston near Concord, Massachusetts, Thoreau wrote:

> I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately [carefully, unhurried], to front [confront] only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practise resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life.

Thoreau's insistence on standing by his principles and on living a simple life by choice are two abiding themes in his work. Even before the physical move to Walden, Thoreau had refused to pay his poll tax (granting him the right to vote) for a number of years because he strongly objected to the government's use of his money to support enslavement and the war with Mexico. He went peacefully to jail as a result, untll he was bailed out (the next day). In "Civil Disobedience," Thoreau advocates for more individual freedom and for individuals to defy unjust laws in nonviolent ways. His writings on "passive resistance" inspired the thoughts and actions of influential figures such as Indian leader Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948), American religious and civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929–1968), and other leaders of nonviolent liberation movements. In *Walden*, Thoreau describes and advocates for a simple life in which a person breaks with society when they feel the need to express their individualism, often based on ideas others do not share.

These themes are the focus of analysis in the following excerpts from an essay by student Alex Jones for a first-year composition class.

> **The Two Freedoms of Henry David Thoreau by Alex Jones**

> Henry David Thoreau led millions of people throughout the world to think of individual freedom in new ways. During his lifetime he attempted to live free of unjust governmental restraints as well as conventional social expectations. In his 1849 political essay "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience," he makes his strongest case against governmental interference in the lives of citizens. In his 1854 book *Walden; or Life in the Woods*, he makes the case for actually living free, as he did in his own life, from social conventions and expectations.

The title clearly identifies Thoreau and sets the expectation that two aspects or definitions of freedom will be discussed in two different works. Alex Jones wants readers to know that millions of people worldwide figure in Thoreau's legacy. He gives the examples of "unjust governmental restraints" and "conventional social expectations" as the parts of social life Thoreau rejected, thus limiting the scope of the analysis and preparing for the body of the essay.

Jones notes the titles and publication dates of both works and immediately moves ahead to analyze the two works, "Civil Disobedience" first. He will show how this political statement leads to the narrative of Walden, the actual story of a man's life in temporary exile.

> Thoreau opens "Civil Disobedience" with his statement "that government is best which governs not at all."

The analysis moves immediately to the first work to be discussed and features the memorable quotation regarding a government that does not govern. The statement may seem contradictory, but for Thoreau it is a direct statement in that someone who allows himself to be imprisoned will find freedom by distancing himself from all others to prove his point.

> He argues that a government should allow its people to be as free as possible while providing for their needs without interfering in daily life. In other words, in daily life a person attends to the business of eating, sleeping, and earning a living and not dealing in any noticeable way with an entity called "a government."

Jones repeats "in daily life" to give a rhythm to his own prose and to emphasize the importance to Thoreau of daily activities that are simple and meaningful. The word government is repeated for emphasis as the negative subject of this essay—in literary terms, a powerful and constant antagonist that constrains and disempowers.

> Because Thoreau did not want his freedom overshadowed by government regulations, he tried to ignore them. However, the American government of 1845 would not let him. He was arrested and put in the Concord jail for failing to pay his poll tax, a tax he believed unjust because it supported the government's war with Mexico as well as the immoral institution of slavery. Instead of protesting his arrest, he celebrated it and explained its meaning by writing "Civil Disobedience," one of the most famous English-language essays ever written. In it, he argues persuasively, "Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison" (230). Thus, the idea of passive resistance—and accepting unjust arrest to make a point—was formed, a doctrine that advocated protest against the government by nonviolent means:
>
> > How does it become a man to behave toward this American government today? I answer that he cannot without disgrace be associated with it. I cannot for an instant recognize that political organization as my government which is the slave's government also. (224)

Jones strengthens his own writing by calling the essay one of the most famous works ever written. This is not an ordinary technique in textual analysis, but when done for emphasis, it helps the analysis gain power. Using "instead of protesting" at the start of his sentence is another example of strong contrast and linkage.

> For nearly 200 years, Thoreau's formulation of passive resistance has been a part of the human struggle for freedom. In fact, it changed the world by inspiring the resistance movements led by Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

The total effect is to make Jones's analytical essay more important for readers, as Thoreau's writings have indeed changed the world despite being written humbly as the voice of one man's conscience and isolation in his own freedom.

> Thoreau also wanted to be free from the everyday pressures to conform to society's expectations.

Jones transitions from the first short work to the different and equally famous nonfiction narrative Walden, moving smoothly from one freedom to the next with the transition "also wanted." This second analysis of freedom is the second part of the essay's thesis.

> He believed in doing and possessing only the essential things in life. To demonstrate his case, in 1845, he moved to the outskirts of Concord, Massachusetts, and lived by himself for just over two years in a cabin he built at Walden Pond. Thoreau wrote *Walden* to explain the value of living simply, far removed from the unnecessary complexity of society: "simplicity, simplicity, simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand" (66). At Walden, he lived as much as possible by this statement, building his own house and furniture, growing his own food, bartering for simple necessities, and attending to his own business rather than seeking employment from others.

Jones uses textual evidence to support his claim. He summarizes Thoreau's activities at Walden and quotes Thoreau as evidence to reinforce the freedom of mind that simple living allows.

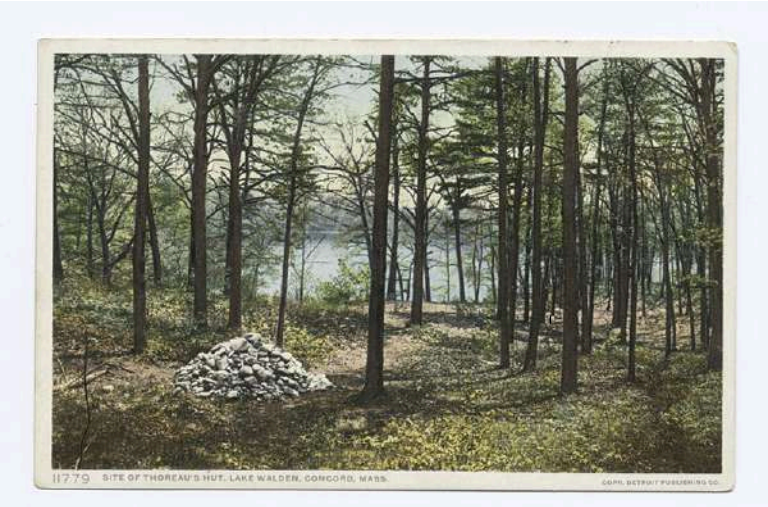

FIGURE 16.8 Setting for Thoreau's cabin at Walden Pond near Concord (credit: "Site of Thoreau's Hut, Concord, Mass" by Detroit Publishing Company/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

> Living at Walden Pond gave Thoreau the chance to formulate many of his ideas about living an unencumbered, economical life. At Walden, he lived simply to "front only the essential facts of life" (66) and to center his thoughts on "living" instead of on unnecessary details of mere livelihood. He developed survival skills that freed him from the constraints of city dwellers whose lives depended upon a web of material things and services provided by others. He preferred to "take rank hold on life and spend my day more as animals do" (117).

Jones uses the poetic language of high rhetoric directly from Thoreau. The body of the essay gives specific evidence of how Thoreau ate, built, read, and provided for his needs, cutting away all but the essential man in the two settings of his life.

> While living at Walden Pond, Thoreau was free to occupy his time in any way that pleased him, which for him meant mostly writing and tending his bean patch. The details of his gardening appear frequently, as he concentrated on it during his time there. He wasn't troubled by a boss hounding him with deadlines or a wife and children who needed his attention. His neighbors accused him of being selfish and did not understand that he sought most of all "to live deliberately" (66), as he felt all people should learn to do.

> Then, as now, most people had more responsibilities than Thoreau had and could not just pack up their belongings and go live in the woods—if they could find free woods to live in. Today, people are intrigued to read about Thoreau's experiences and are inspired by his thoughts, but few people can actually live or do as he suggests. The idea of life without cell phones or Internet seems inconceivable, even if one grows one's own food and lives mostly off the grid.

The next-to-last paragraph recognizes what could be a counterclaim: not everyone in contemporary times would view living alone for two years as a pleasure. Rather, they might see it as a different kind of prison, perhaps even a dangerous one. Indeed, such deprivation has less appeal these days, and people who do go off by themselves may be seen to have questionable motives.

> The theme of exploring how a man lives in or outside governmental control is clear in the choices he must make to define himself as a free person. Nevertheless, practical or not, Thoreau's writings about freedom from government and society have inspired countless people to reassess how they live their lives. Though unable to live as Thoreau advocated, readers everywhere remain inspired by his ideals and his belief in the two freedoms.

Jones concludes by emphasizing the strength of Thoreau's ideas—his two freedoms—and the influence they have had in the world.

Review the Essay

After reading Alex Jones's essay, complete the following sentences to review his work:

- He identifies and summarizes the content by _____.
- He describes the form and structure of Thoreau's works when _____.
- He places Thoreau and his works in context by _____.
- He clearly states his own theme in reading Thoreau, which is _____.
- He indicates Thoreau's unusual language at times, such as _____.
- He gives supporting evidence for his points, such as _____.
- He includes a visual to _____.
- He concludes with a balanced and convincing viewpoint by _____.

FIGURE 16.9 Contemporary replica of Thoreau's cabin and statue of Thoreau (credit: "Walden pond - Thoreau's house" by Luigi Franchini/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

For Reference: excerpt from *Walden (https://openstax.org/r/Civil-Disobedience)* by Henry David Thoreau *from* "Where I Lived and What I Lived For"

> When first I took up my abode in the woods, that is, began to spend my nights as well as days there, which, by accident, was on Independence Day, or the Fourth of July, 1845, my house was not finished for winter, but was merely a defense against the rain, without plastering or chimney, the walls being of rough, weather-stained boards, with wide chinks, which made it cool at night. The upright white hewn studs and freshly planed door and window casings gave it a clean and airy look, especially in the morning, when its timbers were saturated with dew, so that I fancied that by noon some sweet gum would exude from them. To my imagination it retained throughout the day more or less of this auroral character, reminding me of a certain house on a mountain which I had visited the year before. This was an airy and unplastered cabin, fit to entertain a travelling god, and where a goddess might trail her garments. The winds which passed over my dwelling were such as sweep over the ridges of mountains, bearing the broken strains, or celestial parts only, of terrestrial music....

> The only house I had been the owner of before, if I except a boat, was a tent, which I used occasionally when making excursions in the summer, and this is still rolled up in my garret; but the boat, after passing from hand to hand, has gone down the stream of time. With this more substantial shelter about me, I had made some progress toward settling in the world. This frame, so slightly clad, was a sort of crystallization around me, and reacted on the builder. It was suggestive somewhat as a picture in outlines. I did not need to go outdoors to take the air, for the atmosphere within had lost none of its freshness. It was not so much within doors as behind a door where I sat, even in the rainiest weather. The Harivansa [important Sanskrit text] says, "An abode without birds is like a meat without seasoning." Such was not my abode, for I found myself suddenly neighbor to the birds; not by having imprisoned one, but having caged myself near them....

> For the first week, whenever I looked out on the pond it impressed me like a tarn high up on the side of a mountain, its bottom far above the surface of other lakes, and, as the sun arose, I saw it throwing off its nightly clothing of mist, and here and there, by degrees, its soft ripples or its smooth reflecting surface was revealed, while the mists, like ghosts, were stealthily withdrawing in every direction into the woods, as at the breaking up of some nocturnal conventicle. The very dew seemed to hang upon the trees later into the day than usual, as on the sides of mountains.

> This small lake was of most value as a neighbor in the intervals of a gentle rain storm in August, when, both air and water being perfectly still, but the sky overcast, mid-afternoon had all the serenity of evening, and the wood-thrush sang around, and was heard from shore to shore. A lake like this is never smoother than at such a time; and the clear portion of the air above it being shallow and darkened by clouds, the water, full of light and reflections, becomes a lower heaven itself so much the more important. From a hill top nearby, where the wood had been recently cut off, there was a pleasing vista southward across the pond, through a wide indentation in the hills which form the shore there, where their opposite sides sloping toward each other suggested a stream flowing out in that direction through a wooded valley, but stream there was none. That way I looked between and over the near green hills to some distant and higher ones in the horizon, tinged with blue. Indeed, by standing on tiptoe I could catch a glimpse of some of the peaks of the still bluer and more distant mountain ranges in the north-west, those true-blue coins from heaven's own mint, and also of some portion of the village. But in other directions, even from this point, I could not see over or beyond the woods which surrounded me. It is well to have some water in your neighborhood, to give buoyancy to and float the earth. One value even of the smallest well is, that when you look into it you see that earth is not continent but insular. This is as important as that it keeps butter cool. When I looked across the pond from this peak toward the Sudbury meadows, which in time of flood I distinguished elevated perhaps by a mirage in their seething valley, like a coin in a basin, all the earth beyond the pond appeared like a thin crust insulated and floated even by this small sheet of interverting water, and I was reminded that this on which I dwelt was but *dry land*.

> We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep. I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor. It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful; but it is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts. Every man is tasked to make his life, even in its details, worthy of the contemplation of his most elevated and critical hour. If we refused, or rather used up, such paltry information as we get, the oracles would distinctly inform us how this might be done.

> I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practise resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have *somewhat hastily* concluded that it is the chief end of man here to "glorify God and enjoy him forever."

> Still we live meanly, like ants; though the fable tells us that we were long ago changed into men; like pygmies we fight with cranes; it is error upon error, and clout upon clout, and our best virtue has for its occasion a superfluous and evitable wretchedness. Our life is frittered away by detail. An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers, or in extreme cases he may add his ten toes, and lump the rest. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumb nail. In the midst of this chopping sea of civilized life, such are the clouds and storms and quicksands and thousand-and-one items to be allowed for, that a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom and not make his port at all, by dead reckoning, and he must be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify, simplify. Instead of three meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one; instead of a hundred dishes...

> Why should we live with such... waste of life? We are determined to be starved before we are hungry. Men say that a stitch in time saves nine, and so they take a thousand stitches to-day to save nine to-morrow.

Peer Review:

After you have completed your first draft, exchange essays with a partner for peer review. Look at the questions you answered to address the essay about Thoreau. Then, to provide helpful feedback, answer these questions about your peer's draft.

1. Does the introduction include the author, title of the work, publication date, historical context, and a brief summary?
2. What is your peer's main claim, or thesis? Is it clearly stated? If not, how might your peer clarify it?
3. Is the thesis effectively supported throughout the essay? How does each paragraph support the thesis? What evidence does each contain? Has the writer included direct quotations, paraphrases, and summary as relevant and convincing support? Is there enough information to sustain the writer's claims? How might the author improve their support? In working on this section, go through each body paragraph separately for these criteria.
4. Does the analysis address counterclaims? If not, how might the writer include them?
5. Which sentence or sentences restate the thesis? If a restatement is not there, what might the writer include?

Revising:

Once you have feedback from a peer, consider their suggestions. Read all comments, and think carefully before making changes.

- **Use your discretion**. Sometimes writers do not agree with their peers' suggestions; indeed, authors do not always revise everything suggested by editors. However, it is important to clarify what might have prompted a response from a peer, such as "This seems like more of an unsupported opinion than text-based evidence." Here you might consider including a source citation either from the text or from an outside resource, or consider further explaining your claim. However, if you think your peer reviewer

misinterpreted or read your claim superficially, do not revise it. At all times, though, maintain ownership. It is your paper; you are the ultimate judge of whether the ideas in it represent you and your views. Never include someone else's idea in your paper if you do not understand it or believe it. Whether or not you decide to revise, be sure to read and consider all suggestions carefully.

- **Focus on global suggestions first.** Global feedback applies to your entire paper. You may have to revise your topic or thesis so that your paper meets assigned guidelines or does what it should. It is important to revise global feedback first, for these revisions might necessitate changes in content and organization, among other things.
- **Complete a close revision.** Check your paper to revise for clarity at the sentence level, and double-check citations, if you have them, for accuracy and style.

Student Revision Model

Below is a paragraph from the first draft of Gwyn Garrison's paper. It was reviewed by a peer, who made the suggestions indicated. First, read the draft. Next, read the reviewer's suggestions and consider whether you would accept or reject each one. Then, read the paragraph as it appears in the final version. After each suggestion, consider why you think Gwyn Garrison accepted or rejected the reviewer's comment.

Original Draft

> When Calixta acts outside of societal norms, she discovers the freedom of self-expression and passion. Chopin's diction evokes a spiritual transcendence that allows Calixta to exist momentarily outside social norms that exist only in the physical plane of existence: "when he possessed her, they seemed to swoon at the very borderland of life's mystery." The affair becomes a vehicle that allows Calixta to get to a place of true self-expression. The storm, an aspect of nature or the natural world, acts as the catalyst in Calixta's natural self-realization of womanhood. The storm breaks externally and internally for Calixta. Chopin's depiction of Calixta's sexual liberation and fulfillment outside of her marriage is an early step in the fight to bridge the gap between women's bodies and their sociopolitical lives. By presenting female sexuality in a way that is enlightening rather than degrading, Chopin helps destigmatize labels such as *whore,* which have been used to shame women for acting outside of traditional gender expectations.

Peer Reviewer's Comments

1. A transition would help link this paragraph with the previous one.
2. At the beginning of the paragraph, after the first sentence, add a short description or explanation of what is happening in the scene.
3. The quotation from the text doesn't help explain your claim. Anyway, you left out a word.
4. Perhaps you could add a quotation about the storm.
5. Can you clarify the relationship between the storm and Calixta's self-realization?

Final Version

> When Calixta acts outside of societal norms, **however**, she discovers the freedom of self-expression and passion. **All of the parts of her womanhood that have no place in the society in which she lives have been repressed until this one moment. In this scene, Chopin takes possession of the term *whore* and redefines Calixta's behavior as a transformative awakening.** Chopin's diction evokes a spiritual transcendence that allows Calixta to exist momentarily outside social norms that exist only in the physical plane of existence: "when he possessed her, they seemed to swoon together at the very borderland of life's mystery." The affair becomes a vehicle that allows Calixta to get to a place of true self-expression. The storm, an aspect of nature or the natural world, acts as the catalyst in Calixta's natural self-realization of womanhood. As the storm breaks externally, it also breaks internally for Calixta. Chopin's depiction of Calixta's sexual liberation and fulfillment outside of her marriage is an early step in the fight to bridge the gap between women's bodies and their sociopolitical lives. By presenting female sexuality in a way that is enlightening rather than degrading, Chopin helps destigmatize labels such as *whore,* which have been used to shame women for acting outside of traditional gender expectations.

16.6 Editing Focus: Literary Works Live in the Present

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Apply methods commonly used for analysis and interpretation in writing.
- Demonstrate competent use of the literary present tense in textual analysis.

Although some texts may have been written years ago, they live in the present. This expression means that when you analyze a literary text such as a story, play, poem, or novel, you use a form of the present tense in your discussion. Narration in the story may be in the past tense—the narrator tells the story as though it has already happened—but your discussion of the literary work is done in the present tense. Characters *do* this or *say* that. The leaves *fall* or the wind is *howling*, even though in the text, the leaves *fell* and the wind *was howling*. Your discussion nevertheless remains in the present tense. Also, when discussing the author in relation to the literary text, use the present tense, even if the author is no longer living or wrote the text in the past. Look at these examples:

Incorrect: The narrator *stated* that the time is now.
Correct: The narrator *states* that the time is now.
Incorrect: Kate Chopin *seemed* to sympathize with Calixta.
Correct: Kate Chopin *seems* to sympathize with Calixta.
Incorrect: At the end, Clarisse *was* happy to remain ignorant about her husband and Calixta.
Correct: At the end, Clarisse *is* happy to remain ignorant about her husband and Calixta.

Use the Literary Present Tense with Consistency

Although the present tense is used in literary discussions and references to literary texts, some instances will occur in which you have to distinguish between times of events. Thus, using the present tense may not apply to all actions within a text. The characters within a text often have done something, or something has happened, in the past—before the action of the story. In such cases, refer to these past actions in the past tense. Also, use the past tense when referring to the author and events in the author's life that do not relate directly to the text. See the examples below:

Incorrect: Kate Chopin *is* born in 1850.
Correct: Kate Chopin *was* born in 1850.
Incorrect: Alcée *reminds* Calixta of what *happens* in Assumption years ago.
Incorrect: Alcée *reminded* Calixta of what *happened* in Assumption years ago.
Correct: Alcée *reminds* Calixta of what *happened* in Assumption years ago.

When revising and editing your textual analysis, review it for consistency and clarity in literary present tense when you discuss the text, events within the text, and the author's relationship to it. Use the past tense, however, when dealing with information outside the text, such as historical context or events related to the author's life. Be sure to distinguish between past and present events by using the correct tense. For more about the **literary present tense**, see Verbs.

16.7 Evaluation: Self-Directed Assessment

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Apply formats and design features for different kinds of texts.
- Assess your writing for language, clarity, coherence, and rhetorical choices, and by using a rubric.

Many writers find it difficult to assess their own work. Therefore, they rely on insights from someone outside of the process. While such insights may be useful in helping writers find their way, writers can review their own work either before someone else does or when outside reviewers are unavailable.

As a student writer, you might choose to read your work aloud or print the work in hard copy to read in a different medium. Close to the end of the process is a good time to conduct a self-directed assessment to note whether the points made, the organization, the tone, and the style of the work are helping you achieve goals for the project, whether personal, professional, or academic. You might think of this process as a type of reverse outlining, as you go back to the basic structure of your writing. Based on your rubric or evaluative criteria, create points to check on your own.

Rubric

Score	Critical Language Awareness	Clarity and Coherence	Rhetorical Choices
5 **Skillful**	The text always adheres to the "Editing Focus" of this chapter: using the literary present tense as discussed in Section 16.6. The text also shows ample evidence of the writer's intent to consciously meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	All paragraphs in the paper reflect its purpose, stated in the thesis, and allow for a thorough analysis of a literary work. The overall organization is clear, and ideas are connected with effective transitions. Paragraphs have topic sentences and proceed logically from them to support the thesis.	The tone and language choices are well suited to the audience and purpose. The work reflects thought, fairness, general comprehension, and keen awareness of the rhetorical situation.

TABLE 16.4

Score	Critical Language Awareness	Clarity and Coherence	Rhetorical Choices
4 Accomplished	The text usually adheres to the "Editing Focus" of this chapter: using the literary present tense as discussed in Section 16.6. The text also shows some evidence of the writer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	Most paragraphs in the paper reflect its purpose, stated in the thesis, and allow for a strong analysis of a literary work. The overall organization is clear, and most ideas are connected with transitions. Most paragraphs have topic sentences and proceed logically from them to support the thesis.	The tone and language choices are usually well suited to the audience and purpose. The work reflects thought, fairness, comprehension, and reasonable awareness of the rhetorical situation.
3 Capable	The text generally adheres to the "Editing Focus" of this chapter: using the literary present tense as discussed in Section 16.6. The text also shows limited evidence of the writer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	Some paragraphs in the paper reflect its purpose, which may be stated in the thesis, and may not provide a strong focus for analysis of a literary work. The overall organization is discernible, and some ideas are connected with transitions. Most paragraphs have topic sentences but may not proceed logically from them to support the thesis.	The tone and language choices are somewhat suited to the audience and purpose. The work reflects some thought, fairness, comprehension, and reasonable awareness of the rhetorical situation
2 Developing	The text occasionally adheres to the "Editing Focus" of this chapter: using the literary present tense as discussed in Section 16.6. The text also shows emerging evidence of the writer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	Some paragraphs in the paper reflect its purpose, which may or may not be stated in the thesis. The thesis provides minimal focus for analysis of a literary work. Other paragraphs are rambling, unfocused, and out of logical order. There is little overall organization and little use of effective transitions. Most paragraphs lack topic sentences or have more than one.	Lapses in tone and language choices make the writing unsuited to the audience and purpose. The work reflects little thought, some unfairness, questionable comprehension, and minimal awareness of the rhetorical situation.

TABLE 16.4

Score	Critical Language Awareness	Clarity and Coherence	Rhetorical Choices
1 **Beginning**	The text does not adhere to the "Editing Focus" of this chapter: using the literary present tense as discussed in Section 16.6. The text also shows little to no evidence of the writer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	Few, if any, paragraphs in the paper reflect its purpose, which may or may not be stated in the thesis. The thesis provides little or no focus for analysis of a literary work. Other paragraphs are rambling, unfocused, and out of logical order. There is little or no obvious organization and little or no use of effective transitions. Most or all paragraphs lack topic sentences, have more than one, or are insufficiently developed.	Frequent lapses in tone and language choices make the writing unsuited to the audience and purpose. The work reflects little or no thought, fairness, accurate comprehension, or awareness of the rhetorical situation.

TABLE 16.4

16.8 Spotlight on … Humanities

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Describe various disciplines in the humanities.
- Evaluate employment opportunities for graduates with humanities degrees.


Although all college instructors value good writing, each area of study has its own set of criteria by which writing is judged. For instance, the loose informal style and speculative content of a reflective essay might be appropriate for an English class but inappropriate for an anthropology class in which the instructor would expect the more formal structures established in that subject area.

As a discipline, the humanities include subjects that focus on human culture and values. Some subjects are literature, languages, classics, art history, film, musicology, philosophy, religion, and often history, which sometimes is placed in the social sciences. The humanities are the foundation of liberal arts and, as such, include a wide variety of writing genres. Research reports, biographies, literary analyses, ethnographies, quantitative reports, proposals, books, journal articles, poetry, film scripts, novels, stories, technical writing, and professional documents are forms of writing particular to the humanities.

As a rule, knowledge in the humanities focuses on texts and on individual ideas, speculations, insights, and imaginative connections. Interpretation in the humanities is thus relatively subjective. Accordingly, much of the writing and research in the humanities is characterized by personal involvement, lively language, and speculative or open-ended conclusions.

The field of English includes the study of not only literature but of literary theory and history, and not only composition but creative and technical writing. In addition, English departments often include linguistics, journalism, folklore, women's studies, cultural or ethnic studies, and film. In other words, within even one discipline, you might be asked to write several distinct types of papers: personal experience essays for a composition course, analyses for a literature course, abstracts or case studies for a linguistics course, procedural texts for a technical writing course, and short stories for a creative writing course. Consequently, any observations about the different kinds of knowledge and the differing conventions for writing about them are only generalizations. The more carefully you study any one discipline, the more complex it becomes, and the harder it is to make a generalization that does not have numerous explanations.

Careers in the Humanities

Because humanities subjects emphasize critical thinking and clear writing, the skills humanities students obtain are valued in many fields other than the most obvious ones. Humanities majors have gone on to careers in law, medicine (humanities plus pre-med), advertising, journalism, TV and film writing and production, public relations, graphic design, teaching, technical and medical/scientific writing, human resources, and many others. For more information about career opportunities for humanities students, see these sites:

- Humanities and Social Sciences Careers (https://openstax.org/r/Humanities)
- Top 10 Highest Paying Jobs for Liberal Arts Majors (https://openstax.org/r/Top-10-Highest)
- 25 Great Jobs for Humanities Majors (https://openstax.org/r/Great-Jobs)

Students' Stories

Despite strong interest in the humanities—especially in reading, writing, and language—some students avoid humanities subjects as majors because they think they won't find jobs after graduation. Such fear, however, is unwarranted, as many organizations actively seek students who major in languages or in other humanities disciplines. These graduates are valued for their ability to interpret and analyze text and to write clear, concise, and compelling prose. Moreover, employers realize that students who concentrate on studying people—whether real or fictional—develop insights into human behavior and understanding of how to deal with it. For example, these students who graduated with degrees in humanities subjects have found rewarding work in humanities-related and business fields.

Gabriela Torres majored in film studies, with a minor in theater. Although more interested in the technical aspects of both, she took creative writing classes and enjoyed performing in several college productions. Soon after graduation, Gabriela joined the human resources (HR) department of midsized corporation. Her job is to train new hires and conduct in-service workshops for current employees. Recently her role has expanded to writing, producing, and acting in training videos in which she uses the skills she learned in college—and more.

Derrek Wilson became an international studies major after he received a summer stipend to study in Europe. After only a few weeks there and trips to historic sites, Derrek says he got "hooked on history." The broad focus of his interdisciplinary major allowed him to take courses in humanities subjects: history, geography, religion, archaeology, and world literature. He had studied Spanish in high school and continued in college. Derrek graduated last year and now works as an international program coordinator for his university. Responsible for logistics of foreign students coming to the United States and for American students going abroad, he oversees housing accommodations, student visas, and travel arrangements. He loves his job and the time he gets to spend in different countries, but he plans to go to law school in a few years—with, you guessed it, a specialty in international and immigration law.

Despite his parents' warnings that he'd never find a good job, Nick Marelli majored in English. He put his literary interests to work in college as managing editor of the literary magazine and arts editor of the newspaper. When he graduated, he applied, on a whim (and to please his parents), for a management trainee position at a large insurance company. Thinking he would get nowhere without business courses, he was surprised when a recruiter called him for an interview. The interviewer then told him that the company actively seeks English majors because they know how to read carefully, digest and summarize information, think critically, and write clearly, concisely, and correctly. Nick says, "I was surprised when I heard someone other than an English teacher say that. I really like my work, where I'm learning a lot on the spot rather than in a classroom."

Thinking, Writing, and Publishing

Critical writing requires critical thinking. When an individual or collaborative team articulates their perspective, they provide new knowledge for audiences. In essence, all texts have potential to create new knowledge. A writer of any type of text has the potential to enter a conversation and show audiences new ways

to look at a subject.

Learning how to write analytically and critically offers a skill set for crafting various genres, such as information reports, proposals, cost/benefit analyses, instructions, and so on. After you have completed your analysis for this chapter, consider submitting it to an open-access academic journal that highlights the work of undergraduate students in the humanities, such as these:

Undergraduate Journal of Humanistic Studies (https://openstax.org/r/Undergraduate)

16.9 Portfolio: The Academic and the Personal

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Reflect on the development of composing processes and how those processes affect your work.
- Identify your strengths in writing and consider how to continue to develop your writing process.

Reflective Writing: Genres of Reflective Writing

Reflective writing is not limited to a single genre. Because it is highly personal, it is most frequent in, but certainly not limited to, diaries, journals, autobiographies, and memoirs. One common way that it appears is in letters or essays that writers craft to reflect on, or think about, their writing process for a particular text they have written. Consider the following suggestions when you write reflectively about this assignment for your ongoing portfolio compilation:

- Write this letter, essay, or response as you would to a friend—be kind to yourself and your process, but be realistic as well.
- Highlight what you think are your present capabilities and what you would like to strengthen.
- Specifically discuss and illustrate—by giving specific examples—how well you have met the assignment objectives listed under Evaluation: Self-Directed Assessment.

To guide your portfolio reflection, answer these questions:

- What did you learn about yourself and/or the writing process in the course of writing your textual analysis?
- What did you learn about the topic and/or about writing in general?
- Which part of the writing process was most beneficial to you: drafting, peer review, conferences, or something else?
- How successfully did you address the assignment guidelines?
- How might you change your writing process to better support your growth as a writer—for example, time management, change in drafting methods, more focus on rubric, extended research, more focus on the final draft before submission?

Further Reading

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Image Analysis: What You See 17

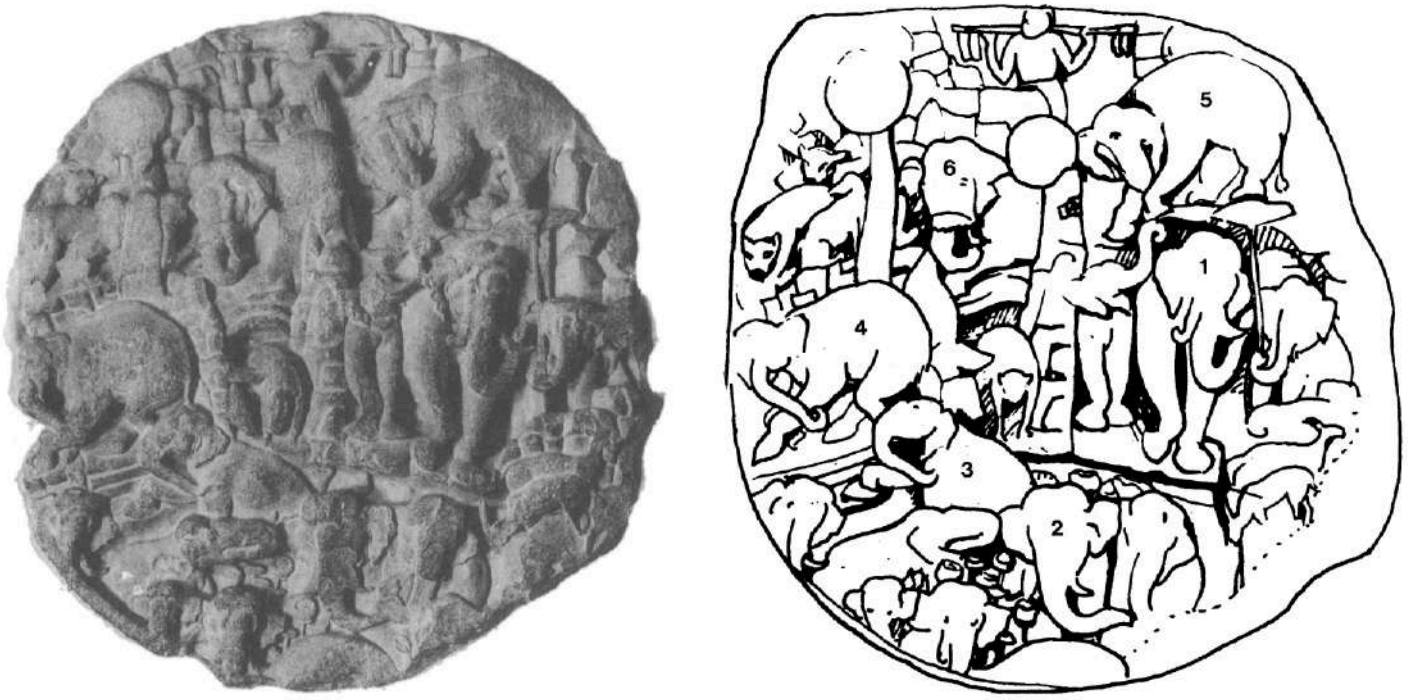

FIGURE 17.1 On the left is a carved medallion, found at Amaravati in a Buddhist shrine that dates from the later years BCE to the early CE. On the right, the individual images in the carving are outlined and numbered, explaining the narrative sequence and showing the audience how to "read" the medallion. Together, the two serve as an early example of visual rhetoric. (credit: "Chaddanta Jataja Amaravati" by Vidya Dehejia/Wikimedia Commons, CC0)

CHAPTER OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION Many people spend a substantial portion of their time watching and assessing images—including photographs, memes, graphs, and videos—via television, streaming services, and social media platforms. Even the college curriculum is as much visual as it is verbal, including as it does Internet research, computer graphics, and PowerPoint presentations. These forms of media might be relatively new, but people have been creating and consuming images for millennia, as you can see in Figure 17.1. An

important part of human development consists of making images, enjoying them, and talking about them.

Formerly, visual texts were created exclusively by painters, photographers, and others generally designated as artists. Today, given the proliferation of technologies that enable the easy capture and manipulation of images, such visual texts are created by a multitude of authors. In this chapter, terms for these image creators—artist, author, composer, creator—are used interchangeably.

Chapter 17 examines the elements of visual literacy and analysis most likely to complement the textual literacy emphasized in first-year writing classes and addressed in Print or Textual Analysis: What You Read. A critical understanding of visual texts is key to helping you both as a consumer of the frequent images you encounter in reading and viewing and as a producer who incorporates images into your own writing, as addressed in Multimodal and Online Writing: Creative Interaction between Text and Image. Overall, this chapter provides a solid basis for understanding visual rhetoric and communicating about it in various situations. After study and practice, you will be able to do so while drawing on your own cultural context, background, and experience and considering your audience, purpose, and rhetorical context.

17.1 "Reading" Images

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Define the key concepts and elements of visual rhetoric.
- Interpret visual information using the language of visual rhetoric.
- Interpret images differently based on cultural considerations.
- Choose digital and visual media according to the rhetorical situation and cultural context when writing for different audiences.
- Make informed decisions about intellectual property issues regarding images.

To compose an effective essay or a strong visual, a creator works with a number of elements that are remarkably similar from one medium to the other. Both stories and pictures contain **information** presented by a creator who has a particular point of view and arranges the work in two-dimensional space. The information is likely to be open to multiple **interpret**, which may or may not be justified by the text. Although the sharing of personal opinions and beliefs has value, the focus here is on interpreting or analyzing texts in combination with your personal experiences.

Interpreting Visual Information

Both words and pictures convey information, but each does so in different ways that require interpretation. *Interpretation* is the sense a person makes of a piece of communication—textual, oral, or visual. It includes personal experience, the context in which the communication is made, and other rhetorical elements. (See Glance at Genre: Relationship Between Image and Rhetoric for a list of key terms related to visual elements and rhetoric.) By the time readers get to college, they have internalized strategies to help them critically understand a variety of written texts.

Images present a different set of challenges for critical readers. For example, in a photograph or drawing, information is presented simultaneously, so viewers can start or stop anywhere they like. Because visual information is presented in this way, its general meaning may be apparent at a glance, while more nuanced or complicated meanings may take longer to figure out and likely will vary from one viewer to another.

FIGURE 17.2 Naked Raygun performance, 2007 (credit: "Naked Raygun" by Greg Dunlap/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

Some images, however, do not really lend themselves to interpretation. Before trying to engage in rhetorical discourse about an image, be sure it contributes something of value. For example, Figure 17.2 shows a punk rock concert featuring the band Naked Raygun with several concertgoers in the foreground. Such pictures are common forms of memorabilia that serve an archival function. The features common to visual rhetoric—point of view, arrangement, color, and symbol—do not inspire much in the way of discussion in this particular image. Parts are blurry, some of the figures are obscure, and the picture's purpose is unclear. Therefore, any analysis of the image may be guided more by personal opinion than by critical thinking. Such images are *not* the focus of this chapter.

FIGURE 17.3 (credit: "DSCF1343" by K. Kendall, Portland, OR, USA/Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 2.0)

Figure 17.3, in contrast, depicts not merely a moment in time for the sake of memory, although it certainly does that. It contains a central, dominant figure. The color red is bold and centers the figure, giving the image

weight. It also conveys several political messages, both obvious and nuanced. The woman in the picture is wearing a mask, as people were either asked or mandated to do during the COVID-19 pandemic. The slogan on her mask reads "I can't breathe," words that were made infamous after Eric Garner (1970–2014) died as the result of an illegal chokehold inflicted by a New York City police officer during arrest. These words were repeated by George Floyd (1973–2020) in an 8-minute, 46-second video showing his murder by a Minnesota police officer who knelt on Floyd's neck. The phrase became one of several slogans of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, symbolizing the struggle that people of color endure when living in an implicitly and explicitly racist culture. Breathing—like blood—is fundamental, essential. Without breath, there is no life. Thus, this slogan draws attention to the fact that people of color may be brutalized for no reason other than their existence.

Placing the slogan on a mask is a design choice likely to provoke those who have argued against mandated mask wearing as an assault on personal liberty and who have proclaimed they could not breathe while wearing masks. **Juxtaposition**, or placing contrasting elements close together, is a technique that image creators often use for a variety of purposes: humor, irony, sarcasm, or—as in this case—disgust or outrage. The juxtaposition of the mask with a slogan referencing literal asphyxiation emphasizes the wearer's view that state violence against people of color is a more serious threat to her existence than a mask. Thus, the image is open to multiple interpretations.

Thinking Critically

To think critically about visual information, first identify the objects, facts, processes, or symbols portrayed in the image. Taking all the information together, ask whether there is a main or unifying idea. *Is the meaning open to multiple interpretations? Is it suggested but not stated? Is it clear and unambiguous? Are there multiple levels of meaning, both stated and unstated?* When you view an image, pausing to answer such questions will sharpen your critical faculties, increase your understanding of the visual information you encounter, and help you use images more meaningfully in texts you create.

Visual Rhetoric

Written texts rely on strategies such as thesis statements, topic sentences, paragraphing, tone, and sentence structure to communicate their message to their audience. Images rely on different strategies, including **point of view**, **arrangement**, **color**, and **symbol**. When writing about images or including them in your writing, think critically about the visual strategies they use and the effect they will have on your audience.

Using these techniques may or may not make you a proficient artist or creator of images. However, familiarity with the technical language of the visual arts will certainly enable you to describe what you observe as you build the evidence that allows you to **interpret** an image, **reflect** on it, **analyze** it, and make **persuasive arguments** about it.

Point of View

In written texts, *point of view* refers to the "person" from whose vantage point the information is delivered, either a character in the story or a narrator outside the story. However, in photographs, drawings, and paintings, *point of view* refers to the place from which the image creator looks at the subject—where the photographer places their camera or the artist their easel.

Photographs that haven't been manipulated in a darkroom or digitally by a computer only reproduce the subject in front of the camera, as it exists in the moment the shutter opens and closes. They do not show anything to the left or right, above or below, or what comes before or after. A camera aimed to the east omits information from the north, west, and south. In other words, any photograph is the result of placing a camera in a certain location, at a certain height and distance, at a specific time of day and using a particular lens, film, and perhaps a filter. All of these decisions about where, when, and how to place the camera create the visual point of view.

You can find good examples of these kinds of limited truths in real-estate advertisements featuring photographs of houses for sale. The photograph might not reveal a landfill next door or a factory across the street—though you might infer such limitations from a low selling price or confirm them by driving past the house.

FIGURE 17.4 (credit: “Kodak Digital Waterfall” by Nan Palmero/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

The creator of Figure 17.4 chooses to highlight the digital waterfall with its seductive lighting and colors. Meanwhile, the people interacting with the computer are barely visible, standing off to the side, some nearly out of the frame. The silhouetted profiles and darkened faces lack identifying details. These features are emphasized by the blurred people in the background. These figures, too, are unidentifiable and are looking out of the frame, uninterested. The effect is to imply that the waterfall and its computer interface dominate human interaction and possibly even human existence.

To think critically about point of view, answer the following questions:

- From what place or stance does the image creator view the subject?
- What effect does this particular point of view have on the way viewers may think or feel about the subject?
- What would happen if the vantage point were elsewhere—above or below, left or right?
- What would change in the image if the point of view were changed?

Arrangement

In addition to point of view, artists use arrangement to signal an image’s significance to the reader. The term *arrangement* in visual texts might be compared to terms such as *order*, *organization*, and *structure* in verbal texts, though the differences are substantial. While writers *arrange*, or put together, a story, essay, or poem to take place over time—that is, the time readers need to follow the text, line by line, through a number of pages—image creators arrange pictures in the two-dimensional space of their viewfinder, paper, or canvas to invite viewers to read in space rather than time. This difference is also evident in sculpture and other three-dimensional works, which require viewers to move around them to read them spatially. In visual texts, then, *arrangement* refers to the ways in which the various parts of a picture come together to present a single coherent experience for the viewer.

In contrast to static images, which are read spatially, videos and some types of **multimodal** texts—those incorporating more than one genre, discipline, or literacy (for example, GIFs that incorporate pictures or videos with language)—combine elements of both time and space. That is, they invite viewers to examine an image in motion that changes over time. Video creators often mimic linear time by telling a story, or they

repeat key images to be interpreted differently after being seen in various contexts within the video.

One element to examine is the use of **pattern**—predictable, repeated elements within the visual field that the eye notices and seems attracted to. Just as sonnets, sestinas, and haiku follow patterns of lines, so do visual compositions. But in these, patterns are created by light and color rather than words. Documentary and commercial photographers often use visual patterns to lead viewers to an intended meaning. Patterns are especially prominent in street art, where the elements of surrounding architecture and infrastructure interact with the work, as shown in Figure 17.5.

FIGURE 17.5 Gaza Strip mural in Prague, Czech Republic, by Blu (credit: "Gaza Strip" by Tom Hughes-Croucher/ flickr, CC BY 2.0)

Many patterns are suggested by mathematics. For example, the **Möbius strip** is both a mathematical construct and a visual enigma. It has one side and one boundary curve. It looks like a spiral, but it does not intersect itself. Thus, it gives the impression of being infinite. In Figure 17.5, the artist capitalizes on these features of the Möbius strip, using it to depict the seemingly endless cycle of destruction (green tanks) and reconstruction (yellow steamrollers) in one of the world's most contested pieces of real estate: the Gaza Strip.

Ownership and control of the Gaza Strip are disputed. Approximately two million people live there, many in refugee camps. Since the mid-20th century, the region has been fought over by Israel, Egypt, and Palestinian Arabs. As you contemplate the mural, think about the way its creator uses pattern and repetition to convey various ideas and emotions. The following questions may help:

- Which elements within the mural are repeated?
- Where is its center of gravity or weight?
- Where do patterns of light/dark, large/small, and color lead the eye?
- How do pattern and balance contribute to meaning in a two-dimensional image?
- What does the arrangement suggest about the meaning of the image?

Color and Symbol

Pattern and arrangement are controlled by the image creator and intended to guide the viewer. Color and symbol allow the viewer greater latitude in interpreting the image, in part because particular colors suggest specific moods. Think about your personal reactions to different colors. *What color might you select to paint your bedroom? What is your favorite color for, say, clothing or cars?* While these may differ according to personal preference, traditional symbolic values are attached to different colors in literature and art. *Why, for instance, does red often symbolize anger or war on the one hand and romance or passion on the other? Why does black often suggest danger or death? And why does white often stand for innocence or purity? Are the*

reasons for these associations arbitrary, cultural, or logical?

Particular colors also suggest or reinforce social and political ideas. *What, for example, is suggested by adding a red, white, and blue American flag to a magazine advertisement for an American automobile, political poster, or bumper sticker? What is the meaning of a yellow ribbon tied to a tree in front of a house or an image of a yellow ribbon sticker attached to the tailgate of a pickup truck?* By themselves, colors do not specify political positions, arguments, or ideas, but used in conjunction with specific words or forms—a flag or ribbon, for example—the emotional power of color can be influential.

Color associations globally are complicated and highly nuanced. The following overview is brief and simplified, to be considered merely as an introduction or starting point for your research and investigations into individual artistic expressions. When you interpret an artist’s use of color, one place to start is with the hues found in the natural world. Because blood is red, the color is often associated with life, heat, and passion. Yellow and green appear with the new growth of spring, so these colors often symbolize new beginnings, freshness, and hope. Both the sea and the sky are blue. Although these elements can be turbulent, many people find peace and tranquility as they reflect on them, and thus they are often associated with these emotions.

Regardless of colors’ natural associations, people from around the world understand colors differently. In China, for example, red is a celebratory color associated with holidays, feasts, and the giving of gifts, whereas in some parts of Africa the color may symbolize the sacrifice necessitated by the fight for independence. In the Western world, white can represent purity or innocence and is often worn by young women at their weddings. However, in parts of Asia, white is a color of mourning.

The colors mentioned so far are mostly primary colors: red, yellow, and blue. The secondary colors—orange, green, and purple—carry more complex meanings. Both orange and the bright shade of green called neon or chartreuse are easy to see in all light conditions. Therefore, they are often used for safety purposes, on caution signs or uniforms of emergency workers. The color orange is associated with the robes of Buddhist monks, thus representing in Buddhist cultures that which is holy, whereas in the Netherlands, orange is the color of the royal family and used for patriotic purposes.

In addition to connotations of spring, the color green is also associated with Islam. In the Christian tradition, yellow and gold are colors associated with riches and abundance. Holiness is also associated with the color blue in Egyptian, Hindu, and Christian cultures (in which blue has other associations as well). Because purple has traditionally been a difficult color to manufacture, its rarity meant that only the very wealthy, often nobility or royalty, could afford to wear it—hence its association with royals and even gods. However, some cultures, such as Thai, Brazilian, and Italian cultures, associate purple with bad luck or death. Again, this overview of colors’ different interpretations and associations is not intended as a guide for interpreting color in a visual image. Instead, consider all of the different ways in which color can be understood, some ways that the artist might intend for color to be interpreted, and the associations that colors have for you when you view a visual or digital image.

In this chapter, you have begun learning about how to interpret visual information through the lens of rhetoric. Color and its related symbolism help viewers interpret images.

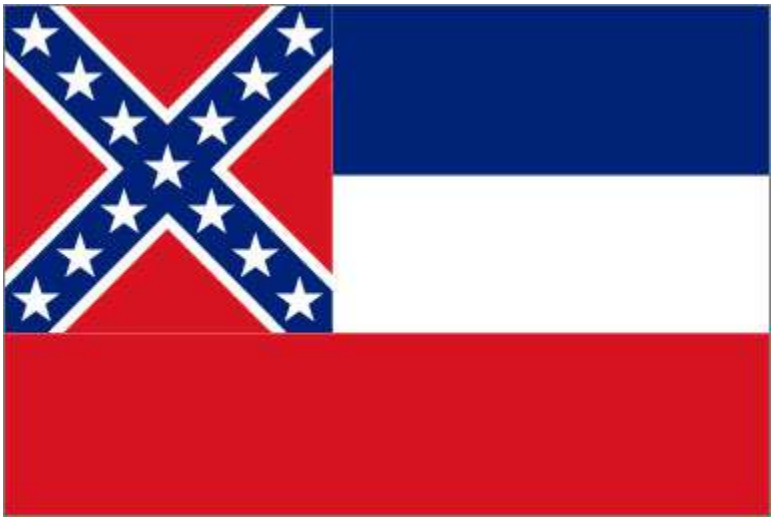

FIGURE 17.6 State flag of Mississippi (https://openstax.org/r/State-flag), 1894–2020. This is the 1894 version, without the white stripe added in 1996. (credit: "Flag of Mississippi (1894–1906)" by Wikimedia Commons/Public Domain)

FIGURE 17.7 The current state flag of Mississippi was adopted 2021. (credit: "Flag of Mississippi" by Rocky Vaughan, et al./Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

Symbols

Like colors, symbols are interpreted differently by individuals on the basis of their personal and cultural experiences. Here is an example of two state flags with very different symbolism: Figure 17.6 depicts the state flag of Mississippi that was adopted in 1894; Figure 17.7 depicts the one adopted in 2021. In 2021, under pressure from numerous organizations and in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement, Mississippi replaced its state flag. The 1894 flag included the battle flag of the Confederacy, referencing Mississippi's history of secession and violence during the Civil War (1861–1865); the single blue, white, and red bands were a reference to the stripes on the American flag. This historical allusion, coupled with the state's history of enslavement and segregation, meant that the 1894 flag served as a stark reminder of efforts to silence Black Mississippians. In fact, Mississippi did not formally ratify the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution—proposed in 1865 to abolish slavery—until 2013, and the state remained segregated long after the Supreme Court outlawed the practice.

Mississippi continued to use the 1894 flag throughout the Reconstruction (1865–1877) and the Jim Crow laws (ca. 1877–c. 1950) and civil rights (1950s and 1960s) eras despite multiple and sustained efforts to remove any reference to the Confederate flag. In 2020, the increasing prominence of the Black Lives Matter movement

created the context in which state lawmakers were forced to consider these problems as mainstream and urgent. Further, the state came under pressure from numerous organizations, including the Southeastern Conference athletics organization (SEC), which threatened to boycott the state by no longer holding major events there if the flag were not changed.

Submitted to the legislature by Starkville-based graphic designer Rocky Vaughan (b. ca. 1977) and collaborators Sue Anna Joe, Kara Giles, and Dominique Pugh, the new flag took effect in January 2021 after voters approved it and the governor ratified it. The current flag (Figure 17.7) features a central vertical band of blue, flanked by two thin gold bands and encompassed by two broader red ones. The flag's center is dominated by a single magnolia flower, crowned by a single gold star and encircled by 20 white ones. Beneath the flower are emblazoned the words "In God We Trust."

The gold coloring is intended to celebrate Mississippi's contributions to the world of art, music, and literature. The white stars symbolize Mississippi's status as the 20th state of the Union; thus, the new flag symbolizes the state's reintegration into the Union without reference to its seditious acts in the 19th century or lingering loyalty to the beliefs that motivated them. In addition, the single gold star honors the state's indigenous people; no reference is made to the state's history of enslavement and racism.

Thinking critically about color and symbol, ask yourself these questions:

- Does the color enhance or distort the reality of the image?
- Imagine the image in shades of black, white, and gray. What would be lost and what would be gained if color were subtracted?
- Does the color work with or against the other compositional elements?
- What symbols are incorporated into the image? How might those symbols be interpreted in various contexts?
- What, if any, is the significance of referencing Indigenous but not Black Americans on the current flag?

Selecting and Incorporating Digital and Visual Media

In addition to analyzing visual and digital media, you may be asked to find, create, or manipulate such materials for a variety of situations and audiences. Following are some considerations to keep in mind, including **copyright** issues, appropriate selections, and **technical manipulations**.

Intellectual property laws are complicated, change frequently, and vary by country. Sharing an image is similar to quoting a text, with one exception: you must not only cite the author in a reference list or bibliography but also secure permission to use the image. To be safe, unless an image explicitly states that you are free to share it (public domain), assume it is protected by copyright.

The texts you write will have varying degrees of formality and require different levels of diction (word choice), syntax (sentence structure), content, and tone. Similarly, the images you select should reflect the **tone**, or attitude, that you wish to convey in your text. Ask yourself these questions to decide whether an image is appropriate for your text:

What is the image's purpose? Include images only if they add to or supplement the text. Do not add images simply as "filler" or for audience entertainment. Such materials are more likely to confuse or distract readers than they are to enlighten or inform them.

Is the image humorous or sarcastic? Humor has value as entertainment by keeping the audience interested and engaged in your text and making it more memorable. However, determining what makes something funny is deeply personal. An image you find funny could be read with confusion or even offense by someone else. In formal communications, humor and sarcasm are better avoided because of the risk of misunderstanding. In creative contexts, you have greater latitude.

Does the image include text? Because you are already creating a text, you may wish to question the value of

inserting an image with text. Consider what information the image provides in addition to the text. For example, in Figure 17.3, the text "I can't breathe" is enhanced by its placement on a mask and, further, by the mask's presence on a Black woman. These details make the image with its text a valuable addition to a discussion or analysis.

Consider also the language of the text. You may be fluent in multiple languages, so an image with text in Spanish, French, or Japanese could have meaning for you. *Will it have meaning for your audience?* The same applies to images that include slang, jargon, or slogans with a limited shelf life. If you have to explain the image's meaning before your readers understand it, the image is probably not worth including.

What is the image's context? Where and when the image is placed can affect the viewer's understanding and interpretation. A picture of poverty in one country is likely to look very different from poverty in another country. Some images can be considered universal, meaning they depict situations that have significance for all people, regardless of culture, ethnicity, or historical context. For example, an image of a mother and an infant is easily recognized by anyone anywhere and is likely to evoke similar thoughts and emotions.

What digital or technical requirements or manipulations are needed? Finally, when you think about including an image, you'll need to consider the digital and technical requirements and manipulations necessary to do so. Aspects to consider include compatibility requirements, visibility on different devices and platforms, sizing, and placement. The technical details associated with these considerations are changing rapidly, so this chapter makes no recommendations regarding software programs or specifications. However, if an image is blurred or distorted—or invisible—the result will be confusion and frustration on the part of your reader.

Selecting an Appropriate Image

To practice selecting appropriate images, imagine you are writing an informational webpage about the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and its responsibilities in relation to the Clean Water Act. *To illustrate those responsibilities, which of the following images would you use? Why?* (Suggested answers follow.)

FIGURE 17.8 Sample image 1: EPA flag with logo (credit: "Environmental Protection Agency building" by USEPA Environmental-Protection-Agency/flickr, Public Domain

FIGURE 17.9 Sample image 2: Water pouring from a faucet into a clear glass (credit: “Water pouring from a faucet into a clear glass cup” by USEPA Environmental-Protection-Agency/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

FIGURE 17.10 Sample image 3: Woman holding a cup of brown liquid (credit: “Safe Drinking Water Act” by Erik Calonius/USEPA Environmental-Protection-Agency/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

Suggested Answers

- **Sample image 1** seems like an obvious choice. It depicts the name and logo of the agency you are writing about, and nothing about it is likely to be considered controversial. However, by itself, it does not convey any useful information, so its purpose is unclear.
- **Sample image 2** depicts safe, clean drinking water from the tap. The glass emphasizes the clarity of the water, and its proximity to the tap shows the intimate role that water plays in daily life. It features no characters or setting, so it is not restricted by any obvious contextual clues. It is perfect for this piece.
- **Sample image 3** is emotionally powerful. It depicts a woman, older and likely with a low income, holding a

jar of brownish liquid. The image appears to be old, based on the coloring of the photograph, the woman's dress, and the home in the background. Its age could help make the rhetorical point that the EPA's enforcement of the Clean Water Act, passed in 1972, has been effective. However, its context is unclear, raising questions about its composition. *When and where was the photo taken? Is it set in the United States? And what is the liquid in the jar—water? Oil? Moonshine?* The image raises too many questions to be useful in this context.

17.2 Trailblazer

Image Trailblazer: Sara Ludy

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Interpret images through the conceptual lens of hybridity to learn, think critically, and communicate in a variety of rhetorical and cultural contexts.
- Articulate how genre conventions are shaped by purpose, culture, and expectation.

FIGURE 17.11 Images from nature inspire artists such as Sara Ludy (https://openstax.org/r/Sara-Ludy). (credit: "Plants OB 934" by USDA NRCS Montana/ Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

"The digital sublime emerges from a collectively built hyperobject that globally connects our nervous systems."

Sara Ludy and Hybridity

This chapter focuses on images. Still, most of the images with which viewers interact have been either created or manipulated digitally (https://openstax.org/r/digitally) and contain textual, animated (https://openstax.org/r/animated), and cinematic content. In the field of digital manipulation, Sara Ludy (https://openstax.org/r/Sara--Ludy) is a pioneer, combining painting, sculpture, floral arrangements, animation, sound, and video. She was raised in Bluemont, Virginia, a small town in the Appalachian region. She studied at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) and lived and worked in New Mexico and California before settling in Chicago. Her work includes images of water, clouds, water vapor, birds, fabric, glass, and plants. American painter Georgia

O'Keeffe's (1887–1986) influence—see Figure 17.12—on Ludy's work is obvious in its lush, open petals and wings, as well as in the vibrant natural colors.

FIGURE 17.12 *Red Canna*, 1919, by Georgia O'Keeffe (credit: "Georgia O'Keeffe Red Canna 1919" by Georgia O'Keeffe/High Museum of Art, Atlanta/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

But Ludy also names British primatologist Jane Goodall (b. 1934); Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges (1899–1986); and American architect, inventor, designer R. Buckminster Fuller (1895–1983) among her inspirations, emphasizing the hybrid nature of her work.

The concept of hybridity pervades Ludy's work, which occurs in different media and includes a variety of topics. The concept refers to mixing and is used in disciplines that encompass discussions of language, race, ethnicity, and culture. Relating to digital and visual media, the term *hybridity* incorporates pieces from each of these disciplines as well as the blending of practical, physical, technological, and artistic methods. The result is a piece of art that represents and speaks to people from multiple walks of life in various visual and tactile ways.

In particular, the concept of hybridity in the arts refers to the relationship between digital media and the creation and experience of the artwork. Artists such as Ludy anticipate that mixture by embedding it in their work, using digital techniques to distort or change it.

The following example of Ludy's work sheds light on her contributions to contemporary art and the multiple directions in which visual and digital media are headed in the 21st century.

Second Life: Convergence of the Virtual and the Physical

Ludy (https://openstax.org/r/Ludy) works extensively in the genre of *Second Life*, capturing and then manipulating images people have created. *Second Life* cannot be described merely as a video game, given the seriousness with which many people treat it and the lack of an ultimate goal or winning moment, but it does share features commonly found in video games. It is an animated alternative world where people spend long periods of time entertaining themselves. It represents a virtual reality in which participants design settings, create characters, and engage in a variety of interactions. The goal is simply to be present in this virtual world,

to create beautiful or intriguing spaces, and to experiment with form and color in ways that may not be possible in the real world. Ludy's *Second Life* work removes viewers even farther from the virtual experience's all-encompassing reality and heightens its surrealism using multiple layers of distance.

In interviews, Ludy encourages viewers to resist the urge to experience her work "consciously"—that is, to name or describe it. Instead, she wants them to focus on the sensory experiences they have when contemplating it. However, this advice is contrary to the goal of discourse, in which you describe and assess a work and your reactions to it. It also contradicts her own practice, in which she has commented on the nature of her practice and her intentions. Notice how, in the video, she talks about finding images in *Second Life* that resonate with a sense of familiarity. While many users may see *Second Life* as a place to invent new or unusual designs not permitted by physics, Ludy appears to be after those designs that make people feel at home, at least to the extent they can do so in a world constructed of binary code.

Elsewhere, Ludy describes the sublime as the happenstance that occurs when her virtual-reality-created scenes match a real-life experience she later has, much like witnessing an awe-inspiring natural phenomenon that appears supernatural and then realizing its natural qualities. Ludy instructs her viewers to "assume a prismatic quality" to her work (Ludy, "Artist"). Therefore, viewers should look at her images more than once, from different angles and perspectives and with different assumptions. In the case of the discovered floral arrangement she discusses, she refers to the pixelation—the radiation—the unintended effects of the digital relationship with the light and the camera.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you consider Ludy's photographs of design elements created in *Second Life* to be her own work or the work of another person? Explain your response.
2. In what ways is Ludy's *Second Life* photography practice "natural"? In what ways is it digital, artificial, or manipulated? How do those descriptions or designations affect the way you see, reflect on, or feel about her work?
3. Ludy refers to the "artifacts" she finds in her photographic images, such as the radiant light from the top of the floral arrangement creating a pseudo-star. Do you consider such "artifacts" of artistic interest, or do you believe they are flaws that represent byproducts of one's digital limitations? Explain your response.
4. In what ways is the experience of viewing, reflecting on, and discoursing about images similar to the *Second Life* experience? In what ways is it different?

17.3 Glance at Genre: Relationship Between Image and Rhetoric

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Analyze and reflect on images using the language of visual rhetoric.
- Articulate how genre conventions are shaped by purpose, culture, and expectation.
- Determine variations in genre conventions.

This section examines two sets of genre conventions: those associated with *visual rhetoric* and those associated with *writing about visual rhetoric*. The former include arrangement, color and symbol, composition, juxtaposition, light, line, multimodality, and point of view. These were introduced in 'Reading' Images and are summarized and defined at the end of this section. The latter conventions—reflecting, analyzing, and writing persuasively—are defined here with examples and suggestions for engaging in these kinds of writing. They serve as three frameworks for communicating the variety of human responses to images—responses that can range from apathy to repulsion, from enjoyment to bliss—using the language of visual rhetoric.

Reflecting and analyzing are addressed below. Writing persuasively is addressed in Writing Process: Thinking

Critically and Writing Persuasively about Images in connection with this chapter's writing assignment. However, remember that all writing about images relies first on description and is persuasive in that its purpose is to convince readers to consider the ideas presented.

Reflecting on Images

When you **reflect** on an image, you process its technical elements through the dual lens of critical thought and personal experience. You may ask questions such as the following:

- Does this image resonate with me? Why or why not?
- How does this image make me feel?
- What memories or associations does this image summon for me?
- How might my thoughts, feelings, and associations evoked by the image differ from those of someone else—someone of a different gender, socioeconomic context, or culture?

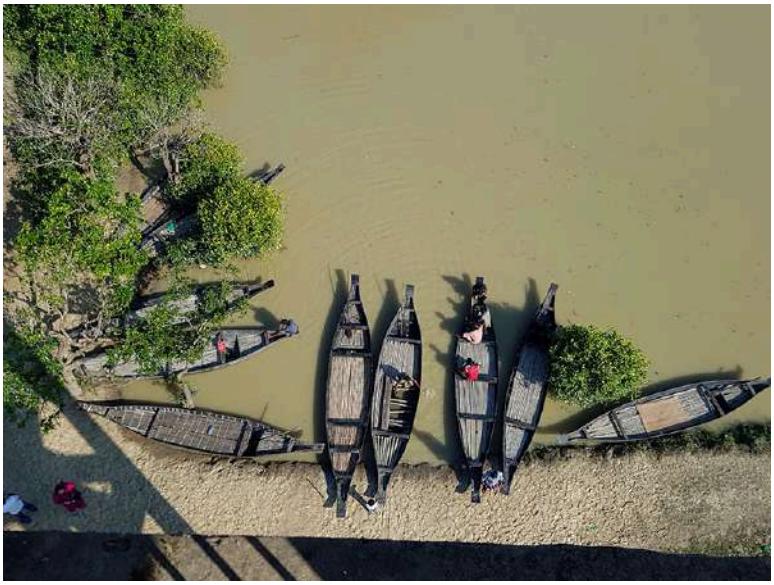

FIGURE 17.13 Boats carrying tourists in Ratargul Swamp Forest, Bangladesh (credit: "Ratargul swampland, Sylhet" by Mostaque Chowdhury/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

To respond to some of these questions, consider Figure 17.13. Images of nature are often used to either soothe the viewer or inspire a sense of grandeur. Figure 17.13 has the capacity to do both. The repeating horizontal and vertical lines, gradient color patterns, and whimsical spots of pink and red directly offer a visual appeal that encourages meditation and reflection. A bare understanding of the context similarly lends a sensation of awe to the image. Ratargul is both a forest and a swamp in a remote part of Bangladesh that floods regularly. Tourists frequent the location, and local residents capitalize on that fact by giving them guided boat tours along the river, despite the inherent dangers.

But this image can be further informed by a viewer's variety of personal experiences. Consider, for example, the extent to which you have traveled. *Is Bangladesh within the realm of possibility for you—in the past, now, or ever? What are your experiences as a tourist or in the service industry? Do you think the boat operators and the photographer have similar or different opinions of the scene?* When you think and write critically about such questions, you deepen your understanding of your own experiences and reactions, you interact with the experiences of others, and you understand the world more broadly and deeply.

Remember that reflecting necessarily contains an element of speculation. Be careful to ground your discussion in evidence—from the image itself, from the image's context, or from your own experience. Beyond these, such

discussions devolve into self-indulgent musings that few others can share in or learn from.

Analyzing Images

When describing an image, you might state that a line is blue. When you **analyze** an image, you might discuss what the color and the line *mean* or *do*. The images in 'Reading' Images are analyzed according to genre elements specific to visual media. In these discussions, the analysis begins with description, but it does not end there. The elements of visual rhetoric are both described and analyzed to discover the artist's intentions. (You will read a detailed analysis about painter Charles Demuth's *Dancing Sailors* in the Annotated Student Sample.)

When you analyze an image, you contribute to an ongoing global discussion, helping create the kaleidoscope that makes such rhetorical discussions meaningful. Do not worry about whether your contribution is right or wrong. Instead, consider its value to the global discussion. *What can you say that would broaden understanding of the work of art and your experience of the world?* This task may seem overwhelming, especially when you consider the work of a well-known artist. But your experiences and opinions are unique and valuable.

So far, this task sounds a lot like reflection, with one difference: reflection focuses on personal responses, reactions, feelings, and experiences, whereas analysis broadens that discussion to include the effects of various technical elements on a variety of people in different contexts. When analyzing an image, consider some of the following questions:

- Why did the creator select these particular technical elements?
- How are various audiences likely to react to them?
- How have interpretations of the image changed over time, or how are they likely to change in the future?
- What effect does historical or current context have on your interpretation?

The Language of Visual Rhetoric

Images speak to viewers in a language that short-circuits their critical thought processes and goes directly to their sensory receptors. Yet unlike a simple, instinctive response to stimuli, the goal of critical thought, reflection, and discourse is to consider *how* and *why* viewers respond the way they do to certain images. To do so, viewers should consider the techniques that artists use to elicit such reactions. In this way, artists and viewers create a shared language of visual rhetoric in which both can discuss the virtues and demerits of a work of art as well as its historical and artistic contributions.

Key Terms in Visual Rhetoric

- **Arrangement:** Artists arrange their work to emphasize certain aspects and to create patterns of repetition and variation. The term *composition* is often used to mean *arrangement*.
- **Color and symbol:** Images communicate their meaning in part through the variety and interplay among colors. Even the choice to use black and white or a monochrome color palette is a color choice. Symbols in images allude to deeper meanings.
- **Composition:** Composition is often used as an umbrella term encompassing all aspects of visual rhetoric. It can also be used synonymously with *arrangement* to indicate how the piece is put together.
- **Juxtaposition:** In visual art, juxtaposition is the placement of contrasting images close together to emphasize their connection, lack of connection, or incongruity.
- **Light:** Unique to images is the use of light to highlight or obscure various parts of an image or to create prismatic effects that enhance its repetitive aspects.
- **Line:** In addition to outline shapes, artists use line to focus or center the viewer's eye and then to move it across the image in certain predetermined patterns.
- **multimodal:** Multimodality is the use of more than one type of literacy within a single work. For example, an airline display board is a multimodal work because it requires viewers both to understand ways of

reading airport codes, time zones, and visual representations of temporal data and to relate that information to the their current circumstances. Multimodality is a theory, perspective, or method that incorporates the consideration of all elements of an image.

- **Point of view:** Also called **perspective**, point of view encompasses what an image includes, what it excludes, and where its focus lies.

17.4 Annotated Student Sample: "Hints of the Homoerotic" by Leo Davis

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Determine the context of an image.
- Analyze the rhetorical techniques common to images.
- Analyze a variety of texts according to organizational patterns and rhetorical techniques.

Introduction

Below you will find a student analysis of a painting by Charles Demuth. As you read it, pay careful attention to the way in which the student author, Leo Davis, describes technical details of the painting, such as color, line, and technique. Also notice the way he analyzes those details, moving beyond mere description into the realms of context, analysis, and reflection.

Meet American Modernist and Precisionist Charles Demuth (1883–1935)

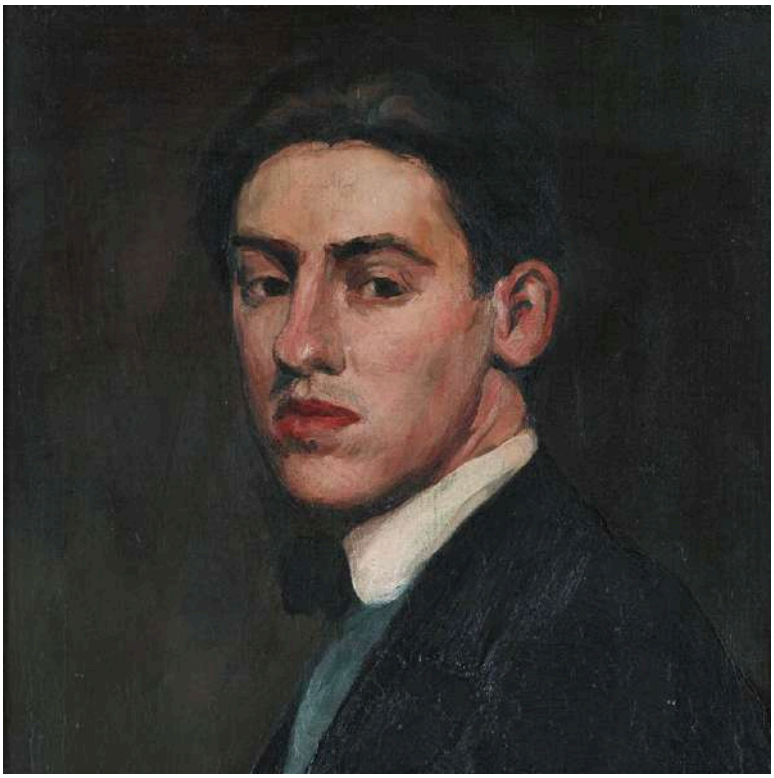

FIGURE 17.14 *Self-Portrait*, 1907 (credit: "Self portrait of Charles Demuth" by Charles Demuth/Wikimedia Commons, CC0)

Charles Demuth was an American painter of the modernist and precisionist movements. Trained at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, he traveled to Europe and worked as an illustrator before striking out on his own, first as a watercolorist and then as an oil painter. His watercolors follow languid lines of vegetation, reproducing plants and flowers in stronger geometric patterns than those of his friend and fellow artist Georgia O'Keeffe (1887–1986). His work in the precisionist movement, like that of other similar artists, often focuses on industrial subjects enhanced by exaggerated geometric techniques. Few human characters appear

in Demuth's paintings, which tend to erase any suggestion of his own personality or brushstroke on the artwork.

Demuth was a keen wit with a vibrant social presence in New York, Paris, and London. He cultivated his friendships as avidly as he did his art, and his company was much prized. His homosexuality was likely well known among his circle of friends, although his works depicting gay subculture in major metropolitan areas were only privately circulated. These works, including *Dancing Sailors* (https://openstax.org/r/Dancing-Sailors) seen in black and white in Figure 17.15, are today shedding light on the ways in which LGBTQ people engaged with one another and society more than 100 years ago.

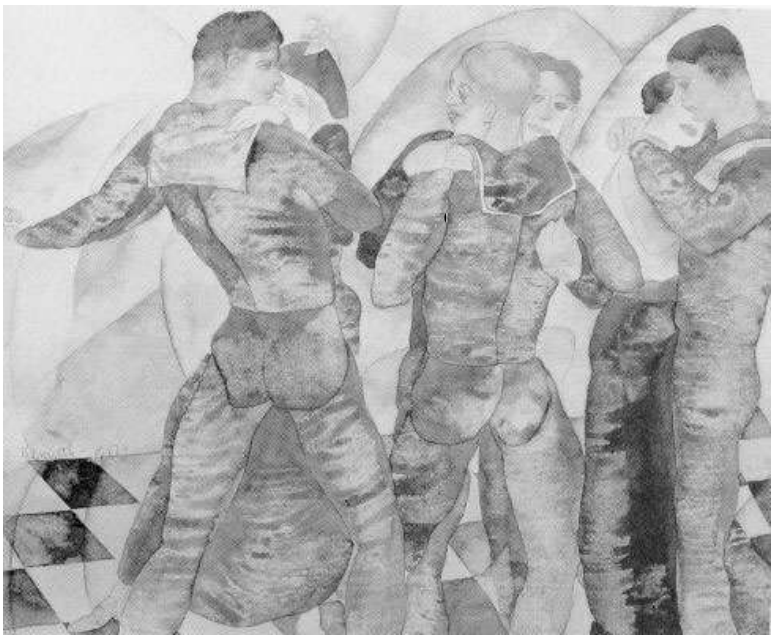

FIGURE 17.15 *Dancing Sailors*, c. 1918, by Charles Demuth (credit: "Dancing sailors" by Charles Demuth/ Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

LIVING BY THEIR OWN WORDS

Analysis of *Dancing Sailors* by Charles Demuth

> Four male sailors dance on a checked floor with arched lines in the background. Two of the men dance with women, while two of them dance with each other. This painting is done in watercolor and graphite and focuses on the sailor on the far left. The other figures face him, and his posture draws the viewer's eye to his face. The man and woman on the far right seem completely involved with each other. The two couples in the middle are drawn sensually, with passion, but none of them focus on their own partners. Instead, the two sailors with their backs to the viewer stare at one another. The sailor on the left appears quite aggressive, with an arched back and bent knees suggesting a pelvic thrust. Although his dance partner is a woman, he holds her right hand at arm's length, away from his body, and stares past her toward the sailor next to him. Strong pencil strokes emphasize his eyes and eyebrows, pointing the viewer to the object of his stare. The central sailor is dancing with a man in a mutual embrace, but his attention is fixed on the sailor at left, his head tilted slightly and his expression receptive. The painting is signed and dated: "C Demuth - 1918 -."

Description. *The initial paragraph focuses extensively on the visual elements of the painting, with a few analytical passages. Leo Davis uses descriptive, artistic terminology such as "arched," "watercolor and graphite," and "[s]trong pencil strokes" to help readers visualize the painting.*

Line and Arrangement. *Davis provides some details about the artistic techniques used, such as the strong pencil*

strokes and the way the image "emphasize[s] his eyes and eyebrows."

Analysis. *The author explains the effect of these elements and techniques to interpret the poses and intentions of the characters in the painting.*

A Vibrant Subculture and a World in Crisis

> *Dancing Sailors* was painted by Charles Demuth (1883–1935), a key figure in early-20th-century modernism. Best known as a watercolorist, Demuth also painted the gay subculture in jazz clubs and underground bars in New York City in works that he kept secret. As a gay man, he frequently visited Manhattan during the Harlem Renaissance and participated in this culture, savoring the artistic and erotic intensity of the Jazz Age.

> Although the art movement in the early 20th century was vibrant, its context was depressing. The United States entered World War I (1914–1918) in April 1917. A month later, the Selective Service Act was passed, and thousands of American men were drafted into military service. In March 1918, the United States was hit with the influenza pandemic. Twenty million people died in the war, and another 50 million died from the flu.

> Meanwhile, in 1916, the U.S. military began using so-called blue discharges to force gay people out of the armed forces. By 1919, sailors were arrested and court-martialed for homosexual activity. It seems seriously unfair that someone who fought in the war could come back home and be convicted as a criminal just for his sexual orientation.

> In this context, with death seemingly everywhere and gay men hated, Demuth created striking watercolors that say a lot about his times. Because he did not share these paintings publicly, he was probably afraid of revealing his own homosexuality. But that did not stop him from making art that reflected his own desires. *Dancing Sailors*, now in possession of the Cleveland Museum of Art in Ohio, was not intended for public exhibition.

Context. *In these four well-organized paragraphs, Davis outlines the painting's context: key details about the artist's personal life, the military and domestic situations in America, and Demuth's place in this world. Davis focuses on the aspects most relevant to the artwork, keeping the context short and pointed.*

Tension within a Painting

> The perspective, or point of view, of the painting is high, as shown by the angle of the black-and-white checkerboard floor and where it hits the wall. The figures are shown in a practical close-up, so that their feet and the tops of their heads are not included in the frame. This perspective is very intimate, but with the audience intruding on the scene. All of the couples hold each other closely and tightly, and the audience is almost uncomfortably close.

Point of View. *Davis returns to technical description, indicating the artist's perspective and how it affects the viewer.*

> Demuth uses watercolor to outline the dancers' bodies, making the clothing almost transparent. The silhouette of the pants emphasizes the bulge of thigh and calf muscles, and the arches in the background suggest erections. For both men, the buttocks are outlined and emphasized. The male dancers are clearly wearing uniforms, but Demuth chooses not to include insignias, medals, or other identifying marks. Perhaps he was simply not interested in military rank and regulation. Or maybe he wanted to direct the viewer's attention elsewhere. The two women in the painting are incidental, their bodies largely obscured by the men. Although the figures are outlined in graphite, the textured watercolor unites the dancers with the background, making them seem very much like they belong in this scene of intimacy.

Artistic Medium and Line. *Davis discusses the medium—watercolor—and how Demuth's use of it creates the impression of tight clothing. Importantly, the author does not assume intent on Demuth's part, although he speculates. Instead, he limits his analysis to the details and artistic techniques of the painting.*

Technical Description. *Again, the author keeps this paragraph focused on an element of artistic design: the watercolor. He backs his assertion with evidence from the painting. Instead of simply saying that the men are*

wearing tight clothing, he describes the artist's use of watercolor to create the impression of tight clothing.

> The painting appears to tell a story, but only in part. The viewer is invited to fill in the blanks. The sailors in the foreground are blatantly flirting with one another. And the central sailor's direct stare at the viewer may be considered an invitation. His wide-eyed expression, slight smile, and hands curled to embrace his dance partner's torso indicate pleasure. The viewer knows something this sailor does not: his part of this story is unlikely to have a happy ending. The female dance partners, while largely obscured, are still individuals with strong personalities. The woman on the left has a vacant stare from half-closed eyes, and her indifferent posture suggests that she may be bored, but the curve of her hip is still sexual. Is she offended by her partner's distraction?

Arrangement. *Davis invites viewers to "read" the painting, to see the story being told by the arrangement, which also invites them to notice the two women.*

Rhetorical Question. *This technique allows the student author to pose provocative questions that have no clear answers. In combination with the accompanying analysis, the rhetorical question helps establish the tone and theme of the painting that Leo Davis wishes to explore.*

Lasting Significance

> Demuth was a gay man during a difficult time in American history. This painting, one of many he kept private, is sympathetic and nonjudgmental. These private paintings may have been his attempt to find and show his acceptance of his own identity. During World War I, many military men came to port cities such as New York. Also during that time, Demuth enjoyed the Manhattan nightlife, and he painted a number of scenes of this changing environment. His personal involvement is interesting in and of itself. But even more so, these private paintings document the emergence of a sexual subculture and mark an important moment in American gay history.

Context and Analysis. *The author uses context and analysis to reach a conclusion about Demuth's intention in creating the painting and its significance in the history of American homoerotic art.*

> Although Demuth died at the relatively early age of 52, his work remains influential in American art. The geometric background of *Dancing Sailors* shows his increased interest in architectural watercolors. Later in his career, these paintings were hailed as key to the development of the precisionist movement. His unique expressions of modernism are a precursor to the abstract expressionism that developed in the 1940s and later influenced pop art innovators such as Andy Warhol (1928–1987). Aside from its historical significance, the vibrant sensuousness of *Dancing Sailors* continues to have relevance and appeal for art lovers today.

Context. *Leo Davis concludes by extending his argument for Demuth's influence, tracing the effect of his work through later artists and movements and stating the reason Dancing Sailors continues to have value as a work of art.*

Discussion Questions

1. In which of the three types of writing about art—reflecting, analyzing, persuading— is the student author engaging? How do you know?
2. Identify some of the descriptive language specific to visuals that Leo Davis uses when talking about the painting. How does this language enhance the paper and contribute to the discussion?
3. From the essay, can you determine Davis's opinion regarding homosexuality? Why might this tone be or not be a significant part of the rhetorical situation?
4. What details does the student author include about the painter? Is any information about the painter excluded that you think would be relevant?

17.5 Writing Process: Thinking Critically and Writing Persuasively About Images

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Develop a writing project through multiple drafts.
- Employ a variety of drafting strategies to complete an analysis of images.
- Apply aspects of visual rhetoric to a writing project.
- Participate in the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes.
- Give and act effectively on productive feedback.

In this section, you will combine what you learned earlier about reflecting on and analyzing images with another way of writing about images: writing persuasively, or persuading. Like reflecting and analyzing, writing persuasively requires clear, vivid descriptions of the technical aspects of an artwork, such as point of view, arrangement, color, and symbolism, as explained in Glance at Genre: Relationship Between Image and Rhetoric. Remember that reflecting on an image helps you make sense of both the image and your experience from different perspectives. Reading other people's reflections expands your universe of experience. Analyzing images improves your critical thinking skills by synthesizing description, reflection, and logical thinking to determine what an image's design elements mean. You write persuasively about images when you determine that an image's meaning has or does not have a value (that you define) for its viewers. For example, Leo Davis, in his analysis of *Dancing Sailors* in Annotated Student Sample, determines the homoerotic message in the image and the painter's tone or attitude toward his subject. You can also extend the scope of persuasion to make a recommendation about the status or merit of the work, as you will do in this assignment.

Writing Persuasively about Images

Like reflection, persuasion starts with context and description and can include personal reflections. The difference is primarily in the purpose and often the tone, or attitude toward the subject and audience. The purpose generally falls into one of three categories:

- ***What is the image's value?*** In the art world, these discussions are commonplace. Major publications such as the *New Yorker* or *Harper's Magazine* publish reviews of artists, galleries, and exhibitions. Critics and scholars argue that such discussions serve to establish a society's values and to benchmark the limits of what a society will and will not tolerate. Certainly, 2020 witnessed an explosion of such conversations. Protestors created images meant for display on public property, many of which were identified as graffiti or acts of vandalism; streets and other locations were renamed to reflect a growing awareness of the role that Black excellence has played in America's history; and monuments and memorials relating to injustice were reevaluated, vandalized, and removed.
- ***What happened?*** Forensic arguments often relate to legal situations, in which lawyers, judges, and juries try to determine what happened and how to respond. In the case of images, these techniques are applied to assess the circumstances of an image's creation as well as its critical and modern reception.
- ***What should happen?*** In the public sector, officials decide whether to fund artistic works. In the private sector, companies decide on images that faithfully represent their brands and values.

In persuasive writing, the purpose is usually revealed in a **thesis statement**, a single sentence, sometimes two, that defines the author's position and gives one or more reasons for it. The thesis usually appears at the end of the introduction, although it can occur at the start of either the introduction or the conclusion.

Look again at Figure 17.3, in which a woman wears a mask that reads, "I can't breathe." Table 17.1 below outlines a thesis statement based on that image that might apply to each of the three persuasive writing purposes.

Persuasion Purpose	Sample Thesis Statement
What is the image's value?	The image of the mask, its text, and the woman wearing it convey an important message that serves as a valuable artifact representing many of the complexities of 2020.
What happened?	The mask wearer is sending a valuable message that people need to hear in the context of the controversies surrounding both the pandemic and the racial situation in America in 2020.
What should happen?	The mask's message and context are inflammatory during a public health crisis; therefore, the use of masks with potentially political commentary should be discouraged in public places.

TABLE 17.1 Sample thesis statements by persuasion purpose

Tone

The tone of a persuasive piece can range from educational to impassioned and is largely based on the audience to which it is directed. Most writing about images is done in the neutral tone typically adopted in academic writing, although you may find reviews or essays that are informal and others that are scholarly.

Taking a Side

In 'Reading' Images, you read a description of and some reflections on Figure 17.3, an image of woman wearing a mask reading, "I Can't Breathe." You also read a brief analysis of the figure, combining description, historical context, and the visual design element of juxtaposition. Now, in Table 17.2, look at what two sides of a persuasive discussion of Figure 17.3 might look like.

Side A	Side B
Purpose / Thesis	
Figure 17.3 represents an important moment in American history and should be included in a yearbook recording historical events of 2020.	Figure 17.3 depicts an ordinary occurrence and does not warrant inclusion in a yearbook recording historical events of 2020.
Audience	
Committee commissioned by the National Endowment for the Humanities	
Context	
The committee has been commissioned to publish a yearbook of 2020, entitled *The Year Democracy Roared*. They are looking for pictures that represent large movements in America in 2020 that tie into the country's history and depict individuals in interesting or unique settings.	
Evidence	

TABLE 17.2 Elements of a persuasive argument about an image

Side A	Side B
• The image features a Black woman wearing a mask that reads, "I Can't Breathe." • The pandemic of 2020 caused many people to wear masks, either by choice or by mandate. • Some people did not support mask wearing because of their political beliefs regarding personal liberties. • During 2020, the Black Lives Matter movement gained widespread support. • "I Can't Breathe" was one of several slogans adopted by the Black Lives Matter movement. • The image juxtaposes the mask with the slogan in an ironic statement open to multiple interpretations.	• Many people wore masks in 2020 for reasons unassociated with politics or controversy. • Many people decorated their masks with a variety of images and slogans. • The choice of whether to wear a mask was, in many cases, not a choice but a mandate. • This woman is not in obvious distress or at a protest. • The image includes another woman, reflected in the first woman's sunglasses, not wearing a mask, calling into question the seriousness of her mask message. • The woman does not appear to be part of a larger movement, engaged in a unique or interesting activity, or placed in an unusual setting.

TABLE 17.2 Elements of a persuasive argument about an image

Summary of Assignment: Writing Persuasively about an Image

Public works projects such as stadiums or convention centers, private developments such as condominiums and shopping centers, and online spaces such as websites and social media platforms all commission artists to create exclusive works for display. These works are intended to reflect the vision of the artist as well as to promote the brand or mission of the space. Imagine that you have been asked to analyze an artist's work to determine whether the artist should contribute to the development of a local space that you select. Select the work of an artist, either Sara Ludy (https://openstax.org/r/Sara.Ludy) or another artist whose work is familiar to you or whose work you would like to learn more about. See Further Resources at the end of this chapter for suggested museums to visit in person or online. You can choose from historical figures or living artists. You can even choose an artist who illustrated a graphic novel you have read. Once you have chosen an artist and an image created by that artist, identify the aspects of the work you wish to assess, and support your analysis with technical descriptions of the image. Then, explain why you reached your decision about the artist's contribution to the selected space.

The parts in this section will take you through the development of a sample essay, using the example of American sculptor James Earle Fraser's (1876–1953) *Equestrian Statue of Theodore Roosevelt*. As you follow along in this process, consider how it applies to your topic. Think of the process as divided into these six steps:

1. Identify the rhetorical situation.
2. Outline the elements you intend to analyze.
3. Write an introduction in which you frame the image and the context in which you intend to discuss it.
4. As you draft, or before you draft the body of the essay, write topic sentences to identify the focus of each paragraph on a specific technical or contextual aspect of the image.
5. Build your paragraphs by describing the relevant elements.
6. Conclude by suggesting directions to consider in the future.

Another Lens 1. Visit Sara Ludy's website (https://openstax.org/r/Sara.Ludy) and select an image, a rendering, or an animation that speaks to you in some way, and identify the technical aspects you wish to assess. Support your analysis with descriptions of the image, using the vocabulary introduced in "Reading" Images and Glance at Genre: Relationship Between Image and Rhetoric. Then, as an option, consider whether or not you would advise an individual to purchase the work or how you would advise an organization to use it (or not use it) as a

representative image—for example, as part of a logo or cover for a publication.

Another Lens 2. Another option for assessing an artist's work is to compare and contrast this work with another piece, either by Sara Ludy or by a different artist. In doing so, you may consider ways in which the artist and their work have changed over time, or you may consider the influence one artist has on another. Finally, you may consider the images in different contexts through the lens of the artists' experiences, places in history, personal identities, and artistic practices.

Another Lens 3. Consider a work from a multimodal perspective. If you are interested in the connections of art and culture, consider choosing a piece of historic or contemporary Native American art. You can find information and view images at the websites for the National Museum of the American Indian (https://openstax.org/r/National) and the *Hearts of Our People: Native Women Artists* (https://openstax.org/r/Hearts-of-Our) exhibition at the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Create an **infographic** or a short video assessing the chosen artwork. An infographic incorporates multiple images and texts into a single image that can be read and understood quickly. A short video could work in a similar way, but the images would be presented sequentially with narration, either spoken or written. Your multimodal work should consider the elements of visual rhetoric discussed throughout this chapter and combine reflection with analysis and persuasion. See Multimodal and Online Writing: Creative Interaction between Text and Image for more information on creating a multimodal work.

Quick Launch: Identify Rhetorical Context

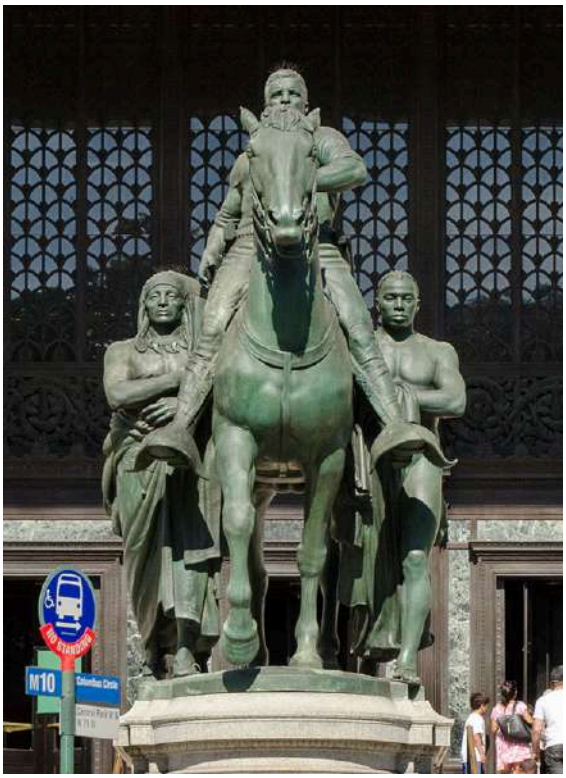

FIGURE 17.16 *Equestrian Statue of Theodore Roosevelt* , 1940, by James Earle Fraser, New York City (credit: "Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Hall entrance" by edwardhblake/Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 2.0)

In this writing example, the statue of former U.S. president Theodore Roosevelt (1858–1919) (Figure 17.16) is analyzed as part of the museum's decision to keep it or remove it. To begin, the author of this paper (a college student, U.S. citizen, and nursing major) defines the rhetorical situation: purpose, audience, genre, stance, context, and culture. Complete the first step in the assignment as this author has done by consulting the writer's triangle to sketch out these elements. The writer's triangle (Figure 17.17) includes audience, genre,

and stance and is surrounded by the circle of context/culture. The image allows you to "shorthand" your ideas about these elements during the brainstorming phase, as the author has done beneath the figure.

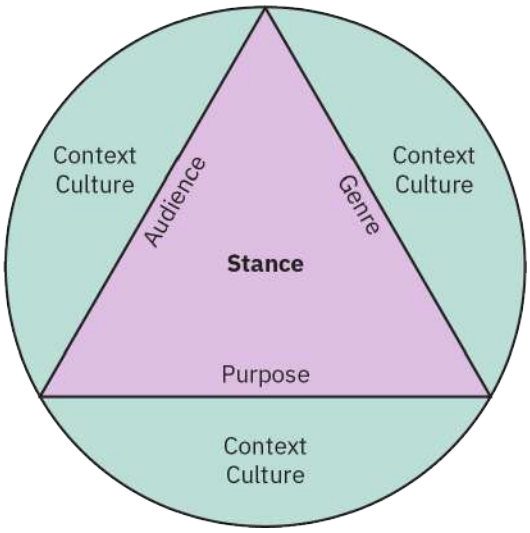

FIGURE 17.17 Writer's triangle (attribution: Copyright Rice University, OpenStax, under CC BY 4.0 license)

- **Purpose:** To analyze the Equestrian Statue of Theodore Roosevelt
- **Audience:** Instructor, fellow students, and U.S. residents
- **Genre:** Print or digital newsletter or magazine article
- **Stance:** To support the American Museum of Natural History's decision to remove the statue of Theodore Roosevelt
- **Context:** Roosevelt's presidency and what he accomplished, the relationship between him and the American Museum of Natural History, and the elements of the statue warranting its inclusion or exclusion
- **Culture:** Critics have said that the statue depicts Black people and Native Americans as conquered and culturally substandard.

Note: Do not confuse context with your rhetorical situation, which, in this case, is a writing assignment for a college course, part of a portfolio and a learning technique in which you practice a type of civil discourse. Meanwhile, context in this case refers to the image—the circumstances of its creation, its technical elements, and how its meaning may change over time.

Sometimes the elements of your rhetorical situation are not made explicit. Signs that you need clarification include the following:

- Trouble getting started
- Difficulty understanding how much background information to provide
- Not knowing which terms are too technical or which need to be defined

For clarity about purpose, audience, genre, or culture, talk to your peers and instructor using the questions in Table 17.3 as a guide.

	Questions to Consider	Your Responses
Purpose	With regard to the image, are you writing to describe, to reflect, to analyze, or to evaluate (persuade)?	

TABLE 17.3 Questions to determine the elements of your rhetorical situation

	Questions to Consider	Your Responses
Audience	Who is the audience? What do they already know about the image? What do they need to know? Toward what cultural issues might you need to show sensitivity?	
Genre	What are the characteristics of the genre in which you will compose your analysis of the image?	
Stance	What direction should your thesis statement take?	
Context	Within what social, political, economic, or cultural context was the image created, and for what purpose?	
Culture	What cultural issues are related to the image? From what cultural viewpoint are you writing? What is the cultural viewpoint of your audience?	

TABLE 17.3 Questions to determine the elements of your rhetorical situation

Regarding context, you may need to do some research on the image:

- Who is the image's author?
- When was it created?
- For what purpose was it created?
- Has the image been featured in reviews or the news?
- Does the image include important symbols or references?

After you have defined your rhetorical situation, write a working thesis for your paper. Consider using one or a combination of these frames. You may change the phrasing as needed to make your point.

- The artist's choice of _____ shapes the viewer's understanding of _____.
- The artist incorporates _____ to symbolize _____.
- The image's point of view reveals that _____.
- The artist's style, including _____, suggests that _____.
- The image evokes feelings of _____.

Drafting: The Visual to the Textual

After you have a working thesis, move on to the next major step: outlining the visual elements you intend to analyze. Review the material in "Reading" Images and Glance at Genre: Relationship Between Image and Rhetoric. In the case of the Roosevelt statue, the author has thought about which technical elements of the statue to analyze. The author also has considered the important aspects of the historical context shaping Theodore Roosevelt's life, presidency, and legacy; the museum and the cultural events in the year the statue was erected; and the cultural events in the year the decision is being made about whether to remove the statue. Remember that you may need to do some additional research to supplement your understanding of the context.

Analyze the Image

With a larger understanding of your subject's social, political, and cultural context, you can now begin to analyze the image. Limit your descriptions to what you can see and what your observations imply. Consider the following examples:

- **Pattern.** Identify the repetition of the figures, but note the differences in the ways each is depicted. Identify any lines or other elements that are repeated with variation.

- **Point of view.** The statue is tall and on a pedestal, requiring viewers to look up or see it from a distance.
- **Arrangement.** Three figures are arranged in a triangle, suggesting an apex with two supporting angles. Among the figures, the president is tallest, always visible, whereas the two accompanying figures can be seen fully only from either the front or the back. From the side, one or the other is always obscured.
- **Symbolism.** Each man is dressed in the clothing representative of his homeland. The two to the side are clearly allegorical, whereas the one on top is given individuality and freedom of expression.
- **Conclusion.** Outline criteria that could be used in the future to determine how symbols of or memorials to historical figures should be assessed.

Write an Introduction

In your introduction, name the artist, the image, and the context in which you intend to discuss it. See the suggestions above for research you may need to do regarding context. If you do research, remember to cite the sources you use because this information did not originate with you. The context may consist of one or two paragraphs, depending on how much information your audience needs to understand your analysis. (This is one reason to have a good understanding of your audience.) This type of introduction appears frequently in visual analyses and persuasive papers.

The two keys to writing a strong context are (1) being selective about what you include and (2) framing your own analysis. For example, Theodore Roosevelt is an important historical figure, and many books have been written about him. Even two paragraphs are insufficient to summarize every relevant detail about him. Likewise, the American Museum of Natural History plays a significant role in documenting mammalian life and has a vital, if at times controversial, role in American scientific history. In the two paragraphs below, the author selects details about the president, the museum, and the statue that both highlight the reasons they are admired and touch on their potential failings. These details are not all-inclusive; they are carefully culled from all of the available information to lead up to the subsequent analysis, which focuses on the reasons to remove the statue. The last sentence in the second paragraph is the thesis, in which the author states her agreement with the museum's decision.

Contextual Introduction

> Theodore Roosevelt cultivated a hearty outdoor lifestyle, exploring the Dakota Territory in the 1890s, serving as a Rough Rider during the Spanish-American War (1898), and advocating for the conservation of America's natural resources. Despite criticism for the way in which he acquired the land and rights to construct the Panama Canal, he was widely respected both at home and abroad, being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize (1906) for helping negotiate a peace treaty between Japan and Russia. After his presidency, he traveled extensively throughout Africa and South America, where he killed many animals and returned them to serve as specimens in America's natural history museums. He was himself shot while campaigning, but as the bullet did not penetrate his lung, he gave his speech regardless, earning him the reputation of a bull moose.

> A statue commemorating Roosevelt was presented to the public in 1940, two decades after his death, and placed in front of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, where Roosevelt served as governor from 1899 to 1900. On one side of Roosevelt, depicted on horseback at the center of the sculpture, walks an African person, and on the other an Indigenous person. All three figures have a straight, proud posture and look directly ahead of them, toward the future. Given its placement, the statue is likely intended as an allegory, depicting the men of two continents—Africa and North America, including its Indigenous people—on a voyage of discovery and learning. Over time, however, and given the hierarchical framing of the image, with the White man clothed in a suit and atop a horse, central to the image, the statue's meaning has changed, leading to the praiseworthy and long-awaited decision to remove it in 2020.

Create Topic Sentences

Use the models below to create your own topic sentences to focus each paragraph on a specific technical or contextual aspect of the image.

- **Pattern.** The sculpture unites the three figures—four, including the horse—primarily through the repetition of musculature, armor, weapons, and costumes.
- **Point of view.** Because the sculpture is large, tall, and set on a pedestal, it requires viewers either to look up at it or to regard it from a distance—both postures requiring a certain degree of reverence.
- **Arrangement.** The sculpture's three human figures are arranged in a triangle, suggesting an apex with two supporting angles.
- **Symbolism.** Each man is dressed in the clothing of his homeland, giving each allegorical significance as racial, rather than individual, representations.

Build Body Paragraphs

Support each topic sentence by describing in detail the elements you have chosen to assess. When describing the image, avoid overuse of adjectives and adverbs. Use concrete rather than abstract nouns. Abstract nouns name ideas, such as *perspective* or *theme*; concrete nouns refer to specific, tangible elements, such as *triangle*, *line*, or *granite*. Incorporate strong verbs as well as the necessary forms of *to be* (*is*, *are*, *was*, *were*). Think about what the features in the image are *doing*—the ways they interact with one another, the space around them, and the viewer's relationship to them. Finally, avoid speculation while going beyond description. Keep the discussion rooted in the evidence, and show readers what the evidence points to, what it means.

Sample Body Paragraph: Arrangement

> The sculpture's three human figures are arranged in a triangle, suggesting an apex with two supporting angles. President Roosevelt is by far the tallest of the three and always visible from whichever angle the viewer faces the sculpture. Meanwhile, the two flanking figures can be seen fully only from the front or the back, suggesting that they lack nuance or subtlety because they can be seen and understood only directly. When seen from an angle, they are either overshadowed by the White man on horseback or disappear from view. Similarly, level with the Native American and the African is the horse, all three depicted with sharply defined muscles, highlighting their strength. Roosevelt is similarly well defined but fully clothed and towering over both the animal and the two men. Overall, the sculpture suggests, at the very least, a hierarchy among the three men and, at worst, a dominance of the White man over those of color.

Formulate a Conclusion

After you have developed the body paragraphs in which you analyze and reflect on the image, conclude by expanding on your thesis and suggesting directions to consider in the future. One important role of the conclusion is to further the discourse by showing how this rhetorical moment is merely one example of other such discourses and how they can be used productively in other contexts. In this case, an effective strategy would be to outline criteria for memorials of historical figures, even those with complicated legacies and flaws.

Sample Conclusion

> The people concerned with public spaces—city planners, museum curators, and government and other leaders—must determine who is worthy of remembrance and how. In doing so, they need to consider historical, contextual, cultural, and artistic concerns, and they must seek and respond to public input. Now is the time to draft guidelines for these decisions.

Peer Review: Separate the Personal from the Technical

After you have drafted your paper, you are ready to review the work of your peers while they review your work.

Keep in mind that you and your peers are almost certainly going to respond to images differently. This is the value of critical discourse about visual rhetoric: pooling shared responses and experiences helps develop a greater understanding of the human condition. As you review your peers' writing, part of your task is to separate your personal responses from the writer's analysis of the image's technical elements.

Here are some topics and questions to get you started on a peer analysis of someone else's work:

- **Consider the context, including culture.** Indicate places where the writer has done well or can supply more information.
  - In what ways has the author included enough information to prepare you for the analysis?
  - What else would you like to know?
  - Is any information superfluous or irrelevant?
  - In what ways has the author addressed cultural issues—their own and those of the intended audience?
  - What else should be considered?
- **Read the first sentence of each paragraph.** Write your answers to these questions.
  - Does a clear outline emerge?
  - What, if any, changes can you suggest to improve the flow?
- **Examine each paragraph.** Highlight places where descriptions or analyses are insufficient, and make suggestions for improvement.
  - In what ways does the paragraph reflect a clear, vivid, and technical description of the image?
  - In what ways does the paragraph move beyond description into analysis to explain the effect of the technical elements?
- **Read the conclusion.** If the author has not outlined strategies for the future or contributed to ongoing discourse, provide your suggestions, or brainstorm some ideas with them.

Revising: Hone Your Practice

Writing the first draft is hard work, and you are right to feel pride and a sense of accomplishment after completing it. Thus, any critique can feel unjust and even personally wounding. Remember, though, that writing is a process and that everyone is an apprentice, working toward expertise and, eventually, mastery. So take every opportunity you can to learn from others and hone your skills.

First, reward yourself for completing the first draft. You may choose to take a long walk, prepare a favorite meal, or enjoy some leisure time with friends. Savor the moment. Time away from the writing process is time for your writing and thinking muscles to recover. Consider some light reading. Think about it this way—you'll never build muscle if you go to the gym all day while you starve yourself. In the same way, you've expended a lot of vocabulary and sentence- structure energy. Feed it to rebuild it.

Finally, return to your work with a goal in mind and a plan to put it into place. Look at the feedback you received. *Does your work require major revision or minor tweaks?* If the latter, then your task is simple: make a to-do list and get started! If the former, go back to the drawing board and diagnose your own process, considering the following questions:

- Is your current understanding of context, culture, audience, or purpose different from what it was at the outset? If so, what changes do you need to make?
- Are your descriptions insufficient, unclear, or vague? Revisit "Reading" Images and Glance at Genre: Relationship Between Image and Rhetoric and consider the terminology and techniques introduced there in light of your image.
- Is your analysis insufficient or missing? Review Glance at Genre: Relationship Between Image and Rhetoric and the example in Writing Process: Thinking Critically and Writing Persuasively about Images. Reflect on your image and consider your assumptions.

- Do you have a clear introduction, conclusion, and body paragraphs with topic sentences? Is each paragraph fleshed out with meaningful descriptions and analysis?

After you think about these topics and take notes based on your thoughts, you can make a plan and revise your work with confidence.

17.6 Editing Focus: Descriptive Diction

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Apply editing strategies to highlight the features of visual rhetoric.
- Edit to include concrete nouns and descriptive language when writing about images.
- Identify instances of wordiness and overused modifiers and edit to eliminate them.

People reading about visual and digital images expect to encounter vivid, descriptive language that allows them to picture the image as they read. Particularly helpful is detailed language, such as precise names for colors (for example, aqua, teal, or navy for different shades of blue) or similes (for example, *steel blue like the October sky seen through a heavy Los Angeles smog*). This type of language helps readers visualize the image differently and broadens their range of experience. Such descriptive writing incorporates your personal experience with the elements of visual rhetoric discussed in this chapter.

Consider the following suggestions to help you bridge the gap between your experience and that of your reader.

- **First, use concrete, rather than abstract, nouns.** An abstract noun is a word such as *concept* or *practice*. It refers to an idea rather than a thing. A concrete noun refers to something visible or tangible: *arc*, *circle*, or *line*. Your reader can identify concrete nouns in the image and follow your description more meaningfully.

  Example 1

  Original: The artist used a lot of colors for the face instead of dividing it into lights and darks.

  Revision: The French painter Henri Matisse (1869–1954) used blues and greens, along with reds and yellows, to depict the woman's face instead of separating it into realistic color and shading.

  Example 2

  Original: By the placement of the figures, the sculptor depicts dominance.

  Revision: By placing the African and Indigenous figures behind and lower than the central figure mounted on horseback, the sculptor depicts the dominance of the White man, Theodore Roosevelt.

- **Second, use adjectives sparingly.** Readers rely on subjects and verbs to draw meaning from sentences. Those are the words that light up the synapses and neurons in people's brains. They are the characters and actions in stories, while all other words act as "filler." Although they provide color, interest, and detail, they lack the power of subjects and verbs. So let your subjects and verbs pack the punch, and reserve adjectives and adverbs for special occasions.

  Consider the advice given by one of America's classic writers, Mark Twain (1835–1910): "When you catch an adjective, kill it. No, I don't mean utterly, but kill most of them—then the rest will be valuable. They weaken when they are close together. They give strength when they are wide apart. An adjective habit, or a wordy, diffuse, flowery habit, once fastened upon a person, is as hard to get rid of as any other vice."

  Example 1

  Original: Inside and outside, the big, shiny memorial building was covered with many very small, brightly colored tiles.

  Revision: Both the interior and exterior of the memorial were adorned with mosaics.

Example 2

Original: The bleak meadow, which looked very dreary and not very serene, with bits of snow all around, was the perfect backdrop for the majestic eagle and its massive nest.

Revision: The snow dotting the meadow made it look bleak rather than serene, highlighting the majesty of both the eagle and its nest.

- **Finally, strengthen verbs by removing weak, wordy structures.** *There are* and *it is* are two such structures. If you look deeper into the sentence, you usually can find a verb masquerading as a noun. While you're at it, eliminate unnecessary or filler words, such as prepositions or repetitive conjunctions.

  Example 1

  Original: It is obvious that the artist intended that the painting should be something that projects clarity and insight.

  Revision: The artist obviously intended the painting to project clarity and insight.

  Example 2

  Original: Throughout the United States near the end of the landscape painting era, there was growing disillusionment among artists with the naturalness of nature.

  Revision: As the landscape painting era neared an end, U.S. artists became increasingly disillusioned with the naturalness of nature.

Practice Using Descriptive Diction

Revise the following descriptions to eliminate abstract nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and extra words. Be sure to keep the same meaning.

1. The dirty, grimy, broken walls in the artist's painting of the building really show anyone looking at it that there is no one living there because of the condition or maybe some other reason.
2. The drawing is really very beautiful; the artist has done a great job of making the face look like the real person's face, especially the features.
3. In the picture, there are flowers in a vase and some food and other things on a table; in the background, there is a cat.

17.7 Evaluation: Relationship Between Analysis and Image

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Apply or challenge measurement outcomes for written discourse in the field of visual rhetoric.
- Compare your written work with evaluation criteria.

Below are the criteria that your instructor will use to assess your written work for this chapter. As you read them, consider how they align with the elements of visual rhetoric identified and analyzed throughout this chapter. As you plan, write, and revise, consult the following rubric carefully to ensure that you are meeting the critical cultural and rhetorical expectations for assessing images. Consider also ways you might usefully and creatively challenge such expectations—for example, by adopting a unique voice in which to write that rejects language such as "point of view" but still results in an effective piece of persuasive writing.

Rubric

Score	Critical Language Awareness	Clarity and Coherence	Rhetorical Choices
5 **Skillful**	The text always adheres to the "Editing Focus" of this chapter: using descriptive diction, as discussed in Section 17.6, and employing sensory detail. The text also shows ample evidence of the writer's intent to consciously meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The thesis and organization are clear. Paragraphs are evenly and fully developed, with topic sentences. Sentence structure is balanced. The introduction offers a clearly relevant context, and the conclusion is insightful. The writer has used transitions to ensure coherence throughout.	The author demonstrates consistent skill in using the technical language associated with visual rhetoric—line, light, and point of view, for example—and consistently speaks to the reader in an engaging and professional tone.
4 **Accomplished**	The text usually adheres to the "Editing Focus" of this chapter: using descriptive diction, as discussed in Section 17.6, and employing sensory detail. The text also shows some evidence of the writer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The thesis and organization are clear. Paragraphs are evenly and fully developed, with topic sentences. Sentence structure is generally, if not consistently, balanced. The introduction offers a relevant context, and the conclusion is insightful. The writer has used transitions to ensure coherence in most places.	The author demonstrates some mastery of the technical language associated with visual rhetoric—line, light, and point of view, for example—and usually speaks to the reader in an engaging and professional tone.
3 **Capable**	The text generally adheres to the "Editing Focus" of this chapter: using descriptive diction, as discussed in Section 17.6, and employing sensory detail. The text also shows limited evidence of the writer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The thesis and organization are fairly clear. Some paragraphs may lack topic sentences, or topic sentences may be unclear. Some paragraphs may be undeveloped. Sentence structure may be unbalanced. The introduction offers a relevant context, and the conclusion is adequate, if not insightful. Transitions may be missing in key places.	The author demonstrates familiarity with, if not mastery of, the technical language associated with visual rhetoric—line, light, and point of view, for example—and usually speaks to the reader in an engaging and professional tone. There may be occasional lapses in vocabulary, tone, or comprehension.

TABLE 17.4

Score	Critical Language Awareness	Clarity and Coherence	Rhetorical Choices
2 **Developing**	The text occasionally adheres to the "Editing Focus" of this chapter: using descriptive diction, as discussed in Section 17.6, and employing sensory detail. The text also shows emerging evidence of the writer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The thesis may be implied rather than stated, and the organization may be unclear. Paragraphs may lack topic sentences and may be undeveloped. Sentence structure is likely to be simplistic. The introduction offers little context, and the conclusion is impractical or simplistic. Few transitions provide minimal, if any, coherence.	The author demonstrates little, if any, familiarity with the technical language associated with visual rhetoric—line, light, and point of view, for example. The tone may be inconsistent and informal or unprofessional at times. There may be occasional lapses in vocabulary and comprehension as well.
1 **Beginning**	The text does not adhere to the "Editing Focus" of this chapter: using descriptive diction, as discussed in Section 17.6, and employing sensory detail. The text also shows little to no evidence of the writer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The thesis is missing or irrelevant to the assignment. Paragraphs are unevenly developed and poorly organized. Sentence structures and word choices may be simplistic or exhibit substantive errors that impede comprehension. The introduction or conclusion may be missing. Alternatively, the introduction provides no context, or the conclusion merely summarizes the paper. Lack of transitions contributes to general incoherence.	The author demonstrates little, if any, familiarity with the technical language associated with visual rhetoric—line, light, and point of view, for example. The tone is inconsistent and often informal or unprofessional. There may be lapses in vocabulary and comprehension as well.

TABLE 17.4

17.8 Spotlight on … Video and Film

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Examine and apply key techniques used in film and movies to personal rhetorical and cultural contexts.
- Implement a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences.
- Create a multimodal work that incorporates visual rhetorical techniques.

FIGURE 17.18 Ken Burns (https://openstax.org/r/Ken-Burns) (b. 1953), American historian and documentarian (Credit: "KenBurns" by Jim Wallace/Wikimedia Commons, CC-BY-2.0)

Lights, Camera Angles, Actions

This chapter focuses largely on still images, but many of the same principles apply to moving images, or film. Documentaries in particular combine a series of still or moving images with historical and narrative text. This section shows how the concepts of visual rhetoric apply to the documentary work of Ken Burns. It also encourages you to examine your experience through such techniques by creating a film autobiography.

The field of movie and film artistry is vast, constituting an entire field of study in its own right. One notable figure in the field is the American history film documentarian Ken Burns (b. 1953), who is responsible for nearly 200 films as writer, director, producer, or all of the above. From *The Civil War* (1990) to *The Vietnam War* (2017), from *Jackie Robinson* (2016) to *Country Music* (2019), Ken Burns has documented the American experience in richer and more layered ways than can be achieved via print text alone.

Burns's style is deceptively simple. His documentaries are narrated in an informative, objective manner, sometimes by a well-known figure in politics, sports, or entertainment whose work is related to the documentary topic. The images consist of archival footage, which differs depending on the topic, ranging from black-and-white photographs to grainy home videos. These are interspersed with interviews from eyewitnesses and experts.

Of the many techniques that Burns employs, three are of particular interest: **foreshadowing**, **the personal vs. the universal**, and **juxtaposition**.

Foreshadowing

Documentaries are not known for being riveting, suspenseful, edge-of-your seat thrillers, but Ken Burns keeps audiences enthralled for hours on end. *The Civil War*, for example, consists of nine episodes totaling 11 hours and 30 minutes. One important way Burns keeps audiences engaged is by implying that things are not as they seem or that a major change is just on the horizon. Such warnings are delivered by his narrators often just after a peak emotional moment either of contentment and resolution or of fear and anxiety. The effect is to

make the audience question what could possibly happen next and to keep them tuned in for the next episode.

The Personal vs. the Universal

History may move in giant sweeps across times and places, but it happens day by day with the mundane choices made by ordinary people. Burns excels at highlighting the small, personal tales of individuals who changed the course of history and the ways massive historical movements affected individual people's lives. The back-and-forth of these forces plays out in his work like a delicate ballet in which the lead dancers move toward and away from one another on stage, amplifying the tension each time.

Juxtaposition

Like any serious historian, Burns is interested not merely in *what* happened but also in *why.* This investigation requires that he go beyond appearances, a challenge for a filmmaker who relies on images to make his meaning clear to viewers. Burns often demonstrates for viewers how people and events converge by showing an ordinary American soldier, farmer, or sports figure, for example, alongside a powerful political figure. Alternatively, he may pan out from a newspaper headline only to zoom in on a story printed deep within the fold. In the viewer's mind, the placement of such figures plants an impression that is immediately upended or replaced. The experience can be jarring, but the technique leads to deep learning and retention, which is one reason Burns's documentaries leave a lasting impression on his audience.

Burns often works in conjunction with the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), which funds and airs much of his work. To see these techniques in action, visit his page on the PBS website and watch a short clip of his biography of Jack Johnson (https://openstax.org/r/short-clip) (1878–1946), the first Black American heavyweight boxer to became world champion—in the height of the Jim Crow era.

Publish Your Work: Film Autobiography

Make a documentary of your own! Document the process of writing your essay or select a meaningful moment in your life—an event, an anniversary, an accomplishment, a disappointment—and create a 3–5 minute multimodal video about it, incorporating video, still images, and text that explore the significance of the moment in your life. Post your finished product to YouTube. Table 17.5 lists resources you can use to produce and publish your video, including ways to limit viewership and address privacy concerns.

Video Creation Software

Name	Notes	Location
Lightworks	Best for beginners. Includes stock images.	LWKS (https://openstax.org/r/LWKS)
VideoPad	Open access and easy to use. Limited functionality.	VideoPad (https://openstax.org/r/VideoPad)
HitFilm Express	Somewhat advanced. Allows special effects. Must share status update on social media to use.	HitFilm (https://openstax.org/r/HitFilm)
OpenShot	For intermediate users.	OpenShot (https://openstax.org/r/OpenShot)

YouTube Resources

Description	Location

TABLE 17.5 Resources for making a film autobiography

Video Creation Software

Name	Notes	Location
Upload videos to YouTube privately so that you control who sees them and when.		YouTube (https://openstax.org/r/YouTube)
Set your YouTube audience to comply with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act.		Channel Setting (https://openstax.org/r/Channel-Setting)
Set your YouTube video to be visible only to your professor and classmates.		Sharing With a Specific Audience (https://openstax.org/r/Sharing-With)

TABLE 17.5 Resources for making a film autobiography

A film autobiography about your experiences with writing and images can help you consider the way you use images in discourse. It also serves as good practice in thinking critically about your experiences and their relation to both images and language. Finally, a film autobiography allows you to communicate your experiences and reflections with others, expanding their worldview as well as your own.

17.9 Portfolio: Interplay Between Text and Image

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Articulate your use of images in light of their rhetorical context and elements.
- Analyze images rhetorically both in and out of academic settings.

The consideration of visual rhetoric is not merely an academic exercise. Because visual and digital images are ever-present, thinking critically about them is a meaningful way of interacting with the world, reflecting on attitudes and behaviors, and communicating with others. You can apply what you learned in this chapter by considering the images surrounding you: those you see on advertisements in public spaces, those you view on television and other streaming services, and those you see and post on social media platforms.

Interacting with Images Online

As you add your essay to your portfolio, continue conscious and reflective practice in your own writing by thinking about an image you recently posted on one of your social media platforms. Consider the following questions, returning to "Reading" Images as needed.

- Does it contain information open to interpretation?
- What is its point of view?
- How is it arranged?
- What colors or symbols does it use, and what associations might these have for you or others?

Draft an analysis of your own image-posting behavior to include in your course portfolio. The purpose is both to showcase and continue practicing the writing skills and techniques you learned from this chapter and to assess and reflect upon the ways in which you interact with visual and digital images. Remember to include the following elements in your analysis:

- **Introduction.** Establish the context. Material here should include relevant information about you, your posting platforms and behaviors, and the image you posted. Should you choose to write a persuasive piece, your introduction should include a thesis statement identifying your position and one or more reasons for it.
- **Paragraphs with clear topic sentences.** Focus each paragraph on a technical element of the image, and ensure that it contains a mixture of description and either reflection, analysis, or persuasion. Begin each

paragraph with a topic sentence identifying the paragraph's focus.

- **Image(s).** Because you are describing and assessing the image you posted, a copy of it will go a long way toward helping your audience understand it. If the image is in the public domain, embed it with a citation. If not, embed a link so viewers can see it on the Internet.
- **Citations.** Understanding context often requires research. Furthermore, images have creators who deserve recognition for their work. Follow MLA guidelines to cite all of your sources, including the image.
- **Conclusion.** Go beyond summarizing to identify future image-posting practices that you intend to consider and would encourage others to consider.

In conclusion, this chapter explains the concepts associated with both visual rhetoric and writing about visual and digital images. Through the numerous examples, analyses, and procedures outlined here, you can connect your personal and cultural experiences to the visual and digital images with which you interact. In doing so, you can make meaningful connections with a variety of audiences, permitting a broader understanding of the world and its many visual depictions.

Further Reading

The following is a list of some texts and museums that can help deepen your understanding of visual rhetoric.

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El Museo del Barrio. New York, NY, www.elmuseo.org/

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The Honolulu Museum of Art. Honolulu, HI, honolulumuseum.org/

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Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Los Angeles, CA, www.lacma.org/

McClean, Shilo T. *Digital Storytelling: The Narrative Power of Visual Effects in Film*. MIT P, 2007.

National Memorial for Peace and Justice. Montgomery, AL, museumandmemorial.eji.org/memorial

National Museum of Mexican Art. Chicago, IL, nationalmuseumofmexicanart.org/

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The Rubin Museum of Art. New York, NY, rubinmuseum.org/

The Smithsonian National Museum Network. Washington, DC (collections with special cultural interests detailed below)

Asian Pacific American Center, smithsonianapa.org/

Latino Center, latino.si.edu/latino-center

National Museum of African American History and Culture, nmaahc.si.edu/

National Museum of the American Indian, americanindian.si.edu/

Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, the Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art, asia.si.edu/

Stocchetti, Matteo, and Karin Kukkonen, editors. *Images in Use: Towards the Critical Analysis of Visual Communication*. John Benjamins, 2011.

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Multimodal and Online Writing: Creative Interaction between Text and Image

18

FIGURE 18.1 Multimodal text incorporates many different types of communication, making it visually and aurally compelling as well as highly accessible for audiences. (credit: "Computer Internet Tools Gadgets Edited 2020" by www.mechanicalcaveman.com/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

CHAPTER OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION Chances are you already have a great deal of experience with **multimodal** composition—that is, writing or creating content by combining different types of communication. Much of your experience may come from digital spaces, perhaps even from platforms such as social media that you don't associate with academics. According to literature examining adolescent and young adult literacy skills, young adults incorporate a great deal of multimodal communication—which includes sound, images, movement, and text—into their everyday lives to express themselves and connect with others. Social media has no doubt hastened the spread of multimodal communication, and its prevalence in the world is unprecedented. Perhaps

you have never believed that your experience with digital and multimodal writing connects to academic composition, but indeed it does. Just as technology has changed how people interact with the world, multimodal composition has altered how they create content. In this chapter, you will learn how to combine your experience in creating and using multimodal composition with established writing practices, particularly those used in argumentative writing, to generate connected content that creates meaning.

Multimodal composition begins where any other composition does: with the **rhetorical situation**, or the circumstance of communication in which one person (the composer) uses communication to influence the perspective of another (the audience). All multimodal compositions are created for a specific time and place and a particular audience who views the world in an explicit and culturally influenced way. As a writer, you make choices based on the rhetorical situation: context, audience, purpose, genre, and culture. You consider the strengths and weaknesses of all the possible means and tools available for reaching your rhetorical goals. By identifying the audience, determining what you need to tell the audience, and analyzing the best way to do that (including which types of media to use), you are empowered to create an effective and targeted composition.

In many ways, multimodal composition opens a range of possibilities by offering you any number of tools to make meaning, rather than limiting you to text alone. For example, a sportswriter might rely heavily on visuals to engage readers and demonstrate a runner's prowess, or they might create infographics to relay statistics about the athlete or the meet itself.

FIGURE 18.2 Composers often use images to engage readers and relate details that are difficult to express with words alone. (credit: "ISST 2014 Munich" by R. Boed/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

Websites require a balance of text, images, and careful formatting to present information in ways that are easy to digest and not overwhelming for the reader. In fact, the most difficult part of this type of creation may be choosing among the available tools to create meaning *effectively* without doing too much or too little. In some ways, the flexibility of websites can make it hard to know where to get started—or where to end.

This chapter presents a blog post by Alexandra Dapolito Dunn, formerly of the Environmental Protection Agency. Studying this article and the components of multimodal writing that Dunn chooses to use will help you understand how different platforms and rhetorical needs require different elements of text, media, and modes. Later in the chapter, you will learn how to address a range of audiences through your own textual and digital compositions.

18.1 Mixing Genres and Modes

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Address a range of audiences using a variety of technologies.
- Adapt composing processes for a variety of modalities, including textual and digital compositions.
- Match the capacities of different print and electronic environments to varying rhetorical situations.

The writing genre for this chapter incorporates a variety of modalities. A **genre** is a type of composition that encompasses defined features, follows a style or format, and reflects your purpose as a writer. For example, given the composition types *romantic comedy*, *poetry*, or *documentary*, you probably can think easily of features of each of these composition types. When considering the multimodal genres, you will discover that genres create **conventions** (standard ways of doing things) for categorizing media according to the expectations of the audience and the way the media will be consumed. Consider film media, for example; it encompasses genres including drama, documentaries, and animated shorts, to name a few. Each genre has its own conventions, or features. When you write or analyze multimodal texts, it is important to account for genre conventions.

A note on text: typically, when referring to text, people mean written words. But in multimodal genres, the term *text* can refer to a piece of communication as a whole, incorporating written words, images, sounds, and even movement. The following images are examples of multimodal texts.

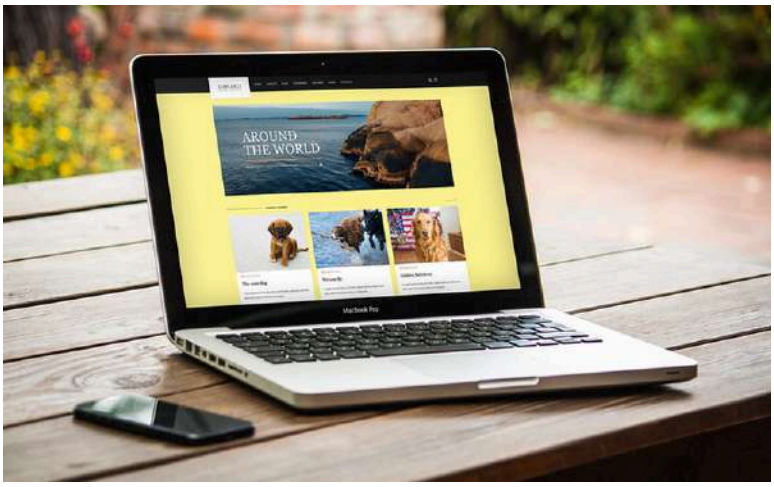


FIGURE 18.3 A website is a multimodal text that combines images and words. It may incorporate sound and animation as well. (credit: “SimplePix - Responsive WordPress Blog Magazine Theme #2” by Serge Kij/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

FIGURE 18.4 A theatrical performance, as shown in this dance image, is a multimodal text combining drama, music, movement, and visual design. Other theatrical performances combine different elements. (credit: "Danses d'Okinawa (musée Guimet, Paris)" by Jean-Pierre Dalbéra/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

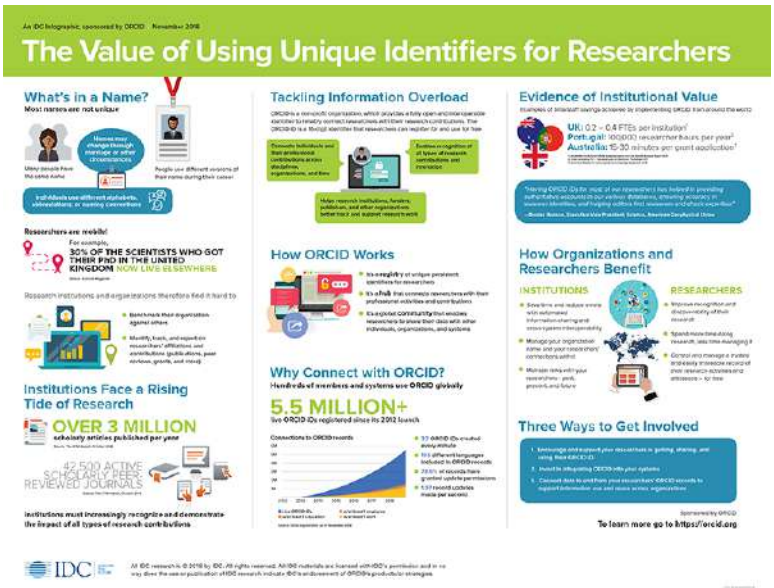


FIGURE 18.5 An infographic is a multimodal text that combines words and different types of graphics to convey information succinctly. (credit: "ORCID Infographic 2019" by ORCID/Wikimedia Commons, CC0)

Multimodal genres are uniquely positioned to address audiences through a variety of **modes**, or types of communication. These can be identified in the following categories:

Linguistic text: The most common mode for writing, the linguistic mode includes written or spoken text.

Visuals: The visual mode includes anything the reader can see, including images, colors, lighting, typefaces, lines, shapes, and backgrounds.

Audio: The audio mode includes all types of sound, such as narration, sound effects, music, silence, and ambient noise.

Spatial: Especially important in digital media, the spatial mode includes spacing, image and text size and

position, white space, visual organization, and alignment.

Gestural: The gestural mode includes communication through all kinds of body language, including movement and facial expressions.

Multimodal composition provides an opportunity for you to develop and practice skills that will translate to future coursework and career opportunities. Creating a multimodal text requires you to demonstrate aptitude in various modes and reflects the requirements for communication skills beyond the academic world. In other words, although multimodal creations may seem to be little more than pictures and captions at times, they must be carefully constructed to be effective. Even the simplest compositions are meticulously planned and executed. Multimodal compositions may include written text, such as blog post text, slideshow text, and website content; image-based content, such as infographics and photo essays; or audiovisual content, including podcasts, public service announcements, and videos.

FIGURE 18.6 Multimodal compositions aren't always complicated. Even a single photo can create a major impact on readers. (credit: "3-187 Infantry soldier scanning ridge in Bak Defense" by Sgt. Jeffrey Alexander/Wikimedia Commons, Defense.gov Photo Essays, Public Domain)

Multimodal composition is especially important in a 21st-century world where communication must represent and transfer across cultural contexts. Because using multiple modes helps a writer make meaning in different **channels** (media that communicate a message), the availability of different modes is especially important to help you make yourself understood as an author. In academic settings, multimodal content creation increases engagement, improves equity, and helps prepare you to be a global citizen. The same is true for your readers. Multimodal composition is important in addressing and supporting cultural and linguistic diversity. Modes are shaped by social, cultural, and historic factors, all of which influence their use and impact in communication. And it isn't just readers who benefit from multimodal composition. Combining a variety of modes allows you as a composer to connect to your own lived experiences—the representation of experiences and choices that you have faced in your own life—and helps you develop a unique voice, thus leveraging your knowledge and experiences.

18.2 Trailblazer

Multimodal Trailblazer: Torika Bolatagici

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Identify various rhetorical and culture contexts while reading for inquiry, learning, critical thinking, and communication.
- Demonstrate that genre conventions vary and are shaped by purpose, culture, and expectation.

FIGURE 18.7 Torika Bolatagici (https://openstax.org/r/4S3YIw-PFAs) works to bring attention to indigenous artists. Speculation exists as to the origin of this wall- like stone structure; some believe it was constructed by early peoples of Australia. (credit: "Man-made stone wall" by Rupert Gerritsen/Wikimedia Commons, CC0).

"I can never deny the deeply personal place that the work comes from."

Digital Representations of Embodiment and Cultural Identity

Torika Bolatagici is a creator, educator, and art historian who works with various modalities, including photography (https://openstax.org/r/photography), video, fine art, and mixed media (https://openstax.org/r/mixed_media). Bolatagici was born in Tasmania and, as a young person, spent time living in Hobart, Tasmania; Sydney, Australia; and her father's village of Suvavou, Fiji. Her work has been featured across the globe, including in exhibits in the United States, Taiwan, and Mexico as well as throughout New Zealand and Australia. She has a PhD from the School of Art and Design, University of New South Wales, where she wrote her dissertation on "Somatic Sotia: Commodity, Agency and the Fijian Military Body."

In 2013 and 2014, Bolatagici coordinated the Contemporary Pacific Arts Festival (https://openstax.org/r/contemporary_specific), curating an experience that focused on Pacific arts practices in Australia. She invited speakers to present on themes spanning activism and the arts, cultural appropriation, and contemporary artistic practices. Bolatagici now works as an educator, lecturing on art and performance at Deakin University in Australia, and has led youth arts workshops in the local Pacific community.

Reflecting on the beginnings of her career, she describes going through her undergraduate coursework and feeling the responsibility of bringing "brown-ness" to the classroom. After finding that higher education largely dismissed the lived experiences of marginalized communities and spending time at the Stuart Hall Library at the Institute of International Visual Arts, Bolatagici was inspired to create the pop-up Community Reading Room in Melbourne, Australia, in 2013.

Through the pop-up room, she hoped to engage the community in international visual arts and culture. She

began her initiative by sharing her own personal collection, including texts and anthologies of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) art. The Community Reading Room provides an emphasis on contemporary art and theory from Africa, the Americas, and Oceania.

Bolatagici has incorporated a variety of media (https://openstax.org/r/variety) into her academic and professional portfolios, describing how her work helps her not only represent diverse cultures (https://openstax.org/r/represent) but also explore her own identity. From photo essays (https://openstax.org/r/photo_essays) to academic papers, her compositions are anchored by the common thread of representing marginalized people and experiences, particularly those related to communities of color. Her creative output has focused on representation of mixed-race identity, Pacific arts practices, and militarism. Through mixed media, she investigates relationships between visual culture and historiography (study of historical writings); human ecology (study of relationships between humans and their natural, social, and created environments); and the intersection of gender, knowledge, and globalization.

Bolatagici describes her work as interdisciplinary, creating components across a wide range of media. Instead of limiting herself, she allows her work to flow naturally, staying focused in the moment. With these unique components, she looks at the relationship between visual culture and human ecology. This interdisciplinary approached emerged for Bolatagici even before she knew it as multimodalism. Because her interests in college varied so greatly, she pursued a media arts degree so that she could explore visual arts as they related to cultural studies. This pursuit grew into a career that now includes new modes and media sources, such as photography, video, and mixed media.

Choosing a multimodal approach because it better communicates the complex subjects she conveys, Bolatagici draws on her own experiences in order to represent the experiences of marginalized people at the forefront of her compositions. For Bolatagici, creating in any form is bigger than the page, and she aims to bring her reality to life through visual, textual, and multimedia creations that communicate in four dimensions.

Read Bolatagici's weekly journal (https://openstax.org/r/freshmilk) during her residency in Barbados.

Discussion Questions

1. How does using a multimodal approach allow Bolatagici to communicate her lived experience?
2. Why does representation matter in multimodal composition? How has Bolatagici addressed this in her methods?
3. What role can multimodal compositions play in exploring experiences beyond your own?
4. How can multimodal works at times better communicate aspects of culture and history than literary text alone?
5. In what sense is bringing communities together an important aspect of Bolatagici's work?

18.3 Glance at Genre: Genre, Audience, Purpose, Organization

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Identify key genre conventions, including structure, tone, and mechanics.
- Implement common formats and design features for different text types.
- Demonstrate how genre conventions vary and are shaped by purpose, culture, and expectation.

The multimodal genres of writing are based on the idea that modes work in different ways, with different outcomes, to create various vehicles for communication. By layering, or combining, modes, an author can make meaning and communicate through mixed modes what a single mode cannot on its own. Essentially, modes "cooperate" to communicate the author's intent as they interweave meanings captured by each.

For example, think of a public service announcement about environmental conservation. A composer can create a linguistic text about the dangers of plastic pollution in oceans and support the ideas with knowledge of or expertise in the subject. Yet words alone may not communicate the message forcefully, particularly if the audience consists of people who have never considered the impact of pollution on the oceans. That composer, then, might combine the text with images of massive amounts of human-generated plastic waste littering a shoreline, thus strengthening the argument and enhancing meaning by touching on audience emotions. By using images to convey some of the message, the composer layers modes. The picture alone does not tell the whole story, but when combined with informational text, it enhances the viewer's understanding of the issue. Modes, therefore, can be combined in various ways to communicate a rhetorical idea effectively.

FIGURE 18.8 The addition of various types of media can enhance the impact of a composition and thus increase the reader's understanding of an issue. (credit: "Polluted Beach on the Red Sea in Sharm el-Naga, Port Safaga, Egypt" by Vberger/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

Audience Awareness

As with any type of composition, knowing your **audience** (the readers and viewers for whom you are creating) will help you determine what information to include and what genre, mode(s), or media in which to present it. Consider your audience when choosing a composition's **tone** (composer's attitude toward the audience or subject), substance, and language. Considering the audience is critical not only in traditional academic writing but also in nearly any genre or mode you choose. Ask yourself these questions when analyzing your audience's awareness:

- What (and how much) does the audience already know about the topic? The amount of background information needed can influence what genre, modes, and media types you include and how you use them. You don't want to bore an audience with information that is common knowledge or overwhelm an audience with information they know nothing about.
- What is the audience's viewpoint on the subject? Are you creating for a skeptical audience or one that largely agrees with your rhetorical arguments?
- How do you relate to your audience? Do you share cultural understanding, or are you presenting

information or beliefs that will be unfamiliar? This information will help you shape the message, tone, and structure of the composition.

Understanding your audience allows you to choose rhetorical devices that reflect **ethos** (appeals to ethics: credibility), **logos** (appeals to logic: reason), and **pathos** (appeals to sympathy: emotion) to create contextually responsive compositions through multiple modes.

It important to address audience diversity in all types of composition, but the unique aspects of multimodal composition present particular opportunities and challenges. First, when you compose, you do so through your own cultural filter, formed from your experiences, gender, education, and other factors. Multimodal composition opens up the ability to develop your cultural filter through various methods. Think about images of your lived experiences, videos capturing cultural events, or even gestures in live performances. Also consider the diversity of your audience members and how that affects the content choices you make during composition. Avoiding **ethnocentrism**—the assumption that the customs, values, and beliefs of your culture are superior to others—is an important consideration when addressing your audience, as is using bias-free language, especially regarding ethnicity, gender, and abilities.

Blogs, Vlogs, and Creative Compositions

Among the modes available to you as a composer, **blogs** (regularly updated websites, usually run by an individual or a small group) have emerged as a significant genre in digital literature. The term *blog*, a combination of *web* and *log*, was coined in 1999 and gained rapid popularity in the early 2000s. In general, blogs have a relatively narrow focus on a topic or argument and present a distinctive structure that includes these features:

- A headline or title draws in potential readers. Headlines are meant to grab attention, be short, and accurately reflect the content of the blog post.
- An introduction hooks the reader, briefly introducing the topic and establishing the author's credibility on the subject.
- Short paragraphs often are broken up by images, videos, or other media to make meaning and supplement or support the text content.
- The narrative is often composed in a style in which the author claims or demonstrates expertise.
- Media such as images, video, and infographics depict information graphically and break up text.
- Hyperlinks (links to other internet locations) to related content often serve as evidence supporting the author's claim.
- A call to action provides clear and actionable instructions that engage the reader.

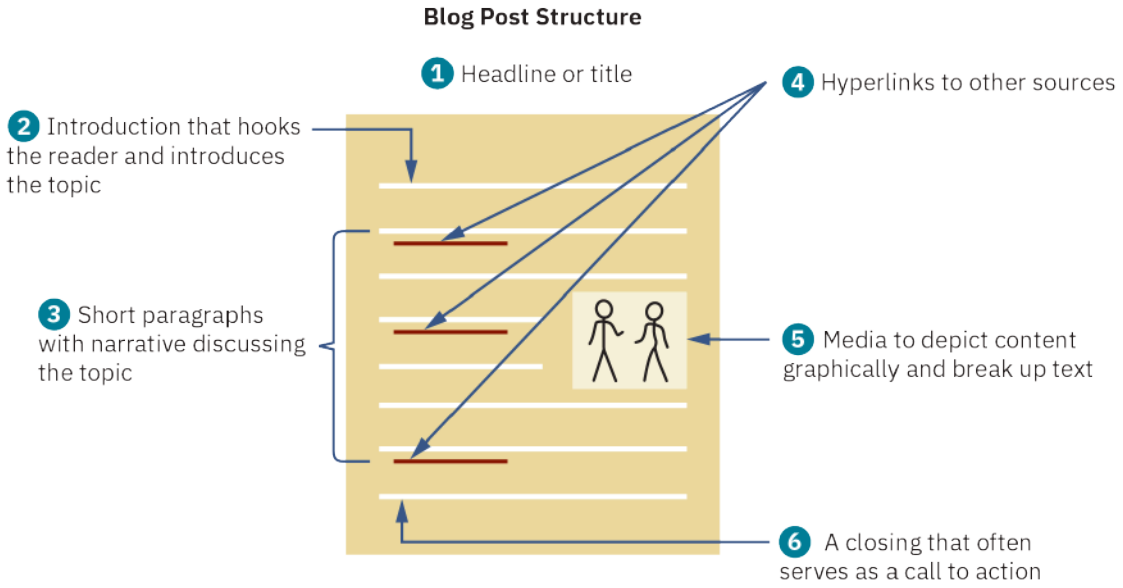


FIGURE 18.9 A blog post typically has these labeled parts. (attribution: Copyright Rice University, OpenStax, under CC BY 4.0 license)

Blogs offer accessibility and an opportunity to make meaning in new ways. By integrating images and audiovisual media, you can develop a multimodal representation of arguments and ideas. Blogs also provide an outlet for conveying ideas through both personal and formal narratives and are used frequently in industries from entertainment to scientific research to government organizations.

Newer in the family of multimodal composition is the video blog, or **vlog**, a blog for which the medium is video. Vlogs usually combine video embedded in a website with supporting text, images, or other modes of communication. Vlogging often takes on a narrative structure, similar to other types of storytelling, with the added element of supplementary audio and video, including digital transitions that connect one idea or scene to another. Vlogs offer ample opportunities to mix modalities.

Vlogs give a literal *voice* to a composer, who typically narrates or speaks directly to the camera. Like a blogger, a vlog creator acts as an expert, telling a narrative story or using rhetoric to argue a point. Vlogs often strive to create an authentic and informal tone, similar to published blogs, inviting a stream-of-consciousness or interview-like style. Therefore, they often work well when targeted toward audiences for whom a casual mood is valuable and easily understood.

FIGURE 18.10 Vlogs are video blogs that offer the opportunity for composers to voice their thoughts in a stream-of-

consciousness style or interview-like style. (credit: "BloggerCon IV Day 2 24Jun06 – 13" by Roland Tanglao/flickr, CC0 1.0)

Other creative compositions include websites, digital or print newsletters, podcasts, and a wide variety of other content. Each composition type has its own best practices regarding structure and organization, often depending on the chosen modalities, the way they are used, and the intended audience. Whatever the mode, however, all multimodal writing has several characteristics in common, beginning with effective, intentional composition.

Effective Writing

Experimenting with modes and media is not an excuse for poorly developed writing that lacks focus, organization, thought, purpose, or attention to mechanics. Although multimodal compositions offer flexibility of expression, the content still must be presented in well-crafted, organized, and purposeful ways that reflect the author's purpose and the audience's needs.

- To be well-crafted, a composition should reflect the author's use of literary devices to convey meaning, use of relevant connections, and acknowledgment of grammar and writing conventions.
- To be organized, a composition should reflect the author's use of effective transitions and a logical structure appropriate to the chosen mode.
- To be purposeful, a composition should show that the author addresses the needs of the audience, uses rhetorical devices that advance the argument, and offers insightful understanding of the topic.

Organization of multimodal compositions refers to the sequence of message elements. You must decide which ideas require attention, how much and in what order, and which modalities create maximum impact on readers. While many types of formal and academic writing follow a prescribed format, or at least the general outline of one, the exciting and sometimes overwhelming features of multimodal possibilities open the door to any number of acceptable formats. Some of these are prescribed, and others more open ended; your job will inevitably be to determine when to follow a template and when to create something new. As the composer, you seek to structure media in ways that will enable the reader, or audience, to derive meaning. Even small changes in media, rhetorical appeal, and organization can alter the ways in which the audience participates in the construction of meaning.


Within a medium—for example, a video—you might include images, audio, and text. By shifting the organization, placement, and interaction among the modes, you change the structure of the video and therefore create varieties of meaning. Now, imagine you use that same structure of images, audio, and text, but change the medium to a slideshow. The impact on the audience will likely change with the change in medium. Consider the infamous opening scene of the horror movie *The Shining* (1980). The primary medium, video, shows a car driving through a mountainous region. After audio is added, however, the meaning of the multimodal composition changes, creating an emphasis on pace—management of dead air—and tone—attitude toward the subject—that communicates something new to the audience.

FIGURE 18.11 The opening scenes of *The Shining* feature the serene-looking Saint Mary Lake with its Wild Goose

Island. The addition of the audio mode, music featuring ominous-sounding horns (https://openstax.org/r/ominous), not only communicates new information to viewers but also shapes an emphasis on drama and danger. (credit: "The upper end of St. Mary Lake and Wild Goose Island, Glacier National Park, Montana. Photo taken from Going-to-the-Sun Road" by Ken Thomas/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

Exploring the Genre

These are the key terms and characteristics of multimodal texts.

- **Alignment:** the way in which elements such as text features, images, and particularly text are placed on a page. Text can be aligned at the left, center, or right. Alignment contributes to organization and how media transitions within a text.
- **Audience:** readers or viewers of the composition.
- **Channel:** a medium used to communicate a message. Often-used channels include websites, blogs, social media, print, audio, and video-hosting sites.
- **Complementary:** describes content that is different across two or more modes, both of which are necessary for understanding. Often audio and visual modes are complementary, with one making the other more meaningful.
- **Emphasis:** the elements in media that are most significant or pronounced. The emphasis choices have a major impact on the overall meaning of the text.
- **Focus:** a clear purpose for composition, also called the central idea, main point, or guiding principle. Focus should include the specific audience the composer is trying to influence.
- **Layering:** combining modes in a single composition.
- **Layout:** the organization of elements on a page, including text, images, shapes, and overall composition. Layout applies primarily to the visual mode.
- **Media:** the means and channels of reaching an audience (for example, image, website, song). A medium (singular form of *media*) can contain multiple modes.
- **Mode:** the method of communication (linguistic, visual, audio, or spatial means of creating meaning). Media can incorporate more than one mode.
- **Organization:** the pattern of arrangement that allows a reader to understand text or images in a composition. Organization may be textual, visual, or spatial.
- **Proximity:** the relationship between objects in space, specifically how close to or far from one another they are. Proximity can show a relationship between elements and is often important in layout.
- **Purpose:** an author's reason for writing a text, including the reasoning that accounts for which modes of presentation to use. Composers of multimodal texts may seek to persuade, inform, or entertain the audience.
- **Repetition:** a unifying feature, such as a pattern used more than once, in the way in which elements (text features, typeface, color, etc.) are used on a page. Repetition often indicates emphasis or a particular theme. Repetitions and patterns can help focus a composition, explore a theme, and emphasize important points.
- **Supplementary:** describes content that is different in two or more modes, where a composer uses one mode to convey primary understanding and the other(s) to support or extend understanding. Supplementary content should not be thought of as "extra," for its purpose is to expand on the primary media.
- **Text:** written words. In multimodal composition, text can refer to a piece of communication as a whole, incorporating written words, images, sounds, and movement.
- **Tone:** the composer's attitude toward the subject and/or the audience.
- **Transitions:** words, phrases, or audiovisual elements that help readers make connections between ideas in a multimodal text, including connections from sentence to sentence, paragraph to paragraph, and mode to mode. Transitions show relationships between ideas and help effectively organize a composition.

18.4 Annotated Sample Reading: “Celebrating a Win-Win” by Alexandra Dapolito Dunn

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Read a diverse range of texts in different genres to identify how conventions are shaped by purpose, language, culture, and audience expectation.
- Read effectively for inquiry, learning, critical thinking, and communication in various rhetorical and cultural contexts.
- Demonstrate the relationships between ideas, patterns of organization, and verbal and nonverbal elements.

Introduction

FIGURE 18.12 Alexandra Dapolito Dunn (credit: “Alex Dunn, assistant administrator at US EPA” by Eric Vance/ Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

As a multimodal composer, you may choose to employ ethos, a rhetorical method of persuasion. In this context, ethos is an appeal to readers in order to establish the author’s credibility and character. In a rhetorical appeal, you can use ethos through fair, neutral language to show trustworthiness. In multimodal composition, ethos aims to convince readers that you are a reliable and an ethical expert on the subject. When using ethos, authors present sources that support their argument in balanced and honest ways, revealing their writing to be reliable. Authors also seek to understand their audience, establishing commonalities between those who support the issue, those who are undecided or indifferent, and those who dissent. Often, authors invoke the words or ideas of respected figures, authorities, or even religious texts when using ethos to convince readers. Analyzing multimodal compositions can help you learn how to use rhetorical frames in the multimodal composing process. In the blog post you are about to read, the author uses ethos, along with structural aspects of multimodal texts, to establish herself as a trustworthy expert on the subject of pollution prevention. Studying the components of multimodal writing in this blog will help you understand how multimedia platforms utilize elements of text, media, and modes.

LIVING BY THEIR OWN WORDS

"Celebrating a Win-Win: 30 Years of Progress under the Pollution Prevention Act" by Alexandra Dapolito Dunn (b. 1967)

> On this day in 1990, a new era was ushered in for Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the nation when the Pollution Prevention (P2) Act was signed into law. The act gave the agency new tools to join with states, tribes, and communities to prevent pollution *before* it happens. It also marked a shift in the paradigm of environmental protection, which had been mostly focused on end-of-pipe pollution control and clean-up strategies.

Headline and Tone. *The linguistic headline immediately allows readers to know the author's position on the subject, and its visual component of boldfaced text allows readers to understand that it's important. Not only does it clearly preface the article by informing the reader of its topic (the Pollution Prevention Act), but it also presents the author's positive attitude toward the subject through the words celebrating and win-win.*

Context. *Dunn contextualizes the Pollution Prevention Act, showing it as a positive national achievement that partnered the government with the people to prevent pollution.*

> Equally important, the P2 Act strengthened EPA's role as an ally of American businesses, helping them save billions of dollars and improve operations. As EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler has said, "It's far better to prevent pollution from occurring than to go in after the fact and clean it up."

Quotation from an Authority. *This quotation from the EPA administrator supports Dunn's assertion that the P2 Act is good for America. The quotation helps lend credibility to the author's claim that the P2 Act has been a success over the past 30 years.*

Purpose. *Dunn's purpose is to show how the P2 Act has been successful over time. Thus far, she has supported the claims that it has improved the environment and helped local governments and private businesses.*

> The P2 Act greatly expanded the opportunities for "source reduction" to reduce or prevent pollution at the source through cost-effective changes in production, operation, and raw materials use. These changes can reduce the amount of pollution entering a waste stream or the environment prior to recycling, treatment or disposal, and can offer industry substantial savings in reduced raw material, pollution control, pollution clean-up and liability costs.

Short Paragraphs. *Dunn uses short, easily digestible paragraphs in her blog post. Short paragraphs are visually effective on a screen and ensure that the reader is not overwhelmed by text while helping the writer organize ideas.*

Ethos. *Dunn uses neutral, measured language to convince the reader that she is a reliable and ethical expert.*

> One of EPA's first pollution prevention successes was with its 33/50 Program, a voluntary program under which companies committed to reduce their releases of 17 top priority chemicals 33 percent by 1992 and by 50 percent by 1995. Subsequent EPA programs built on the 33/50 and P2 model and are still working to reduce pollution across the country today including EPA's WaterSense (https://openstax.org/r/watersense), Safer Choice (https://openstax.org/r/safer_choice), Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (https://openstax.org/r/environmentally), Green Chemistry (https://openstax.org/r/green), and our SmartWay Transport Partnership Program (https://openstax.org/r/smartway). President Trump acknowledged the effectiveness of these and other EPA programs in a 2018 Executive Order that directed federal agencies to use EPA's P2 resources to meet their statutory sustainable purchasing requirements.

Hyperlinks. *Hyperlinks are a functional tool and employ the visual mode to command the reader's attention. Dunn uses hyperlinks to the EPA programs she names, establishing the agency as a source of pollution prevention efforts and, as a result, an expert on the issues covered in the blog post. In addition, she links to the presidential executive*

order, which establishes credibility.

> The P2 Act also serves as an authority for collecting information from reporting facilities through the Toxics Release Inventory (https://openstax.org/r/toxics) (TRI) about their management of certain toxic chemicals, including source reduction approaches. Since this reporting began in 1991, we have learned that over 24,000 unique facilities have taken more than 450,000 actions to prevent pollution and reduce the amount of toxic chemicals entering the environment, such as spill and leak prevention measures, using safer chemicals, modifying industrial processes, and updating operating procedures.

Transition between Paragraphs. *By using the word also, Dunn signals that she is shifting to another success the EPA has achieved in preventing pollution.*

Statistics as Supporting Evidence. *To support the impact of the P2 Act, Dunn uses statistics as evidence to show that the act has facilitated the prevention of pollution and toxic chemicals.*

> Perhaps the most impactful and collaborative program to grow out of the P2 Act is EPA's P2 Grants Program. Since 1990, EPA has awarded more than 1,200 grants to state, tribal, non-profit, and university partners to work directly with U.S. businesses to develop and implement source reduction techniques. With the assistance from P2 grants, businesses have been able to save over $1.5 billion since 2011 while also reducing the use of hazardous materials by over 570 million pounds.

Supporting Evidence. *Dunn provides evidence of the success of the P2 Act by showing how one program has helped local governments and private businesses save money.*

> As we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Pollution Prevention Act today, I would like to thank all our state and local pollution prevention partners, as well as all the businesses that have joined with us to score a true win-win for the American people.

Audience. *Although this blog is written on a public government website, Dunn shifts focus at the end to directly address businesses and local governments that have partnered with her or her organization.*

You can access this post on the EPA blog (https://openstax.org/r/win-win).

Discussion Questions

1. Why does Dunn choose to use neutral language rather than emotional appeals in this blog post?
2. Why does Dunn focus on the impact of the P2 Act on businesses, particularly on how the act is financially beneficial to those organizations?
3. How might this blog post differ if the intended audience were different?
4. What is the effect of Dunn's shift to addressing specific partners at the end of the post?
5. In your opinion, does Dunn effectively establish herself as a trusted source? Why or why not?

18.5 Writing Process: Create a Multimodal Advocacy Project

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Craft textual and digital compositions using various genres of modes and technologies.
- Match different modes of communication to various rhetorical situations.
- Identify various genres of multimodal and online writing.

Now you will experiment with using multiple modes to create an advocacy project. An advocacy project tells the story of an overarching problem—for example, world hunger—and uses multiple modalities to inform readers about that issue and to propose change. You may be familiar with similar advocacy projects; perhaps you have been involved with them in your everyday life. Think carefully about advocacy initiatives you know of

or have encountered, and find out whether you can pinpoint the answers to these three questions: *What problem is being addressed? Who is the intended audience? What mode or modes are being used, including what media?* Then think about what works. *How do the chosen media speak to the specific audience? Why might the initiative's creators have made those choices?*

After you have chosen a cause and begun working through the composition, you might want to tweak the modes you are working with, including how they relate to one another. You may find, for example, that your primary communication to readers would be better achieved with a different mode or that you need stronger transitions to move your reader through your rhetorical appeal. Don't be afraid to experiment, revise, and examine your project from different angles. Just like a literary text, a multimodal composition is a living document, one that can be improved over time with peer review and revision. As you work, focus your project by concentrating on addressing your audience, purpose, and organization.

Summary of Assignment

Create a multimodal advocacy project for a cause or an issue that you choose or that your instructor chooses for you. If you are free to choose your own topic, here is a short list from which you may draw inspiration:

- Providing clean and safe water
- Ending gun violence
- Addressing nutritional needs of children locally or around the world
- Anti-bullying
- Reducing your carbon footprint
- Access to health care
- Anti-racism
- Vaccination policies
- Social media and free speech
- Climate change
- Immigration

You may also use these brainstorming questions to narrow down your topic:

- What are you passionate about?
- Where do you notice a need in your community / the world?
- What ideas do you have for addressing the issue?
- What existing campaigns do you find compelling, and why?
- What existing projects can you build on, and how?
- What goals do you hope to achieve?

Choose a need or an issue that is important to you, because you will develop a rhetorical appeal to inform and convince your audience. Although world hunger is an important issue and may not be a bad example, consider choosing problems that you encounter locally, even in your everyday life. The closer you are to the issue, the more easily you will be able to develop rhetorical appeals. As you compose your project, consider the best modes and methods to communicate your ideas. Consider how to add and combine different modalities to increase audience impact without overdoing it.

FIGURE 18.13 As you brainstorm potential topics for your advocacy project, consider issues that directly impact your community as a starting point. (credit: "Blog Camp 2017" by gdsteam/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

Another Lens 1. To broaden your perspective on advocacy, find ways to connect directly to those whom the issue most closely affects. Ensure that your proposed advocacy provides pragmatic and helpful solutions to the problem for the targeted audience. For example, if you choose to create a project based on the need for education opportunities for young mothers who have survived domestic abuse, advocating for full-time schooling options with no consideration for childcare would be neither pragmatic nor helpful. In other words, don't assume you know best. Open yourself to information gleaned from research, interviews, or informal conversation. If possible, try to speak with someone whom your project will affect.

Determine what others are already doing to address the need you have identified, and decide whether to build on that work or take a different route. Identify the most effective means of translating the vision you decide on for your audience, which may differ from the audience targeted by other advocacy groups.

Another Lens 2. Another option for approaching this project is to identify and analyze multimodal advocacy initiatives already occurring on a large scale today. Some well-known ones include Charity: Water (https://openstax.org/r/water), Free Rice (https://openstax.org/r/rice), It Gets Better (https://openstax.org/r/it_gets), and Upworthy (https://openstax.org/r/upworthy). After choosing an advocacy campaign to research, consider the following:

- What is the purpose of the advocacy initiative? What do the organizers want to achieve?
- Whom does the initiative address? (Knowing the target audience will help you analyze how effectively the organizers use a multimodal approach to reach them.)
- How does the initiative persuade its audience? Are rhetorical appeals used, and if so, how? Why do you think these choices are made?
- What modes of communication are being used? (These may include social media platforms and streams.) Does the campaign rely more on textual or non-textual media to convey its message? How are modes combined, and how effective are these choices?

After thinking about these questions, create an addition to this advocacy initiative. Introduce your composition by explaining what you have included and why.

FIGURE 18.14 Look to successful advocacy projects, such as the It Gets Better Campaign (https://openstax.org/r/ItGetsBetter) supported by former President Barack Obama, as a model of the potential for incorporating multimodal elements into your project. (credit: "President Barack Obama" by Official White House Photo by Pete Souza/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

Quick Launch: Defining a Primary Purpose and Goal

After you have decided on your topic, the first step is to identify the primary **purpose**, or reason, for your advocacy project. Your goal is what you want to accomplish with it. Do you intend to inform people about an issue they are likely to know little about, or do you want to inspire people around you to take action in creating a sustainable solution that addresses the issue at hand? Goals are broad statements and can be general and abstract, as in the case of this goal: *Improve access to clean water for students in Flint, Michigan.*

Part of identifying your goal is to articulate your **claim**, or assertion, about the issue you have chosen. Your claim is equivalent to a thesis in a traditional written essay. Identifying your purpose and goal will help you decide how to structure your project and, ultimately, which media and modes to employ.

Consider also your audience. You already have learned and discussed the importance of understanding your audience's perspective, including social, cultural, or linguistic factors that could affect your communication. Understanding what your audience knows, their lived experiences, and what is important to them will help you shape your narrative. Complete these sentence starters to organize your ideas and begin the planning stages of your project.

Define the situation.

My project focuses on _____, which is a problem because _____.

Define your purpose.

The purpose of my project is to _____, which will be accomplished by _____.

Write a thesis, hypothesis, or line of inquiry.

The issue I'm addressing is _____.

My position on the issue is _____.

Write your thesis as a declarative sentence. See Writing Process: Creating a Position Argument for help writing a thesis. _____.

Define your goals and objectives.

I will try to _____ by _____.

Define your audience.

The intended audience for my project is _____. They are _____ (familiar/unfamiliar) with the issue. I will reach them by _____.

After you define the situation, it is time to choose the mode or modes to communicate your ideas to your audience. For example, will you write an op-ed, or opinion piece, in which you formally discuss the issue and advocate for change? Will you write and deliver a speech that relies on rhetorical devices to convey your passion for the issue? You might also consider advertisements and public service announcements (PSAs), including audio and video versions, as other effective ways to "sell" a concept, often combining modes for added impact. For examples, peruse The Op-Ed Project (https://openstax.org/r/op-edproject) or the Ad Council (https://openstax.org/r/adcouncil).

Just as your choice of topic must be rhetorically sound and specific, your choice of mode should be based on the circumstances under which your audience will best meet and respond to your advocacy project. This decision may feel daunting, because composing within the multimodal genres means that you have many options. You might choose a video advertisement, a visual flyer, a performance, a photo essay, or something completely different. Consider the modes you might use to accomplish your goals, responding to the needs of your audience.

	Linguistic Mode	Visual Mode	Audio Mode	Spatial Mode	Gestural Mode
Uses in Composition	written text word choice organization tone	color style size perspective	sound narration music/effects silence	arrangement proximity organization	body language facial expressions
Primary Types of Media (media may cross multiple modes)	print or digital media (newspaper, blog, professional publication)	infographic photo essay advertisement PSA website/blog/vlog	speech advertisement radio podcast vlog	infographic photo essay website/blog/vlog	speech presentation vlog

TABLE 18.1

Drafting: Varying Purposes for Integration of Media or Other Genres

Once you have determined your purpose and audience and have considered the impact of including multiple

modes and media, it is time to begin drafting your project.

Gathering Information

The first step in any project is to collect and analyze sources. You will likely need to explore relevant research, data, and literature that already address your topic. The following questions are a good place to start: *What do you already know about the issue you have chosen to address? What do you need to learn, and where can you find that information?*

When considering the data and research you read and collect, it is important to address multiple perspectives, particularly regarding culture, language, and social issues. It is essential to have a clear understanding of the needs of the community you seek to advocate for, as defined by that community.

Now plan for the ways in which your project will create and support the argument, the modes and media you will use, and how these will reach your audience. Start by completing a graphic organizer like Table 18.2. Begin with what you already know, including the sources of that information, formal research you have done, and informal or anecdotal data you have. After looking carefully at what you have, ask yourself what you still need to learn about the topic to understand and communicate the issue to your audience. Finally, brainstorm for strategies to learn that information. These may include research, interviews, or other methods of data collection. Then carry out that information collection until you have what you need.

What I already know	Source(s) of that information	Information and data that I need to collect	Where I can find information

TABLE 18.2 Planning Chart

Determine Modes and Media

Once your research is complete (or, at least, once you have a good enough foundation to get started), determine which modes and media you will employ to address your audience. Research, like composition as a whole, is largely an open-ended process, one in which you may need to experiment to determine whether the modes, media, and genres you choose accurately and effectively communicate your purpose to the audience. A good way to make this decision is to create a mockup or storyboard. A **mockup** is a visual representation of compositions that are basically static. You can use a mockup for media such as websites, posters, or photo essays. A **storyboard** is a sequence of drawings that represents the progression of a piece that moves through time. You can use a storyboard for media such as videos or podcasts.

Use graphic organizers like Figure 18.15 and Figure 18.16 for your mockup or storyboard. Remember to consider *all* modes, including linguistic, visual, audio, spatial, and gestural, and what impact they will make on your audience.

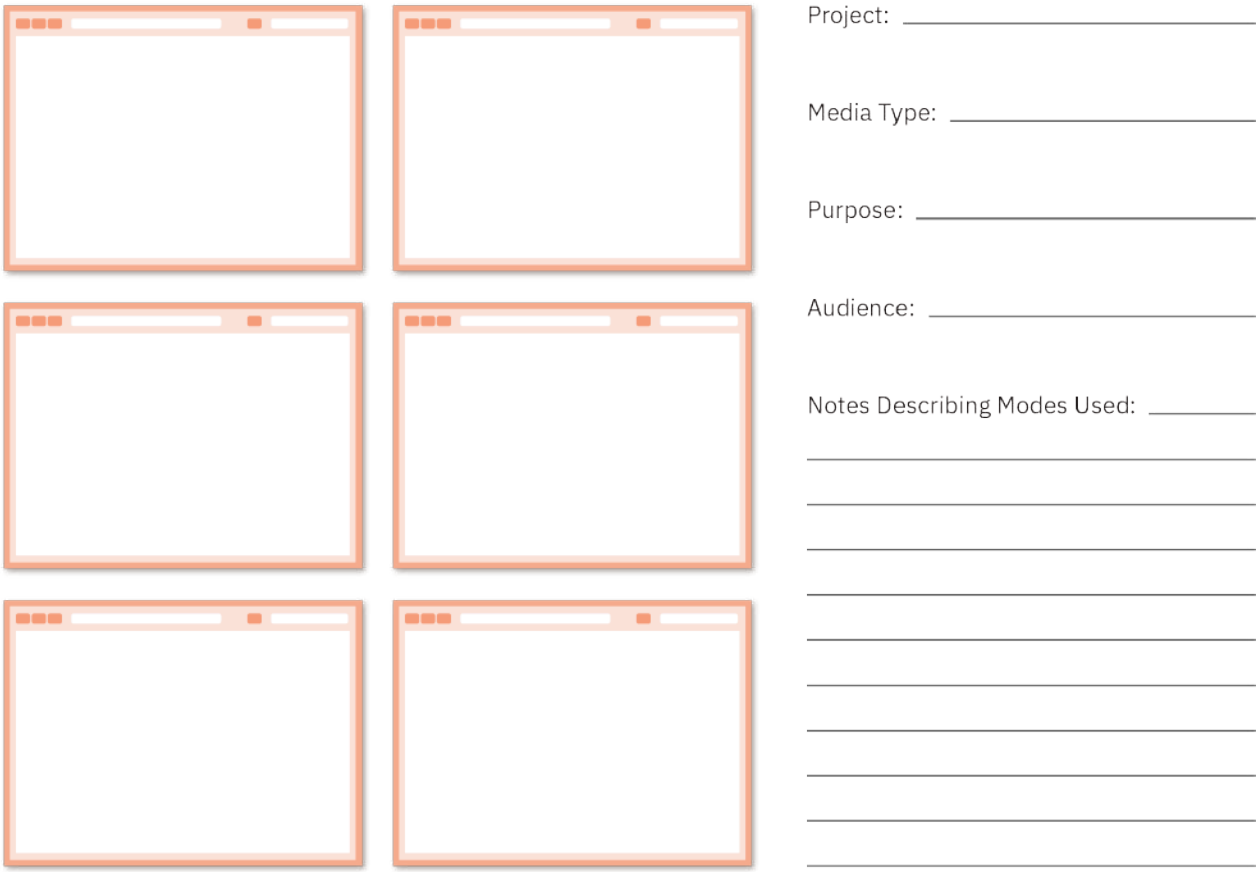


FIGURE 18.15 Mockup (attribution: Copyright Rice University, OpenStax, under CC BY 4.0 license)

Project: _____ Media Type: _____

Purpose: _____ Audience: _____

FIGURE 18.16 Storyboard (attribution: Copyright Rice University, OpenStax, under CC BY 4.0 license)

When you finish, look over your mockup or storyboard. Then consider whether your choices effectively address the needs of your audience. For example, a student composing a project calling for humanitarian efforts to improve the living conditions of citizens in war-torn Syria might choose the genre of a photo essay, with visual media and captions used as a powerful way to tell the story. This choice will be more effective than relying mainly on text or other means alone.

FIGURE 18.17 Destruction from the Syrian War (credit: "A destroyed part of Raqqa" by Mahmoud Bali/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

That student might ask and answer questions such as the following:

- What do I want to convey? The desperate situation in Syria because of the war
- Who is my audience? Online readers interested in current events

- How do the media I've chosen speak to the audience? They tell a story more powerfully than text can by itself.

As you brainstorm, don't feel obligated to include every piece of information or media you collect. You'll want to choose carefully, ensuring that the information and media you use serve your audience and rhetorical goals.

Introduce Other Genres

After establishing the primary genre, it's time to define the purpose for introducing other genres, including how you will introduce them smoothly with seamless transitions. In the example above, the student chooses a photo essay as the primary genre. A photo essay usually includes multiple pictures, laid out on a blog or website with or without text. If there is an opportunity to directly address the audience, the student might consider writing a script to incorporate the genre of presentation. Or they might choose to create a slideshow or video, incorporating a voice-over or textual quotations. All of these choices depend on their purpose as the composer, the rhetorical methods they believe will work best, and a knowledge of their audience, including how best to respond to social and cultural needs. It's important not to incorporate more modes simply for the sake of having more. Each choice you make will either enhance or detract from your purpose.

Compose

Countless tools are available for creating multimodal texts. At first, this project may seem daunting as you ponder which tool to choose and possibly learn to use new technology. However, you will likely find you can use tools that are not only familiar but also readily available. Software and apps that you already have on your phone, tablet, or laptop, such as PowerPoint, Google Slides, and Keynote, not only are useful for slideshows but also allow you to create graphics and videos that you can upload to YouTube with a single click. You can record podcasts by using the memo feature on your phone or a free online recording tool and then upload them to SoundCloud.

FIGURE 18.18 Finding tools to create a multimodal composition doesn't have to be difficult or complicated. Often, you are able to use familiar and readily available tools. (credit: "powerpoint-presentation in format video" by downloadsource.fr/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

After you have created your mockup or storyboard, it is time to create the first draft of your project. Sometimes called a *first cut*, particularly in audiovisual presentations, this is the next step in drafting the composition's basic elements. It is also your chance to experiment with the modes and media you have considered to determine what works and what doesn't. This first cut creates a **prototype**, a preliminary model or draft, that you will revise according to feedback from peer review. Consider this prototype as a starting point. Keep in

mind that the composition process, like the writing process, is **recursive**, not linear. You can move from drafting to research to revising and organizing at any point.

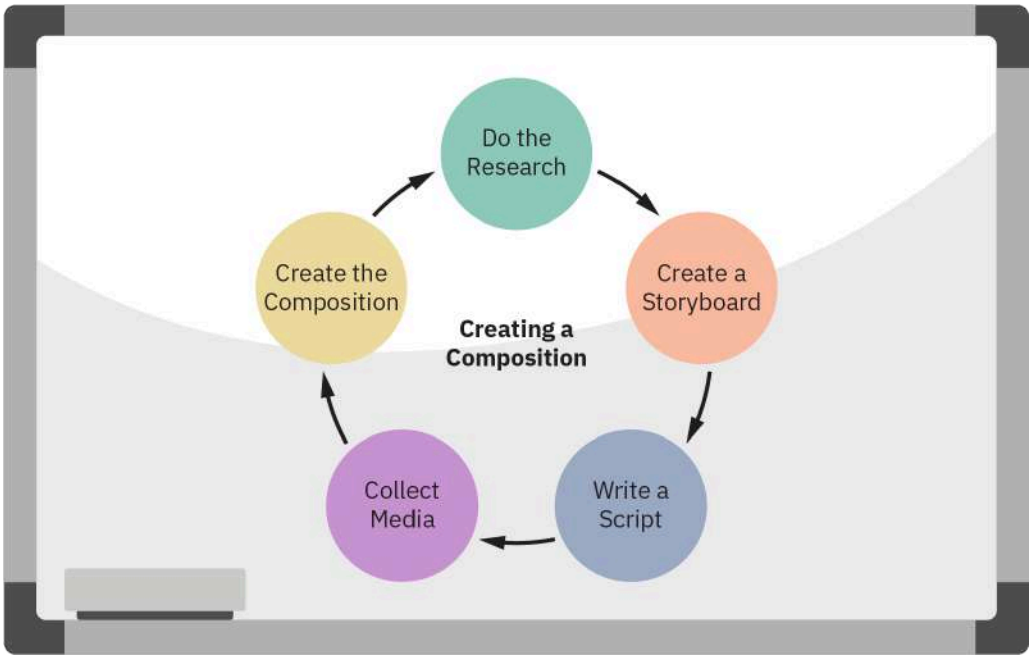
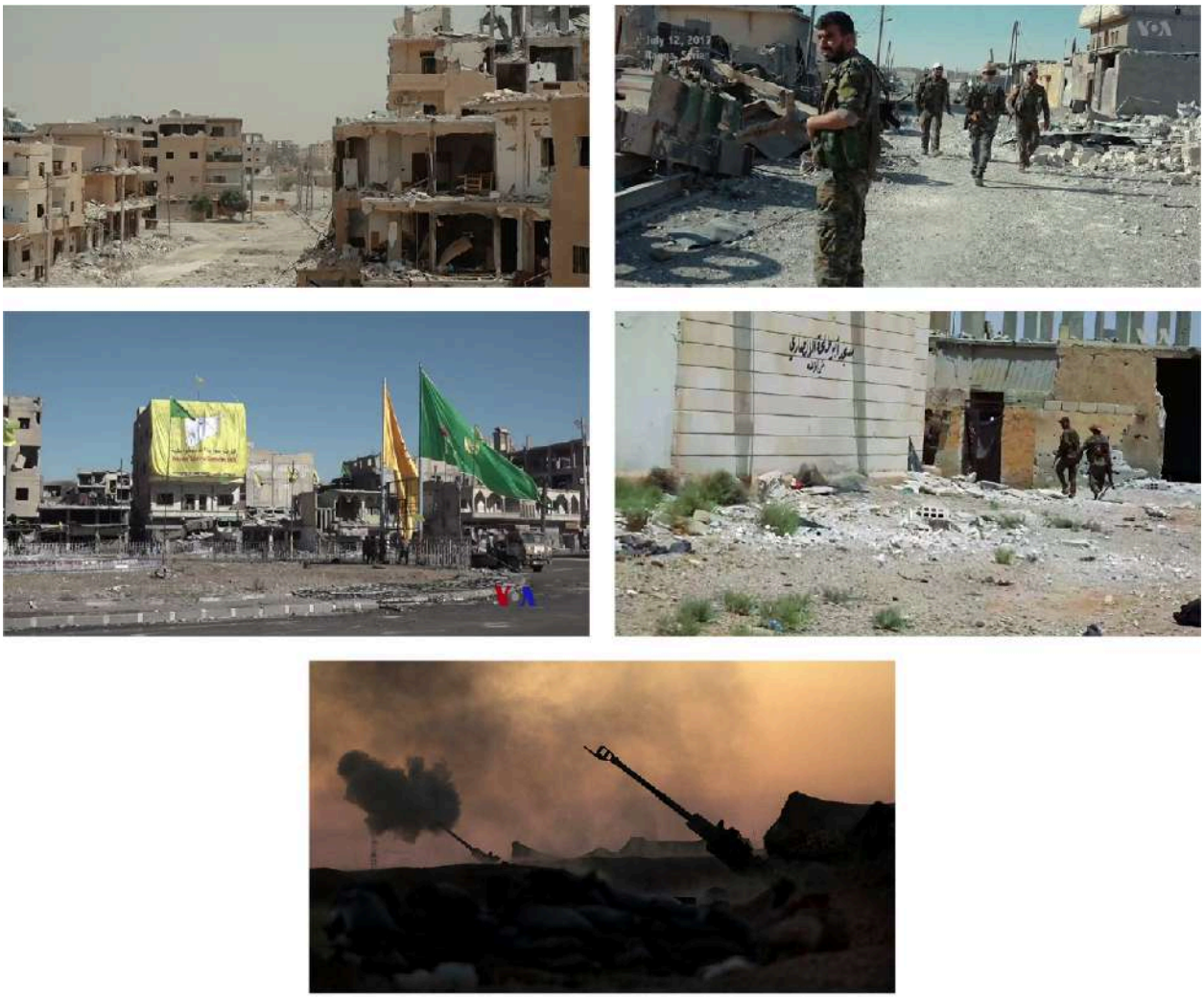


FIGURE 18.19 Like written composition, multimodal composition is a recursive process. (attribution: Copyright Rice University, OpenStax, under CC BY 4.0 license)

Though your options for your project may seem endless, this is how the student drafted the photo essay about the war in Syria. Because the composition primarily uses the visual mode, the student created a mockup, which includes the photo from Figure 18.17 as well as other photos and shared information.



The second Battle of Raqqa occurred in 2017, with United States troops joining forces with the Syrian Democratic Forces to take control of the city. The battle began with multiple airstrikes that killed dozens of citizens and culminated months later after many more deaths. Over 80% of the city was left uninhabitable.

FIGURE 18.20 Sample mockup (credit: "SDF fighters in Raqqa downtown" by (top left), (top right) & (center right) Mahmoud Bali/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain; (center left) Voice of America Kurdish/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain; (bottom) United States Marine Corps/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

As shown here, this mockup is basic; it contains only the photographs the author has chosen and a short textual excerpt that provides context and more information to support the image. Although there were other options for this photo essay, the student considered them and decided to use only images with some supporting text, basing this choice on purpose, audience, and organizational principles. As you consider your options, begin by focusing on one mode, then build a mockup according to your audience and purpose. The mockup may be as simple as an outline of a speech or a PowerPoint template to which you add text and images. The idea is to create a concrete piece to use for your prototype.

Creating the prototype is the next step. Remember that this is the stage at which you consider which elements of mode and media to use and put them "on the page." Keeping in mind the purpose, organization, and audience, design a prototype that meets those guiding principles.

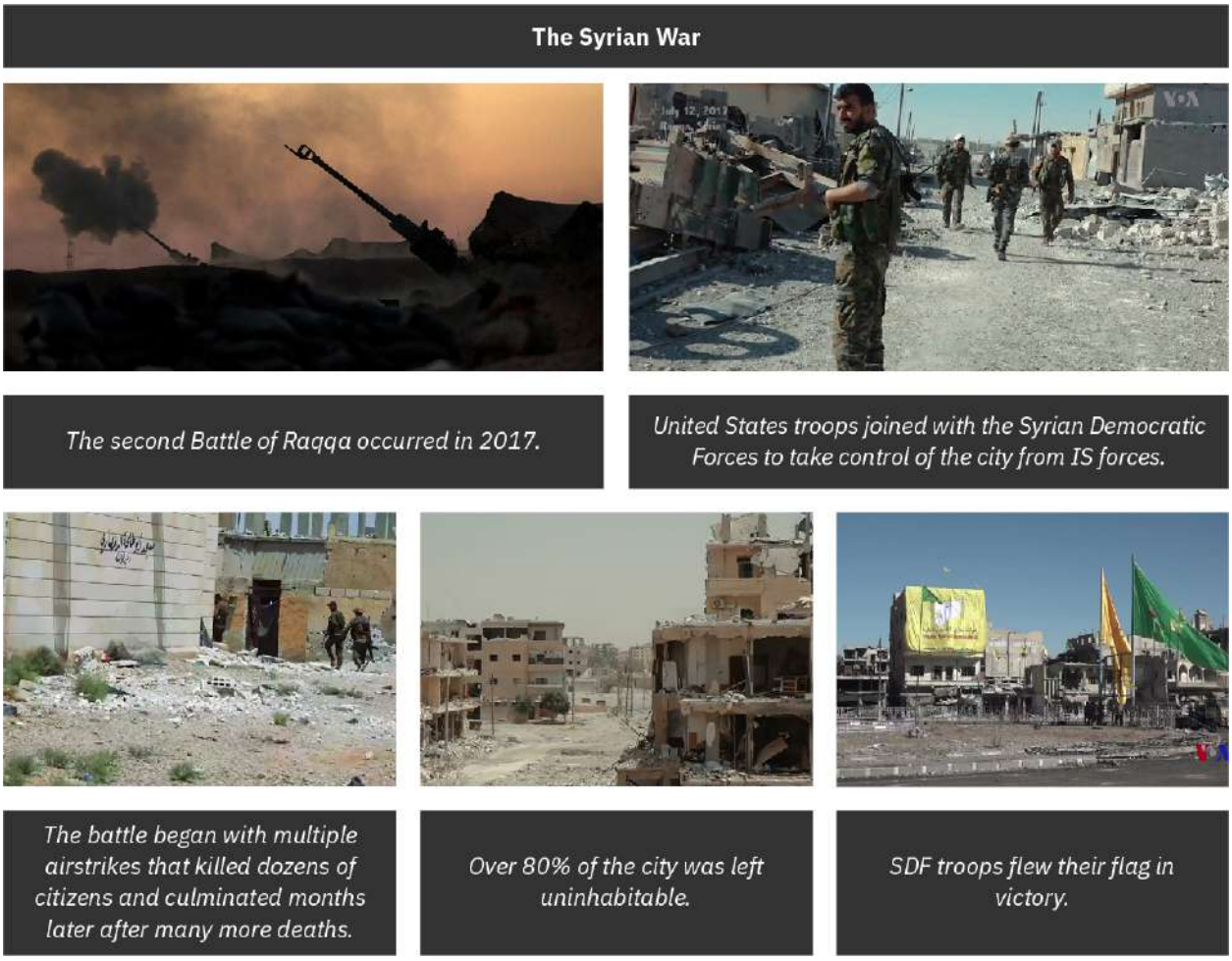


FIGURE 18.21 Sample prototype (credit: "SDF, YPG, and YPJ flags in Raqqa centre" by (top left) United States Marine Corps/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain, (top right), (bottom left) & (bottom center) Mahmoud Bali/ Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain; (center right) Voice of America Kurdish/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

For the prototype, the student made several choices related to the visual mode, incorporating both textual and graphic images. Remember that the composer stated an intent to convey the desperate situation in Syria resulting from war and is speaking to an audience of online readers interested in current events.

The first element added is a **headline**, "The Syrian War." It allows the reader to know immediately what the topic is and get a general idea of the context of the photo essay. The student has taken the text from the mockup and for each picture created a **caption**—a short statement that provides context for each event depicted and helps readers progress through the narrative of the photo essay. In addition, the composer has chosen to stage the captions against a black backdrop with white space between each photograph and caption, a visually appealing layout that is effective in its use of transitions. The images set against the black background stand out. Viewers can easily understand that they are supposed to read each row from left to right and understand the relationship between each picture and the one following it.

With these adjustments, the student has completed the prototype. It is now ready for peer review.

Peer Review: Asking Specific Questions of the Writer

Peer review is an important step in helping you determine the ways in which your multimodal composition works well and how it can be improved. Peer review allows you to gain an outside perspective on your writing and composing processes and thus makes it easier to clear up any questions related to organization, purpose, audience, and genre.

For your review, provide your peer reviewer with your mockup or storyboard and your prototype. Seeing your process may help your reviewer offer feedback and suggestions. Your peer reviewer can use the following questions to think critically about your project, focusing on both its strengths and its areas for improvement, and to guide their feedback. Your response to these questions will guide your revision process.

Questions about Topic

- How did you choose the focus of the composition?
- How did you narrow down the scope of your topic? Should it be broadened or narrowed further?

Questions about Purpose

- My reaction after reading or viewing the composition is _____ because _____. Does this reaction match your intent for the composition?
- In my opinion, the thesis of this composition is _____. If this is your thesis, how can you strengthen your rhetorical arguments to better support it? If you intended to have a different thesis, how can you restate your claims to clarify the composition's purpose?
- The project uses sufficient evidence to support your claim that _____. How can you better support the claim that _____?

Questions about Audience and Culture

- What audience are you trying to reach? What are the characteristics of this audience?
- What do you want your audience's reaction to this composition to be?
- How have you accounted for the similarities and differences between you and your audience?
- Are the elements of the composition accessible and meaningful to the audience?

Questions about Genre and Media

- The genre of this text is _____, including conventions common to this genre such as _____. Optional: You might consider including other conventions such as _____ in order to strengthen the content by _____. How does this genre best capture the message you want to convey?
- The media chosen within the project's genre (do/do not) effectively communicate the author's intent by _____. How could using other media such as _____ increase the impact of the communication?
- A transition that works well in this composition is _____. How can you create a more effective transition here: _____?

Revising: Responding to Questions

You will next revise your project, using your discretion to incorporate your peer reviewer's feedback. After considering reviewer comments, actively engage with that feedback to plan your revisions. As with textual compositions, revisions to multimodal compositions often involve rewording, shifting ideas, and rewriting to better address your audience and purpose.

FIGURE 18.22 As you consider revisions, keep in mind your audience and purpose. In this brochure, notice how the author creates a balance between textual information and visual elements such as color, size, and space. (credit: "Brochure Design" by Evan Courtney/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

Answering Questions

To begin the revision process, answer the questions your peer reviewer has posed. Focus first on the rhetorical situation, including your composition's topic, purpose, and audience as well as questions surrounding culture. Reflect on improvements you might make to represent and communicate the rhetorical situation within the scope of a multimodal composition. Consider using these sentence frames to answer your reviewer's questions.

- The reason I chose this genre is _____ (relate to purpose/audience/organization). I could better communicate by _____.
- I used rhetorical appeal through _____. This is effective in this way: _____ but can be strengthened further by _____.
- I considered the culture of (myself/viewers or readers/subject of composition) by _____. Other cultural components I would like to consider or address are _____. My plan to do that is _____.

Next, answer questions about genre and media. *How might the tools available serve you more effectively? Is your choice of media the most effective to communicate with your audience? What aspects of the primary genre are key to helping you convey your issue? How can you introduce other genres, or aspects of other genres, to strengthen the impact?* In responding, be mindful of creating smooth transitions and content that is uncluttered and clear in meaning. Consider using these sentence frames to answer your reviewer's questions.

- The genre _____ captures the message I am trying to convey by _____. I could strengthen this communication by _____.
- Using new media such as _____ or _____ could increase the impact of the communication by _____.
- My plan for _____ (media/mode) and _____ (media/mode) to work together is _____. I will revise my composition to achieve that by _____.
- I will strengthen my transitions by _____.

The student composer of the prototype above might answer a reviewer's questions in the following way:

> I chose the photo essay genre to show the effects of war in Syria in an expressive, meaningful way. I designed a simple layout contrasting the colors black and white to organize the narrative. I primarily called on pathos to invoke the emotions and values of viewers, drawing them in with powerful images, but I think I could strengthen the emotional appeal by rearranging the pictures and more clearly addressing the most powerful statement: that 80 percent of the city was left uninhabitable. I also think my headline could be more attention grabbing, and I plan to revise it to draw viewers in and more accurately reflect the subject matter. I will revise my composition to achieve a more effective presentation by editing my text to make it more direct and by reordering my photos to leave viewers with a more forceful statement.

Revising

In creating multimodal compositions, revising can refer to taking multiple pieces of content and arranging, rearranging, deleting, and adding to the greater whole! Consider the project on the war in Syria. If choosing to create a video of the photo essay with a voice-over, the student might rearrange the order of photographs or choose which photos to show during particular audio clips, depending on the student's reflection on the peer reviewer's questions.

Alternatively, the student might choose to keep the same format, thinking that it best expresses what they hope to communicate. However, the student might make revisions based on the peer reviewer's feedback and their own reflection, in which the student mentions revising the text, reordering photos, and changing the headline. Consider this revision of the sample photo essay, in Figure 18.23.

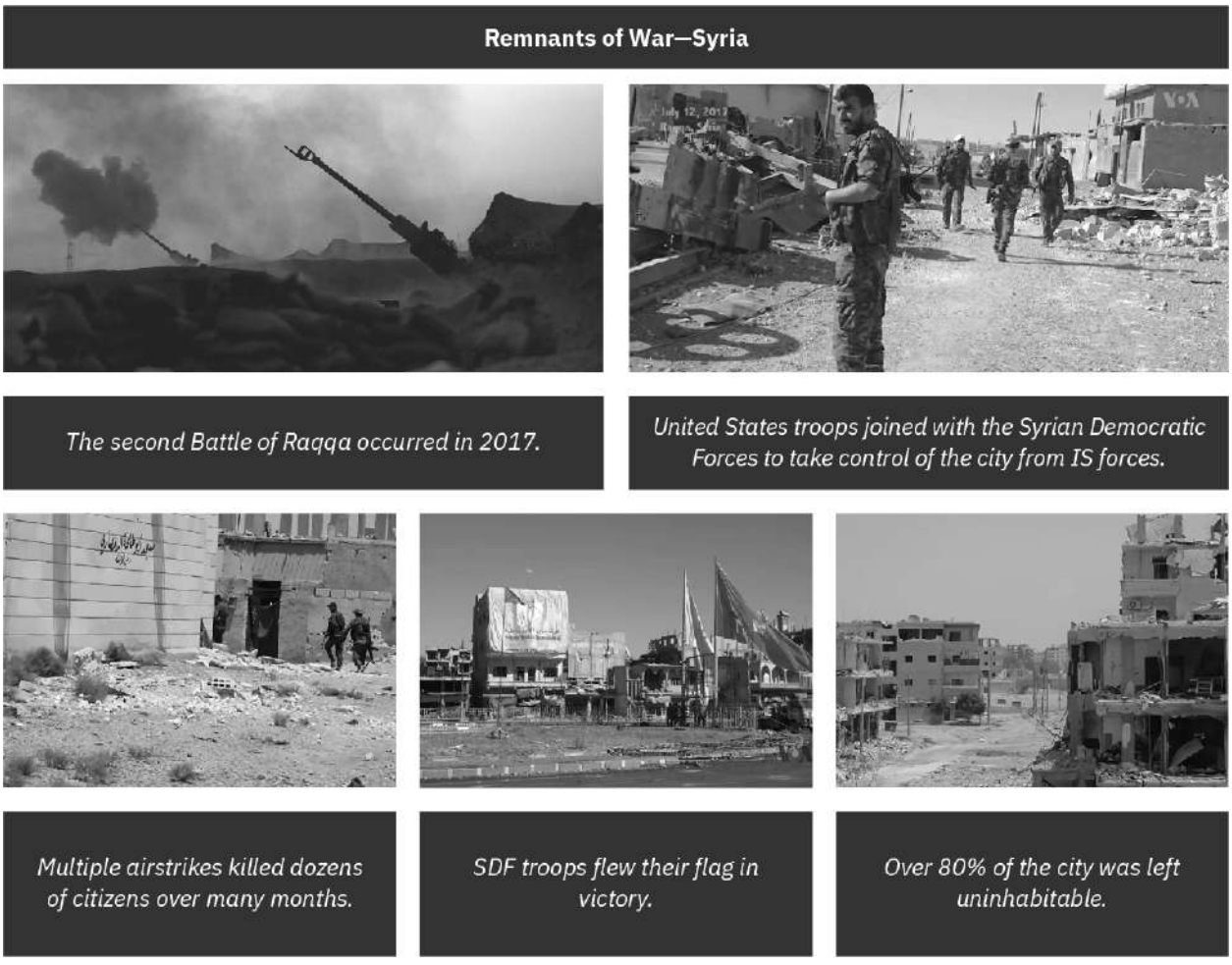


FIGURE 18.23 Sample revision (credit: "SDF fighters in Raqqa downtown" by (top left) United States Marine Corps/ Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain, (top right), (bottom left) & (bottom right) Mahmoud Bali/Wikimedia Commons,

Public Domain; (bottom center) Voice of America Kurdish/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

The author makes revisions according to peer reviewer feedback and reflection of that feedback, particularly as it relates to purpose, organization, and audience. To get a better sense of the revision process, carefully examine the student's thought process.

> I revised the headline from "The Syrian War" to "Remnants of War—Syria." This headline is more engaging for readers and viewers and better reflects the purpose of my project: to convey the desperate situation in Syria resulting from the war that has ravaged citizens' lives.

> I changed the aesthetic by using a black-and-white filter on the photos. Not only does this contrast with the white space and white text, creating a more organized and cleaner look, it more effectively appeals to readers' emotions by emphasizing the destitution left by the Syrian War.

> I rewrote the captions of the final three pictures to make them closer to one another in word count, which is visually more pleasing. But even more important, they create a more powerful narrative, building upon one another.

> I reordered the final two pictures, ending on what I consider the most powerful image and most powerful statement: that 80 percent of the city was uninhabitable after the war. I intend to increase viewers' emotional responses with these changes.

Remember that you do not have to accept every suggestion a peer reviewer makes, but do give each question and suggestion careful thought. Pay close attention to your reviewer's questions and their perception of your purpose and audience in particular, ensuring that they match yours. And again, don't be afraid to experiment. One benefit of multimodal composition, particularly when created with digital media, is that it is relatively quick and easy to manipulate. One valuable tip is to duplicate your work in different workspaces as you make changes, thus saving the major elements of your project should something go wrong.

18.6 Evaluation: Transitions

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Implement conventions from a variety of modes and media to address a range of audiences.
- Match the capacities of different genres to various rhetorical situations.

Ask a peer to use the rubric below to read through your draft. Pay special attention to **transitions** in your composition. Remember that although transitions in various genres may differ, logical transitions are an important element in helping your audience "read" your text.

Linguistic text uses transitions to create relationships between sentences, between paragraphs, and between sections of text. Consider this sentence-to-sentence transition from "Celebrating a Win-Win: 30 Years of Progress under the Pollution Prevention Act" by Alexandra Dapolito Dunn.

> The act gave the agency new tools to join with states, tribes, and communities to prevent pollution *before* it happens. **It also** marked a shift in the paradigm of environmental protection, which had been mostly focused on end-of-pipe pollution control and clean-up strategies.

The phrase *it also* helps readers connect the ideas from each sentence: that the Prevention Pollution Act provides new tools *and* that it focuses on preventing pollution instead of the former strategy of addressing pollution after it occurs. The next sentence from the article begins a new paragraph.

> **Equally important**, the P2 Act strengthened EPA's role as an ally of American businesses, helping them save billions of dollars and improve operations.

Here, the author uses the transition phrase *equally important*, signaling a new idea related to the Prevention Pollution Act (that it saved American businesses money) and providing context for how it ranks in importance

(it is equally important). You can refer to Editing Focus: Paragraphs and Transitions for more information on textual transitions.

In multimodal compositions, you will have to think about transitions differently. First, consider how images and blank space work together when modes are mixed. Often, a margin of space around images helps organize a composition. Colors and other visual features can also serve as transitions, as seen in the following graphic. An important part of multimodal compositions is readability, particularly related to density of text. How might you revise this graphic to increase readability?

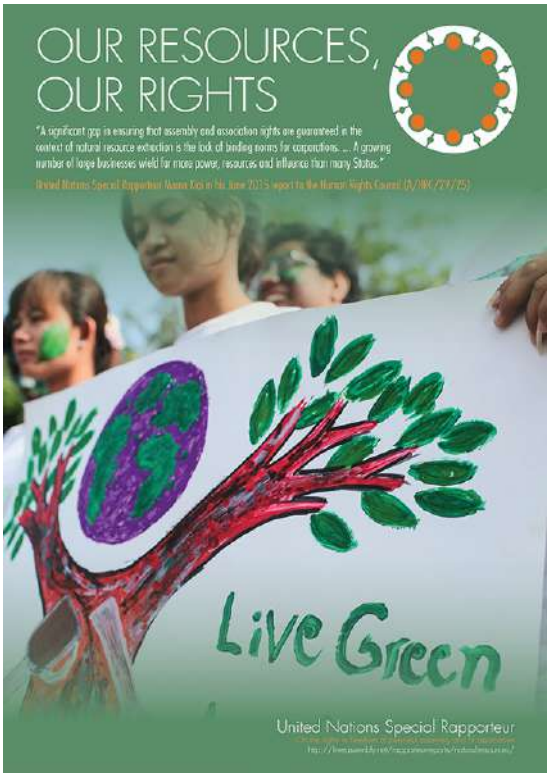


FIGURE 18.24 United Nation poster (credit: "UNSR FOAA natural resources poster 2015 A1 (A/HRC/29/25)" by Maina Kiai/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

Further, a composer must make decisions about how different media interact with one another when more than one genre is introduced. Think about multimodal compositions you encounter in your everyday life, such as websites or flyers. Those that are effective may have a host of different features, modes, and media, but they likely have elements in common: they are visually appealing, organized, and provide the information you need without overwhelming. Consider Figure 18.25, a photo essay located at the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter plant in Fort Worth, Texas.

FIGURE 18.25 (credit: "Defense.gov photo" by Cherie Cullen/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

The composer uses different modes to communicate clearly and help readers transition between ideas. While photographs of varying sizes are the primary media used to emphasize the evolution of aircraft design, the composer includes text boxes that overlay photographs and aid in providing context and transition between ideas. In addition, some of the photographs have been cut out and placed so as to rise above the flat surface of the background. In this case, the composer has chosen not to employ white space but to layer the text boxes and photographs on top of a large background photograph. Also missing are long textual blocks. The composer presents the necessary information in short excerpts and quotations.

Rubric

As you know, *how* you present content within your compositions is as important as what content you choose to include. Moving smoothly among elements, genres, and incorporations of various media has a powerful impact on how your audience experiences your composition. Refer to the following rubric throughout the process to help you evaluate your transitions and other conventions.

Score	Critical Language Awareness	Clarity and Coherence	Rhetorical Choices
5 Skillful	The composition effectively communicates a position through a variety of genres, introducing media successfully. The composition also shows ample evidence of the composer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The composer's position or claim is stated clearly, well supported, and directly related to the advocacy issue. The composer's ideas and the media chosen are always clearly presented. Concepts are consistently linked with linguistic, visual, or multimedia transitions that effectively connect ideas.	The project makes clear, substantive, and focused claims advocating for an issue. The composition effectively demonstrates the composer's understanding of purpose, organization, audience, and culture.

TABLE 18.3

Score	Critical Language Awareness	Clarity and Coherence	Rhetorical Choices
4 Accomplished	The composition communicates a position adequately through a variety of genres, introducing media moderately successfully. The composition also shows some evidence of the composer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The composer's position or claim is stated and adequately supported. The ideas and media chosen are connected. Most concepts are linked with linguistic, visual, or multimedia transitions that connect ideas well.	The project makes mostly clear, substantive, and focused claim advocating for an issue. The composition usually demonstrates the composer's understanding of purpose, organization, audience, and culture.
3 Capable	The composition's communication is sometimes unclear. Introduction of genres and media may be unfocused and ineffectual occasionally. The composition also shows limited evidence of the composer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The composer's position or claim is stated and reasonably well supported but may show lapses of convincing support at times. The ideas and media used are not always clearly connected. Some concepts are linked with linguistic, visual, or multimedia transitions, but the transitions may not smooth or appropriate.	The project makes claims that are sometimes unclear, lacking substance, or unfocused while advocating for an issue. The composition is missing some elements that demonstrate the composer's understanding of purpose, organization, audience, and culture.
2 Developing	The composition's communication is often unclear. Introduction of genres and media is more unfocused than focused. The composition also shows emerging evidence of the composer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways. The text also shows limited evidence of the writer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The composer's position or claim is weakly supported. Evidence is either insufficient or irrelevant. The ideas and media used are not effective for the purpose. If linguistic, visual, or multimedia transitions are present, they are usually ineffective or unrelated.	The project makes claims that are unclear and shows little substance or focus. The composition does not demonstrate the composer's understanding of purpose, organization, audience, and culture.

TABLE 18.3

Score	Critical Language Awareness	Clarity and Coherence	Rhetorical Choices
1 Beginning	The composition does not communicate a position and the use of genres and media is ineffective. The composition shows little to no evidence of the composer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The composer's position or claim is not supported. The ideas and media used are disconnected. The composition is missing linguistic, visual, or multimedia transitions, or those used are incorrect, ineffective, or insufficient.	The project's claims are extremely weak. The composition has no discernible purpose, organization, audience, and culture.
Comments:			

TABLE 18.3

18.7 Spotlight on . . . Technology

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Implement a variety of technologies while matching them to environments used to address rhetorical situations.
- Match the capacities of different modes and media to various rhetorical situations.

Technology is a crucial element in multimodal composition. In fact, the emergence of digital technology has vastly changed the landscape of multimodal composition in recent years. The rise of technology has resulted in new communication and composition practices in people's social, academic, and professional lives. Technology also plays a role in the rhetorical approach to writing and composition, increasing the complexity of expression, communication, and persuasion. Indeed, technology has both challenged and transformed long-held ideas about what it means to write.

Within the genre of multimodal composition, there is a growing call for design advocacy, part of which means redefining and recontextualizing the rhetoric of design to make multimodal compositions more inclusive not only for those with differing abilities but also for those marginalized according to social, technological, and cultural equity.

Digital Deserts

One challenge posed by the incorporation of technology in multimodal composition is the presence of **digital deserts**, or places affected by a digital divide, where residents have no access to the high-speed internet connections required to consume and create digital media. The Federal Communications Commission produced data indicating that in 2017, 21.3 million Americans lacked access to high-speed internet service, and of those people, 2.2 million households had no internet access at all. Studies show that this data may be understated, with even more people living in digital deserts. Rural parts of the country are disproportionately affected, but people living in low-income urban areas make up a significant portion of these numbers.

To participate in the consumption or creation of most multimodal composition, students need access to high-speed internet, defined by the FCC as a download speed of 25 Mbps and an upload speed of 3 Mbps. When no such access exists, cultural, social, and educational disparities arise within the genre of multimodal literature. Students who have less access to the technology required to read, view, or create multimodal works are excluded from this relatively new form of literature, leading to cultural underrepresentation and placing them at academic and social disadvantages.

Enhancing Usability and Accessibility

Other considerations affecting multimodal compositions are usability and accessibility for readers of differing abilities. These may be associated with speech, hearing, vision, and/or motor impairments, among others. Universal accessibility aims to produce content that all people, regardless of abilities, can use, often with assistive technologies, solutions, and tools. Although new fields within the education landscape, such as universal design, have made great strides in usability and accessibility, multimodal content can enhance these strides in unique ways for students and for all consumers of multimodal compositions.

Multimodal compositions often include interaction constraints. These can be thought of as filters that limit a user's ability to access consumer content effectively. For example, a person who has vision impairment may experience interaction constraints when attempting to consume a photo essay. This constraint can be eased through technologies that help make the media more meaningful, such as text and audio alternatives that help the user experience the composition in a way similar to its original form.

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) are intended to make web content more accessible to people with disabilities. However, creators of multimodal compositions can adapt and apply WCAG rules and principles, such as those discussed below, even to compositions that are not web based.

Provide Informative Titles and Headings

Content titles and headlines that accurately describe and distinguish the composition from others are helpful for contextualizing the composition. A headline usually refers to a composition within something larger, such as an article in a magazine, whereas a title encompasses an entire entity in itself, such as a novel or story that stands on its own. Consider the headline of the blog post you read earlier, "Celebrating a Win-Win: 30 Years of Progress under the Pollution Prevention Act." This headline is informative, telling the audience that the post is about the progress of the Pollution Prevention Act. It also informs readers of the author's perspective on this topic, clearly indicating her belief in the success of the act. For the photo essay about the war in Syria, the student writer revised the original headline to the more specific and meaningful *Remnants of War—Syria*.

Use Headings and Subheads to Convey Meaning and Structure

Headings and short subheads group related information, clearly describe sections of text or media, and provide an outline of the content. Although they are a standard feature of informational texts, headings and subheads can be explored within multimodal compositions as organizational and accessibility features, as they are used in the poster shown in Figure 18.24, *United Nations poster*. The subheads clarify the structure of the composition, indicating features such as the introduction and author's objectives, and provide transitions between sections.

Make Link Text Meaningful

When using hyperlinks within a multimodal composition, write text that describes the content of the link target. Instead of using vague text such as "click here" or simply using the URL as the hyperlink, use the opportunity to include relevant information about the content of the link. This added content serves as a transition and emphasizes the relationship between the media. Alexandra Dapolito Dunn does this in the blog post in Annotated Sample Reading, specifying in her text the content of the link used:

> President Trump acknowledged the effectiveness of these and other EPA programs in a 2018 Executive Order that directed federal agencies to use EPA's P2 resources to meet their statutory sustainable purchasing requirements.

Write Meaningful Text Alternatives for Graphics

All images and other graphic representations should have meaningful alternative text that helps readers understand the information portrayed in the image and its significance to the function of the composition. Consider Figure 18.26:

FIGURE 18.26 Masses waving flags excitedly cheer for their national soccer teams. (credit: "Long Street party, Final Draw, FIFA 2010 World Cup Cape Town, South Africa "by flowcomm/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

Briefly, the caption provides context and any other important information that cannot be gathered simply by looking at the image. Alternative (Alt) text, in contrast, describes *only* the information that can be gathered by simply looking at the image (the "what the image shows" part of the caption sentence). Alt text for this image might read "Large crowd of soccer fans waves national flags." Alternative text is imperative for those who have vision impairments because it enables them fuller comprehension of the media.

Create Transcripts and Captions for Media

Audiovisual content, such as videos and podcasts, can be especially challenging for users with visual or auditory disabilities. Therefore, include clear and specific transcripts and captions to guide users through content in your multimodal compositions. In video transcripts, describe visual content (for example, "Joey enters the room" whenever that action occurs). For audio content, include text that indicates spoken information and other sound that is important for understanding the content (for example, "Trumpets softly play the national anthem in the background"). Again, these small additions make your multimodal media accessible to consumers of all abilities.

FIGURE 18.27 Closed captions and other forms of accessible text help those with different abilities consume multimodal text. The captioning in this image indicates that one figure offers help and the other figure shows appreciation. (credit: "Closed-Caption-Example" by Palmtree3000/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

Publishing Your Work

One of the most exciting parts of composing is publishing your work. Technology affords multimodal composers numerous options for publishing. Whether or not you create your composition through digital means, you can use technology in the publishing process. First, know that you want your published product to be a finished work that incorporates the revisions and edits you made during the peer review process. This step is occasionally skipped in the multimodal composition process, mostly because digital publishing can be more accessible than other traditional publishing methods. Nevertheless, as a composer, you want your published product to be your best work.

Depending on which modes and media you include, consider the following options for publishing your multimodal advocacy project.

- Blogs, which usually include text, images, and videos, can be self-published on free or inexpensive web-based platforms such as WordPress, Adobe Experience Manager, and others. Any author or group can start a blog and create posts that incorporate multimodal content.
- As an alternative to blogs, consider the digital **flipbook** format, the equivalent of a digital magazine. Platforms such as Issuu allow content creators to organize content in a format in which the viewer scrolls left and right by "flipping" pages. Flipbooks offer more options for layout, organization, and transitions.
- You may instead choose to publish your completed composition on a **video** hosting site such as YouTube or Vimeo.
- You can also use technology to publish non-digital multimodal compositions, such as performances, presentations, or hard-copy posters and the like. This kind of publication typically involves another layer of mode mixing, such as recording a live performance or uploading a picture of an artwork to a digital platform.

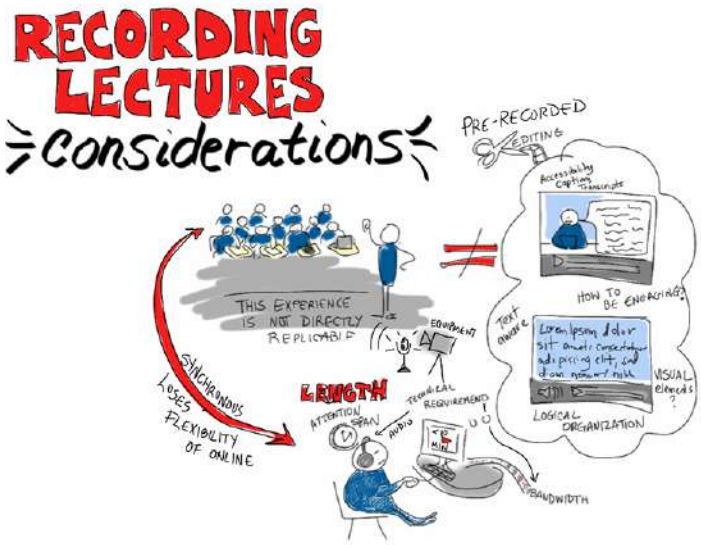


FIGURE 18.28 Publishing a multimedia composition will allow you to present your best work to spread your message. (credit: "Recording Lectures … Considerations" by Giulia Forsythe/Wikimedia Commons, CC0)

No matter what technology you choose, you will want to follow an organized writing process and ensure that your choices honor your purpose, your audience, and the organization you have chosen for your work. Thinking specifically about your advocacy project, consider what you want to accomplish and to whom you are speaking. *What digital publishing options can accomplish your goals? How does your intended audience consume digital media?* Choosing your publication method is as important as choosing the modes and media.

18.8 Portfolio: Multimodalism

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Write about the development of multimodal composition.
- Compose a reflection on how the processes affect your work.

After creating your multimodal advocacy project, think critically about the development process, including how you chose genres, modes, and specific media to include; your process for creating transitions; and ways in which you incorporated usability and accessibility into your finished project.

Reflective Writing: Letter to Your Instructor

As you reflect on your multimodal composition and the process you used to create it, answer these questions, supporting your answers with evidence from your project. Then compose a letter to your instructor that incorporates your answers and addresses any other parts of the composition process that come to mind.

- How would you articulate your role as a composer? (Hint: Who are you as the author—what is your identity in this role? To whom are you speaking, and for what purpose?)
- Why did you choose the advocacy topic that you did? Do you have a personal connection?
- On which parts of the composition process (planning, research, drafting, revising) did you spend the most time? Why did these parts occupy you the longest? What, if anything, would you change if you could do it again?
- How did considering your audience change your development process? What opportunities did you have to think critically about social and cultural issues?
- Why did you choose the rhetorical devices that you did? What factors helped you decide on them? How did the situation influence your rhetorical appeals?
- What factors helped you determine the primary genre, mode(s), and media you chose? Did you change

those elements at any point in the composition process? If so, why?
- How did peer review and revision help clarify your ideas, organization, or composition?
- How did you show relationships between the ideas and media? What changes did you make to improve your transitions?
- What did you learn about your topic and the composition process through the revision process?
- How did you address considerations for usability and accessibility, using technology or otherwise?
- Which parts of the composition came more easily than others?
- How did thinking about publishing affect your final product?

Further Reading

These titles are examples of multimodal compositions that will help you view and analyze the variety of possibilities present in the multimodal genres.

The following is an example of the podcast genre, which uses the aural mode. However, the accompanying website incorporates multiple supporting modes, with images, hyperlinks, and other information that bring in other genres to increase understanding.

Ridgen, David, host. "The Family." *Someone Knows Something*, season 1, episode 1, CBC, 26 Feb. 2016.

The following is an example of the photo essay genre, though the author has turned his photo essay into a video, incorporating a different supporting mode.

Kalina, Noah. *Noah Takes a Photo of Himself Every Day for 20 Years*. *YouTube*, uploaded by Noah Kalina, 13 Jan. 2020.

The following is an example of a public service announcement, delivered as a video. Note the use of multiple modes and the rhetorical devices present in convincing viewers to pursue careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math).

Wishes. CA Technologies, 6 Jan. 2017.

The following is an example similar to the photo essay genre, although it incorporates elements of a blog with a text introduction.

The Picture Show: Photo Stories from NPR. NPR, 2021.

The following is an example of the documentary genre, a primarily visual genre that uses various rhetorical devices to persuade the audience.

Food, Inc. Directed by Robert Kenner, Magnolia Pictures / Participant / River Road Entertainment, 2008.

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Scripting for the Public Forum: Writing to Speak

19

FIGURE 19.1 American crisis manager, lawyer, author, and television producer Judy Smith (b. 1958) speaks at the Roanoke College Regional Forum. Smith and her company, Smith & Company, served as the inspiration for the ABC television series *Scandal* , which ran from 2012 to 2018. (credit: "Judy Smith" by roanokecollege/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

CHAPTER OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION While writing academic text may take up the bulk of your time as a student, other aspects of life involve writing as well, especially as you move toward an engaged social life and a career. One personal or professional task in particular is writing to speak. Whether speaking as part of a classroom assignment, a planned address, a professional presentation, or recording a video to post to a video-sharing social media platform, **script writing** shares much more with traditional academic writing than you might first believe. A successful speaking event is not achieved by a perfectly planned outline or even extensive research and knowledge on a topic—although these are important aspects. No, the key to memorable speech is the speaker's

connection with an **audience**, or group of listeners.

Greek philosophers and educators wrote the first texts for public speaking over 2,000 years ago. In fact, Greek philosopher Aristotle (384–322 BCE) wrote the treatise *On Rhetoric*, which covers many of the same concepts and topics you will encounter in this chapter, including rhetorical appeals, awareness of audience, and organization. As it turns out, effectively engaging an audience through speech is a time-honored endeavor. But new technologies, channels, and avenues of communication have expanded the opportunities for more and more voices to be heard.

In this chapter, you will read about podcast trailblazer Alice Wong, read a student script, and write your own script or outline advocating for a cause of your choice. Speaking of activism, you will discover how script writing and activism go hand in hand, opening new possibilities for communicating with your audience.

19.1 Writing, Speaking, and Activism

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Articulate how genre conventions shape and are shaped by readers' and writers' practices and purposes.
- Identify and apply rhetorical concepts such as shifts in voice, diction, tone, formality, design, medium, and structure appropriate to a speech.
- Match the capacities of different environments to varying rhetorical situations.

The **genre** of this chapter is script writing. A genre is a type of composition that uses specific features, follows a particular style or format, and is shaped by the author's **purpose**, or what the author wants to accomplish. In a script, the purpose is what the author wants to communicate to the audience and wants the audience to think about or do after the speech. Speech is often used as a vehicle to persuade audiences or move them to action.

Writing for and beyond the Academy

By now, you are likely familiar with the concept of **rhetoric**, which, in academic terms, describes how writers and speakers use language to persuade. Rhetoric has its roots in ancient Greece, dating back to Homer's epic poems (mid-8th century BCE), and was developed by the philosophers Socrates (c. 470–399 BCE) and Aristotle into a system for understanding and teaching persuasion. If you have ever analyzed a speech or story to determine how the author develops or supports claims, chances are you have studied rhetoric. Refer to Rhetorical Analysis: Interpreting the Art of Rhetoric and Position Argument: Practicing the Art of Rhetoric for more about rhetoric.

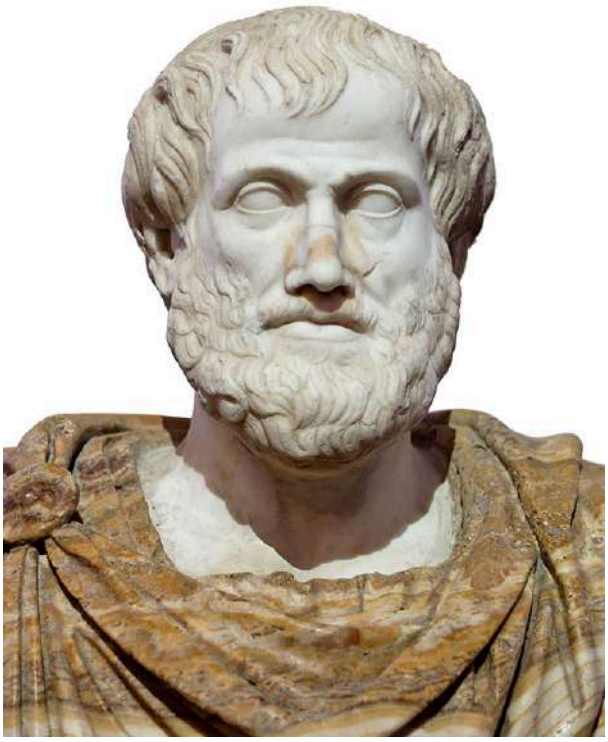

FIGURE 19.2 Ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle was a leading thinker who proposed concepts of rhetoric that you continue to use today. (credit: "Aristotle transparent" by Alvaro Marques Hijazo/Wikimedia Commons, CC0)

However, rhetoric is not simply an academic exercise designed to be used in formal writing or literature. Rhetoric is the basis of the spoken language people use every day, and it has a purpose. As an example, think of a commercial or advertisement. Advertisers use rhetoric to try to convince an audience that their beauty product is superior to other companies' products, or that it's cooler to drive their car than another car. Indeed, effective speech uses some form of rhetoric, combined with purpose, to make an impact on an audience.

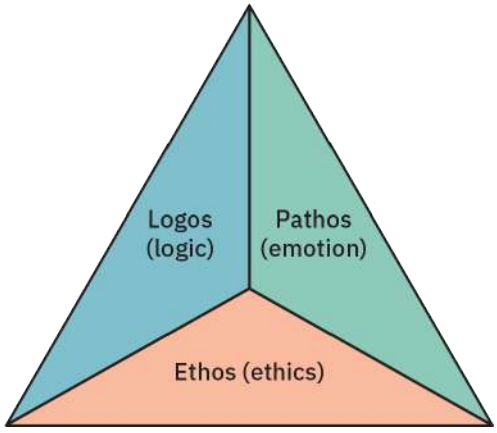

FIGURE 19.3 Writers and speakers often use rhetorical appeals to persuade their audiences. (attribution: Copyright Rice University, OpenStax, under CC BY 4.0 license)

Figure 19.3 illustrates how three types of appeal form the elements of a strong argument. In brief, these are the rhetorical appeals available to writers:

- **Ethos** is an appeal to ethics, which, in rhetorical terms, helps establish the writer's or speaker's credibility. You must establish credibility with your audience so that they feel they can trust what you say. Ethos often invokes the speaker's character and qualifications on the subject. Speakers may strengthen their ethical

appeal by using or referring to patriotic or religious documents in their speeches.

- **Logos** is an appeal to logic and intelligence. Logos appeals rely on strong and sound reasoning, often supported by facts and statistics. Support your position with **critical thinking** and clear, credible **evidence**. To give yourself credibility, use respected, reliable sources that are properly attributed.
- **Pathos** is an appeal to emotion. Supporting your position by using pathos involves evoking in your audience emotions, such as fear, anger, sympathy, guilt, or sorrow. This appeal often involves dramatic or vivid language, anecdotes or illustrations, and a more personal tone. For more information on ethos, logos, and pathos, see Rhetorical Analysis: Interpreting the Art of Rhetoric and Position Argument: Practicing the Art of Rhetoric.

Identifying General Purpose

The purpose of speech, like any type of writing, is directly related to the **rhetorical situation**, which defines how a speaker will use communication to influence an audience's perspective. Speech is created for a specific time, place, and audience, by a speaker who makes choices on the basis of the rhetorical and cultural context.

Speech typically falls into one of three categories. Some speak to teach the audience something or to explain something. The purpose of this speech is to **inform**. Some speak to influence an audience's beliefs, behaviors, or attitudes. The purpose of this speech is to **persuade**. Some speak to amuse the audience. The purpose of this speech is to **entertain**. In some instances, the purposes will overlap; a speaker may want both to persuade and to evoke emotion, for example. Consider President Franklin D. Roosevelt's (1882–1945) Pearl Harbor speech (https://openstax.org/r/Pearl_Harbor). It was delivered as an informational speech on December 8, 1941, at a joint session of Congress to address Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbor, which occurred a day earlier. However, Roosevelt crafted the speech to stir emotions and convince Congress to formally declare war against Japan, officially bringing the United States into World War II (1939–1945).

When writing to speak, consider whether you want to inform, entertain, or persuade your audience. These purposes are often combined, as in the Pearl Harbor speech, and the medium through which you present speech may use different formats and channels (podcast, YouTube, Facebook Live, Periscope, Vimeo, presentation to a live audience, and so on). However, your ultimate goal will always be to connect meaningfully with your audience to achieve your general purpose.

The formula for establishing your purpose is fairly straightforward. Identify your audience, determine what you want to tell them, then analyze the best way to reach them. By following these steps, you will have defined your purpose, and you can create effective and meaningful speech.

Informative Speech

Informative speech explains, describes, or demonstrates. The speaker's aim is to provide information that will be comprehensible to audience members. Informative speech may cover topics such as describing a location, an object, or a person; explaining an idea or how to operate something, a thermostat, for example; or demonstrating how to change a tire. The speech will be organized according to the specific purpose and audience. Informative speech usually incorporates media—for example, visuals, three-dimensional objects, or video—to illustrate the content of the speech.

Entertaining Speech

Entertaining speech features the use of humor to connect with an audience. This speech may comment on the humor present in everyday situations or use humor for social commentary. When you speak to entertain, you will call upon elements of humor such as self-deprecation, physical comedy, absurdity, wordplay, topical observation, or dark comedy.

Persuasive Speech

Persuasive speech seeks to convince audience members of something or influence their beliefs, values, or behavior. This type of speech either reinforces an audience's existing beliefs on a topic, changes their beliefs,

or inspires them to act on something. When you speak persuasively, you will use many of the same principles you used when you wrote the position argument in Position Argument: Practicing the Art of Rhetoric.

You likely will present your **thesis**, or statement of your position, at the beginning of your script and then devote most of the script to supporting that position. On the other hand, you might consider presenting the thesis later in the script, after you have provided compelling evidence to support it. In this case, the delayed thesis creates a dramatic effect. You might also save it for the end if you know your audience is likely to disagree with it. You can structure a script written to persuade as a five-part argument with the following features:

- An **introduction** that hooks, or engages, the audience sets the **tone**, or writer's attitude toward the audience or subject, and states the thesis if is presented early.
- **Background information** provides **context** and details for the situation being discussed. These are closely linked to purpose and explain why the audience should care about the topic.
- The **body** of the script explains the argument (if persuasive) and provides compelling reasons and evidence.
- **Refutation of counterclaims** disproves or rules out objections.
- A **conclusion** presents a closing argument, stating or restating the thesis and summarizing the main points of the script.
- **Transitions** within the script guide the listener smoothly from one idea to the next.

Audience Awareness

When you are writing to speak, audience awareness is particularly important. After all, the audience is often right there in front of you! Your goal is to speak directly to them, to evoke emotion or make them react, even if silently. Consider your audience when choosing your tone, language, and approach to a topic. Knowing your audience and crafting your writing for them will help you connect and thus fulfill your purpose. Among the most famous speeches of all time, Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech (https://openstax.org/r/I_Have_a) is known for inspiring civil rights progress in the United States.

FIGURE 19.4 Considering your audience is an important part of writing for speech. Here, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (1929–1968) connects to an enthusiastic audience. The photograph was taken on August 28, 1963, at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., when Dr. King delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. (credit: "USMC-09611" by Slick-o-bot/U.S. Marine Corps/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

All speech is designed for a particular audience at a particular time. Because effective speakers seek to know their audience, they consider demography, the statistical study of human populations, focusing on categories such as age, gender, education, religion, race, and so forth. **Demographics** are the statistical data gathered from studies in these and other areas relating to populations. Although your audience may be quite specific and you may know some of its demographics, it is important to design your script outline to include examples, ideas, and appeals that are broadly understood. The circumstances that lead your audience to you will also influence their interest and reaction to your presentation. A presentation to a captive audience—those who attend because of some outside force rather than their own choice—will require you to spend more time building common ground than you would with an audience you know to be more receptive. Contrast this situation with a speech at a political rally, where voluntary attendees are likely to share political beliefs. As is evident, understanding your audience is imperative to knowing how to speak to them. Considering their attitudes, beliefs, cultures, and values, including those they share with one another and with you as the speaker, will allow you to understand how much attention you need to devote to convincing the audience of your viewpoint.

When analyzing your audience in this way, you also will want to consider their prior knowledge and relationship with the topic. *Do they already have a solid understanding of the topic?* If they do, there is no need to spend much time on background information. *Are they largely opposed to the premise of your thesis?* If so, you will need to provide effective reasoning and strong evidence to convince them. The amount of background knowledge required will influence how you shape your script or outline and thus your speech.

Audience awareness also can help you decide which rhetorical appeals and devices to use within your script. You need to consider how you relate to the audience. *Are you an expert on a topic? Are you a peer in their community? Do you (or they) have cultural intricacies that influence your understanding of the topic?* These questions, combined with cultural awareness, can guide your composition.

Cultural Context

Culture—the shared values, customs, arts, and other traits of a group of people—is an important consideration when developing a relationship with your audience. Speech—particularly formal, persuasive speech—is a part of the American social and political systems. Candidates for political office commonly use speech during campaigns. Consider former president Barack Obama's (b. 1961) introductory speech at the 2004 Democratic National Convention (https://openstax.org/r/introductory_speech), which political scholars credit with his rise to the presidency. Lawyers regularly use speech to argue their cases before judges and juries. Religious leaders have long used speech from the pulpit to challenge and influence congregants. Moreover, as American culture morphs and grows, speech has become an important part of everyday life in ways not witnessed in earlier times.

Radio and television have existed as vehicles for delivering speech for many years. But in the past two decades, speech has found new outlets, including podcasts (streamed spoken-word audio), YouTube videos, and social media videos. This influx of new formats has created a cultural shift, making speech, and by extension its influences on a large audience, more accessible and representative. This shift has also increased the level of social, political, and economic activism. Understanding the cultural context of your audience and the subject of your speech is as important as any other part of it, for this context will dictate whether your words are effectively received.

19.2 Trailblazer

Podcast Trailblazer: Alice Wong

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Articulate how genre conventions shape and are shaped by readers' and writers' practices and purposes.
- Match the capacities of different environments (e.g., print, electronic) to varying rhetorical situations.

"Stories are the closest we can come to shared experience."

FIGURE 19.5 Alice Wong, 2017 (credit: "Alice Wong" by Andrew Scheer/Wikimedia Commons, CC 1.0)

The Disability Visibility Project

Alice Wong (b. 1974) is an activist, writer, and media creator from San Francisco, California. After graduating from Indiana University in 1997 with majors in English and sociology, Wong went on to earn a master's degree in sociology from the University of California, San Francisco, where she later worked. Wong has been widely published, including feature pieces appearing in publications ranging from the *New York Times* to *Teen Vogue*, and her activism work has been featured in CNN's series *United Shades of America (https://openstax.org/r/Unitedshades)*. In addition to writing, Wong regularly creates multimedia content, including podcasts. From 2013 to 2015, she was a member of the National Council on Disability, appointed by then president Barack Obama.

FIGURE 19.6 In this photo taken in 1990, Alice Wong participates via robot in the 25th anniversary celebration of the Americans with Disabilities Act. (credit: "Alice Wong participated at the 25th anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act via robot" by Pete Souza/The White House/Wikimedia Commons, CC0)

Wong founded and serves as the director of the Disability Visibility Project (DVP), an online community that aims to create a space where disability media and culture are recognized, created, and shared. The project is personal for Wong, who has been unable to walk since childhood. The DVP also provides an online place for people to share and connect about disability culture. The organization encourages those living with disabilities to share their stories through the website or the app StoryCorps (https://openstax.org/r/storycorps), which collects and shares oral history. The DVP curates "disabled media" from these collected oral histories in the form of tweets, audio clips, podcasts, blog posts, images, and so on. The project also publishes original written and multimedia content created from the perspectives of people who are disabled. Topics include issues related to **ableism** (discrimination against people with disabilities), culture, and politics.

Wong is also the host and a coproducer of the Disability Visibility Project podcast (https://openstax.org/r/Disability_Visibility), launched in 2017. She uses the podcast to give a voice and platform to issues concerning politics and culture as they relate to disability rights and social justice. Through conversations with diverse guests, Wong amplifies disability media and culture on topics ranging from health care to climate change to the arts, and everything in between.

Wong has also partnered with #CripTheVote (https://openstax.org/r/CriptheVote), a nonpartisan campaign to bring awareness of disability issues into the public and political arenas, and Access Is Love (https://openstax.org/r/accessislove), an initiative to build accessibility into everyday life. She is the editor of *Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century*, an anthology of personal stories from members of the disability community. The book contains curated text such as blog posts, manifestos, eulogies, and testimonies to Congress in order to bring to light the diverse experiences of people in this community. The aim of the anthology is intersectional, meaning it emphasizes the crossroads of living with disabilities and other issues, including race, class, gender, culture, and religion.

Discussion Questions

1. Why might Alice Wong look to speech and other media to communicate activist ideas surrounding the disability community?
2. How is the impact of writing for speech different from writing for print? What comes across when an activist speaks rather than represents their ideas in print?
3. How does social media both enhance and limit accessibility within the disabled community? How is this true for other cultural communities?

4. Wong says that storytelling can be more than written words. How can other forms of media—she lists emojis, memes, selfies, and tweets—communicate rhetorical ideas as effectively as, or more effectively than, traditional written storytelling?

19.3 Glance at Genre: Language Performance and Visuals

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Apply appropriate genre conventions for structure, tone, mechanics, format, and design in writing speech.
- Demonstrate relationships between ideas, patterns of organization, and interplay of verbal and nonverbal elements.
- Articulate how genre conventions are shaped and vary by purpose, culture, and expectation.

Oral communication skills are integral to personal and professional success. While many aspects of script writing are similar to those used in writing for print or electronic formats, speech incorporates another domain with its own considerations.

Writing for Listeners and Readers

The script for a speech may begin as a traditional text, but it must be written and delivered in a way that makes it available and accessible to readers and listeners alike. Think of your favorite radio show or podcast. If the author wrote as if composing a written text with no consideration for listeners, the effect for listeners would likely be compromised.

When writing for listeners, think about not only what you want to express but also how you can best support your ideas and claims. Because speech relies heavily on audience members' auditory skills, listeners with little practice in these skills or who learn better through visual or experiential text may be at a disadvantage. Therefore, the speaker-writer must make a concerted effort to support listeners in other ways.

Writing for Delivery

Text for speech will be only as good as its delivery. If you write for speech in the exact way you write an academic paper, the result is likely to be lackluster, for speech is immediate—that is, it makes an impact as soon as it is heard. A powerful written argument, if orally delivered without voice modulation or emphasis, is unlikely to move listeners and likely to have fluency glitches, as written sentences tend to be longer and more complex. Although topical outlines for a paper and a script might look similar, the way you translate ideas into writing for speech will vary to increase effectiveness. One strategy for making this "conversion" is to read your script aloud during or after writing. Hearing the script will allow you to make revisons and edits to ensure oral fluency, or smooth delivery, including pronunciation, phrasing, stress, and tone.

You can write effectively for delivery by doing the following:

- Support information by including visual and audio aids to help the audience remember and understand information.
- Demonstrate information through action, such as dynamic movement or demonstrations.
- Engage your audience with vocal techniques such as gestures, inflection, changes in speed and pitch, and strategically placed pauses.

Writing with Media

Script writing and presentations often take a multimedia approach. Multimedia can include a variety of channels, media types, and visual aids, including videos, images, infographics, and animations that enhance understanding and bring a new level of engagement among media consumers. The use of media can reinforce the content of a script or presentation, provide a vehicle for delivery, and generally enhance the speaker's purpose and message.

While formal speeches are still featured at contemporary political, religious, and academic events, other forms of media have become alternatives to traditional public addresses. Free and readily available video platforms such as YouTube mean that more people than ever before are able to share their experiences. Also free and readily accessible for the most part, podcasts are increasingly used as a vehicle to share ideas through an oral medium. Plus, podcasts such as *Serial* (https://openstax.org/r/Serial) have led to changes within the criminal justice system. Social media platforms now are filled with multimedia, including video, audio, and images, that play a more prominent role than at the time these platforms first were launched. As you develop your presentation in the next section of this chapter, consider which methods of presentation you might explore in order to harness the power of media to your benefit.

Key Terms

Below are key terms and characteristics of scripts and other oral media.

- **audience:** the people for and to whom a script is written.
- **Body:** the middle and main portion of a script, in which key ideas, evidence, and reasons are presented and elaborated.
- **Citation:** credit given to a source used in a writer's research.
- **Conclusion:** the final portion of a script, in which the thesis and key ideas are reiterated and/or expanded to include action or additional consideration.
- **ethos:** appeal to readers'/listeners' ethics, establishing authority and credibility.
- **Evidence:** information, such as facts, statistics, and examples, that proves or disproves the validity of a key idea.
- **Introduction:** the first portion of a script, in which the author engages the audience and usually states the thesis.
- **Logos:** appeal to readers'/listeners' logic, or reasoning.
- **Parallelism:** a rhetorical technique of using similar words, phrases, or other grammatical constructions to connect related ideas, emphasize a point, or add rhythm.
- **Pathos:** appeal to readers'/listeners' emotions.
- **purpose:** a writer's reason for creating a script, often to persuade readers/listeners to agree with a viewpoint or take action.
- **reasoning:** logical and sensible explanation of a concept.
- **Repetition:** a rhetorical technique of repeating a key word or phrase for emphasis.
- **Rhetorical appeals:** methods of persuasion, including ethos, logos, and pathos.
- **Rhetorical devices:** ways that writers use language to convey meaning, create emphasis, and draw attention to their words and ideas. Repetition and parallelism are rhetorical devices.
- **Signpost language:** statements that help the audience know where your presentation is going. Transitions are examples of signpost language.
- **Topic:** the subject of a script.
- **Thesis:** a statement indicating a writer's/speaker's position on the topic.

19.4 Annotated Student Sample: "Are New DOT Regulations Discriminatory?" by Zain A. Kumar

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Explain how conventions of writing, including rhetorical devices, reflect purpose, culture, or audience expectations.
- Analyze the relationships between ideas and patterns of organization in a speech.

Introduction

A script may take many forms, but effective speakers connect with their audience, clearly state a main idea or

thesis, and support that thesis by backing up key ideas with evidence and reasoning. In this feature, you will read a speech that examines whether U.S. Department of Transportation regulations discriminate against people who depend on service animals. The full transcript of the speech, rather than the outline, is provided here to allow you to study aspects of delivery as well as preparation. Notice not only the disapproving tone and conversational style but also the way in which the author builds and supports the thesis.

LIVING BY THEIR OWN WORDS

It's a Dog Fight

> Several years ago, I sat in the waiting area of a major airport, trying to ignore the constant yapping of a small, clearly agitated dog being restrained with difficulty on the lap of a fellow passenger. An airline rep approached the passenger and asked the only two questions allowed by law: "Is that a service animal? What service does it provide for you?"

> "Yes. It keeps me from having panic attacks," the woman said defiantly, and the airline employee retreated.

> Shortly after that, another passenger arrived at the gate. She gripped the high, stiff handle on the harness of a Labrador retriever that wore a vest emblazoned with the words "The Seeing Eye." Without warning, the smaller dog launched itself from its owner's lap, snarling and snapping at the guide dog. The owner of the small dog jumped up and retrieved her animal from the Labrador's vest and stomped back to her seat. That neither she nor the still-yapping dog had an obvious panic attack amazed me, as I questioned, to myself of course, what service was being provided—other than a moment of exercise for the woman and her dog.

Introduction. *The opening anecdote grabs the listener's attention with a relatable story about an interaction at an airport. It provides an illustration of the point that Zain A. Kumar will make next in the introduction.*

Pathos. *Using strong words such as snarling and snapping, Kumar connects his argument to emotions.*

Tone. *Kumar clearly expresses disapproval of the small dog and its owner, implying that the woman is lying and the dog is untrained.*

> The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) has recently established new regulations regarding service animals on domestic and international flights. This regulation has provoked a flurry of protests by people who are accustomed to taking their pets for free in airplane cabins by claiming they are emotional support animals. Are these new regulations discriminating against persons with disabilities? Let's look at some details.

Signpost Language. *Kumar uses a rhetorical question, or a question used for effect and not meant to be answered, to establish the central discussion in the script: whether restrictions put in place for service animals infringe on the rights of people with disabilities. This signpost language tells listeners that this is important information.*

Introduction. *Following the anecdote, this introductory paragraph establishes the problem and provides background information.*

Tone. *Kumar's use of rhetorical questions and phrases such as Let's look at creates an informal, conversational tone that is well suited to script.*

> The new rule has 12 provisions. The first is the definition: a service animal is a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability.

Definition. *The definition of a service animal provides context for the focus of the script.*

> Okay, how was the service dog trained? Well, as a puppy it lived with a foster family that taught it basic behavior and socialization. When it was between 13 and 19 months old, it came to the Seeing Eye campus to work with an individual instructor for four months of intensive training. At the end of the four months, the dog took a final exam: leading the instructor successfully on a field trip to New York City. About 75 percent of the dogs pass this training and are matched with a person who is blind or visually impaired. The new owner works with the dog and its instructor for an additional 25 days on campus before the owner and the dog go home. But the training doesn't end there. The new owner continually reinforces the dog with praise and correction, and The Seeing Eye staff members are always available for telephone consultations and even home visits if needed.

Tone. *The question opening the paragraph contributes to the conversational tone of the script.*

Evidence. *This paragraph firmly establishes the "credibility" of the guide dog, detailing its training. This rigorous process will be contrasted with the background of the emotional support dog from the opening anecdote to draw a comparison.*

> Now, what about that emotional support dog in the airport? The law requires no specific training for emotional support animals. The rationale is that their presence is enough to support people who have anxiety, depression, or stress. The only requirement is that the animal be manageable in public and not create a nuisance. In light of this requirement, the little dog did not do well.

Evidence. *This paragraph contrasts the guide dog with the emotional support dog and shows that the latter cannot meet even the minimum standard set by the airlines.*

> The second provision of the new DOT regulation is that emotional support animals are no longer considered service animals. However, the third provision grants psychiatric service animals the same status as other service animals. In other words, a person with an emotional or psychiatric disability can still obtain and travel with a service companion that has appropriate documentation.

Transition. *This signpost language allows the listener to know that the author is moving from one key idea to another.*

> Three other regulations deal with this documentation. The DOT has developed forms attesting to the animal's health, behavior, and training. Airlines may require these to be submitted 48 hours before travel or may require them at the departure gate. Providing these forms is no problem for a passenger with a Seeing Eye–certified or other officially trained dog.

FIGURE 19.7 Certified Seeing Eye dogs provide accessibility to those with vision impairments. (credit: "Kaye Kay-Smith and Patsy Reddy" by New Zealand Government, Office of the Governor-General/Wikimedia Creative Commons, CC BY 4.0)

> But what about the certification for an emotional support animal? Until the new regulations were passed, this wasn't a problem. A person wishing to claim a pet as an emotional support animal could simply go online and purchase certification from a for-profit agency. On one such site, for $54, a basic kit offers lifetime registration in a national database maintained by the company, plus a framed certificate, ID card with leash clip, and two official-looking vest patches. "Deluxe" and "premium" packages added more goodies for $114 and $154, respectively. The applicant could also obtain a certification letter from a licensed mental health professional for an additional fee. Just out of curiosity, I took the free online assessment—10 multiple-choice questions like these: "In the past two weeks, how often have you had little interest or pleasure in doing things that you usually like to do?" "How often have you felt sad or depressed?" "How often have you felt worried, anxious, or on edge?" The multiple choice options were *never*, *sometimes*, or *often*; I replied with 5 *often*, 4 *sometimes*, and 1 *never* response. My results were immediate: "Congratulations! Based on your responses, you are a good candidate to qualify for an ESA." All that was left for me to do was fill in my credit card info and upload a photo of my pet to have a certified emotional support animal. This certification, by the way, must be renewed annually—for a fee. Big surprise!

Supporting Evidence. *Though it has not yet been expressly stated, audience members should have a sense of the thesis. This anecdote serves as evidence that Kumar will use to support the claim that regulations are not discriminatory.*

Tone. *The sarcastic words "Big surprise!" reflect Kumar's disapproval of the for-profit agency issuing certification for service animals.*

> Additional DOT regulations allow airlines to require that service animals be harnessed, leashed, or tethered at all times in the airport and on the aircraft and to limit a single passenger to two service animals. The regulations also allow airlines to require a service animal to fit within its handler's foot space on the aircraft. This is not a hardship; I have personally seen a full-grown Labrador tuck herself comfortably into the space for carry-ons and go to sleep.

Personal Anecdote. *Kumar frequently uses personal anecdotes to support his points and establish credibility on the subject.*

> The bottom line? I don't believe the DOT's new regulations are discriminatory.

Thesis. *Although the structure is unusual, Kumar finally states the thesis: the new regulations do not discriminate against persons with disabilities.*

> Developed after receiving over 15,000 comments from individuals with disabilities; airline and airport personnel, including flight attendants; and other members of the public, these restrictions close loopholes that have been exploited by pet owners who want to take their pets along in airplane cabins without using a pet carrier or paying the pet fee. Individuals with a genuine need can still be accompanied by their documented and trained service animals—including psychiatric service animals—when they travel. In fact, travel just became less challenging in one major respect: people no longer have to abide fake emotional support animals having fuzzy four-footed panic attacks during the trip.

Logos. *Kumar uses logical appeals to support the thesis, talking through points in an organized and rational manner.*

Reasoning. *Drawing on previous anecdotes, evidence, and explanations, Kumar explains why the new regulations do not discriminate against people with real disabilities.*

Parallel Conclusion. *Kumar concludes the speech in the same casual manner and tone as the rest of the script. In addition, the ending is meaningful, once again drawing in the reader's/listener's attention by circling back to the opening anecdote.*

Discussion Questions

1. What is the impact of opening the introduction with an anecdote?
2. Which parts of the script show that the author has a good understanding of the audience and is trying to connect with them? Explain your response.
3. Why has the author used rhetorical questions within the script?
4. Why might the author have chosen to save the thesis for near the end of the script? What effect does this placement have on the overall text?
5. How does the author support the thesis with reasoning? In your opinion, is it sufficiently supported? Why or why not?

19.5 Writing Process: Writing to Speak

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Develop a writing project through multiple drafts.
- Compose texts that use rhetorical concepts appropriately in a speech.
- Apply effective shifts in voice, diction, tone, formality, design, medium, and structure.
- Demonstrate orality as an aspect of culture.
- Provide and act on productive feedback to works in progress through the collaborative and social aspects of the writing process.
- Adapt composing processes for a variety of technologies and modalities.

Now it's time to try your hand at writing a script or speaking outline for a public audience. Decide on a topic, and take that topic through the planning, drafting, and revision processes. Remember that even the informal writing you do when planning a script or speaking outline is **recursive**, meaning it is not linear. You will probably go back and forth between sections and processes.

You may question of the wisdom of preparation before speaking to the public. After all, you may post regularly to social media, for example, without following the processes of drafting and revising. However, "winging it" when it comes to speech is not a wise strategy. As a genre, social media in particular lends itself to short and simple messaging. Viewers allow producers very little time and attention before clicking to view the next item. Some sources say that you have 10 seconds to get the attention of a viewer; by the one-minute mark, you may have lost up to 45 percent of your viewers. Live adult audiences will pay attention for about 20 minute increments before their minds begin to wander; for young audiences, the time is even less. Given that knowledge, you must craft your message accordingly.

Summary of Assignment: Writing to Speak, Speaking to Act

You may have heard that merely believing in a cause is not enough; you must take action to create change. As you keep the idea of social, political, or economic change in mind, your task is to develop an outline as the basis for a speech to a live audience or on a social media platform of your choice. The topic is an issue you care about. Speaking from an outline rather than from a written script helps ensure that your speech is natural and smooth. Your audience should not feel as though you are reading aloud to them. If you are free to choose your own topic, consider a cause meaningful to you, or consider using one of the following suggestions as your topic or as inspiration for it:

- Police and mental health services reform
- Standards-based reform in education
- Global human rights
- Liberty and justice for all
- Reduction of carbon emissions

Your speech may incorporate multimedia components as you see fit. You'll also need to plan how to access the audience or platform you have in mind.

As you craft your outline, keep in mind your audience, your purpose for addressing them, and your support for that purpose by using key ideas, reasons, and evidence. When planning your script, use an organizer to collect information so that you can support your ideas credibly with a well-developed argument.

Using Your Authentic Voice

Unlike most formal academic papers, oral presentations give you an opportunity to consider how you might challenge formal writing conventions by delivering your script in your authentic voice. Oral compositions offer an opportunity to bring through conventions of your own culture, perhaps including discursive patterns of language and grammar and challenges to standard language ideologies. As always, keep your audience and purpose in mind as you make choices about your use of language.

Researching and Narrowing the Topic

After choosing the overall subject of your script, research the general topic to learn about context, background information, and related issues. Then narrow the topic and focus your research, as guided by your working thesis and purpose. You can return to Argumentative Research: Enhancing the Art of Rhetoric with Evidence, Research Process: Accessing and Recording Information, and Annotated Bibliography: Gathering, Evaluating, and Documenting Sources to review research processes, including how to allow research to shape your thesis and organization.

After choosing a topic, you will probably need to narrow it further. One way to achieve this task is by **brainstorming**, which involves generating possible ideas and thoughts quickly and informally. A basic, fast-paced brainstorming technique is simply to list all your possible ideas on paper and combine those that are related. Then you can eliminate some ideas to narrow the range. For example, for this assignment, you might list all of the causes toward which you feel sympathetic. Beginning with an idea that already interests you will help you remain enthusiastic about the idea and generate a positive tone that will come across to the audience and maximize the effectiveness of the presentation.

For example, if you're interested in the environment, your brainstorm might include the following:

- Animal endangerment
  - Deforestation
- Ocean pollution
  - Plastic waste
- Rising carbon levels
- Global warming

If you think you still need new ideas at this point, spend some time researching advocacy organizations. Next, expand each idea by creating subtopics. This activity will help you eliminate topics that are difficult to elaborate on—or at least you will know that you need to conduct more research. In summary, follow this process as you choose and narrow your topic:

1. Brainstorm ideas that already interest you or with which you have experience.
2. Circle topics appropriate for the assignment.
3. Cross out topics that you think you cannot make relevant to the audience. Remember, you are developing a presentation for a public forum.
4. For remaining topics, flesh out subtopics with ideas you might cover in your script. You should have between two and five key ideas; three is fairly typical.
5. Eliminate topics for which you lack sufficient material, or do the necessary research to obtain more.
6. Finally, decide on a topic that you have the resources to research.

Another Lens. Because this chapter focuses on activism and you have read the Trailblazer feature about Alice Wong's work in the disability activism space, think about content consumers (readers, listeners) who experience the world through the lens of disability. Challenge yourself to create content that meets the needs of diverse consumers. Because the assignment is an activist script outline for a presentation, it naturally lends itself to those who are abled in the areas of sight and hearing. Consider people who are visually impaired or hard of hearing. *How might you adapt your script and its delivery to make it accessible to all?*

One option to consider is visual representation of your presentation through an infographic that depicts the thesis, main reasoning, and evidence to reach those who cannot hear a speech. Or consider how you might adapt the delivery of a script to reach those who experience visual limitations. By making considerations for accessibility, you will strengthen your message for all who interact with it.

Quick Launch: Outlining

Before your presentation, create an outline of the main ideas you plan to discuss. An **outline** is a framework that helps you organize your major claims, reasoning, supporting details, and evidence. Creating an outline is also a way to create a natural flow for your ideas and provide a foundation for engaging your audience. Doing this basic organizational work at the beginning will help you present your ideas so that they will have the greatest impact on your audience.

The first step in creating your outline is to develop a **purpose statement**. This one-sentence statement reveals what you hope to accomplish in the presentation—that is, your objective. The purpose statement isn't something that you will include in your actual presentation; the purpose statement is for you. It will help you keep your audience at the center of your script, create a central idea, and, most of all, give you a realistic goal. One example of a purpose statement for an informational speech might read, "By the end of this presentation, my audience will better understand the impact of plastic waste on the ocean and the world." Or, for a persuasive speech, a purpose statement on a similar topic might read, "By the end of this presentation, my audience will feel compelled to reduce their use of disposable plastic."

Although a speaking outline resembles an outline for an academic paper, with special considerations for the genre, it does not need to be as detailed as an outline for a research paper. Rather, a speaking outline will form the framework for speech. Feel free to write your outline as complete thoughts, sentence fragments, or even bullet points.

A presentation's basic format is relatively similar to most other writing: an introduction, three to five major supporting points, and a conclusion. The major differences will be the genre-specific choices you make about presenting this information.

Introduction

Like most persuasive writing, your presentation needs an introduction that establishes its purpose. The introduction should engage the audience, present the topic and main ideas, and validate the speaker's credibility. Engaging your audience is important. You can capture an audience's attention by relating an anecdote or a quotation, posing a question, using humor, relating surprising facts or statistics, or any other method you think will do the job.

The introduction will usually lead seamlessly into a definitive statement of the main theme or claim. As you would include a thesis in the introduction of a piece of persuasive writing, your introduction here also should include a statement that previews the main idea and briefly touches on key points. Though you are outlining your presentation rather than writing a full script, it is a good idea to write your thesis so that you clearly identify your aim. When presenting, you won't have to read your script word for word, but recording the thesis clearly will enable you to summarize the central idea of your presentation easily.

Finally, the introduction is your opportunity to establish credibility with your audience and to tell them why

they should listen to what you have to say. Include a brief statement of your credentials, experience, and knowledge that demonstrates your credibility or authority on the topic.

Body

The main section of the outline, the body is the longest part of the script and the one in which you present key points to support the main idea. Each key point should stem organically from the script's goal and your thesis. Although standard practice is to present three key ideas, you may choose to have between two and five. Any fewer, and you won't support your thesis sufficiently; any more, and your audience will lose track of them. Back each key idea with several points, including reasoning, evidence, and audiovisual support.

You can organize your key ideas in several ways. Determining an organizational pattern helps you narrow the central ideas generated from research and allows you to plan material for your script. Topical patterns break main ideas into smaller ideas or subcategories. After dividing the topics into subtopics, consider the most logical order of points. There is often no right answer to this order, so feel free to move your ideas around to create the greatest impact. For example, a topic discussing World War II battles might best be presented in **chronological order** (listed or arranged according to time sequence), but a topic broken down to address the causes of World War II (diplomatic factors, nationalism, World War I peace treaty) may not fit into an obvious pattern. In a persuasive script, **problem-and-solution** or **cause-and-effect** patterns of reasoning may be the best way to organize ideas. These and other organizational patterns are discussed in Reasoning Strategies: Improving Critical Thinking.

Conclusion

This portion of the script provides a summary and is your final opportunity to make an impression on your audience. Typically, in this section, you restate the thesis convincingly and, if applicable in a persuasive script, tell your audience what you believe they should do. Also, you briefly revisit each key idea in the context of how it supports your thesis. Strong conclusions are especially important in scripts.

One strategy for writing conclusions is the "mirrored" conclusion that ties back to the introduction. For example, if you use a statistic to engage your audience's attention, you return to that statistic in the conclusion. Consider the following example.

> ***Introduction:*** It takes 450 years for one plastic bottle to decompose in a landfill. Now consider the fact that, according to the U.S. government, at least **50 million** plastic bottles are thrown away *each day* in the United States.

> ***Mirrored Conclusion:*** Each time you're tempted to reach for a plastic bottle, contemplate the **50 million** that end up in landfills each year. Consider other options that spare our environment from the centuries of decomposition that each one contributes to.

For writers who have difficulty beginning, one idea is to reverse-engineer the structure of the script. Beginning with the conclusion will help you know where you need to end up, thus making it easier to create a roadmap for getting there. This strategy can provide consistency and add emphasis to the key ideas in the script.

Outline

Keeping in mind the basic parts of a script outline, you can now begin to craft a skeletal version your own. Use a graphic organizer like Table 19.1 to gather and organize your initial thoughts.

Topic:	**General Purpose:**	**Purpose Statement:**

TABLE 19.1 Presentation outline

Introduction	Hook:
	Thesis:
Body	Key Idea 1: • Reason(s): • Evidence:
	Key Idea 2: • Reason(s): • Evidence:
	Key Idea 3: • Reason(s): • Evidence:
Conclusion	Restatement of Thesis:
	Closing Statement:

TABLE 19.1 Presentation outline

A sample skeletal outline might include the following information.

Topic: Plastic waste	**General Purpose:** To convince people not to use plastic water bottles.	**Purpose Statement:** By the end of this speech, my audience will feel compelled to reduce their use of disposable plastic.
Introduction	Hook: It takes 450 years for one plastic bottle to decompose in a landfill. Now consider the fact that, according to the U.S. government, at least **50 million** plastic bottles are thrown away *each day* in the United States.	

TABLE 19.2 Sample outline

	Thesis: We should reduce our use of disposable plastic.
Body	Key Idea 1: Plastic production increases carbon emissions and contributes to global warming. • Reason(s): Plastic production requires a lot of energy and resources. • Evidence: **1.5 million barrels of oil are used each year to make plastic bottles.**
	Key Idea 2: Most plastic is never recycled. • Reason(s): Recycling plastic is not efficient. • Evidence: **Only 9% of plastic ever produced has been recycled.**
	Key Idea 3: Plastic waste is filling our landfills. • Reason(s): Plastic manufacturing is increasing, and there is nowhere to put all the used plastic. • Evidence: **40% of plastic is single-use then thrown away.**
Conclusion	Restatement of Thesis: All people should reduce their use of disposable plastic.
	Closing Statement: Each time you're tempted to reach for a plastic bottle, contemplate the 50 million that end up in landfills each year. Consider other options that spare our environment from the centuries of decomposition that each one contributes to.

TABLE 19.2 Sample outline

Drafting: Signpost Language; Tone, Repetition and Parallelism; Media and Other Visuals; and Cultural Cues

After you have analyzed your audience, selected and narrowed the topic, researched supporting ideas, and created a skeletal outline, you can begin adding flesh to the outline. Gather all supporting material for your topic, and consider the various ways to include notes about effective language and delivery.

Signpost Language

The function of signs is to direct people to the places they are going. Think of a road sign that points to an exit off the highway. Signs also can warn people of places they should *not* go. Similarly, in presentations, **signposts** are statements that help the audience know where your presentation is going. These may include

- a **preview statement** that offers an overview of the path and topics your script will take on;
- **transition statements** between the introduction and body, between key points and ideas, and between the body and the conclusion; and
- a **conclusion statement** that ends the script.

Table 19.3 shows examples of signpost language. Notice the boldfaced words, called **transitions**, which help readers and listeners navigate between ideas and concepts. Signposts should clearly connect ideas, are often parallel (repeated words or grammatical forms), and mark the most important parts of an argument or

explanation.

Signpost	Example
Preview	"**Today, I'd like to introduce you** to the organization ReStart, a community outreach that makes a difference for those experiencing homelessness in our community."
Transition (introduction to body)	"**First**, let's look at how ReStart was formed."
Transition (key idea to key idea)	"**Let's begin** by examining the reasons some people experience homelessness, which can help you understand the need for an organization like ReStart."
Transition (key idea to key idea)	"**Now that you understand** something about homelessness, let's look at how ReStart addresses the problem."
Transition (key idea to key idea)	"**It's not just** the staff at ReStart that can help. You can play a role in helping those experiencing homelessness too."
Conclusion (restatement of thesis)	"**Thus, as you can see**, ReStart is an organization with a long history in the Kansas City area, one that not only provides services to those experiencing homelessness but also offers an opportunity for volunteers to play a role."

TABLE 19.3 Signpost language

Tone

Tone is a writer or speaker's attitude as it is conveyed in a composition or script. A writers or speaker's language choices as well as other elements specific to speech, such as gestures and body language, help create tone. The tone of a presentation depends largely on its purpose, audience, and message.

Consider this text from Annotated Student Sample.

> Without warning, the smaller dog launched itself from its owner's lap, snarling and snapping at the guide dog. The owner of the small dog jumped up and retrieved her animal from the Labrador's vest and stomped back to her seat. That neither she nor the still-yapping dog had an obvious panic attack amazed me, as I questioned, to myself of course, what possible service was being provided—other than a moment of exercise.

The author's tone of disapproval is evident when he relates the actions of the untrained, unrestrained dog causing trouble for others. The attitude is emphasized by words with negative connotations such as *snarling* and *stomped*.

The tone you choose for your script will help you relate to your audience. It can help your audience feel connected to you and promote your credibility as well as that of the message you wish to impart.

Notice, too, the use of the first person in script writing. While you may have been taught not to use first-person pronouns in most formal or academic writing, speech is completely different. Even in formal scripts, the use of *I* helps connect listeners to the speaker. In general, effective speakers also use simple, declarative statements in the active voice (subject + verb + object) to emphasize their key ideas and to keep audiences focused on them. Longer, complex sentences may cause audience members to lose focus. Thoughts and sentences should flow conversationally. See Clear and Effective Sentences for more about effective sentences, including use of the active voice.

Repetition and Parallelism

Repetition and parallelism are literary devices that authors and speakers use for emphasis, persuasion,

contrast, and rhythm. In **repetition**, a word, phrase, or sound is repeated for effect. Repetition is also employed in a variety of figurative language. The following example is an excerpt from the surrender speech of Chief Joseph (1840–1904), the Nez Percé leader who surrendered to the U.S. Army in 1877 after the U.S. government had appropriated Nez Percé land. Rather than be forced to live on reservations, Chief Joseph and his followers unsuccessfully attempted to flee to Canada, a journey of about 1,500 miles, during which they were pursued and vastly outnumbered by the U.S. Army. Notice the use of repetition to emphasize the cold and the death toll.

> I am tired of fighting. Our chiefs are killed; Looking Glass is **dead**, Too-hul-hul-sote is **dead.** The old men are all **dead**. . . . He who led on the young men is **dead**. It is **cold**, and we have no blankets; the little children are **freezing to death**. My people, some of them, have run away to the hills and have no blankets, no food. No one knows where they are—perhaps **freezing to death**. I want to have time to look for my children. . . . Maybe I shall find them among the **dead**.

Parallelism is the use of similar or equivalent constructions of phrases or clauses to emphasize an idea. Parallelism is especially helpful for organizational and structural concerns in a script or composition. Consider this excerpt from President John F. Kennedy's (1917–1963) inaugural address:

> Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall **pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe** in order to assure the survival and the success of liberty.

Kennedy uses parallelism for impact as well as to organize his support for the idea that the United States works collaboratively for "the success of liberty." Parallelism and repetition can work hand in hand as organizational strategies and to emphasize ideas in your script.

Anaphora and **epistrophe** are two related forms of parallelism.

Anaphora: repetition of the first word or phrase across phrases or sentences	"**We shall fight** on the beaches, **we shall fight** on the landing grounds, **we shall fight** in the fields and in the streets, **we shall fight** in the hills." —Winston Churchill's "We Shall Fight on the Beaches"
Epistrophe: repetition of the last word or phrase across phrases or sentences	"And that the government of **the people**, by **the people**, for **the people**, shall not perish from the Earth." —Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address "For man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish **all forms of human poverty** and **all forms of human life**." —John F. Kennedy's inaugural address

TABLE 19.4

You can hear examples of parallelism and repetition in audio excerpts on the website American Rhetoric (https://openstax.org/r/American_Rhetoric).

In Chapter 19, you have learned about rhetorical techniques used in speech, including parallelism, repetition, and signpost language.

Media and Other Visuals

Because speeches are auditory by nature, you can enhance their effectiveness by using media and other visual aids. These elements can add emphasis, help the audience understand a complex idea, or otherwise support your message. But be careful not to detract from your speech with the media you choose. A common error

speakers make is to include too much or irrelevant media.

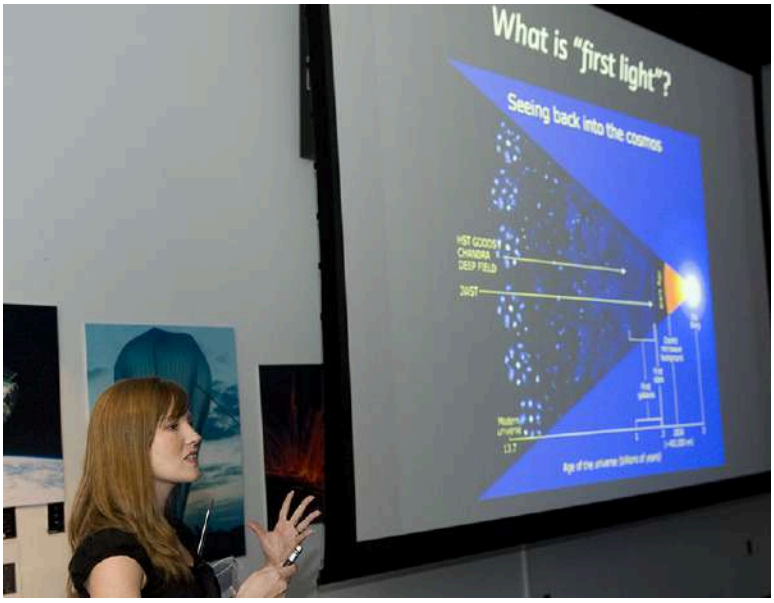

FIGURE 19.8 Visual aids and other media can enhance an audience's understanding during a public address. (credit: "James Webb Space Telescope Night at the NASA Goddard Visitor Center" by NASA/GSFC/Bill Hrybyk/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

When considering media and visual aids, remember to keep in mind your audience, purpose, and message. Note these considerations about media and visual aids:

- Use media in a way that doesn't clutter or overwhelm your presentation. The media you choose should enhance, not detract from, your message.
- Ensure that visuals are large enough for the audience to see. Create or obtain media that is clear, concise, and of high quality. Tiny, hard-to-read graphs or muffled audio clips will only frustrate your audience.

FIGURE 19.9 Infographics are one example of how a speech can be enhanced by multimedia content. (credit: "Stop the Spread of Germs (COVID-19)" by United States Health and Human Services/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

- Keep a consistent visual style, including font, colors, backgrounds, and so on.
- Provide space and time for your audience to listen to, read, and/or view media and other visuals in your presentation.
- Consider accessibility; think about an audience member who relies on an interpreter or who is visually impaired. *How can you make your presentation accessible to that person?*
- Ensure that your media engages the audience, thus making your speech delivery more dynamic.
- If using technology, make every effort to test it before your presentation.

Read Aloud

As you finish drafting your script, consider all the potential aspects of language and organization you might use to create meaning for your audience. Remember that you will give your presentation orally. Therefore, during drafting, take a few minutes at key points—after completing a section, for example—to practice your presentation by reading it aloud. Listen to how it sounds and make adjustments as you go along, considering the oral elements of speech that lend themselves to fluency.

Peer Review: Using Symbols

After you have completed the first draft of your outline, peer review can help you refine your ideas, improve your organization, and strengthen your language. One aspect of effective peer review is marking the text for revision. You and your peers can do this kind of marking by using symbols, which allow reviewers to give feedback quickly and thoughtfully without overwhelming the writer with notes.

Figure 19.10 below provides some of the editing marks to use for proofreading and review. Peer reviewers may also write in the margin to indicate issues with organization, tone, or flow of ideas.

	Editing Marks
	insert a word, letter, or phrase
	delete
	capitalize
	change to lowercase
	insert period
	insert comma
	insert an apostrophe
	insert quotation marks
	insert space
	close up space
	transpose letters or words
	start a new paragraph
	check spelling
	move right
	move left

FIGURE 19.10 Editing symbols (attribution: Copyright Rice University, OpenStax, under CC BY 4.0 license)

Revising: Interpreting and Responding to Symbols and Context Cues

After a peer has reviewed and provided feedback on your first draft, you will begin the revision process. Remember that writing is recursive, meaning it is not linear. Although revision won't go on forever, it's important to revise your work at each point in the writing process. In fact, even though you are officially working with the first draft, it is likely your writing has already undergone some process of revision. You will want to continue this process to strengthen your writing, respond to peer review, and ensure that your script fulfills your intent. Consider the items in the following checklist.

Checklist for Revision

☐ Read the draft aloud.
- Is it organized logically?
- Is the topic immediately clear?

☐ Ensure that the script has a clear purpose.
☐ Think about your audience.
- Does the script respond to what the audience already knows about the subject?
- Does it support new knowledge?
- Have you taken culture into consideration?

☐ Review the introduction to determine whether it hooks the audience and establishes a thesis.
☐ Review the sentences in each paragraph and the order of the paragraphs to ensure that the organization supports the thesis.
☐ Review the conclusion to ensure that it supports the thesis and provides a strong ending.
☐ Read the script again after making revisions to find ways to improve transitions and connections. Consider

tone, signpost language, parallelism, and repetition.
☐ Review the draft for conventions, including grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

19.6 Evaluation: Bridging Writing and Speaking

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Produce effective written and oral content based on genre conventions, including common formats and design features.
- Demonstrate understanding and use of genre conventions for structure, coherence, tone, and mechanics.

Ask a peer to use the following rubric to evaluate your final presentation draft. The rubric covers oral fluency, rhetorical choices, and organizational principles necessary for creating a strong presentation. After going through the rubric, your peer reviewer may leave comments or other feedback to help you understand their reasoning. Although you may not agree with all of their ideas, peer reviewers offer an opportunity for you to get an outsider's perspective on your writing. Be sure to ask questions about parts you do not understand, and listen closely to your peer reviewer's reasoning. Then review your script again according to the feedback you think you can address.

Rubric

Score	Critical Language Awareness	Clarity and Coherence	Rhetorical Choices
5 **Skillful**	The outline and its delivery have a clear focus and thesis, exemplify strong oral fluency, and appeal to readers' intelligence and sympathies. The outline also shows ample evidence of the writer's intent to consciously meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The topic or claim is stated clearly and is expertly supported with abundant credible evidence. The writer's ideas are always clearly presented and linked with appropriate transitions. The conclusion ties back to the thesis. Media and visual aids are skillfully used as support.	The language is consistently clear and appropriate and accurately reflects the overall tone. The writer consistently demonstrates awareness of the audience and highly skilled use of rhetorical strategies and devices, such as parallelism and repetition.
4 **Accomplished**	The outline and its delivery have a generally clear focus and thesis, exemplify moderate oral fluency, and generally appeal to readers' intelligence and sympathies. The text also shows some evidence of the writer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The topic or claim is stated clearly and is supported with sufficient credible evidence. The writer's ideas are usually presented clearly and linked with appropriate transitions. The conclusion ties back to the thesis. Media and visual aids are used appropriately as support.	The language is usually clear and appropriate and accurately reflects the overall tone. The writer usually demonstrates awareness of the audience and skilled use of rhetorical strategies and devices, such as parallelism and repetition.

TABLE 19.5

Score	Critical Language Awareness	Clarity and Coherence	Rhetorical Choices
3 Capable	The outline and its delivery have a somewhat clear focus and thesis, exemplify some oral fluency, and appeal somewhat to readers' intelligence and sympathies. The text also shows limited evidence of the writer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The topic or claim is stated fairly clearly and is supported with sufficient, if not abundant, credible evidence. The writer's ideas are presented fairly clearly, but the writing may be choppy because of insufficient or inappropriate transitions. The conclusion may be missing or may not tie back to the thesis. Media and visual aids may not be used appropriately as support—too many, too few, too small, or inaudible.	The language is usually clear but may be inappropriate at times and may not always reflect the overall tone. The writer demonstrates some awareness of the audience and use of rhetorical strategies and devices, such as parallelism and repetition, but more are needed for a strong presentation.
2 Developing	The outline and its delivery have evidence of an emerging focus and thesis, exemplify emerging oral fluency, and provide limited appeal to readers' intelligence and sympathies. The text also shows emerging evidence of the writer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The topic or claim is unclear and insufficiently supported with credible evidence. The writer's ideas are unclear and disconnected, a result of insufficient or inappropriate transitions. The conclusion may be missing or may not tie back to the thesis. Media and visual aids contribute little to the presentation.	The language may be unclear or inappropriate and may not reflect the overall tone. The writer demonstrates little, if any, awareness of the audience and little use of rhetorical strategies and devices, such as parallelism and repetition.
1 Beginning	The outline and its delivery have little to no focus or thesis, show little evidence of oral fluency, and provide little to no appeal to readers' intelligence or sympathies. The text also shows little to no evidence of the writer's intent to meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The topic or claim is not supported with credible evidence. The writer's ideas are unclear and disconnected, a result of insufficient or inappropriate transitions. There is no clear conclusion. Media and visual aids either are missing or contribute little to the presentation.	The language is unclear and inappropriate and does not reflect the overall tone. The writer demonstrates little or no awareness of their audience and little to no use of rhetorical strategies or devices, such as parallelism and repetition.

TABLE 19.5

19.7 Spotlight on … Delivery/Public Speaking

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Implement various technologies effectively to address an audience, matching the capacities of each to the rhetorical situation.
- Apply conventions of speech delivery, such as voice control, gestures, and posture.
- Identify and show awareness of cultural considerations.

Think of a speech you have seen or heard, either in person, on television, or online. Was the speech delivered well, or was it poorly executed? What aspects of the performance make you say that? Both good and poor delivery of a speech can affect the audience's opinion of the speaker and the topic. Poor delivery may be so distracting that even the message of a well-organized script with strong information is lost to the audience.

Speaking Genres: Spoken Word, Pulpit, YouTube, Podcast, Social Media

The world today offers many new (and old) delivery methods for script writing. While the traditional presidential address or commencement speech on a stage in front of a crowd of people is unlikely to disappear, newer script delivery methods are now available, including many that involve technology. From YouTube, which allows anyone to upload videos, to podcasts, which provide a platform for anyone, celebrities and noncelebrities alike, to produce a radio-like program, it seems that people are finding new ways to use technology to enhance communication. Free resources such as YouTube Studio (https://openstax.org/r/YouTube_Studio) and the extension TubeBuddy (https://openstax.org/r/TubeBuddy) can be a good starting place to learn to create these types of media.

Voice Control

Whether the method is old or new, delivering communication in the speaking genre relies not only on words but also on the way those words are delivered. Remember that voice and tone are important in establishing a bond with your audience, helping them feel connected to your message, creating engagement, and facilitating comprehension. Vocal delivery includes these aspects of speech:

- **Rate of speech** refers to how fast or slow you speak. You must speak slowly enough to be understood but not so slowly that you sound unnatural and bore your audience. In addition, you can vary your rate, speeding up or slowing down to increase tension, emphasize a point, or create a dramatic effect.
- **Volume** refers to how loudly or softly you speak. As with rate, you do not want to be too loud or too soft. Too soft, and your speech will be difficult or impossible to hear, even with amplification; too loud, and it will be distracting or even painful for the audience. Ideally, you should project your voice, speaking from the diaphragm, according to the size and location of the audience and the acoustics of the room. You can also use volume for effect; you might use a softer voice to describe a tender moment between mother and child or a louder voice to emphatically discuss an injustice.
- **Pitch** refers to how high or low a speaker's voice is to listeners. A person's vocal pitch is unique to that person, and unlike the control a speaker has over rate and volume, some physical limitations exist on the extent to which individuals can vary pitch. Although men generally have lower-pitched voices than women, speakers can vary their pitch for emphasis. For example, you probably raise your pitch naturally at the end of a question. Changing pitch can also communicate enthusiasm or indicate transition or closure.
- **Articulation** refers to how clearly a person produces sounds. Clarity of voice is important in speech; it determines how well your audience understands what you are saying. Poor articulation can hamper the effect of your script and even cause your audience to feel disconnected from both you and your message. In general, articulation during a presentation before an audience tends to be more pronounced and dramatic than everyday communication with individuals or small groups. When presenting a script, avoid slurring and mumbling. While these may be acceptable in informal communication, in presented speech

they can obscure your message.

- **Fluency** refers to the flow of speech. Speaking with fluency is similar to reading with fluency. It's not about how fast you can speak, but how fluid and meaningful your speech is. While inserting pauses for dramatic effect is perfectly acceptable, these are noticeably different from awkward pauses that result from forgetting a point, losing your place, or becoming distracted. Practicing your speech can greatly reduce fluency issues. A word on **verbal fillers**, those pesky words or sounds used to fill a gap or fluency glitch: utterances such as *um*, *ah*, and *like* detract from the fluency of your speech, distract the audience from your point, and can even reduce your credibility. Again, practice can help reduce their occurrence, and self-awareness can help you speak with more fluency.

Gestures and Expressions

Beyond vocal delivery, consider also physical delivery variables such as **gestures** and **facial expressions**. While not all speech affords audiences the ability to see the speaker, in-person, online, and other forms of speech do. Gestures and facial expressions can both add to and detract from effective script delivery, as they can help demonstrate emotion and enthusiasm for the topic. Both have the ability to emphasize points, enhance tone, and engage audiences.

Eye contact is another form of nonverbal, physical communication that builds community, communicates comfort, and establishes credibility. Eye contact also can help hold an audience's attention during a speech. It is advisable to begin your speech by establishing eye contact with the audience. One idea is to memorize your opening and closing statements to allow you to maintain consistent eye contact during these important sections of the script and strengthen your connection with the audience.

Although natural engagement through gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact can help an audience relate to a presenter and even help establish community and trust, these actions also can distract audiences from the content of the script if not used purposefully. In general, as with most delivery elements, variation and a happy medium between "too much" and "too little" are key to an effective presentation. Some presenters naturally have more expressive faces, but all people can learn to control and use facial expressions and gestures consciously to become more effective speakers. Practicing your speech in front of a mirror will allow you to monitor, plan, and practice these aspects of physical delivery.

FIGURE 19.11 Body language such as facial expressions and gestures can help your audience interpret another level of meaning when you address them publicly. (credit: "Mamallapuram, Indian Dance Festival, Bharatanatyam dancer" by Arian Zwegers/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

Posture and Movement

Other physical delivery considerations include posture and movement. Posture is the position of the body. If you have ever been pestered to "stand up straight," you were being instructed on your posture. The most important consideration for posture during a speech is that you look relaxed and natural. You don't want to be slumped over and leaning on the podium or lectern, but you also don't want a stiff, unnatural posture that makes you look stilted or uncomfortable. In many speeches, the speaker's posture is upright as they stand behind a podium or at a microphone, but this is not always the case. Less formal occasions and audiences may call for movement of the whole body. If this informality fits your speech, you will need to balance movement with the other delivery variables. This kind of balance can be challenging. You won't want to wander aimlessly around the stage or pace back and forth on the same path. Nor will you want to shuffle your feet, rock, or shift your weight back and forth. Instead, as with every other aspect of delivery, you will want your movements to be purposeful, with the intention of connecting with or influencing your audience. Time your movements to occur at key points or transitions in the script.

Cultural Considerations

Don't forget to reflect on **cultural considerations** that relate to your topic and/or audience. Cultural awareness is important in any aspect of writing, but it can have an immediate impact on a speech, as the audience will react to your words, gestures, vocal techniques, and topic in real time. Elements that speakers don't always think about—including gestures, glances, and changes in tone and inflection—can vary in effectiveness and even politeness in many cultures. Consideration for cultural cues may include the following:

- **Paralanguage**: voiced cultural considerations, including tone, language, and even accent.
- **Kinesics**: body movements and gestures that may include facial expressions. Often part of a person's subconscious, kinesics can be interpreted in various ways by members of different cultures. Body language can include posture, facial expressions (smiling or frowning), and even displays of affection.

- **Proxemics**: interpersonal space that regulates intimacy. Proxemics might indicate how close to an audience a speaker is located, whether the speaker moves around, and even how the speaker greets the audience.
- **Chronemics**: use of time. Chronemics refers to the duration of a script.
- **Appearance**: clothing and physical appearance. The presentation of appearance is a subtle form of communication that can indicate the speaker's identity and can be specific to cultures.

Stage Directions

You can think proactively about ways to enhance the delivery of your script, including vocal techniques, body awareness, and cultural considerations. Within the draft of your script, create **stage directions**. An integral part of performances such as plays and films, stage directions can be as simple as writing in a pause for dramatic effect or as complicated as describing where and how to walk, what facial expressions to make, or how to react to audience feedback.

Look at this example from the beginning of the student sample. Stage directions are enclosed in parentheses and bolded.

> Several years ago, I sat in the waiting area of a major airport, trying to ignore the constant yapping of a small dog cuddled on the lap of a fellow passenger. An airline rep approached the woman and asked the only two questions allowed by law. **(high-pitched voice with a formal tone)** "Is that a service animal? **(pause)** What service does it provide for you?"

> **(bold, defiant, self-righteous tone)** "Yes. It keeps me from having panic attacks," the woman said defiantly, and the airline employee retreated. **(move two steps to the left for emphasis)**

> Shortly after that, another passenger arrived at the gate. **(spoken with authority)** She gripped the high, stiff handle on the harness of a Labrador retriever that wore a vest emblazoned with the words "The Seeing Eye." **(speed up speech and dynamic of voice for dramatic effect)** Without warning, the smaller dog launched itself from its owner's lap, snarling and snapping at the guide dog. **(move two steps back to indicate transition)**

Your Turn

Now it's your turn. Using the principle illustrated above, create stage directions for your script. Then, practice using them by presenting your script to a peer reviewer, such as a friend, family member, or classmate. Also consider recording yourself practicing your script. Listen to the recording to evaluate it for delivery, fluency, and vocal fillers. Remember that writing is recursive: you can make changes based on what works and what doesn't after you implement your stage directions. You can even ask your audience for feedback to improve your delivery.

Podcast Publication

If possible, work with your instructor and classmates to put together a single podcast (https://openstax.org/r/podcast) or a series of podcasts (https://openstax.org/r/podcasts) according to the subject areas of the presentations. The purpose of these podcasts should be to invite and encourage other students to get involved in important causes. Work with relevant student organizations on campus to produce and publicize the podcasts for maximum impact. There are many free resources for creating podcasts, including Apple's GarageBand (https://openstax.org/r/GarageBand) and Audacity (https://openstax.org/r/Audacity).

19.8 Portfolio: Everyday Rhetoric, Rhetoric Every Day

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Write reflectively about the process of creating a script for a presentation.
- Demonstrate how the composing process affects the final product.

Reflecting on your writing enhances the writing process by allowing you to deepen your understanding of the process of drafting, revising, and evaluating. Now that you have finished another writing project, it's time to add another section to your portfolio. Think critically about the process you followed for this assignment, reflecting on how your writing developed over time, specifically as it relates to writing for an audience.

Reflective Task

As you reflect on writing for your presentation, ask yourself the following questions:

- How did you decide on the topic and subject of your script?
- How did the research process inform the development of your thesis?
- How did you organize your outline? Why did you choose this method of organization?
- What sources did you use to develop key points?
- How did you engage the audience in the introduction of your script? What methods of engagement did you use?
- How did you build credibility and engagement with your audience?
- How did collaboration with peers help you as you wrote and revised your script?
- What specific feedback was helpful in the revision process?
- How did you incorporate structural elements such as tone, parallelism, and repetition into your writing? How did they affect the text?
- What considerations for delivery did you make within your writing?
- Did you find writing for speech more or less difficult than writing a traditional paper? In what ways?
- What might you do differently if you were to begin again or write a different script?
- What insights about your topic did you gain from writing your paper?

Further Reading

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Portfolio Reflection: Your Growth as a Writer

20

FIGURE 20.1 Mount Hood, Oregon. Seeing and reseeing, as in this lake reflection, is a practice that may help you think and understand with greater clarity. (credit: "Mount Hood reflected in Mirror Lake, Oregon" by Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory/Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain)

CHAPTER OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION Reflecting on your work is an important step in your growth as a writer. Reflection allows you to recognize the ways in which you have mastered some skills and have addressed instances when your intention and execution fail to match. By recognizing previous challenges and applying learned strategies for addressing them, you demonstrate improvement and progress as a writer. This kind of reflection is an example of recursive (https://openstax.org/r/recursivity). At this point in the semester, you know that writing is a recursive process: you prewrite, you write, you revise, you edit, you reflect, you revise, and so on. In working through a writing assignment, you learn and understand more about particular sections of your draft, and you

can go back and revise them. The ability to return to your writing and exercise objectivity and honesty about it is one of skills you have practiced during this journey. You are now able to evaluate your own work, accept another's critique of your writing, and make meaningful revisions.

In this chapter, you will review your work from earlier chapters and write a reflection that captures your growth, feelings, and challenges as a writer. In your reflection, you will apply many of the writing, reasoning, and evidentiary strategies you have already used in other papers—for example, analysis, evaluation, comparison and contrast, problem and solution, cause and effect, examples, and anecdotes.

When looking at your earlier work, you may find that you cringe at those papers and wonder what you were thinking when you wrote them. If given that same assignment, you now would know how to produce a more polished paper. This response is common and is evidence that you have learned quite a bit about writing.

20.1 Thinking Critically about Your Semester

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Reflect on and write about the development of composing processes and how those processes affect your work.
- Demonstrate honesty and objectivity in reflecting on written work.

You have written your way through a long semester, and the journey is nearly complete. Now is the time to step back and reflect on what you have written, what you have mastered, what skill gaps remain, and what you will do to continue growing and improving as a communicator. This reflection will be based on the work you have done and what you have learned during the semester. Because the subject of this reflection is you and your work, no further research is required. The information you need is in the work you have done in this course and in your head. Now, you will work to organize and transfer this information to an organized written text. Every assignment you have completed provides you with insight into your writing process as you think about the assignment's purpose, its execution, and your learning along the way. The skill of reflection requires you to be critical and honest about your habits, feelings, skills, and writing. In the end, you will discover that you have made progress as a writer, perhaps in ways not yet obvious.

20.2 Trailblazer

Reflection Trailblazer: Sandra Cisneros

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Identify and analyze an author's reflections.
- Demonstrate the ability to think critically about a writer's reflections.

FIGURE 20.2 Sandra Cisneros (credit: "Sandra leyendo parte de su obra" by Embassy of the United States-Argentina/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

"She experiments, creating a text that is as succinct and flexible as poetry, snapping sentences into fragments."

Finding a Home in Writing

Poet and novelist Sandra Cisneros (b. 1954) is best known for her novel *The House on Mango Street* (1983). Born in Chicago, Illinois, Cisneros was the only girl in a family of seven children. When she was a child, her father moved the family several times between Chicago and Mexico City, the capital of Mexico. With these moves back and forth between the two countries, Cisneros felt detached from both cultures, forcing her to create her own path to understand herself better.

In school, Cisneros was encouraged to write poems and quickly became known for her writing. However, her interest in writing did not fully take hold until college, when she took a creative writing course. She graduated with a BA from Loyola University in Chicago in 1976 and earned an MFA from the Writers' Workshop at the University of Iowa in 1978. While there, she had an epiphany: "I was in this class, we were talking about memory and the imagination,... and I realized: 'My god, I'm... different from everybody in this classroom'" (Rodríguez Aranda 65). This important reflection encouraged Cisneros to write about what others could not: her own experience. The unique part poetry, part prose writing style that she crafted to relay her experiences eventually found its place among traditional literary genres, giving voice to the once voiceless.

In her memoir, *A House of My Own: Stories from My Life* (https://openstax.org/r/A_House) (2015), Cisneros reflects on her journey as a writer through subjects such as autonomy, home, culture, and environment. She does so by introducing her memories, which develop into a kind of dialogue between the young writer she once was and the successful writer she is today. In the title essay, "A House of My Own"—originally the introduction to the 25th anniversary edition of *The House on Mango Street*—Cisneros writes, "The young woman in this photograph is me.... She thinks stories are about beauty." By describing herself in the third person from the vantage point of herself as a successful writer, Cisneros creates space for reflection—the act of thinking about the arc of her life. She wonders how this young woman with so many fears had the courage to chart her own path in life. Upon reflection, previously unexamined gifts from her parents provide some answers. In *A House of My Own,* Cisneros says that she became a writer because of her mother, "who was unhappy being a mother" and was "banging on the bars of her cell all her life," and because of her father, who wanted Cisneros to marry and have babies and so didn't mind if she "majored in something silly like English": "In a sense, everything I have ever written has been for him, to win his approval." Cisneros's reflection suggests that in some ways, her life has been about rebirthing herself into a form that her mother would be proud of and a form her father would come to understand—a form beyond the circumstances of her original birth.

This reflective dialogue across time mirrors the way in which Cisneros sees herself: as someone who writes from multiple perspectives. Being an American and a Mexican, she writes in two languages and uses elements

of both cultures to create characters that she picks up from memory, chance meetings, visits to various places, and dreams. She cobbles these parts together to form a title or maybe just a first line, giving her mind time to percolate, waiting for the rest of the story to emerge. This is the work of reflection—giving oneself time to think, to make connections, to feel, and to put words to ideas.

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways did the realization that she was different from other students spur Sandra Cisneros's journey as a writer?
2. What is the purpose of reflection in Cisneros's writing?
3. What strategies does Cisneros use to generate reflective writing?
4. What themes emerge when you think about your journey as a writer this semester? Do similarities exist between your themes and Cisneros's? Explain
5. What dialogue might emerge between the writer you were at the beginning of the semester and the writer you are now? If applicable, describe an epiphany, or sudden realization, you might have had about your writing.

20.3 Glance at Genre: Purpose and Structure

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Identify conventions of reflection regarding structure, paragraphing, and tone.
- Articulate how genre conventions are shaped by purpose, culture, and expectation.
- Adapt composing processes for a variety of technologies and modalities.

Reflective writing is the practice of thinking about an event, an experience, a memory, or something imagined and expressing its larger meaning in written form. Reflective writing comes from the author's specific perspective and often contemplates the way an event (or something else) has affected or even changed the author's life.

Areas of Exploration

When you write a reflective piece, consider three main areas of exploration as shown in Figure 20.3. The first is the **happening**. This area consists of the events included in the reflection. For example, you will be examining writing assignments from this course. As you describe the assignments, you also establish context for the reflection so that readers can understand the circumstances involved. For each assignment, ask yourself these questions: *What was the assignment? How did I approach the assignment? What did I do to start this assignment? What did I think about the assignment?* If you think of other questions, use them. Record your answers because they will prove useful in the second area.

The second area is **reflection**. When you reflect on the happening, you go beyond simply writing about the specific details of the assignment; you move into the writing process and an explanation of what you learned from doing the work. In addition, you might recognize—and note—a change in your skills or way of thinking. Ask yourself these questions: *What works effectively in this text? What did I learn from this assignment? How is this assignment useful? How did I feel when I was working on this assignment?* Again, you can create other questions, and note your responses because you will use them to write a reflection.

The third area is **action**. Here, you decide what to do next and plan the steps needed to reach that goal. Ask yourself: *What does (and does not) work effectively in this text? How can I continue to improve in this area? What should I do now? What has changed in my thinking? How would I change my approach to this assignment if I had to do another one like it?* Base your responses to these questions on what you have learned, and implement these elements in your writing.

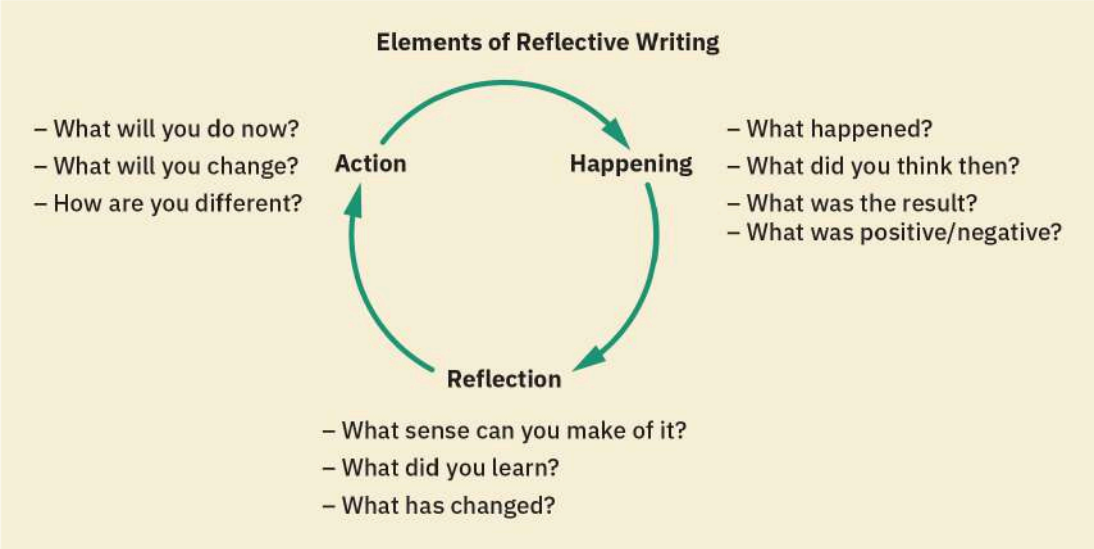

FIGURE 20.3 Elements of reflective writing (attribution: Copyright Rice University, OpenStax, under CC BY 4.0 license)

Format of Reflective Writing

Unlike thesis statements, which often come at the beginning of an essay, the main point of a piece of reflective writing may be conveyed only indirectly and nearly always emerges at the end, almost like an epiphany, or sudden realization. With this structure, readers are drawn into the act of reflecting and become more curious about what the writer is thinking and feeling. ln other words, reflective writers are musing, exploring, or wondering rather than arguing. In fact, reflective essays are most enlightening when they are not obviously instructive or assertive. However, even though reflective writing does not present an explicit argument, it still includes evidence and cohesion and provides lessons to be learned. As such, elements of persuasion or argument often appear in reflective essays.

Discovery through Writing

Keep in mind, too, that when you start to reflect on your growth as a writer, you may not realize what caused you to explore a particular memory. In other words, writers may choose to explore an idea, such as why something got their attention, and only by recalling the details of that event do they discover the reason it first drew their attention.

When you tell the story of your writing journey this semester, you may find that more was on your mind than you realized. The writing itself is one thing, but the meaning of what you learned becomes something else, and you may deliberately share how that second level, or deeper meaning or feeling, emerged through the act of storytelling. For example, in narrating a writing experience, you may step back, pause, and let readers know, "Wait a minute, something else is going on here." An explanation of the new understanding, for both you and your readers, can follow this statement. Such pauses are a sign that connections are being made—between the present and the past, the concrete and the abstract, the literal and the symbolic. They signal to readers that the essay or story is about to move in a new and less predictable direction. Yet each idea remains connected through the structure of happenings, reflections, and actions.

Sometimes, slight shifts in voice or tone accompany reflective pauses as a writer moves closer to what is really on their mind. The exact nature of these shifts will, of course, be determined by the writer's viewpoint. Perhaps one idea that you, as the writer, come up with is the realization that writing a position argument was useful in your history class. You were able to focus more on the material than on *how* to write the paper because you already knew how to craft a position argument. As you work through this process, continue to note these important little discoveries.

Your Writing Portfolio

As you recall, each chapter in this book has included one or more assignments for a writing portfolio. In simplest terms, a writing portfolio is a collection of your writing contained within a single binder or folder. A portfolio may contain printed copy, or it may be completely digital. Its contents may have been created over a number of weeks, months, or even years, and it may be organized chronologically, thematically, or qualitatively. A portfolio assigned for a class will contain written work to be shared with an audience to demonstrate your writing, learning, and skill progression. This kind of writing portfolio, accumulated during a college course, presents a record of your work over a semester and may be used to assign a grade. Many instructors now offer the option of, or even require, digital **multimodal** portfolios, which include visuals, audio, and/or video in addition to written texts. Your instructor will provide guidelines on how to create a multimodal portfolio, if applicable. You can also learn more about creating a multimodal portfolio (https://openstax.org/r/creating) and view one by a first-year student (https://openstax.org/r/first-year).

Key Terms

As you begin crafting your reflection, consider these elements of reflective writing.

- **Analysis:** When you analyze your own writing, you explain your reasoning or writing choices, thus showing that you understand your progress as a writer.
- **Context:** The context is the circumstances or situation in which the happening occurred. A description of the assignment, an explanation of why it was given, and any other relevant conditions surrounding it would be its context.
- **Description:** Providing specific details, using figurative language and imagery, and even quoting from your papers helps readers visualize and thus share your reflection. When describing, writers may include visuals if applicable.
- **Evaluation:** An effective evaluation points out where you faltered and where you did well. With that understanding, you have a basis to return to your thoughts and speculate about progress you will continue to make in the future.
- **Observation:** Observation is a close look at the writing choices you made and the way you managed the rhetorical situations you encountered. When observing, be objective, and pay attention to the more and less effective parts of your writing.
- **Purpose:** By considering the goals of these previous assignments, you will be better equipped to look at them critically and objectively to understand their larger use in academia.
- **Speculation:** Speculation encourages you to think about your next steps: where you need to improve and where you need to stay sharp to avoid recurring mistakes.
- **Thoughts:** Your thoughts (and feelings) before, during, and after an assignment can provide you with descriptive material. In a reflective essay, writers may choose to indicate their thoughts in a different tense from the one in which they write the essay itself.

When you put these elements together, you will be able to reflect objectively on your own writing. This reflection might include identifying areas of significant improvement and areas that still need more work. In either case, focus on describing, analyzing, and evaluating *how* and *why* you did or did not improve. This is not an easy task for any writer, but it proves valuable for those who aim to improve their skills as communicators.

20.4 Annotated Sample Reading: “Don’t Expect Congrats” by Dale Trumbore

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Identify and analyze the elements and organizational pattern of a reflective essay.
- Demonstrate the ability to think critically about a writer’s reflections.

Introduction

FIGURE 20.4 Dale Trumbore

Dale Trumbore (https://openstax.org/r/Dale_Trumbore) (b. 1987) is a Southern California composer and writer. In addition to composing for chorus and orchestra, Trumbore often writes reflectively about artistic conflict and its resolution. In her book *Staying Composed* (2019), she writes about the anxiety and self-doubt that often accompany a career in the arts: “You have to be willing to be a little vulnerable. Real people are flawed.” In the following blog post, she reflects on gender in her career field.

LIVING BY THEIR OWN WORDS

Womanhood and Composition

I am a female composer. As such, my compositions have been programmed on a concert about motherhood, though I do not have children; neither did most of the other women programmed on that concert. I’ve been asked mid-composition to change the theme of a piece, so the commission would relate to womanhood. (I did, but I didn’t rewrite the minute-and-a-half of music I’d composed back when the commission’s theme was “outer space.”) I’ve been asked to sum up what it means to be a woman in a one-minute piece; I tried, but that piece ended up being about exactly how impossible the task is.

Establishing Context. *Trumbore sets up the conditions for this reflective essay by mentioning some of the challenges she has encountered and what she has done about them. She also mentions the difficulty of trying to “sum up” the entirety of her experience as a woman.*

The hundredth anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment… in 2020… and the aftermath of the #MeToo movement have created a perfect storm of what I think of as Lady Composer Commissions: pieces that ask the composer to reflect the experience of being a woman in her work. Equally popular these days is the Lady Composer Concert, which 1) features works by composers who identify as women, and 2) connects the music of these composers for no reason other than that they all share a gender identity.

Context. *By providing additional context, Trumbore gives readers some background information and insight into the focus of the essay.*

Promotion of these concerts on social media often goes like this: "We're so excited to feature the work of Lady Composer 1, Lady Composer 2, Lady Composer 3, Lady Composer 4 [etc.]!" The general tone of these posts seems to be: "Look at all of the women we rounded up! We found so many of them!" When I am tagged in these posts, I never know whether to share them, like them, or un-tag myself as quickly as possible and hope the conductor doesn't notice.

Observation. *Trumbore points to part of the social and culture disparity between genders and questions how to respond. This reflection shows awareness of her discomfort and uncertainty about larger meanings.*

Now, I know these concerts mean well, and I would certainly never tell anyone to stop programming the works of underrepresented composers. As someone who relies on commissions and royalties to pay the rent, I'm also grateful to have my music programmed on any concert at all. But every time I'm tagged in a post for a concert like this—with no theme other than "Here's A Bunch of Lady Composers"—I feel as though someone has drawn a sharp-edged square around my identity. I am positive that these concerts are programmed with earnest and kind intentions; nevertheless, they make me wonder whether any conductor thinks I want to be programmed like this, like I am some exotic and fragile butterfly to be pinned down, labeled appropriately, and locked away in a glass box.

Purpose. *Trumbore uses reflection to see the larger purpose of the concerts. She also questions that purpose and uses the metaphor of a butterfly to emphasize the situation as she leads into the main purpose of the essay.*

One of my two cats, Cotton, is obsessed with catching and eating flies. He'll stalk one around our small house for hours before he finally catches and eats the thing, and he's nearly always more preoccupied with the stalking than the meal itself. But immediately after he's finally caught one, he comes over to my husband or me and meows, wanting recognition for his work: a gentle pat on the head, maybe, or a "Good job!" In our house, we call this routine "congrats," as in: "Cotton just swallowed his second fly of the day, then came over for more congrats."

Vignette and Description. *Trumbore breaks the flow of the essay with a vignette—a brief scene—offering a look into her life. The vignette connects this part of the essay with the next and establishes a concrete example of her feelings.*

This is exactly how the Lady Composer Concerts and their inevitable social media promotion have started to feel to me: like they are an elaborate exercise in seeking congrats. They are not programmed with the audience in mind; if anything, they come off as self-congratulatory. ("Look how woke we are!") If these concerts were serving the audience, they would have a theme beyond "a bunch of women wrote this music."

Metaphor. *Trumbore compares the cat's "congrats" routine with the promotion of the concerts.*

Purpose. *In addition, she reiterates the larger purpose of the essay by highlighting the topic of gender disparity.*

All you need to do to find this concept ridiculous, of course, is to flip the gender: Imagine a conductor saying that any random collection of pieces clearly belong together on the same program, because they all were written by men.

Analysis and Evaluation. *Trumbore defines what is not a valid concert theme and suggests that readers consider a new position—to judge the gender inequality situation among composers as she does.*

I am certainly not the first person to talk about this; I give the above example of gender-flipping whenever I talk about Lady Composer Concerts, and I've heard other friends do the same. Still, every time I bring this up, I hope it will be for the last time: "Music by Women" is not a theme. Collecting a bunch of pieces written by female composers does not in and of itself constitute an inspired concert program. It certainly doesn't deserve congrats.

Analysis. *Defining what she considers a theme, Trumbore continues to explain her position and elaborate on the reality she experiences.*

If you're called to promote the work of composers who identify as women, consider—the same as you would with

any other program—what the music and/or texts have in common. What's the through-line of this music or collection of texts, regardless of the gender of who wrote it? Is the experience of hearing these particular compositions enhanced by virtue of their sharing a program? Does the order of the program present a narrative? Are there any other pieces, including pieces by composers who identify as men, that would better round out this particular program?

Analysis. *These questions engage the reader and beg for answers while again pointing to her reflection on the concerts.*

Speculation. *Further, she is hinting at a way of changing the status quo in the questions she asks.*

Whenever I discuss "Women in Music"—something else I'm often asked to do—I'm struck once again by the fact that we're somehow still having the conversation about the lack of Lady Composers. I feel conflicted whenever I'm asked to talk about the role of women in music; I wish we didn't need to have that discussion, and I resent being asked to talk about it over and over again. At the same time, if I'd like to hear more conversations in the classical music world about systemic inequality—and I would—I have to be willing to talk about this myself.

Thoughts and Speculation. *Trumbore notes her frustrations with discussions focused on gender and music and then suggests that she would rather focus on the inequalities if she would be willing to discuss this issue.*

But a single Lady Composer Concert is unlikely to single-handedly resolve the fact that for centuries, classical music has revered the music of white, mostly dead, usually European men as the highest quality music of all time. In Music History classes, most of us are taught that this is the worthiest music to study. In Music Theory classes, we analyze these scores. Whenever we sing in a chorus, we are at the mercy of what our conductor presents as the worthiest music, and if that is exclusively the work of white and dead and European and male composers, who can blame us for subconsciously thinking that this is the music most worthy of programming?

Thoughts and Context. *Trumbore reflects on her education and notes some of the problematic, and perhaps sexist, elements of music education. Note again her use of questions to involve readers.*

We don't (just) have a lack of Lady Composers or a dearth of Lady Composer Concerts. We have an entire educational system designed to teach us to esteem the music of dead white men above the music of all other composers.

Analysis and Evaluation. *Trumbore responds to her own question and expands her rationale of reconsidering music education. In addition, the brevity of this paragraph encourages readers to focus on the larger message in the last sentence.*

So I'm more than happy to congratulate anyone championing the work of historically underrepresented composers. Yes, please! Let's talk about systemic oppression and racism and the discrimination that composers who are not white and/or male have faced for centuries. Let's talk about implicit bias and financial privilege and how all of it affects which voices we perceive as most worthy of our attention.

Speculation. *Trumbore drives home the point of the previous paragraph and makes it more explicit for readers, indicating what she would like to see happen.*

And yet it's equally important to acknowledge that no single concert will fix that systematic imbalance. If it was going to, the Lady Composer Concert would have already done this, because the Lady Composer Concert has been around for decades. The Lady Composer Concert is a stale concept; we've tried it already, and we're still having this conversation.

Speculation. *In this paragraph, Trumbore suggests a potentially new direction and opportunity, on which she elaborates in the next paragraph. In other words, through this reflection, she has arrived at a new way of seeing the world.*

I want to propose an idea that is new, though. If you truly want to champion the works of historically

underrepresented composers, what would it look like if you did the loudest work behind the scenes?

What if you had bold conversations about why you feel compelled to program more historically underrepresented groups of composers, but for the concert itself, you presented your program the same way you would any other program—highlighting the specific compositions, thematic material, and the reasons that your audience should come hear this music?

What if you championed compositions written by these composers without needing to mention their race or gender as part of the promotion of your concert? What if you identified instead what you find most meaningful, exceptional, and unique about their compositions?

And what if you told your peers about these works that you love? Over time, maybe that specificity—naming the pieces you love, not just a string of composers' names—would eliminate another common problem I've heard conductors discuss: trouble finding quality repertoire written by underrepresented composers.

Analysis and Speculation. *After a series of thoughtful questions about underrepresented groups of composers, Trumbore provides a way to move forward, not by giving directions, but by asking questions that lead readers to obvious answers.*

If you're having trouble finding such repertoire, let your peers and friend-colleagues know that you're searching for this work. Ask for recommendations. You can always reach out to composers directly with requests for perusal scores, too. I'm always more than happy to send along perusals when conductors are looking for new works, and I'm even happier if I'm asked for works that fit a specific theme. Getting to know a new composer's work can be as simple as sending them a quick email through their website's contact form. Ask if they have any pieces that might be a good fit for your upcoming concert season's themes. You might even name some of the other works you already have in mind for that program and see if that composer can recommend compatible works from their catalogue.

Thoughts and Speculation. *This paragraph continues setting up a way to move forward and helps connect it to the previous paragraphs. It reveals more of Trumbore's thoughts on what she wants to do and her ability to do it.*

Truth be told, I don't want to write another piece about "being a woman." I want to write pieces about emotions that are hard to capture in words but easy to express in music, because music has room to hold a staggering amount of complexity and nuance. I want to be given commissions with specific concert themes, even oddly specific ones. Especially oddly-specific ones; please, give me your commissions for works with texts about weddings that must also include percussion, or pieces to pair with Taiwanese music about the sea.

Evaluation. *Trumbore begins to use pathos and urges readers to understand her position. She also explains how she works and what works best for her.*

I will rise to each challenge; this is what I do for a living, and I'm good at my job. I'll find a text that adheres to each theme and write the best music I can write at this moment in time. I do this best when I don't also have to wonder whether I am single-handedly summing up the entirety of what it means to "be a woman." If the texts I choose or the music I write happens to capture some aspect of the female experience—of a female experience—great. Still, that will have been my decision to make.

Thoughts. *In reflecting, Trumbore acknowledges what she needs to do next and begins to gain momentum by describing specific activities to meet her goals.*

When you program the works of underrepresented composers, don't act like my cat does with a freshly-caught fly. Don't proudly rattle off the names of women in a Facebook post like you've hunted down their music and are laying it at the feet of your audience. Your audience deserves better; they deserve a concert with an actual theme.

Coherence. *By bringing back the cat, Trumbore reminds readers of the "congrats" metaphor she established earlier as she continues to advocate for needed change.*

When it comes time to promote the work of historically underrepresented composers, present their

compositions—these works you've come to love—as you would any other excellent repertoire. Shout from the rooftops why you love each composition. Tell your colleagues and friends. Tell your board members. Tell your audience. And once you have, don't expect congratulations for doing so. You don't need or deserve praise simply for doing your job as a conductor. After all, programming music that you admire and respect—sharing that music, teaching that music, advocating for that music—is reward enough. Isn't it?

Speculation. *In this concluding paragraph, Trumbore encourages action toward implementing her points, or at the very least toward a different way of thinking. The reflection encourages readers, too, to reflect on their feelings, their experiences, and potential ways to change or improve.*

Discussion Questions

1. What is the happening, and which parts of Dale Trumbore's essay describe it?
2. What parts of Trumbore's essay show reflection?
3. What parts of Trumbore's essay describe an action that results from the reflection?
4. How does Trumbore use her cat to make a reflective point? What effect might it have for readers?
5. What might you do differently if you were Trumbore and wanted to focus on a similar topic?

20.5 Writing Process: Looking Back, Looking Forward

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Apply composing processes and tools as a means to discover and reconsider ideas.
- Reflect on the development and insights of composing processes and how they affect your work.
- Adapt and apply composing processes for a variety of technologies and modalities.

One of the best ways to reveal who you are as a writer is to show yourself becoming aware of your strengths and weakness. This awareness can help you discover not only new ways of seeing the world but also new insights into yourself. Although such awareness can occur for unexplainable reasons, it usually happens when you encounter new ideas or have experiences that change you in some way. Reflection allows you to begin this journey. To grow as a writer, look back at your previous writing. If you look back at a drawing you did in first grade, you might find it funny or cute. Additionally, and more likely than not, you could do that same drawing now with a lot more detail and skill than you did back then. Think about writing in the same way: as you add to your writing skills and abilities, you become more proficient and can take on more challenging writing tasks. In this section, as you reflect on your writing development during the course, you will find areas of strength and weakness. The weaker areas are the ones you will want to improve.

Prewriting

Before beginning your reflective essay, take some time to review your work from the course. Write a few sentences or paragraphs about specific aspects of each assignment, such as its purpose, your feelings, what you learned, what you did well (and not so well), and where you think you can do significantly better. This prewriting work will be useful later.

Summary of Assignment: Portfolio Reflection and Self-Evaluation

In the form of a letter (e.g., "Dear Reader"), respond to several questions and discuss various topics related to your writing development in this course. For example, you might be asked to identify and discuss your strongest piece of writing. For each claim you make about your strongest assignment, provide reasoning and evidence from your portfolio to support the statement. When you quote directly from your own writing, be sure to state which assignment or draft you are quoting. Within the context of your responses, include commentary on most of the following course topics as well as others that have been significant:

- Writing processes (organizing graphically, outlining, drafting, conferencing, revising, editing, publishing, recursivity)
- Rhetorical situation, rhetoric, and persuasion
- Reasoning strategies, textual and rhetorical analysis
- Evidentiary strategies: evaluation, research
- Word choice, leads, transitions
- Thesis statement, structure and organization, introductions, conclusions
- Showing, not telling; descriptive writing
- Voice; feelings, as hindsight or in process

Depending on the nature of your portfolio, you may be able to create a digital or multimodal reflective letter, as mentioned in Glance at Genre: Purpose and Structure.

Another Lens. Using reflective organization and strategies, create a fictionalized story for readers. Some fiction writers base their stories on real events, adding material or characters to help readers connect the plot points and make the story more memorable and engaging. For example, consider a school-like setting and a host of characters. Incorporate dialogue, details of setting, and other story elements to develop characters and create tension.

Once Upon a Time

> James sat silently across the room as Rafael read the paper James had worked so hard to write. He could not have been more nervous watching Rafael, the best writer in the class, review his work. No one had ever read James's work other than a teacher. His heart was racing, and beads of sweat formed on his forehead.
>
> "What do you think?" James asked. Rafael rolled his eyes before locking eyes with James.
>
> "I'm not finished yet," Rafael answered and returned to the paper, ignoring James.
>
> James stared at him, contemplating the meaning of every facial wrinkle and twitch of a finger: what did they mean? After several aching minutes, Rafael picked up a pen and wrote for several minutes with a slight smile on his face. He took a long breath, walked over to James, and handed the paper back with a sheet full of notes.
>
> He smiled and said, "It's a strong paper. I made some notes I hope you find useful. I was confused only a few times, so you could look at where I made suggestions for when you revise." James smiled back, and the look on his face showed surprise and relief.
>
> After quickly reviewing the comments, James turned to his close friend Jess and said, "He didn't destroy my paper and actually gave me some good suggestions."

In this example, James, Rafael, and Jess are not real people, but the characters show how students may react during a peer-review workshop. Of course, you might decide to write about a less-than-ideal experience in which Rafael laughs at James's work and Jess steps in to help him revise. Or you might set the story in a different time or place and create an entirely different situation. Whatever you decide, use your course experience and some creativity to create scenarios in which a character reflects on their writing in ways that are meaningful and useful not only for you but also for your readers. Then weave these characters into a larger narrative. It might end in a published class book or website of student writing and require James to give a speech about one of his papers, or it might end in another scenario that follows logically from the narrative you have created. Regardless of where you take the story, include realistic elements of reflection as well as how your main character develops across the story, faces a challenge, and finds a way to overcome it.

You can show character development in several different ways. One way is to be inside a character's mind. To portray a character thinking rather than talking, employ **internal monologue** by using sentence fragments and other nonacademic writing conventions to show that a person's thought process doesn't follow conventional rules of language. For example, a character named Bethany describes her thoughts when

revising her first paper. She writes an internal monologue—readers hear her talking to herself while she tries to focus on revision. Note how she provides clues for readers to understand what is going on around her.

> OMG, I cannot believe I wrote that! How could I write about a calligraphy pen when I don't even own a calligraphy pen? I'm not even sure what one looks like! Bonkers! I wonder if the other people in my class are staring at me right now. I'm afraid to look up. I casually tilt my head up and see no one paying any attention to me whatsoever. Wonderful! I'm just another writer in a writing class.

In this example, the character works through a process of reflection based on her experience. She cannot believe she wrote about a calligraphy pen, but perhaps because of her nervousness with writing, this quirk has become a unique aspect of her character. You might create other such quirks in one of your characters, such as a character who always reads aloud, even in the middle of class, or one who taps a pen on their forehead loudly as they read. Then you can use that as a tool to point to another aspect of what you learned in your actual course. When writing this fictionalized piece, be mindful of your focus, which is to reflect on your development as a writer during this course.

Quick Launch: Establishing Criteria for Growth

To get started, you will need to organize your thoughts. After you have reviewed each chapter and its related assignment, reflect on your successes and challenges. Use a graphic organizer similar to Table 20.1 to get started. If the information already filled in for Chapter 1 works for you, use it. If it doesn't, change it accordingly. If you skipped the suggested review of your assignments, do it now. Otherwise, use your notes as you complete the chapter reflection table below. Skip any rows related to chapters that you did not cover in class.

Chapter Number	Key Skills Learned	Successes	Challenges
1	Summarize, Analyze, Evaluate	Analyzing wasn't hard, but I learned to do it better because I really had to think about what the sentence meant and explain it in my own way.	I had a hard time with evaluation because I wasn't comfortable giving my opinion since I'm just a student. However, I got more comfortable writing about complex topics and ideas.
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			

TABLE 20.1 Chapter reflection table

Chapter Number	Key Skills Learned	Successes	Challenges
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			

TABLE 20.1 Chapter reflection table

Once you have completed your own version of the table, use it to guide you as you begin writing. Take each assignment and stay focused on its goal. In doing so, you may notice a pattern in the assignments that helped you learn. If you do, incorporate that pattern into your reflective essay, and use it to create a theme.

Drafting: Getting Started and Following Through

As you work through the task of reflecting, consider the purpose of each assignment and your approach to it, in addition to the information you have included in the chapter reflection table. Also, read some models to help stimulate your reflective thinking: Final Reflective Essay by Andrew Duffy (https://openstax.org/r/Andrew_Duffy); Final Reflection by Anthony Roco (https://openstax.org/r/Anthony_Roco); E-Portfolio Reflection by Sean Porter (https://openstax.org/r/Sean_Porter); or this Portfolio Summative Reflection (https://openstax.org/r/Portfolio_Summative). Then, use the template below as a way to create your own unique reflection on yourself as a developing writer. Focus on the larger impact of what you have learned. Also offer some insight on what you still need to work on, and explain why. Each aspect that you write about will show a level of progress and awareness toward improvement. Just as important, it will help you focus on future writing assignments and allow you to recognize your growth as a writer.

Portfolio Reflection Template

Dear Reader,

Welcome to my English Composition portfolio. Here, you will find _____.

Complete this statement: *This semester, I learned that I am (not) a writer because* _____.

Answer these questions in paragraph form. For each claim you make, show your reasoning and provide quoted evidence from your portfolio:

- Which is the strongest piece of writing in the portfolio?
  - What are the strengths of this essay, and why do you think so?
  - In what specific ways has your writing improved this semester?
  - How does this essay demonstrate this improvement?
- Which is the least effective piece of writing in the portfolio?
  - What are the weaknesses of this essay, and why do you think so?
  - If you could revise this essay one more time, what would you change, and why?
  - Specifically, which writing skills still need work, and how will you continue to work on them?
- How did the process of revision help you re-envision your essays and make changes?
  - In what ways was it useful to see what other students were writing?
  - How did knowing that others would provide feedback during drafting affect your writing process?
  - How did revision affect your skills as a peer workshop partner?
- In what ways did your writing process evolve over the course of the semester?
  - Discuss the issue of perspective, such as when you first entered the course and now.
  - What did you learn about writing through its genres, elements of the rhetorical situation, processes, skills, and strategies?
  - How have you changed as a writer?
  - How have your feelings about writing changed?
- Finish this statement: *Before I took this class, I never knew* _____.

Sincerely,

Your Name

TABLE 20.2

Structuring Your Responses

As you respond to each of the questions above, use a paragraph planner such as this one.

Topic Sentence/Claim	Reasoning Strategy (Circle All Used)	Quoted Evidence from Portfolio
	Revisit Reasoning Strategies: Improving Critical Thinking to find frames and word banks that will help you employ these strategies.	

TABLE 20.3 Paragraph planner

Topic Sentence/Claim	Reasoning Strategy (Circle All Used)	Quoted Evidence from Portfolio
The strongest piece of writing in my portfolio is _____ because _____.	Analogy Cause and effect Classification and division Comparison and contrast Problem and solution Definition	Shows my use of descriptive writing/figurative language: "Learning a foreign language is like learning to ride a bicycle: you must learn to perform multiple tasks at the same time."
The strengths of this essay are _____, _____, and _____.	Analogy Cause and effect Classification and division Comparison and contrast Problem and solution Definition	
This semester, I improved my skills as a writer in the following ways: _____ and _____.	Analogy Cause and effect Classification and division Comparison and contrast Problem and solution Definition	
This essay demonstrates these skills in that it _____.	Analogy Cause and effect Classification and division Comparison and contrast Problem and solution Definition	

TABLE 20.3 Paragraph planner

20.6 Editing Focus: Pronouns

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of linguistic structures, including grammar.
- Implement appropriate pronouns in written work.

You likely use **Pronouns** —words that substitute for nouns or noun phrases—in every text that you write, including this portfolio reflection. Pronouns are one of the eight main parts of speech, the others being nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections.

Reference, Antecedent, and Case

Reference

Pronoun reference is the practice of using pronouns to replace nouns. The important thing to know about pronoun reference is that every pronoun must match the noun it replaces in terms of gender and number. **Gender** refers to the noun as either masculine, feminine, or neuter.

Masculine: Jorge is an educated man. **He** is Toby's neighbor.

Feminine: Rico's **sister** decided to go skating. **She** came back early.

Neuter: The **car** has four new **tires**. **It** runs much better with **them**.

However, if you're not certain of someone's gender identity or don't want to project it on them, use the gender-neutral pronouns *them*, *they*, and *their*. See Spotlight on… Pronouns in Context for more about using gender-neutral pronouns.

Gender neutral: Pat likes to eat pizza. They like pineapple and bacon with lots of cheese.

Number means singular or plural.

Singular: Toby has **one daughter**. **She** is studying art.

Plural: Jorge has **two children**. **They** go to the same school.

In addition to gender and number, **clarity** is often a major issue when using pronouns. For example: *When Lizzie smacked her arm into the glass window, she broke it.* Did Lizzie break her arm, or did she break the window? In this case, the reference is not clear. One way to clarify the meaning would be to write the sentence this way: *Lizzie broke the window when she smacked her arm into it.*

Antecedent

The **antecedent** is the noun, nouns, or other pronoun or pronouns that the pronoun replaces. The antecedent usually appears earlier in the sentence or in a previous sentence, and the pronoun appears later in the same sentence or in another sentence.

Example 1: Although my **friends** tease me about my dancing style, I love **them** anyway.

Example 2: Mariah said **she** wanted to go home.

Example 3: The **car** was far away. Jessica couldn't see what model **it** was.

Case

Pronoun case refers to the grammatical function of the pronoun in a sentence. Pronouns that are the **subjects** (the person, place, or thing that performs the action of the verb or represents what or whom sentence is about) of a sentence are written in the **subjective case**. For example: ***I*** *like pizza*. Pronouns that are **objects** (nouns or pronouns affected by the action of a verb) of a sentence or preposition are written in the **objective case**. For example: *Laura gave* ***him*** *the baseball. Jorge and Toby were standing in front of* ***us*** *in line.* Lastly, **possessive pronouns** pronouns show ownership and are written in the **possessive case**. For example: *The cat picked up* ***its*** *toy. Those notes are* ***his*** *and* ***mine****.*

You already know that you cannot have a sentence without a subject and that subjects and objects in sentences must be nouns or pronouns. Remember, a pronoun is a stand-in for a noun. It is always playing substitute for a noun or nouns "already out there somewhere." Imagine writing without pronouns:

> When **Marcy** woke this morning, **Marcy** had a headache, so **Marcy** went to **Marcy's** medicine cabinet and took one of **Marcy's** headache pills that **Marcy's** doctor had prescribed for **Marcy**.

Instead:

> When Marcy woke this morning, **she** had a headache, so **she** went to **her** medicine cabinet and took one of **her** headache pills that **her** doctor had prescribed for **her**.

Types of Pronouns

When you think of pronouns, **personal pronouns** such as those discussed in the previous section, referring to a specific person or object, are likely the first that come to mind. However, the world of pronouns extends to reflexive, indefinite, and demonstrative pronouns as well.

Personal Pronouns

Knowing the difference between **subject personal pronouns** and **object personal pronouns** will help you use them correctly.

Form	First Person	Second Person	Third Person
Subject	I, we	you	he, she, it, they
Object	me, us	you	him, her, it, them
Possessive	my, mine, our, ours	your, yours	his, hers, its, their, theirs

TABLE 20.4

Subject Position	Object Position
I	me
you	you
she	her
he	him
it	it
we	us
they	them
who	whom
whoever	whomever

TABLE 20.5

Seeing both versions across from each other helps emphasize that each personal pronoun has its counterpart. In other words, if it isn't *we*, then it is *us*, and if it isn't *me*, then it is *I*.

Correct → ***She*** *is such a sweet little dog.*

Incorrect → ***Her*** *is such a sweet little dog.*

It is fairly obvious here which pronoun is correct. You have been saying it correctly all along, probably without

being able to articulate the grammatical rule that made you do so. However, knowing the subject or **object distinction** can be especially helpful in knowing whether to use *I* or *me*. People often make mistakes when a sentence has a plural object. For example:

Jasmine and **I** ordered pizza for dinner. The pizza was delivered to Jasmine and **me**.

In the first sentence, the plural subject is *Jasmine* and *I*. *I* is the subject personal pronouns. In the second sentence, *me* is an **object of the preposition** (*to*), and the object personal pronoun—*me*—is correct. If the second sentence had the singular object pronoun *me*, no problem would arise. You would simply say that the pizza was delivered *to me*, not *to I*. Remember that an object personal pronoun stays an object personal pronoun no matter how many other objects are part of it.

Reflexive Pronouns

Reflexive pronouns are straightforward. They are pronouns that "reflect," as an image does in a mirror. They refer to the same person or thing.

John couldn't stop looking at **himself** in the mirror.

John is the original noun, or antecedent, and *himself* is the pronoun that points back at him. Note that reflexive pronouns *always* end in *self* or *selves*.

First Person	Second Person	Third Person
myself, ourselves	yourself, yourselves	himself, herself, itself, themselves

TABLE 20.6

Indefinite Pronouns

While reflexive pronouns always refer to themselves—that is, the subject and object are the same person, place, thing, or idea—**indefinite pronouns** are the opposite. As their name suggests, they are not definite; they are *in*definite and do not refer to specific nouns. They do get their meaning across, but the nouns they refer to are not known. These are some of the most common indefinite pronouns:

all	either	most	other
another	everybody	much	several
any	everyone	nobody	some
anybody	everything	none	somebody
anything	few	no one	someone
both	many	nothing	something
each	more	one	

TABLE 20.7

Demonstrative Pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns point directly at something. They use all their pronoun power to indicate their preference, so much so that when someone uses a demonstrative pronoun, it is hard *not* to imagine them pointing at something directly. Good news and bad news come along with demonstrative pronouns. The good news is that there are only four demonstrative pronouns: *this*, *that*, *these*, and *those*. The bad news—and it's

not really bad—is that words that commonly play the role of pronouns are multitalented. The same word can play another role (part of speech) in a sentence. Sometimes these four words function as **adjectives**, which always modify nouns and pronouns. In the sentence *That is my car*, the word *that* is playing the role of a pronoun. It is the subject of the sentence. Only nouns or pronouns can be subjects. However, if the sentence read *That car is mine*, then *that* would be an adjective because it modifies (tells something about) the noun *car*.

Common Mix-Ups

- **It's** vs. **its:** This is an easy one to mix up but easy to correct. **It's** means **it is** or **it has**. For example: ***It's*** *a hot day* or ***It is*** *a hot day*. **Its** refers to possession. For example: *This car has* ***its*** *problems*. To be sure you are correct, substitute *it is*. To say *The car has* ***it is*** *problems* makes no sense, so **its** is correct.
- **Who** vs. **whom:** Perhaps the most effective way to recognize which to use is to equate **who** to *he* and **whom** to *him*. For example: ***Who/Whom*** *wrote the book?* ***He*** *wrote the book*, so *who* is correct. Remember that *whom* is in the objective case. Think about it like this: ***whom*** is like *them*, so you might say, *This is for them*. Therefore, *This is for whom?* or *Whom is this for?* would be correct.
- **I** vs. **me: I** is always a subject; **me** is always an object. So *Demarcus and I left the building* is correct because *I* is the subject. Conversely, *Give the package to me* and *You gave me good advice* are both correct because *me* is an object. Remember to use the correct pronoun with compound objects, as in the sentence *Reflection has helped other class members and* ***me*** *improve our writing*.

In Chapter 20, you have learned how to use different types of pronouns to substitute for nouns and noun phrases. You have also learned about common mix-ups when using pronouns.

20.7 Evaluation: Evaluating Self-Reflection

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Articulate how genre conventions for structure, tone, and mechanics vary.
- Evaluate a written work for critical language awareness, clarity and coherence, and rhetorical choices.

As you know, one of the most important aspects of improving as a writer is the ability to evaluate yourself and your writing. Certainly, writing assignments help you, but it is important to learn this kind of evaluation for yourself and work to improve. Moreover, as you deconstruct your writing, you will recognize some aspects that carry over to other courses and disciplines, thus demonstrating the universality of writing. Use this rubric to help you plan, write, or review your reflective essay.

Rubric

Score	Critical Language Awareness	Clarity and Coherence	Rhetorical Choices
5 **Skillful**	The text always adheres to the "Editing Focus" of this chapter: clear use of pronouns, as discussed in Section 20.6. The text shows ample evidence of the writer's intent to consciously meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The writer consistently explains their progress, clearly demonstrating purpose and a combination of thought and narrative in an expert way. Well-chosen transitions and consistently clear connective ideas link the parts of the reflection.	The writer consistently provides meaningful analysis, examples, explanations, observations, speculation, and honest criticism that lead to a thoughtful and purposeful self-evaluation.

TABLE 20.8

Score	Critical Language Awareness	Clarity and Coherence	Rhetorical Choices
4 Accomplished	The text usually adheres to the "Editing Focus" of this chapter: clear use of pronouns, as discussed in Section 20.6. The text shows some evidence of the writer's intent to consciously meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The writer explains their progress, clearly demonstrating purpose and a combination of thought and narrative. Transitions, if not always enough, and generally clear connective ideas link the parts of the reflection.	The writer usually provides meaningful analysis, examples, explanations, observations, speculation, and honest criticism that lead to purposeful and thoughtful self-evaluation. However, some areas may be somewhat less developed than others.
3 Capable	The text generally adheres to the "Editing Focus" of this chapter: clear use of pronouns, as discussed in Section 20.6. The text shows limited evidence of the writer's intent to consciously meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The writer explains their progress, if not always clearly demonstrating purpose and a combination of thought and narrative. Some transitions help achieve coherence, but there are not quite enough, nor are ideas consistently connected.	The writer provides some meaningful analysis, examples, explanations, observations, speculation, and honest, if sometimes superficial, criticism that lead to purposeful and occasionally thoughtful self-evaluation. Some or even most areas may be less developed than others.
2 Developing	The text occasionally adheres to the "Editing Focus" of this chapter: clear use of pronouns, as discussed in Section 20.6. The text shows emerging evidence of the writer's intent to consciously meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The writer attempts to explain their progress but does not clearly demonstrate purpose or a combination of thought and narrative. There may be too much of one or too little of both. Transitions are either missing or ineffective, as are connecting ideas. The essay may be difficult to follow throughout or in places.	The writer provides a minimum of meaningful details, analysis, examples, explanations, observations, speculation, and honest criticism that lead to purposeful and thoughtful self-evaluation. Some or even most areas may be far less developed than others, or all areas may need considerable elaboration.

TABLE 20.8

Score	Critical Language Awareness	Clarity and Coherence	Rhetorical Choices
1 **Beginning**	The text does not adhere to the "Editing Focus" of this chapter: clear use of pronouns, as discussed in Section 20.6. The text shows little to no evidence of the writer's intent to consciously meet or challenge conventional expectations in rhetorically effective ways.	The paper shows little or no progression through the writer's growth and demonstrates minimal attention to purpose or a combination of thought and narrative in a useful way. There may be too much of one or too little of both. Transitions are either missing or ineffective, and the essay may be difficult to follow throughout or in places.	The writer provides few meaningful details, analysis, examples, explanations, observations, speculation, or honest criticism that leads to purposeful and thoughtful self-evaluation. Most areas are seriously undeveloped.

TABLE 20.8

20.8 Spotlight on … Pronouns in Context

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Recognize and avoid gender bias in writing and general language use.
- Apply conventions of usage and current terminology to writing, including gender-neutral pronouns when applicable.

By now, you have a working knowledge of what pronouns are and how to use them. This section focuses on more nuanced uses of pronouns and their place in the contemporary world—an emerging field of interest as people work to develop language that best captures their multiple identities.

Eliminating Gender Bias

It is important to remember that many thoughtful and powerful English-language works from the past took masculine words for granted. English use of words such as *man*, *men*, *he*, *him*, and *his* was, one would hope, meant to include both men and women. Consider Thomas Jefferson's "All men are created equal" and Thomas Paine's "These are the times that try men's souls." The contemporary equivalent of those words might be "All people are created equal" and "These are the times that try our souls," which are two of several possible fixes for such gender exclusivity. When you read historic texts, recognize that the rules were different then, and the writers are no more at fault than the culture in which they lived. Contemporary writing, however, should reflect inclusivity, which in turn reflects the culture in which you live today. (See Spotlight on… Bias in Language and Research for more about language bias.)

As you edit to avoid gender-biased language, you will notice that English does not have an agreed-upon gender-neutral third-person singular pronoun to match the gender-neutral third-person plural pronouns (*they*, *their*, *them*). Writers and speakers use *he* (*him*, *his*) for men and *she* (*her*, *hers*) for women. In the sentence "Everybody has his own opinion," the indefinite pronoun *everybody* needs a singular pronoun to refer to it. Although it is grammatically correct to say, "Everybody has his own opinion," the sentence excludes women. But until recently, it was considered grammatically questionable to write, "Everybody has their own opinion," although *their* is gender neutral. When editing, be alert to such constructions, and consider these ways to use or fix them:

- Make the sentence plural: "People have their own opinions."
- Include both pronouns *(This solution excludes people who do not fall within a gender binary.):* "Everybody

has his or her own opinion."
- Eliminate the pronoun: "Everybody has an opinion."
- Alternate masculine and feminine pronouns throughout your sentences or paragraphs, using *she* in one paragraph and *he* in the next. Be careful, though; to avoid confusing readers, you might change them in each section or chapter.

Most writers have used all of these solutions at one time or another. As always, use the strategy that makes for the clearest, most graceful writing.

Additionally, it has become more common and generally accepted to use *they*, *their*, and *them* as singular pronouns. However, depending on the context, using a plural pronoun to refer to a single individual can be confusing to readers when its antecedent is unclear.

Pronouns for Nonbinary and Transgender People

You cannot always know how individuals identify themselves, nor can you assume their gender is either male or female. The best approach with people you don't know is simply to ask which pronouns they prefer and to respect their choice. Some people identify themselves with the pronouns *they/them/theirs*, and this preference is generally acceptable politically, socially, and grammatically. Other gender-neutral pronouns exist as well, such as *ze/hir/hirs*, but they are used less often. If you are unsure, an option is simply to use the person's name.

If an individual has a specific identity and prefers a masculine, feminine, or gender-neutral pronoun, there are ways they can inform people of it. (Notice the use here of *they* as a singular pronoun.) For example, if one identifies as female, that person can include the pronouns *she/her* as part of their email signature: "Jane Doe (she/her)." Similarly, a person who identifies as nonbinary can include the preferred pronouns *they/them/their* in their signature.

Write about Pronouns

Take a moment and write about how pronoun use impacts you. Also, write about how people understand each other through pronouns, while being mindful of the differences between people. Think carefully about perspectives on gender, and be sure to respect other points of view and interpretations of pronoun use. Finally, explain how pronoun use is an important component of identity.

As an additional exercise, review your portfolio and (re)consider your use of pronouns. Your development as a writer and enhanced understanding of pronouns will provide new insight into their use. *Where might you have made other decisions about pronouns, and what impact might they have had?* Consider including these insights in your reflective essay.

Avoid Discriminatory Language

Above all, your writing should not hurt people or exclude any group from humanity. As you edit, ensure that your language does not discriminate against categories of people based on gender, race, ethnicity, social class, or sexual orientation—or anything else.

Further Reading

The following texts provide additional information or examples regarding reflective writing in various disciplines and settings.

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HANDBOOK

OUTLINE

H 1. Introduction

This handbook is a brief yet comprehensive reference for you to consult as you write papers and other assignments for a college course. You can refer to it as you draft paragraphs and polish sentences for clarity, conciseness, and point of view. You can read it to learn how to identify and revise common sentence errors and confused words. You can use it to help you edit your writing and fine-tune your use of verbs, pronouns, punctuation, and mechanics. And you can have it open as you integrate and cite quotations as well as other source material in your papers in MLA or APA style.

Designed as a reference tool, the handbook is organized to help you get answers to your questions. You do not need to read the entire handbook to get helpful information from it. For example, if your instructor has noted that you need to work on comma splices, you can refer to Sentence Errors, before you turn in a final draft of your writing. If you know you frequently misuse commas, refer to Punctuation, and check your sentences against the advice there. And if you, like many writers, can't remember which punctuation marks go inside and outside quotation marks, refer to Quotations. Becoming familiar with the handbook and the various topics will allow you to use it efficiently.

H 2. Paragraphs and Transitions

Paragraphs help readers make their way through prose writing by presenting it in manageable chunks. Transitions link sentences and paragraphs so that readers can clearly understand how the points you are making relate to one another. (See Editing Focus: Paragraph and Transitions for a related discussion of paragraphs and transitions. See Evaluation: Transitions for a related discussion of transitions in multimodal compositions.)

Effective Paragraphs

Paragraphs are guides for readers. Each new paragraph signals either a new idea, further development of an existing idea, or a new direction. An effective paragraph has a main point supported by evidence, is organized in a sensible way, and is neither too short nor too long. When a paragraph is too short, it often lacks enough

evidence and examples to back up your claims. When a paragraph is too long, readers can lose the point you are making.

Developing a Main Point

A paragraph is easier to write and easier to read when it centers on a main point. The main point of the paragraph is usually expressed in a **topic sentence**. The topic sentence frequently comes at the start of the paragraph, but not always. No matter the position, however, the other sentences in the paragraph support the main point.

Supporting Evidence and Analysis

All the sentences that develop the paragraph should support or expand on the main point given in the topic sentence. Depending on the type of writing you are doing, support may include evidence from sources—such as facts, statistics, and expert opinions—as well as examples from your own experience. Paragraphs also may include an analysis of your evidence written in your own words. The analysis explains the significance of the evidence to the reader and reinforces the main point of the paragraph.

In the following example, the topic sentence is underlined. The supporting evidence discussed through cause-and-effect reasoning comes in the next three sentences. The paragraph concludes with two sentences of analysis in the writer's own words.

> Millions of retired Americans rely on Social Security benefits to make ends meet after they turn 65. According to the Social Security Administration, about 46 million retired workers receive benefits, a number that reflects about 90 percent of retired people. Although experts disagree on the exact numbers, somewhere between 12 percent and 40 percent of retirees count on social security for all of their income, making these benefits especially important (Konish). These benefits become more important as people age. According to Eisenberg, people who reach the age of 85 become more financially vulnerable because their health care and long-term care costs increase at the same time their savings have been drawn down. It should therefore come as no surprise that people worry about changes to the program. Social Security keeps millions of retired Americans out of poverty.

Opening Paragraphs

Readers pay attention to the opening of a piece of writing, so make it work for you. After starting with a descriptive title, write an opening paragraph that grabs readers' attention and alerts them to what's coming. A strong opening paragraph provides the first clues about your subject and your stance. In academic writing, whether argumentative, interpretative, or informative, the introduction often ends with a clear **thesis statement**, a declarative sentence that states the topic, the angle you are taking, and the aspects of the topic the rest of the paper will support.

Depending on the type of writing you're doing, you can open in a variety of ways.

- **Open with a conflict or an action.** If you're writing about conflict, a good opening may be to spell out what the conflict is. This way of opening captures attention by creating a kind of suspense: *Will the conflict be resolved? How will it be resolved?*
- **Open with a specific detail, statistic, or quotation.** Specific information shows that you know a lot about your subject and piques readers' curiosity. The more dramatic your information, the more it will draw in readers, as long as what you provide is credible.
- **Open with an anecdote.** Readers enjoy stories. Particularly for reflective or personal narrative writing, beginning with a story sets the scene and draws in readers. You may also begin the anecdote with dialogue or reflection.

The following introduction opens with an anecdote and ends with the thesis statement, which is underlined.

> Betty stood outside the salon, wondering how to get in. It was June of 2020, and the door was locked. A

> sign posted on the door provided a phone number for her to call to be let in, but at 81, Betty had lived her life without a cell phone. Betty's day-to-day life had been hard during the pandemic, but she had planned for this haircut and was looking forward to it: she had a mask on and hand sanitizer in her car. Now she couldn't get in the door, and she was discouraged. In that moment, Betty realized how much Americans' dependence on cell phones had grown in the months she and millions of others had been forced to stay at home. Betty and thousands of other senior citizens who could not afford cell phones or did not have the technological skills and support they needed were being left behind in a society that was increasingly reliant on technology.

Closing Paragraphs

The **conclusion** is your final chance to make the point of your writing stick in readers' minds by reinforcing what they have read. Depending on the purpose for your writing and your audience, you can summarize your main points and restate your thesis, draw a logical conclusion, speculate about the issues you have raised, or recommend a course of action, as shown in the following conclusion:

> Although many senior citizens purchased and learned new technologies during the COVID-19 pandemic, a significant number of older people like Betty were unable to buy and/or learn the technology they needed to keep them connected to the people and services they needed. As society becomes increasingly dependent on technology, social service agencies, religious institutions, medical providers, senior centers, and other organizations that serve the elderly need to be equipped to help them access and become proficient in the technologies essential to their daily lives.

Transitions

Transitional words and phrases show the connections or relationships between sentences and paragraphs and help your writing flow smoothly from one idea to the next.

Flow

A paragraph flows when ideas are organized logically and sentences move smoothly from one to the next. Transitional words and phrases help your writing flow by signaling to readers what's coming in the next sentence. In the paragraph below, the topic sentence and transitional words and phrases are underlined.

> Some companies court the public by mentioning environmental problems and pointing out that they do not contribute to these problems. For example, the natural gas industry often presents natural gas as a good alternative to coal. However, according to the Union of Concerned Scientists, the drilling and extraction of natural gas from wells and transporting it through pipelines leaks methane, a major cause of global warming ("Environmental Impacts"). Yet leaks are rarely mentioned by the industry. By taking credit for problems they don't cause and being silent on the ones they do, companies present a favorable environmental image that often obscures the truth.

Transitional Words and Phrases

Following are some transitional words and phrases and their functions in paragraphs. Use this list when drafting or revising to help guide readers through your writing. (See Editing Focus: Paragraphs and Transitions for another discussion on transitions.)

Type of Transition	Examples
to compare or show similarity	likewise, similarly, in like manner

TABLE H1

Type of Transition	Examples
to contrast or change direction	but, yet, however, nevertheless, still, at the same time, on the other hand, conversely
to add to	also, and, furthermore, next, then, in addition
to give examples	for example, for instance, to illustrate, specifically, thus
to agree or concede	certainly, of course, to be sure, granted
to summarize or conclude	finally, in conclusion, in short, in other words, thus, in summary
to show time	first, second, third, next, then, soon, meanwhile, later, currently, concurrently, at the same time, eventually, at last, finally
to show a spatial relationship	here, there, in the background, in the foreground, in the distance, to the left, to the right, near, above, below

TABLE H1

H 3. Clear and Effective Sentences

This section will help you write strong sentences that convey your meaning clearly and concisely. See Editing Focus: Sentence Structure for a related discussion and practice on effective sentences.

Emphasis

The most emphatic place in a sentence is the end. To achieve the strongest emphasis, end with the idea you want readers to remember. Place introductory, less important, or contextual information earlier in the sentence. Consider the differences in these two sentences.

Less Emphatic Angel needs to start now if he wants to have an impact on his sister's life.

More Emphatic If Angel wants to have an impact on his sister's life, he needs to start now.

Concrete Nouns

General nouns name broad classes or categories of things (*man, dog, city*); **concrete nouns** refer to particular things (*Michael, collie, Chicago*). Concrete nouns provide a more vivid and lively reading experience because they create stronger images that activate readers' senses. The examples below show how concrete nouns, combined with specific details, can make writing more engaging.

All General Nouns Approaching the library, I see people and dogs milling about outside, but no subjects to write about. I'm tired from my walk and go inside.

Revised with Concrete Nouns Approaching Brandon Library, I see skateboarders and bikers weaving through students who talk in clusters on the library steps. A friendly collie waits for its owner to return. Subjects to write about? Nothing strikes me as especially interesting. Besides, my heart is still pounding from the walk up the hill. I wipe my sweaty forehead and go inside.

Active Voice

Active voice refers to the way a writer uses verbs in a sentence. Verbs have two "voices": active and passive. In the **active voice**, the subject of the sentence acts—the subject performs the action of the verb. In the **passive voice**, the subject receives the action, and the object actually becomes the subject. Although some passive

sentences are necessary and clear, a paper full of passive-voice constructions lacks vitality and becomes wordy.

Active-voice verbs make something happen. By using active verbs wherever possible, you will create stronger, clearer, and more concise sentences.

> **Passive Voice** On the post-training survey, the anti-harassment tutorial was rated highly informative by employees.

> **Revised in Active Voice** On the post-training survey, employees rated the anti-harassment tutorial highly informative.

Conciseness

Concise writing considers the importance of every word. Editing sentences for emphasis, concrete nouns, and active voice will help you write clearly and precisely, as will the following strategies. To be concise, eliminate wasted words and filler—*not* ideas, information, description, or details that will interest readers or help them follow your thoughts. (For more on conciseness, see Editing Focus: Sentence Structure.)

Use Action Verbs

Using action verbs is one of the most direct ways to cut unneeded words. Whenever you find a phrase like the ones below, consider substituting an action verb.

Instead of the phrase . . .	Use an action verb
reach a decision, come to a decision	decide
made a choice	chose
hold a meeting	meet
arrive at a conclusion	conclude
have a discussion	discuss

TABLE H2

Cut Unnecessary Words and Phrases

Eliminate words and phrases that do not add meaning. Consider the following sentences, which say essentially the same thing.

> **Wordy** In almost every situation that I can think of, with few exceptions, it will make good sense for you to look for as many places as possible to cut out needless, redundant, and repetitive words and phrases from the papers, reports, paragraphs, and sentences you write for college assignments. (49 words)

> **Concise** Whenever possible, cut needless words and phrases from your college writing. (11 words)

The wordy sentence is full of early-draft language in three chunks. The first chunk comes at the beginning of the sentence. Notice how *In almost every situation that I can think of, with few exceptions, it will make good sense for you to look for as many places as possible* is reduced to *Whenever possible* in the concise sentence.

The second chunk of the wordy sentence is *needless, redundant, and repetitive.* The concise version reduces those four words to *needless* because the words have the same meaning. The third chunk of the wordy sentence comes at the end. Notice how *papers, reports, paragraphs, and sentences you write for college*

assignments is reduced to *your college writing.* The meaning, although expanded to all writing, remains the same.

The following phrases are common fillers that add nothing to meaning. They should be avoided.

- a person by the name of
- for all intents and purposes
- in a manner of speaking
- more or less

Some common filler phrases have single-word alternatives, which are preferable.

Replace a common filler phrase . . .	With a single word
at all times	always
at the present time	now
at this point in time	now
for the purpose of	for
due to the fact that	because
the reason being	because
in the final analysis	finally
last but not least	finally

TABLE H3

Avoid *there is/there are* and *it is*

Starting a sentence with *there is, there are,* or *it is* can be useful to draw attention to a change in direction. However, starting a sentence with one of these phrases often forces you into a wordy construction. Wordiness means the presence of verbal filler; it does not mean the number of words, the amount of description, or the length of a composition. (For more on these constructions, see Editing Focus: Sentence Structure.)

> **Wordy** There is often uncertainty about whether or not employees are required to turn on their cameras during online meetings, and there are some employees who don't. However, it is the expectation of employers that cameras be turned on.
>
> **Concise** Employees are often uncertain whether they must turn on their cameras during online meetings, and some don't. However, employers expect cameras to be turned on.

Parallelism

Within a sentence, **parallelism**—the repetition of a word or grammatical construction— creates symmetry and balance, makes an idea easier to remember, and sounds pleasing to the ear. In the first example below, the parallelism is established by the repetition of the phrase beginning with *who*. In the second example, the parallelism is created by the underlined nouns.

> **Unparallel** After 25 years, the battle over the reintroduction of wolves continues between environmental activists, who support it, and hunters and people who own cattle ranches and are opposed.

Parallel After 25 years, the battle over the reintroduction of wolves continues between environmental activists, who support it, and cattle ranchers and hunters, who oppose it.

Unparallel Exercises that improve core strength include crunches, leg lifts, and when you do push-ups and planks.

Parallel Exercises that improve core strength include crunches, leg lifts, push-ups, and planks.

Variety

Varying the length and structure of sentences makes your writing more interesting to read.

Simple Sentences

A **simple sentence** has one idea expressed in a single main clause (also known as an independent clause). A **main clause** contains a subject and a predicate and can stand alone as a sentence. A simple sentence can be short or long, as shown in the examples below. The phrases in the long sentence add information, but the sentence remains a simple sentence nonetheless because it has only one clause.

The coronavirus spread around in the world in 2020.

School-age children and college students were pushed into virtual learning environments in March 2020, with schools closing for unspecified lengths of time.

Compound Sentences

A **compound sentence** contains two or more main clauses that are equally important to the meaning of the sentence. (A main clause contains a subject and a predicate and can stand alone as a sentence.) You can create compound sentences in the following ways:

- **Compound Sentence Using a Coordinating Conjunction**

  Create a compound sentence by using a **coordinating conjunction**—*for, and, nor, but, or, yet,* or *so (fanboys)*—to join main clauses. To remember the coordinating conjunctions, use the mnemonic device *fanboys.*

  Restaurants and small retailers experienced steep drops in revenue during the pandemic, **and** many were forced to close.

  Restaurants and small retailers experienced steep drops in revenue during the pandemic, **yet** many survived the downturn.

- **Compound Sentence Using a Semicolon**

  A semicolon can join two main clauses that are closely related in meaning. When using a semicolon, you must have a complete sentence before and after it.

  Restaurants and small retailers experienced steep drops in revenue during the pandemic**;** many were forced to close.

- **Compound Sentence Using a Semicolon and Transitional Word or Phrase**

  A **transitional words or phrases** such as *however, in fact, meanwhile, therefore, consequently, as a result, instead,* or *furthermore* indicates the relation of two or more equally important ideas in the main clauses.

  Restaurants and small retailers experienced steep drops in revenue during the pandemic**; however**, many survived the downturn.

Complex Sentences

A **complex sentence** contains one main clause (a clause that contains a subject and a predicate and can stand

alone as a sentence) and one or more subordinate clauses (also known as dependent clauses). **Subordinate clauses** begin with a subordinating word or phrase such as *although, because, even if, when, whenever, since, as though, whether, as long as, until,* or *while.* The main clause expresses the main idea of the sentence, and the subordinate clause expresses the less important idea. Like a main clause, a subordinate clause has a subject and verb; however, unlike a main clause, it cannot stand alone as a sentence. A subordinate clause punctuated as a sentence is a type of sentence fragment. The subordinate clauses in the following sentences are underlined.

> Although the federal government provided financial assistance, the money came too late for many businesses. When schools and universities shut down in March of 2020, students had to learn at home, a situation that proved challenging for many households.

Compound-Complex Sentences

A **compound-complex sentence** contains two or more main clauses (clauses that contain subjects and predicates and can stand alone as sentences) and one or more subordinate clauses (clauses that begin with a subordinating word such as *although, because, even if, when, whenever, since, as though, whether, as long as, until,* and *while*). A compound-complex sentence is an effective structure to use when you want to express three or more ideas in a single sentence. The example sentence has two main clauses (double underline) and three subordinate clauses (single underline).

> When school districts reopened, parents had to decide whether they wanted their children to attend classes in person, and they had to be ready for classes to move online if there were outbreaks of the coronavirus in their community.

H 4. Sentence Errors

These four common sentence errors can make your writing hard to read: fragments, comma splices, run-on sentences, and mixed constructions.

Sentence Fragments

A **sentence fragment** is a group of words that lacks a subject, a verb, or both, or it is a subordinate clause (a clause that begins with a subordinating word such as *although, because, since,* and so on) punctuated as though it were a sentence by itself. Although most are grammatical errors, sentence fragments can be used judiciously in conventional writing so long as the purpose is clear to readers and the fragment is clearly intended.

Unintentional Sentence Fragments

Often a sentence fragment follows a complete sentence and expands on it, as illustrated in the examples below (fragments are underlined). You can correct most fragment errors by attaching the fragment to the sentence to which it belongs or by rewriting the fragment as a complete sentence.

> **Sentence Fragment** People think that they will be happy if they are well off. That money will make everything better.
>
> **Revised by Attaching the Fragment to a Complete Sentence** People think that they will be happy if they are well off and that money will make everything better.
>
> **Sentence Fragment** Psychologist David Myers explains how students have increasingly chosen to attend college to make more money. Thus further explaining his point of people's desire to use money to gain happiness.
>
> **Revised by Attaching the Fragment to a Complete Sentence** Psychologist David Myers explains how students have increasingly chosen to attend college to make more money, thus further explaining his point of people's desire to use money to gain happiness.

Sentence Fragment Although income grew, people's happiness did not. With rich people reporting that even though they had plenty of money, their happiness had not changed much.

Revised by Adding a Verb Although income grew, people's happiness did not. Rich people reported that even though they had plenty of money, their happiness had not changed much.

Sentence Fragment For many people, increased income is being spent on the things that people are unable to pay less for. Things like taxes, childcare, transportation, and housing.

Revised by Adding a Subject and a Verb For many people, increased income is being spent on things that people are unable to pay less for. These include taxes, childcare, transportation, and housing.

Intentional Sentence Fragments

Intentional sentence fragments force quick reading, inviting readers to stitch meaning to together. Intentional fragments are most common in creative writing and advertising.

The rabbit darted out of the shadows. A flash of movement. The dog lunged and strained at the leash.

Comma Splices

A **comma splice** is a common error that occurs when two complete sentences are joined by a comma. You can correct a comma splice by adding a coordinating conjunction (*for, and, nor, but, or, yet,* or *so),* adding a period and creating two sentences, adding a coordinating conjunction and creating a compound sentence, or subordinating one clause and creating a complex sentence.

Comma Splice The author sheds light on the financial sacrifice many mothers make**,** they take care of their children without compensation and often lose professional status.

Revised with a Coordinating Conjunction The author sheds light on the financial sacrifice many mothers make, **for** they take care of their children without compensation and often lose professional status.

Comma Splice Many college students see their education as the way to become wealthy**,** some are sacrificing happiness to pursue high-paying careers.

Revised with a Period Many college students see their education as the way to become wealthy**. S**ome are sacrificing happiness to pursue high-paying careers.

Comma Splice Psychologist David Myers conducted multiple surveys asking people about their attitudes about money**,** the results revealed that people felt they needed more regardless of how much they had.

Revised with a Semicolon Psychologist David Myers conducted multiple surveys asking people about their attitudes about money**;** the results revealed that people felt they needed more regardless of how much they had.

Comma Splice Love cannot be paid for**,** it is a gift that parents give because they love their children.

Revised with a Semicolon and Transitional Word or Phrase Love cannot be paid for**; indeed,** it is a gift that parents give because they love their children.

Comma Splice Students are choosing majors to enable them to earn more money**,** they are under the misconception that earning money guarantees happiness.

Revised with a Subordinate Clause Students are choosing majors to enable them to earn more money **because** they are under the misconception that earning money guarantees happiness.

Run-on Sentences

In a **run-on sentence**, two or more complete sentences are not separated by any punctuation. Like comma splices, most run-on sentences can be revised in one or more of the following ways: adding a coordinating conjunction (*for, and, nor, but, or, yet,* or *so*), adding a period and creating two sentences, separating the sentences with a semicolon, separating the sentences with a semicolon and transitional word or phrase (such as *on the other hand, however, consequently,* and so on), or turning the less important sentence into a subordinate clause starting with a subordinating word such as *although, because, if, when, since*, and so on.

Run-on Sentence The DNR eventually designated the area as crucial habitat the protection came too late to save the nesting birds.

Revised with a Comma and a Coordinating Conjunction The DNR eventually designated the area as crucial habitat**, but** the protection came too late to save the nesting birds.

Run-on Sentence Most people realize that being wealthy won't just happen many college students choose a major that will ensure they make money.

Revised with a Period Most people realize that being wealthy won't just happen**.** Many college students choose a major that will ensure they make money.

Run-on Sentence Parents do not expect any financial reward they care for their children out of love and responsibility.

Revised with a Semicolon Parents do not expect any financial reward**;** they care for their children out of love and responsibility.

Run-on Sentence The average American family's expenses have risen faster than incomes they have saved less than prior generations.

Revised with a Semicolon and Transitional Word or Phrase The average American family's expenses have risen faster than incomes**; as a result**, they have saved less than prior generations.

Run-on Sentence College students have the opportunity to choose any major they tend to choose those that offer immediate opportunities to earn money when they graduate.

Revised with a Subordinate Clause **Although** college students have the opportunity to choose any major**,** they tend to choose those that offer immediate opportunities to earn money when they graduate.

Mixed Sentence Constructions

A **mixed sentence** contains parts that do not fit together because of grammar or meaning. In the following example, the writer needs to revise either the second part to fit with the first part or the first part to fit with the second. (See Editing Focus: Mixed Sentence Constructions for more on mixed sentence constructions.)

Mixed Sentence By starting my general studies classes last semester gave me the opportunity to take classes in my major this fall.

Second Part Revised By starting my general studies classes last spring, I had the opportunity to take classes in my major this fall.

First Part Revised Starting my general studies classes last spring gave me the opportunity to take classes in my major this fall.

***Just because . . . doesn't mean* Constructions.** *Just because . . . doesn't mean* constructions are common in speech but should be avoided in writing.

Just because Just because I want to be a doctor doesn't mean I will get into medical school.

Revised Simply wanting to be a doctor doesn't guarantee admission to medical school.

Revised Although I want to be a doctor, I will need to work hard to get into medical school.

H 5. Words and Language

The English language is rich and always evolving, offering you many ways and words to express yourself in writing and speech.

Language Varieties

English is not one language but many, made up of regional and social dialects. In addition, groups speak using specialized language among themselves that can be difficult for outsiders to understand. As a writer, be aware of the audience for your writing. Use language that your readers will understand directly or from context.

Dialects

English **dialects** are distinctive versions of the language used in geographical regions and/or by particular social or ethnic groups. Standard American English, the English spoken by newscasters, is one such dialect, as are African American Vernacular English, Creole, Appalachian English, and others. English dialects have many features in common, but each has particulars of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. (For an in-depth discussion of dialects and academic writing, see Spotlight on … Variations of English.)

Slang

Groups of people with similar skills and interests often develop **slang** that allows them to express ideas quickly and vividly. Slang also signals knowledge about a particular topic, such as meme culture, music, sports, and more. Slang is generally considered too casual for most academic writing, but it may be appropriate for personal essays. In your papers, be aware of your purpose and audience when choosing to use slang. Avoid using slang that your readers are unlikely to understand.

Technical Expressions

Experts in many professional fields use specialized and technical expressions that allow them to communicate efficiently and clearly with each other. Such language is often incomprehensible for nonexperts and should be avoided in writing for general readers. (For tips on writing about a technical topic for an audience of nonspecialists, see Spotlight on … Discipline-Specific and Technical Language.)

Biased Language

Biased words and expressions exclude or demean people on the basis of gender, sex, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, social class, or physical or mental traits.

Biased Language Based on Sex and Gender

English includes words and expressions that are considered biased based on sex and gender, such as *mankind, businessman, chairman, fireman,* and so on. These are commonly replaced by gender-neutral words such as *humanity, businessperson, chair* or *chairperson,* and *firefighter.* (See Spotlight on … Bias in Language and Research for more on language bias.)

In addition, the English pronoun *he* has traditionally been used as the gender-neutral pronoun. For example, the construction *A doctor should have a caring attitude toward his patients* was once common but is now widely viewed as gender biased because many doctors are not men. For a discussion of the pronoun *he* used as the gender-neutral pronoun, see Pronouns.

Labels and Stereotypes

Be sensitive to labels and stereotypes that may insult a group of people you are writing about. Avoid labels that don't put people first, such as *cancer victim* and *wheelchair-bound.* Don't make assumptions about entire

groups of people that promote stereotypes, such as *teenagers are rebellious, elderly people don't hear well, conservatives are rich,* or *women are more emotional than men.* (See Spotlight on ... Bias in Language and Research for more on language bias.)

Exact Words

As a general rule, use plain, direct words in your writing. Avoid reaching for a word that sounds fancy or impressive, especially if you are unsure about the meaning. If you use a word that is only vaguely familiar to you, look it up in a dictionary to ensure you are using it correctly. (You can type the word and "def" to get a definition.) Doing so has the added benefit of building your vocabulary.

Words Commonly Confused

The words in the following list are commonly confused or misused by writers. As you write, consult this list or use a reliable online tool, such as Merriam-Webster (https://openstax.org/r/merriam-webster), to check the meanings and usage of words you're unsure of. Keep a list of words that cause you trouble as you become aware of them. Then, after you draft a document, do a search for the words on your list. (For a discussion of homonyms, homographs, and homophones, see Editing Focus: Words Often Confused.)

Confusing Words	Definitions and Examples
accept, except	*Accept* means "to receive willingly." *Except* is used mostly as a preposition meaning "excluding." *He accepted all the gifts except mine.*
advice, advise	*Advice* is a noun meaning "guidance." *Advise* is a verb meaning "to recommend." *My mother gives good advice when she advises me about my college courses.*
affect, effect	The verb a*ffect* means "to produce a change in." The noun *effect* means "result." *The wine affected me, but it seemed to have no effect on my roommate.*
all ready, already	*All ready* means "completely prepared." *Already* means "happened by or before now." *We were all ready for the trip, but the train had already left.*
all right, alright	*All right* is always two words meaning "acceptable" or "satisfactory." *Alright* is an informal spelling.
all together, altogether	*All together* means "everyone or everything together." *We put the tickets all together for safekeeping. Altogether* means "completely" or "entirely." *The book is altogether incomprehensible.*
allusion, illusion	An *allusion* is an indirect or implied reference. *The poem includes an allusion to the Bible.* An *illusion* creates a false impression of reality. *Magic relies upon illusion, seeing what you believe instead of what is really there.*
A lot	*A lot* is always two words meaning "much" or "many." *Alot* is a misspelling.
apart, a part	*Apart* denotes a separation. *Social distancing requires people to stand six feet apart from each other. A part* denotes a segment of something. *The dog is a part of our family.*
bare, bear	As verbs, *bare* means "to uncover." *Bear* means "to endure." *Bear with me while I bare my soul.*

TABLE H4

Confusing Words	Definitions and Examples
complement, compliment	*Complement* means "to add to" or "to complete." *Compliment* means "to make an approving remark." *Many people now compliment the fresh gray paint that complements the exterior stone on the house. Complimentary* also means "free" or "without cost." *Because they sold advertising space for the newspaper, they received complimentary tickets to the game.*
conscience, conscious	*Conscience* is a noun that refers to the awareness of one's actions being right or wrong. *I have a guilty conscience. Conscious* is an adjective meaning "awake" or "alert." *She remained conscious after hitting her head on the windshield.*
disinterested, uninterested	*Disinterested* means "impartial." *Uninterested* means "not interested." *She was chosen as a disinterested party to hear both sides of the disagreement. Unfortunately, she was uninterested in the dispute.*
elicit, illicit	*Elicit* is a verb meaning "to bring out." *Illicit* means "unlawful." *His claims elicited a response from the mayor about the effort to stop demand for illicit drugs.*
emigrate, immigrate	People *emigrate,* or leave, one country. They *immigrate* to a new country to live. *When my family emigrated from Chile, they immigrated to the United States.*
everyday, every day	*Everyday* is an adjective meaning "common," "ordinary," or "used daily." *Every day* is a noun phrase meaning "every day." *Everyday tasks are ones you do every day, like brushing your teeth and washing dishes.*
farther, further	*Farther* refers to distance. *I can't carry these groceries any farther. Further* means "in addition," "more," and "to a greater extent" and refers to abstractions like time or amount. *I can't discuss this issue any further.*
fewer, less	*Fewer* refers to items that can be counted. *Less* refers to items that cannot be counted: *I have fewer assignments than my roommate, and she has less time than I do. Cacti need less water than other plants.*
good, well	*Good* is an adjective. *That color looks good on you. Well* is an adverb. *Marguerite speaks Chinese well. Well* is used as an adjective only in reference to health. *She looks well after recovering from the flu.*
imply, infer	*Imply* means "to suggest." *Your email implies you're upset. Infer* means "to conclude." *I infer from your email that you're upset.*
its, it's	*Its* is a possessive pronoun. *The dog wagged its tail. It's* is a contraction of "it is" or "it has." *It's my turn. Its* followed by an apostrophe is incorrect.
lay, lie	*Lay* means "to put or set something down." *Please lay the books on the table. Lie* means "to be in or move into a horizontal position" or "to be situated." *I need to lie down and rest my eyes. The towns lie near the waterfalls.* Note also that *lay* is the past tense of *lie. I fell asleep as soon as I lay down to rest my eyes.*
lead, led	The past tense of the verb *to lead* is *led.* The noun *lead* (rhymes with *red*) is the metal. *Nina led a group of tourists past the old lead mine.*

TABLE H4

Confusing Words	Definitions and Examples
lose, loose	*Lose* is a verb meaning to "mislay" or "not win." *I lose a sock every time I do laundry. These teams never lose their games. Loose* means "not tight" or "not secure." *The loose shutters may be unsafe in a storm.*
myself, herself, himself, yourself, ourselves, themselves, yourselves	Do not use the *-self* pronouns in place of a personal pronoun in an effort to sound more formal: *Malia and I* [not *myself*] *wrote the report. The report was written by Malia and me* [not *myself*]. Use the *-self* pronouns in the following situations: *Malia wrote the report herself. She treats herself to brunch on Sundays.*
peak, peek, pique	*Peak* means "a highest point" or "to reach a highest point." *After a difficult climb, the hikers finally reached the peak. Peek* means "a secretive look" or "to take a secretive look." *My brother peeked at his birthday gifts.* As a verb, *pique* means "to spark interest." *The two classes piqued her interest in physics.* As a noun, *pique* also means "irritation." *His pique at her probing questions was obvious.*
precede, proceed	*Precede* means "to go before." *The example that precedes this one is* peak/peek/pique*. Proceed* means "to go forward." *The judge's decision allowed the lawsuit to proceed.*
prejudice, prejudiced	*Prejudice* is a noun that is sometimes used incorrectly in place of *prejudiced*, an adjective. *His outrageous views were highly prejudiced* [not *prejudice*].
principal, principle	*Principal* has several meanings: "a chief or head, particularly of a school," "a capital sum of money," or "first or highest in rank, importance, or value." *Principle* refers to a "rule of conduct or action." *The school principal outlined the principles behind the code of conduct. The small principal in their savings account is not their principal source of income.*
raise, rise	*Raise* means "to lift" or "to grow" and always takes an object. *She raised her hand to tell the story of how she raised three children on her own. Rise* means "to get up" and does not take an object. *Like the sun, the moon rises in the eastern sky.*
set, sit	*Set* means "to put" or "to place" and takes an object. *He set the groceries on the table. Sit* means "to be seated" and does not take an object. *She sits in the same seat for every class.*
than, then	*Than* is used to compare. *I am older than you. Then* indicates time. *Do your homework, and then we'll get pizza.*
that, which	*That* is used to introduce information essential to the meaning of a sentence. *The phone that I bought five years ago no longer charges fully. Which* is most often used to introduce information that is nonessential to the meaning of a sentence. *My iPhone 7, which I bought five years ago, no longer charges fully.* (For more on nonessential and essential information, see Editing Focus: Commas with Nonessential and Essential Information.)
that, who, which	Use *that* and *which* to refer to things and most animals. *The tiger that had escaped was found.* Use *who* to refer to people and animals with names. *Doctors who treated COVID-19 patients were often called heroes.*

TABLE H4

Confusing Words	Definitions and Examples
their, there, they're	*Their* is a possessive pronoun. *There* indicates place. *They're* is a contraction of "they are." *The Smiths rescued their missing cat from that tree over there; they're happy to have him back.*
to, too, two	*To* can be a preposition indicating direction. *I am going to the pool.* Or it can be part of an infinitive (the *to* form of a verb). *I like to swim. Too* means "also" or "excessively." *Do you like to swim too? Two* is a number. *I swim two times every week.*
unique, unusual	*Unique* means "one of a kind." *Unusual* means "uncommon." Saying that something is more unique than something else is incorrect because something unique cannot be compared. Use *unusual* instead when comparing.
weather, whether	*Weather* refers to the state of the atmosphere. *Whether* refers to alternatives. *Whether we attend the game in person or watch it on TV depends on the weather.*
who's, whose	*Who's* is the contraction of "who is" or "who has." *Who's going to the game? Whose* is the possessive form of "who." *Whose backpack is this?*
your, you're	*Your* is the possessive form of "you." *You're* is the contraction of "you are." *You're going to be relieved that I found your earring behind the desk.*

TABLE H4

H 6. Point of View

Point of view refers to the vantage point from which a story, event, report, or other written work is told. The point of view in which you write depends on the genre in which you are writing. For example, you will likely use first person in personal narrative writing. For most academic writing, you'll use third person. (See Editing Focus: Characterization and Point of View for a related discussion of point of view in narrative writing.)

First Person

In the first-person point of view, the writer or narrator (*I, we*) is present in the writing. First person is commonly used in personal writing genres, such as literacy narratives, memoirs, and profiles, as well as in fiction.

> After midnight—my paper started, my exam studied for—I leave the library and head back to my apartment. In the dark, I listen closely when I hear footsteps behind me, and I step to the edge of the sidewalk to let a man pass. At my door, I fumble for my key, open the door, turn on the light, and step inside. I am safe, ready to eat, read a bit, and return to my paper.

Second Person

Second-person point of view is used occasionally when an outsider (*you*) becomes part of a story. It should not be confused with a writer or speaker using "you" when directly addressing an audience (*you*). Nor should it be confused with giving instructions (*drive forward, add one cup of brown sugar, close the door*) or with its similar use in textbooks such as this one. However, second person is not considered appropriate in most academic writing.

Writers often slip into second person when they intend to write in third person. In the example below, the writer starts in third person and shifts by accident to second person. To check your sentences for second person, search your documents for *you*, and revise as needed.

Shift from Third Person to Second Person The federal government should raise the minimum wage because it has the responsibility to ensure people earn a wage you can live on. The current minimum wage, $7.25 per hour, is not enough to pay rent, let alone support a family. Many people cannot lift themselves out of poverty. A higher minimum wage can help you.

Revised The federal government should raise the minimum wage because it has the responsibility to ensure workers earn a wage they can live on. The current minimum wage, $7.25 per hour, is not enough to pay a single person's rent, let alone support a family. Many people cannot lift themselves out of poverty. A higher minimum wage can help them.

Third Person

The third-person point of view (*he, she, it, they*) is customary for fiction and for academic writing, such as research papers, reports, visual and textual analysis papers, argumentative essays, and the like. Third-person point of view emphasizes the information instead of the writer.

The hikers and other passive trail users argue that mountain bikes should not be allowed on narrow trails traditionally traveled by foot and horse. They point out that the bikes' wide, treaded tires cause erosion, that the bikers' high speeds startle hikers and horses, and that their presence on trails disrupts the tranquility that hikers and bird watchers seek.

H 7. Verbs

In a sentence, a verb expresses an action, an occurrence, or a state of being.

Subject-Verb Agreement

In many sentences, making the verb agree with the subject is straightforward: *I run every day. My sister runs every other day. Sometimes our brother joins us, and all of us run together.* However, subject-verb agreement gets tricky in the following circumstances. (See Editing Focus: Subject-Verb Agreement for more on subject-verb agreement.)

Agreement with Compound Subjects

Two or more subjects joined by *and* take a plural verb in most sentences:

Yoga and meditation are effective activities for relieving stress.

However, when the parts of the subject form a single idea or unit, the verb is singular:

Macaroni and cheese is my favorite meal.

When compound subjects are joined by *or* or *nor,* the verb agrees with the word closest to it:

Either your aunts or your mother remembers where your great-grandmother's grave is located.

Neither the image nor the words convey the message of the advertisement clearly.

Agreement When Words Come between Subject and Verb

The verb must agree with the subject even when words and phrases come between them:

The cost of the flights is prohibitive.

A box of invitations with stamps and return addresses was on the desk.

Agreement When the Verb Comes Before the Subject

The verb must agree with the subject, even when it comes before the subject:

Are James and Tamara at the front of the line?

There were three people ahead of us in line.

Under the table are a newspaper and a magazine.

Agreement with *Everyone* and Other Indefinite Pronouns

An indefinite pronoun is general; it does not refer to a specific person, place, or thing. Most indefinite pronouns take a singular verb, but not all. Those that take a singular verb include *anybody, anyone, anything, each, everybody, everyone, everything, nobody, no one, nothing, one, somebody, someone,* and *something.*

Everyone in the class has prepared a research proposal.

Nobody among the accused suspects admits to the crime.

The following indefinite pronouns take a plural verb: *both, few many, others,* and *several.*

Several of the students in the class have proposed researching hurricanes.

Both of the suspects deny committing the crime.

Several indefinite pronouns take a singular or plural verb depending on whether the word they refer to is singular or plural. These include *all, any, enough, more, most, neither, none,* and *some.*

Most of the class has proposed researching a topic related to climate change. (*Most* refers to *class.*)

Most of the students in the class have proposed researching a topic related to climate change. (*Most* refers to *students.*)

Neither the students nor the teachers have proposed a field trip. (*Neither/nor* refers to *students* and *teachers.*)

Agreement with Collective Nouns

Collective nouns such as *audience, band, class, crowd, family, group,* or *team* can take a singular or a plural verb depending on the context. When the group acts as a single unit, which is the most common construction, use a singular verb:

The band rehearses every day.

When the group acts individually, use a plural verb, or to avoid confusion, add the word *members* and use a plural verb.

The jury do not agree on a verdict.

The jury members do not agree on a verdict.

Agreement with Words Such as *News* and *Statistics*

Some nouns that end in *-s*, such as *athletics, economics, measles, news, physics, politics,* and *statistics* seem plural but are usually regarded as singular in meaning. In most situations, these words take a singular verb:

Day after day, the news was bad.

Statistics fulfills a math requirement for many college majors.

When a word like *economics, politics,* or *statistics* refers to a specific situation, use a plural verb:

The economics of the situation are hard to comprehend.

Agreement with Titles and Words Used as Words

Whether singular or plural in form, titles and words used as words take singular verbs:

Directed by Spike Lee, *Da 5 Bloods* centers around four veterans returning to Vietnam to find the

remains of their squad leader and the fortune they hid together.

Children is the plural form of *child*.

Verb Tense

Tense expresses the time of a verb's action—the past, present, or future. Tense comes naturally in speech, but it can be tricky to control in writing. The following guidelines will help you choose the appropriate tense for your writing and use it consistently. (See Editing Focus: Verb Tense Consistency for a related discussion of consistent verb tense.)

Verb Tense in Narrative Writing

Personal experience stories, such as literacy narratives, memoirs, personal essays, or profiles, can be written in either the past or the present tense. Although the most natural way to tell a story about a past experience is to write in the past tense, the present tense can draw readers into the story and give the illusion that the experience is happening as they are reading it. In the following examples, the writer describes driving with her Native American grandfather to a tribal conference. Notice the difference between the past and present tense.

Narrative Writing Using Past Tense I sat silently next to Grandfather and watched him slowly tear the thin white paper from the tip of the cigarette. He gathered the tobacco in one hand and drove the van with the other. I memorized his every move as he went through the motions of the prayer, which ended when he blew the tobacco out the window and into the wind.

Narrative Writing Using Present Tense I sit silently next to Grandfather and watch him slowly tear the thin white paper from the tip of the cigarette. He gathers the tobacco in one hand and drives the van with the other. I memorize his every move as he goes through the motions of the prayer, which ends when he blows the tobacco out the window and into the wind.

Verb Tense in Academic Writing

Academic disciplines differ in their tense preferences for signal phrases used in formal essays and reports to introduce and discuss evidence. A **signal phrase** is a verb that tells readers the words or ideas that follow come from another source. Signal phrases include words such as *argues, asserts, claims, comments, denies, discusses, implies, proposes, says, shows, states,* and *suggests.* (For more discussion and a more extensive list of signal phrases, see Editing Focus: Integrating Sources and Quotations.)

acknowledges	declares	observes
admits	endorses	poses
agrees	explains	posits
argues	finds	proposes
asserts	grants	reports
believes	illustrates	reveals
claims	implies	says
comments	insists	shows
concedes	maintains	states
concludes	notes	suggests

TABLE H5

thinks	writes	

TABLE H5

If you are writing for a course in English, a foreign language, or a related discipline and using MLA documentation style, you generally will use the present tense or the present perfect tense in signal phrases.

> **Present Tense** The film critic Manohla Dargis claims that . . .
>
> **Present Perfect Tense** The film critic Manohla Dargis has claimed that . . .

When you are analyzing a work of literature, common practice is to use the literary present tense in discussing both the work of the author and the action that occurs in the work:

> Being cool is key to the lives of the speakers in "We Real Cool," a poem by Gwendolyn Brooks. Brooks uses short lines and stanzas in which speakers list what it means to be cool: dropping out of school, staying out late, playing pool, drinking, carousing, and so on. Being cool unites the speakers, and they celebrate their lifestyle, even as they acknowledge in the final line of the poem that their coolness may cause them to die young.
>
> (For more on literary present tense, see Editing Focus: Literary Works Live in the Present.)

If you are writing for a course in history, art history, philosophy, religion, or a related discipline in the humanities, you generally will use the present tense or the present perfect tense in signal phrases.

> **Present Tense** The historian Eduardo Galeano argues that . . .
>
> **Present Perfect Tense** The historian Eduardo Galeano has argued that . . .

On the other hand, if you are writing for a course in the social sciences, such as psychology, political science, or economics; a course in the natural sciences, such as biology, chemistry, or physics; or a technical field such as engineering, you will generally use past tense or present perfect tense for most signal phrases.

> **Past Tense** The study found that individuals who identify as transgender . . . (past tense)
>
> **Present Perfect Tense:** Several recent studies have found that individuals who identify as transgender . . .

Verb Tense Consistency

Whichever tense you choose, be consistent throughout a piece of writing. You may need to shift tenses to indicate actual changes in time, but the governing tense should remain constant. (See Editing Focus: Verb Tense Consistency for a related discussion of consistent verb tense.)

> **Inconsistent** Blinking back tears, I clutched my two-year-old son to my chest, kiss his forehead, and will gather my things. It is 2003, and I was headed to active duty in Iraq with the National Guard. I hug my spouse, my mom, my dad, my brothers, and my grandma. Then I turn and climbed on the bus that takes me to a future that, in all honesty, was terrifying to me.
>
> **Consistent** Blinking back tears, I clutched my two-year-old son to my chest, kissed his forehead, and gathered my things. It was 2003, and I was headed to active duty in Iraq with the National Guard. I hugged my spouse, my mom, my dad, my brothers, and my grandma. Then I turned and climbed on the bus that would take me to a future that, in all honesty, was terrifying to me.

Irregular Verbs

Most verbs are **regular** and form the past tense and past participle forms by adding *-d* or *-ed.*

- I bake/I baked/I have baked

- She discovers/she discovered/she has discovered
- They shovel/they shoveled/they have shoveled

Some verbs, however, are **irregular** and form the past tense and participle in another way. Below are a few of the approximately 200 irregular verbs in English. For a comprehensive list of irregular verbs, see this list (https://openstax.org/r/this_list).

- begin/began/begun
- bring/brought/brought
- buy/bought/bought
- do/did/done
- drive/drove/driven
- fall/fell/fallen
- go/went/gone
- have/had/had
- is/was/been
- lead/led/led
- hide/hid/hidden
- ring/rang/rung
- run/ran/run
- see/saw/seen
- sing/sang/sung
- sit/sat/sat
- shake/shook/shaken
- speak/spoke/spoken
- take/took/taken
- wear/wore/worn
- write/wrote/written

Verb Mood

Verbs have three moods: indicative, imperative, and subjunctive. **Mood** can be said to indicate a speaker's attitude or intention.

Indicative Mood

Use the **indicative mood** to state a fact or an opinion or to ask a question:

Thousands of women currently serve in the military.

I think college tuition is expensive.

The weather was awful for much of the winter but will improve soon.

Have you submitted your request for time off?

Imperative Mood

Use the **imperative mood** to give instructions and commands. The subject, *you*, is often implied but not stated:

(You) Use the online form to request time off.

(You) Submit your request for time off by Friday.

You must submit your request on time.

Subjunctive Mood

Use the **subjunctive mood** to express wishes, suggestions, or requirements or to state hypothetical or unlikely

conditions:

The rules state that every member be present for the vote.

I wish you were here to see the exhibition.

The governing board could be more effective if all members were active.

Students who failed the class would have passed had they completed all assignments.

H 8. Pronouns

A **Pronouns** is a word used in place of a noun. Some pronouns are *I, you, he, she, we, they, who,* and *everyone*. The noun a pronoun replaces or refers to is its **antecedent**. (See Editing Focus: Pronouns for a related discussion of pronouns.)

Pronoun Reference

A pronoun should refer to a clear and specific antecedent.

Clear Antecedent All nine members of the school board voted in favor of changing the district's mascot. They explained their reasoning during the meeting. (*They* refers clearly to *members.*)

Unclear Antecedent In Smith's essay, she explains why many American families have less money saved and more debt than families in the 1970s.

Revised In her essay, Smith explains why many American families have less money saved and more debt than families in the 1970s.

Problems with pronoun reference occur in the following situations:

Vague *this, that, which,* or *it*. The pronouns *this, that, which,* and *it* should not refer to words expressing an idea, an event, or a situation.

Vague Reference The school board voted to change the district's mascot without holding special meetings with the public. This made some community members angry. (*Are community members angry about the vote or about the lack of special meetings?*)

Revised The school board voted to change the district's mascot without holding special meetings with the public. Their decision to avoid public discussion before the vote made some community members angry.

Indefinite *it, they,* or *you*. The pronouns *it, they,* and *you* should have a definite antecedent in a sentence.

Indefinite *it* Crittenden explains that mothers are taken for granted and disrespected, even though our society calls it the most important job in the world.

Revised Crittenden explains that mothers are taken for granted and disrespected, even though our society calls motherhood the most important job in the world.

Indefinite *they* Japan has considerable wealth compared to Ireland, but they have a low subjective well-being index.

Revised Japan has considerable wealth compared to Ireland, but Japanese citizens have a low subjective well-being index.

Indefinite *you* The federal government should raise the minimum wage to ensure you earn a wage you can live on.

Revised The federal government should raise the minimum wage to ensure workers earn a wage they can live on.

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

In many sentences, making a pronoun agree with its antecedent is straightforward: *My neighbors gave me the keys to their apartment.* However, pronoun-antecedent agreement gets tricky in the following circumstances.

Agreement with Generic Nouns and Indefinite Pronouns

Generic nouns refer to a type of person or job someone performs, such as *athlete, child, scientist, doctor,* or *hairdresser*. **Indefinite pronouns** include words such as *anyone, each, everyone, everything, many, most,* and *none.*

All generic nouns and most indefinite pronouns are singular in meaning. Traditionally, these words took the singular pronouns *he/him/his* because English does not have a gender-neutral third-person pronoun that refers to people: *Everyone has his own opinion* or *A doctor needs to show that he cares about his patients.*

More recently, writers have been replacing *he/him/his* or *his/her* with *they/them/their* when the person's gender is unknown or unimportant or when the person has indicated a preference for non-gendered pronouns:

> Everyone has their own opinion.
>
> A doctor needs to show that they care about their patients.

These plural pronouns are increasingly accepted and intentionally used by writers, teachers, and editors. Many prominent publications and style guides indicate that the plural pronoun should replace binary or singular ones in most cases. If using a plural pronoun does not fit the situation (such as in a paragraph where the pronoun they is also used several times to indicate a group), try rewriting the sentence in either of these ways:

> **Remove the pronoun.** *Everyone has an opinion.*
>
> **Make the antecedent plural.** *People have their own opinions. Doctors need to show that they care about their patients.*

Agreement with Collective Nouns

Collective nouns such as *audience, band, class, crowd, family, group,* or *team* can take a singular or plural pronoun depending on the context. When the group acts as a single unit, which is the most common construction, use a singular pronoun. When the group members act individually, use a plural pronoun. If using the plural sounds awkward, add the word *members* so that the plural is clear.

> The band went through its complete playlist.
>
> The band loaded their instruments on the bus. The band members loaded their instruments on the bus.

Pronoun Case

Pronouns have three cases: subjective, objective, and possessive. Pronouns change case according to their function in a sentence.

- **Subjective case pronouns** function as subjects: *I, we, you, he/she/it, they, who/whoever*:

  > Antonio and I share an apartment downtown in a neighborhood we like.

- **Objective case pronouns** function as objects: *me, us, you, him/her/it, them, whom/whomever*:

  > The manager gave us a tour of the building.

- **Possessive case pronouns** show ownership: *my/mine, our/ours, your/yours, his/her/hers/its, their/theirs, whose*:

Our friends live in the building too.

Pronoun case gets tricky in the circumstances explained below.

Case in Compound Structures

Compound subjects use subjective case pronouns. **Compound objects** use objective case pronouns.

Subjective Case Antonio and I have occasional disagreements about the dishes.

Objective Case Occasional disagreements about the dishes come up between Antonio and me.

Case After *than* or *as*

In a comparison, the case of the pronoun indicates which words have been left out:

Antonio cares more about having a clean kitchen than I [do].

Sometimes I think Antonio cares more about a clean kitchen than [he cares about] me.

Who or *Whom*

Use the **subjective case** *who* in place of a subject—whether it is the subject of the sentence or the subject of a clause:

Who is going to the concert? (subject of sentence)

Give the tickets to whoever can use them. (subject of clause)

She is the person who is best qualified for the job. (subject of clause)

She is the person who I think is best qualified for the job. (subject of clause; the intervening words "I think" don't change the subject or verb of the clause)

Use the **objective case** *whom* in place of an object, whether it is the object of a verb, preposition, or clause:

I don't know whom to ask. (object of verb)

To whom should I give the extra concert tickets? (object of preposition)

Give the tickets to whomever you choose. (object of clause)

We or *us* with a Noun

Use *we* with a subject. Use *us* with an object.

We citizens must vote in order to make our voices heard. (subject)

Legislators need to hear from us citizens. (object)

Case Before or After an Infinitive

Use the objective case before and after an **infinitive** (the *to* form of a verb: *to run, to walk, to eat*):

The agent asked Antonio and me to write a review.

We agreed to give him a positive review.

Case Before a Gerund

Generally, use the possessive case of a pronoun before a **gerund** (the *-ing* form of a verb used as a noun: *gentle snoring*, *elegant dining*):

He grew tired of their partying late into the night.

The rental agreement depends on your approving the lease terms.

H 9. Punctuation

This section covers the major marks of punctuation: commas, apostrophes, semicolons, colons, periods, question marks, exclamation points, dashes, and parentheses. (For using brackets and ellipses, see Quotations.)

Commas

Commas alert readers to brief pauses within sentences.

Commas with Main Clauses

Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction (*for, and, nor, but, or, yet,* or *so)* joining main clauses:

> Businesses in the metropolitan area are growing**,** and unemployment is down.
>
> Many job seekers use online sites like Indeed.com**,** but a few still send traditional cover letters and résumés through the mail.
>
> A solution must be determined soon**,** or the problem will continue.

Commas with Introductory Information

Use a comma after an introductory element at the start of a sentence:

> After class is over**,** we should get lunch and review our notes.
>
> Shuffling his feet nervously**,** he waited for the train.
>
> However**,** the circumstances have not changed.

Commas with Nonessential and Essential Information

(See Editing Focus: Commas with Nonessential and Essential Information for a related discussion of commas.)

Nonessential information refers to information that is usually *not* necessary to the basic meaning of a sentence. Nonessential information is set off by commas. In the following sentence, the word *original* tells readers which labs no longer meet the needs of the teachers and students. The underlined information adds information but does not change the meaning of the sentence and thus is nonessential to the basic meaning:

> The original technical education labs**,** which were installed 50 years ago**,** no longer meet the needs of the teachers and students.

Essential information, on the other hand, is necessary to the meaning of the sentence. In following example, the word *original* is no longer part of the sentence; the underlined words convey necessary information about the labs:

> The technical education labs that were installed 50 years ago no longer meet the needs of the teachers and students.

You can test whether information is nonessential by removing the information. If the meaning of the sentence is unchanged, the information is nonessential. If the meaning becomes too general or changes, the information is essential. In the sentence above, only the labs installed 50 years ago, as opposed to other labs, no longer meet the needs of teachers and students. Note, also, the use of *which* with nonessential information and *that* with essential information.

Commas Around Nonessential Information

Place commas around information that is not essential to the meaning of a sentence:

> The entire technology department**,** which consists of nine teachers and five staff members**,** has contributed to a report on the needed updates to the technical education labs.

The technology department chair, who teaches welding, wrote the final report.

Updates to the labs will begin in June, when school is not in session.

No Commas Around Essential Information

Do not place commas around essential information:

According to the technical education teachers, the labs need equipment that students are likely to encounter in the workplace.

Faculty who teach auto mechanics have requested updates to their lab.

The teachers are concerned about the labs because students are not learning the skills they need.

The amount of lab space that needs to be updated is substantial.

The department has consulted the industry expert Stacy James.

Serial (Oxford or Harvard) Commas

For clarity, use a comma between items in a series:

He studied all the notes, emails, memos, and reports related to the data breach.

Be aware, however, that certain style manuals, such as the *AP Stylebook,* do not use the serial comma, also called the Oxford or Harvard comma.

Commas with Numbers, Dates, Titles with Names, and Addresses

The sign gave the city's population as 122,887.

Nobel Prize winner Toni Morrison died on August 5, 2019.

Diana Wong, M.D., is a practicing obstetrician.

The mailing address for the Smithsonian Institution is 600 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, D.C., 20002.

Common Comma Errors

Misplaced commas can make sentences choppy and obscure the intended meaning.

No Comma after a Subject or a Verb

Anyone who was still at the party, left when the band stopped playing.

The party ended, after the band stopped playing.

No Comma after a Conjunction Connecting Parts of a Compound Subject, Verb, or Object

Some musicians in the band, and many of the guests danced until midnight. (compound subject)

The band stopped after two hours, and took a well-deserved break. (compound verb)

Guests enjoyed the music, and the dancing. (compound object)

No Comma after a Series

The band played 80s rock, punk, and new wave, all night long.

No Comma before an Indirect Quotation

Online reviews say, that the band is the best in the area.

Apostrophes

An apostrophe has two functions. It indicates possession, and it forms contractions.

Apostrophes to Show Possession

Use an apostrophe and *-s* to indicate possession with a singular noun or an indefinite pronoun:

Jack's brother is my sister's coworker.

In their family, everyone's favorite dessert is ice cream.

If the *'s* in a singular noun is pronounced, add apostrophe *-s*:

The business's inconsistent hours caused customers to go elsewhere.

Los Angeles's airport, LAX, is one of the busiest in the United States.

If the *'s* is not pronounced in a singular noun, some writers choose to add an apostrophe alone; however, MLA, APA, and Chicago use the apostrophe and s in these cases:

David Myers' book, *The Pursuit of Happiness*, was published in 1992.

David Myers's book, *The Pursuit of Happiness*, was published in 1992.

When the noun is plural and ends in *-s*, place the apostrophe after the final *-s*:

American households' incomes have grown since the 1970s because more women have entered the workforce.

These families' expenses have risen too.

When the noun is plural and does not end in *-s,* add an apostrophe and *-s:*

Social media's effect on contemporary life cannot be underestimated.

During the pandemic, parents' stress grew as they helped with their children's schooling.

Apostrophes to Form Contractions

Contractions are common in speech and in informal writing. Use an apostrophe in contractions:

When I say I can't, I mean I won't.

It's the best option under the circumstances.

"You're the best friend anyone can have," Mikayla said.

They're driving to their favorite hangout spot.

Common Apostrophe Errors

Apostrophes are not used to form plural nouns, singular verbs, or personal or relative pronouns.

Not in Plural Nouns

How many hotel rooms [not *room's*] should be reserved for the wedding?

The Lewises and the Riveras [not *Lewis's* and *Rivera's* or *Lewis'* and *Riveras'*] have confirmed their reservations.

Not with Verbs Ending in *-s*

Nikki runs [not *run's*] every day.

Jamal walks [not *walk's*] to work.

Not with Possessive Personal Pronouns or Relative Pronouns

The book is yours [not *your's*].

The dog was barking and wagging its [not *it's*] tail.

Whose [not *who's*] apartment is this?

Other Punctuation

Semicolons

The **semicolon** joins main clauses (a clause that contains a subject and a predicate and can stand alone as a sentence). A semicolon is also used to separate items in a series that contain commas.

- Use a semicolon to join main clauses that are closely related in meaning and that are not joined by a coordinating conjunction (*for, and, nor, but, or, yet,* or *so*).

  Originally built in 1928, the school had been remodeled multiple times**;** the result was an architectural mashup.

- Use a semicolon to join main clauses that are connected by a transitional word or phrase such as *for example, however, therefore, indeed,* or *after all*:

  The governor has proposed increased funding to K-12 public schools**;** however, the legislature must approve the budget.

- Use a semicolon between items in a series that contain internal commas:

  The candidates for the award are Michael, who won the essay competition**;** Sasha, the top debater; and Giselle, who directed several student productions.

Colons

A **colon** introduces lists, summaries, and quotations. A colon also separates titles from subtitles.

- A colon can introduce a list:

  Successful athletes have the following qualities**:** physical ability, mental toughness, commitment, and optimism.

- A colon can also introduce a summary or an explanation, which may or may not be a main clause (a clause that contains a subject and a predicate and can stand alone as a sentence):

  The team had one goal left before the end of the season**:** to win the state championship.

- Book titles often include a subtitle. A colon separates the subtitle from the title:

  *Forcing the Spring**:** Inside the Fight for Marriage Equality*

End Punctuation

A sentence ends with a period, a question mark, or an exclamation point.

- A **period** ends declarative (statement) and imperative (command) sentences:

  The administration canceled classes**.**

  Do not attempt to drive to school this morning**.**

- A **question mark** ends a direct question and indicates uncertainty in dates:

Where is Times Square**?**

She asked, "What time is it**?**"

- An **exclamation point** ends an emphatic or emotional sentence:

  "What a mess**!**" she blurted out.

  "Stop**!** That hurts**!**" he shouted.

Dashes and Parentheses

Dashes and parentheses enclose nonessential information in a sentence.

- Use a **dash** or dashes to set off nonessential information, to indicate a contrast or a pause, or to mark a change of direction.

  We did not notice the rain at first—it began so softly—but soon we were soaked.

  Nothing is as exciting as seeing a snowy owl in a winter farm field—except maybe seeing two snowy owls.

- Use **parentheses** to enclose nonessential information such as explanations, asides, examples, and dates.

  He graduated with high honors **(***magna cum laude***)** and found a job immediately.

  The city of Madison **(**home of the University of Wisconsin**)** is the state capital of Wisconsin.

H 10. Mechanics

Capital Letters

Use capital letters in the following situations.

- **Capitalize the first word of a sentence:** The weather is rainy today.
- **Capitalize proper nouns and proper adjectives:** Monday, New Orleans, Mexico, Florida, Halloween, United States Constitution, Department of Education, University of Texas, Native American, Islam, Italian, Freudian.
- **Capitalize titles that precede a person's name:** Dr. Atul Gawande, Senator Tammy Baldwin. [But: Atul Gawande, a doctor; Tammy Baldwin, a senator]

Many online resources, such as this one (https://openstax.org/r/this-one), list words that should be capitalized. You can also consult a dictionary, such as Merriam-Webster (https://openstax.org/r/Merriam-Webster), to determine whether to capitalize a word.

Titles of Works

Titles of books, articles, stories, plays, poems, films, and other works are handled differently depending on the documentation style you are using. The guidelines here follow MLA style.

Capitalization in Titles and Subtitles

Capitalize the first and last words in a title and subtitle and other important words. Do not capitalize **articles** (*a, an, the*), coordinating conjunctions (*for, and, nor, but, or, yet,* or *so*), or prepositions (*above, with, of, in, through, beyond, under*) unless they are the first or last words in the title or subtitle.

- *Forcing the Spring: Inside the Fight for Marriage Equality* (book)
- *Judas and the Black Messiah* (film)
- "American Military Performance in Vietnam: Background and Analysis" (article)

Italics for Titles of Long Works

Use italics for long works that are published, produced, or released separately from other works. These include books, long poems, plays, movies, videos, published speeches, periodicals (newspapers, magazines, and academic and professional journals), websites, long musical works, works of visual art, computer software, TV or radio programs and series, and pamphlets.

- *Four Fish: The Future of the Last Wild Food* (book)
- *The New Yorker* (periodical)
- *The Los Angeles Times* (newspaper)
- *American Idiot* (album)
- *Parasite* (film)
- *Saturday Night Live* (TV program)

Quotation Marks for Titles of Shorter Works

Put quotation marks around the titles and subtitles of individual shorter works or those that are published or released within larger works. These include articles in periodicals (newspapers, magazines, and academic and professional journals), pages or works on a website, short stories, short poems, essays, songs, episodes of TV or radio programs and series, book chapters, and unpublished speeches.

- "Living with a Visionary" (article in a magazine)
- "A World of Fields and Fences" (work on a website)
- "New York Day Women" (short story)
- "Corson's Inlet" (short poem)
- "Return from ISIS" (TV episode)

H 11. Quotations

A **quotation** reproduces the exact written or spoken words of a person or an author, which may include a group. (See Editing Focus: Quotations for a related discussion of direct quotations and Editing Focus: Integrating Sources and Quotations for help with integrating quotations from sources.)

Quotations from Written or Spoken Sources

Put quotation marks around quotations from a written or spoken source.

Quoting a Source

When quoting the words of a source, introduce quoted material with a signal phrase so that readers know the source and purpose of the quotation. Place the quotation inside double quotation marks. When using parenthetical citations, note that the sentence period comes *after* the parentheses. If you include the author's name in your signal phrase, give only the page number in parentheses (first example). If you do not give the author's name in your signal phrase, give the name in parentheses (second example):

> In *Walden*, Thoreau sets forth one individual's antidote against the "lives of quiet desperation" led by the working class in mid-nineteenth-century America (5).
>
> *Walden* sets forth one individual's antidote against the "lives of quiet desperation" led by the working class in mid-nineteenth-century America (Thoreau 5).
>
> Abraham Lincoln wrote "that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth" in his Gettysburg Address.

Quoting or Writing Dialogue

When quoting or writing dialogue between speakers, including characters in a fictional work, place their words in double quotation marks, and start a new paragraph for each speaker:

"It's good to see you—I guess," Brayden said, as Christopher walked up to the door. "I thought you were gone for good."

"I missed you too much," Christopher said, looking down at his feet.

Single and Double Quotation Marks

Put single quotation marks around a quotation within a quotation, using double quotation marks around the full quotation:

Kennedy writes that after a year of teambuilding work, including improvements in communication, evaluation, and small-group quarterly meetings, morale among staff members "improved from 'average' to 'excellent'" (17).

Long Quotations

Introduce a long quotation (four typed lines in MLA style; 40 or more words in APA style) with a signal phrase that names the author and ends with a colon. Indent this entire block quotation one-half inch. If you quote more than one paragraph, indent the first line of each subsequent paragraph one-half inch. Do not use quotation marks. Note that the sentence period comes *before* the parenthetical citation:

In her memoir, *Twenty Years at Hull-House*, reformer Jane Addams recounts vivid stories of child labor:

> The visits we made in the neighborhood constantly discovered women sewing upon sweatshop work, and often they were assisted by incredibly small children. I remember a little girl of four who pulled out basting threads hour after hour, sitting on a stool at the feet of her Bohemian mother, a little bunch of human misery. For even for that there was no legal redress, for the only child labor law in Illinois, with any provision for enforcement, had been secured by the coal miners' unions, and was confined to the children employed in the mines. (199)

Poetry Quotations

When you quote one, two, or three lines from a poem, use the following format, putting quotation marks around the line or group of lines and separating the lines with a slash:

The 17th-century writer Aphra Behn (1640–1689) wrote humorous poems about love and heartbreak, including "Love's Power," which opens with "Love when he Shoots abroad his Darts / Regards not where they light" (1-2).

When you quote more than three lines from a poem, set them off from your text. Indent the quotation one-half inch, and do not use quotation marks. Note that the sentence period comes *before* the parenthetical citation.

In the poem "The Character," Aphra Behn (1640–1689) uses the familiar alternate rhyme scheme, also known as ABAB:

Such Charms of Youth, such Ravishment

Through all her Form appear'd,

As if in her Creation Nature meant,

She shou'd a-lone be ador'd and fear'd. (1-4)

Altering Quotations

When you alter a quotation to fit into your sentence, you must indicate the change you made.

Ellipses

An **ellipsis** [. . .] indicates that you have omitted words from a quotation. In the example below, the writer

omitted words from the middle of the sentence.

> In her memoir, *Twenty Years at Hull-House*, reformer Jane Addams explains that there were no enforceable laws against small children helping their mothers with sweatshop sewing work, and that "the only child labor law in Illinois **. . .** had been secured by the coal miners' unions, and was confined to the children employed in the mines" (199).

If you omit the end of a sentence or a complete sentence, include the sentence period:

> The author explains as follows: "Damage to the Broca's area of the brain can affect a person's ability to comprehend spoken language**. . . .** A person may understand speech relatively well when the sentence grammar is simple and the content familiar but may struggle when the grammar and content are more complex" (Hollar-Zwick 45).

Brackets

Use brackets [ ] to indicate a change you have made to a quotation:

> Abruzzi cited the study, noting that "**[**t**]**he results provide hope to patients **[**with muscular dystrophy**]**."

Punctuating Quotations

Periods

Place the period inside quotation marks if no source is cited:

> The meteorologist said, **"**Today's weather will be sunny and mild**."**

If you are citing a source in parentheses, place the quotation marks at the end of the quotation, followed by the citation and the sentence period:

> In *Twenty Years at Hull-House*, Jane Addams recalls vivid images of child labor: **"**I remember a little girl of four who pulled out basting threads hour after hour, sitting on a stool at the feet of her Bohemian mother, a little bunch of human misery**"** (199)**.**

(See **Long Quotations** and **Poetry Quotations** above for exceptions to this rule.)

Commas

Commas go *inside* quotation marks:

> **"**Tomorrow's weather will be cool and rainy**,"** the meteorologist said.

Colons and Semicolons

Colons and semicolons go *outside* quotation marks:

> The sign read **"**Closed**":** No more films would be shown at the theater. (Note: Use a capital letter if a complete sentence follows the colon.)

Question Marks and Exclamation Points

Question marks and exclamation points go *inside* quotation marks if they are part of the quotation:

> **"**Would you like a sandwich**?"** asked Adelaide.

Question marks and exclamation points go *outside* quotation marks if they are not part of the quotation:

> "I can't believe you haven't read **"**The Lottery**"!**

H 12. Index and Guide to Documentation

Although formal differences exist among the conventions for documenting sources, the underlying principle of all documentation systems is the same: When borrowing words, facts, or ideas from someone else, writers must indicate that the material is borrowed. They do this by providing a citation in the text of their paper that points readers to detailed publication information about the source of the material, usually at the end of the paper but sometimes in footnotes. The following examples are in MLA style:

Citation in the Text

Describing Martin Luther King, Jr.'s visit to India, Isabel Wilkerson notes that King was taken aback by the suggestion that Black Americans were the equivalent of the Dalits in the Indian caste system (22).

Works-Cited Entry

Wilkerson, Isabel. *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents.* Penguin, 2020.

Documentation Styles by Discipline

Each discipline has its own authority or authorities that provide rules about issues such as spelling of technical terms, preferred punctuation, and editing mechanics, as well as documentation style. In addition, if you write for publication in a magazine, professional journal, book, or website, the publisher will have a "house" style, which may vary in some details from the conventions listed in the authoritative guidelines for the discipline in which you are writing. Below are the sources of style manuals for various disciplines. Always check with your instructor about which style to use in a class.

Discipline	Documentation Style
languages, literature, philosophy, and some arts	Modern Language Association (MLA)
social sciences, education, and some other sciences	American Psychological Association (APA)
history, religion, fine arts, and business	Chicago Manual of Style (CMS)
life sciences	Council of Science Editors (CSE)
chemistry	American Chemical Society (ACS)
physics	American Institute of Physics (AIP)
journalism	Associated Press (AP)
medicine	American Medical Association (AMA)
law	Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation

TABLE H6

Index to MLA Documentation Models

The models, listed numerically, provide examples of in-text citations and works-cited entries (MLA). The models themselves are located in Handbook Section 13 (H13).

In-Text Citation Models

1. One author
2. Two or more works by the same author
3. Two authors

4. Three or more authors
5. Authors with the same last name
6. Organization, government, corporation, or association as author
7. Unknown author
8. Work in more than one volume
9. Work with no page or other reference numbers
10. One-page or entire work
11. Source quoted in another source (indirect quotation)
12. Literary works
    - Poetry and verse plays
    - Fiction and prose plays
13. Two or more works in the same citation
14. Sacred text

Endnotes and Footnotes (MLA)

Format of the List of Works Cited (MLA)

Authors and Contributors (MLA)

15. Book: one author
16. Book: two authors
17. Book: three or more authors
18. Book: two or more works by the same author
19. Author and editor
20. Author and translator
21. Author and illustrator
22. Work by an organization, a government, a corporation, or an association
23. Unknown author

Articles in Journals, Magazines, and Newspapers (MLA)

24. Basic format for a journal article in a database
25. Article in an academic journal
    - Database
    - Print
    - Online
26. Article in a weekly or biweekly magazine
    - Database
    - Print
    - Online
27. Article in a monthly or bimonthly magazine
    - Database
    - Print
    - Online
28. Article in a newspaper
    - Database
    - Print
    - Online
29. Editorial or letter to the editor
30. Review

Books and Parts of Books (MLA)

31. Basic entry for a book
32. Print book
33. E-book
34. Book, anthology, or collection with an editor
35. Work in an anthology or chapter in an edited collection
36. Two or more works in an anthology or edited collection
37. Revised or later edition
38. Multivolume work
39. One volume of a multivolume work
40. Book in a series
41. Republished work
42. Sacred text
43. Introduction, preface, foreword, or afterword
44. Published letter
45. Conference paper

Websites and Parts of Websites (MLA)

46. Basic format for a short work or page on a website
47. Short work or page on a website
48. Blog post
49. Entire website
50. Wiki

Social Media (MLA)

51. Basic format for a social media post
52. Social media post
53. Online forum post
54. Online comment

Personal Communication (MLA)

55. Email
56. Text message
57. Personal letter

Video, Audio, and Other Media Sources (MLA)

58. Film
59. Online video
60. Television programs
    - TV series
    - TV episode
61. Advertisement
    - Print
    - Online
62. Cartoon or comic
    - Print
    - Online
63. Painting or other visual artwork

- Original work
- Reproduction
- Online

64. Map, chart, or diagram
    - Print
    - Online
65. Sound recording
    - Album
    - Song
    - Online
66. Radio
67. Podcast
68. Interview
    - Broadcast
    - Online
    - Personal interview
69. Video game, software, or app

Other Sources (MLA)

70. Live lecture, speech, address, or reading
71. Live performance
72. Letter in an archive
73. Dissertation
74. Pamphlet

Index to APA Documentation Models

The models, listed numerically, provide examples of in-text citations and reference entries (APA). The models themselves are located in Handbook Section 14 (H14).

In-Text Citation Models (APA)

75. One author
76. Two authors
77. Three or more authors
78. Authors with the same last name
79. Organization, government, corporation, or association as author
80. Unknown author
81. Two or more works in the same citation
82. Work with no page numbers
83. Source quoted in another source (indirect quotation)
84. Entire work
85. Personal communication

Format of the References List (APA)

Authors (APA)

86. One author
87. Two authors
88. Three to twenty authors
89. Work by an organization, a government, a corporation, or an association

90. Unknown author
91. Two or more works by the same author

Articles in Journals, Magazines, and Newspapers (APA)

92. Basic format for an article in an academic journal
93. Article in an academic journal
    - With DOI
    - With URL
    - Without DOI or URL
94. Article in a magazine
    - Database
    - Print
    - Online
95. Article in a newspaper
    - Database or print
    - Online
96. Blog post
97. Published interview
98. Editorial or letter to the editor
99. Review

Books and Parts of Books (APA)

100. Basic entry for a book
101. Print book or e-book
102. Book, anthology, or collection with an editor
103. Article in an edited book, anthology, or collection
104. Translated or reprinted book
105. Revised edition
106. One volume of a multivolume work
107. Report or publication by a government agency or other organization
108. Conference paper

Web Sources (APA)

109. Basic format for a page or work on a website
110. Page or work on a website
111. Wiki

Social Media (APA)

112. Social media post
113. Online forum post

Video, Audio, and Other Media Sources (APA)

114. Film
115. Online video
116. Television programs
    - TV series
    - TV episode
117. Music recording

118. Radio
119. Podcast
120. Painting or other visual artwork
121. Map, photograph, or other visual
122. Video game, software, or app

H 13. MLA Documentation and Format

MLA style is the preferred form for documenting research sources in English and other humanities disciplines. The following are general features of MLA style:

- All material borrowed from sources is cited in the text of a paper by the author's name and page number (if available).
- A works-cited list at the end of a paper provides full publication data for each source cited in the text of the paper.
- Additional explanatory information provided by the writer (but not from external sources) goes in either footnotes or endnotes. These notes are optional.

The instruction in this section follows the *MLA Handbook*, 8th edition (2016). For more information on MLA style, see this site (https://openstax.org/r/this-site). For examples of student papers in the textbook using MLA documentation style, see Section 4 in Chapters 5, 7, 9, 12, and 16.

MLA In-Text Citations

In-text citations feature author names, page numbers, and sometimes titles, depending on what information is available. The Index located in H12 provides a listing of the models that are included below.

1. One author

When you quote, paraphrase, or summarize a source, include the last name of the source's author, if known, in a signal phrase or in parentheses at the end of your sentence. Provide the page or pages on which the original material appeared. Do not include the word *page* or the abbreviations *p.* or *pp.* Use a hyphen [-] to indicate a number range (See Spotlight on ... Citation for more on quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing sources):

> Becker points out that Joe Biden's views on same-sex marriage changed during a personal visit to a family while he was vice president (285-86).
>
> While he was vice president, Joe Biden's views on same-sex marriage changed during a personal visit with a family (Becker 285-86).

2. Two or more works by the same author

If you cite two or more works by the same author in your paper, give the title of the specific work in your sentence or a short version of the title in parentheses:

> According to Lewis Thomas in *Lives of a Cell*, many bacteria become dangerous only if they manufacture exotoxins (76).
>
> According to Lewis Thomas, many bacteria become dangerous only if they manufacture exotoxins (*Lives* 76).
>
> Many bacteria become dangerous only if they manufacture exotoxins (Thomas, *Lives* 76).

See Model 18 for how to cite two works by the same author in the works-cited list.

3. Two authors

If you cite a work with two authors, include both authors' names in a signal phrase or in parentheses:

> In the preface to *Half the Sky*, Kristof and WuDunn explain their focus on the issues of sex trafficking

and sex work, violence against women, and maternal mortality (xxi).

In the preface to *Half the Sky*, the authors explain their focus on the issues of sex trafficking and sex work, violence against women, and maternal mortality (Kristof and WuDunn xxi).

4. Three or more authors

For works with more than two authors, give the last name of the first author followed by "et al.":

Of the survey respondents, twenty-two percent described themselves as concerned about future job prospects (Pronkowski et al. 9).

5. Authors with the same last name

When authors of different sources have the same last name, include their initials:

Since the legalization of marijuana for recreational use, frequent use among adults has risen (J. T. Greene 21; M. Greene 30).

6. Organization, government, corporation, or association as author

When no author is given for a work published by a corporation, a government, an organization, or an association, indicate the group's name in a signal phrase or in parentheses:

The United States Forest Service describes its mission as "sustain[ing] the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations" (8).

7. Unknown author

When the author of a work is unknown, use the work's title in a signal phrase or a shortened version of the title in parentheses and a page number if available. Put quotation marks around article titles, and put book or journal titles in italics:

In a pointed 2020 editorial, "Don't Let the Games Begin," *The New York Times* argued that college athletic departments should support public health by canceling sports seasons until athletes and the public were vaccinated.

In a pointed 2020 editorial, *The New York Times* argued that college athletic departments should support public health by canceling sports seasons until athletes and the public were vaccinated ("Don't Let").

8. Work in more than one volume

If you cite only one volume of a multivolume work, give the page number in parentheses. If you cite more than one volume of a multivolume work, give the volume number for each citation before the page number, and follow it with a colon and one space:

Hill notes that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Adventure of the Dancing Men* was first published in the *Strand Magazine* and later in *Collier's Weekly* (1: 332).

9. Work with no page or other reference numbers

When the work has no page numbers, give the author's name in a signal phrase or in parentheses. If the source has paragraph, chapter, or section numbers, use them with the abbreviations *par., ch.,* or *sec.*:

Chen reports that the number of Americans seeking help with mental health rose during the pandemic that began in 2020. (ch. 2)

The number of Americans seeking help with mental health rose during the pandemic that began in 2020 (Chen, ch. 2).

For an audio or a video recording, give the start and stop times for the segment you are citing shown on the player in hours (if available), minutes, and seconds:

> It is well known that maternity leave is available in countries around the world, including Norway, which popularized its policy in a comic *YouTube* video showing a pregnant woman on skis announcing the start of her one-year paid leave (01:48-02:07).

10. One-page work or entire work

When you cite a work that is one page long or an entire work, such as a book, website, single-page article, tweet, video, or film, you do not need to cite a page or give a reference number:

> In *Da 5 Bloods,* director Spike Lee connects the Civil Rights movement to the war in Vietnam through the music, montages of the era, and characters' stories.

11. Source quoted in another source (indirect quotation)

When a quotation or any information in your source is originally from another source, try to track down the original source. If you cannot find it, use the abbreviation "qtd. in":

> The group, which has researched global health including access to food, sounded the alarm about a potential "worldwide food crisis" in the early 2000s (qtd. in Sing 32).

12. Literary works

- Poetry and verse plays

  For poems, provide line numbers for reference, and include *line* or *lines* in the first reference:

  In "The Character," Aphra Behn describes a lovely young woman, starting with her eyes: "Her Eyes all sweet, and languishingly move" (line 4).

  Cite verse plays using act, scene, and line numbers, separated by periods: (*Hamlet* 4.4.31-39)

- Fiction and prose plays

  When citing a prose literary work available in various editions, provide additional information after the page number, such as the chapter, act, or scene number, for readers who may be consulting a different edition. Use a semicolon to separate the page number from this additional information: (331; ch. 5) or (78; act 2).

13. Two or more works in the same citation

When you cite more than one work in parentheses, use a semicolon between them:

> Americans who resisted or ignored civil defense are often portrayed as heroic people who chose not to build fallout shelters or as marginalized people who could not afford them (Garrison 57; Mechling and Mechling 109).

14. Sacred text

When you cite passages from the Bible or another sacred text such as the Qur'an, give the title of the edition you are consulting the first time you refer to it. Then give the book (abbreviate the title if it is longer than four letters), chapter, and verse, separated by periods:

> Several times in the New Testament of the Bible, Jesus comments on wealth, telling his disciples, "And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (*King James Version,* Matt. 19.24).

Endnotes and Footnotes

Writers use notes to offer comments, explanations, or additional information that cannot easily be integrated into the rest of a paper. Use notes to cite several sources within a single context if a series of in-text citations will detract from the readability of the text.

Text with Superscript

The standard ingredients for guacamole include avocados, lemon juice, onion, tomatoes, coriander, salt, and pepper.[1] Hurtado's poem, however, gives this traditional dish a whole new twist.

Note

1. For variations see Beard 314, Egerton 197, Eckhardt 92, and Kafka 26. Beard's version, which includes olives and green peppers, is the most unusual.

A note may be placed as a footnote at the bottom of the page on which the in-text citation appears or on a separate page of endnotes at the end of the paper. This should be titled "Notes" or "Endnotes" and appear between the last page of the paper and the works-cited list. Include all sources given in notes in the works-cited list.

MLA Works Cited

Each source cited in the text of your paper refers readers to the list of works cited, a complete list of all the sources you quoted, paraphrased, or summarized. Every source cited in the text of your paper must be included in the works-cited list, and every source in the works-cited list must be cited in the text of your paper.

Format of the List of Works Cited (MLA)

After the last page of the paper, start a new page with the centered title "Works Cited" at the top. Create an entry for each source using the following guidelines and examples:

- Begin each entry at the left margin, and indent subsequent lines one-half inch. (In Microsoft Word, you can also highlight the entire page when you are finished and select "Hanging" from the Special options on the Indentation section of the Paragraph menu.)
- Alphabetize the entries according to authors' last names. If two or more authors have the same last name, alphabetize by first name or initial. Alphabetize sources with unknown authors by the first word of the title, excluding *a, an,* or *the.*
- Double-space the entire page.

Core Elements (MLA)

Each entry in the list of works cited consists of core elements:

- **Author.** *Who is responsible for the work?*
- **Title.** *What is the work called?*
- **Publication information.** *Where can the work be found so that others can consult it?* Publication information includes the date of publication and any larger work, which MLA calls a "container," in which a shorter work is published, such as a journal, magazine, newspaper, database, streaming service, and so on.

  A note on access dates. Although access dates for online sources are not required, MLA acknowledges that an access date can indicate the version of a source you consulted. If you add an access date, place it at the end of the works-cited entry in this format: "Accessed 4 Apr. 2020." Ask your instructors whether they require access dates.

Authors and Contributors for Books and Articles (MLA)

- **Authors.** Give the author's last name, a comma, the author's first name and any middle name or middle

initial, and then a period. For works with more than one author, an organization as an author, or an unknown author, see the models below.

- **Contributors.** People who contributed to the work in addition to the author are called contributors. Refer to them by their role in a phrase such as "adapted by," "directed by," "edited by," "illustrated by," "introduction by," "narrated by," "performance by," and "translated by." (See Models 19, 20, 21, 30, and 58 for examples.)

15. Book: one author

Sotomayor, Sonia. *My Beloved World.* Vintage Books, 2013.

16. Book: two authors

Kristoff, Nicholas D., and Sheryl WuDunn. *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide.* Alfred A. Knopf, 2009.

17. Book: three or more authors

Barlow, David H., et al. *Abnormal Psychology: An Integrative Approach.* 8th ed., Cengage Learning, 2017.

18. Book: two or more works by the same author

When you cite two works by the same author, use three hyphens in place of the author's name, and alphabetize the works by title:

Trethewey, Natasha. *Memorial Drive: A Daughter's Memoir.* Ecco, 2020.

---. *Native Guard: Poems.* Mariner Books, 2007.

19. Book author and editor

Add the editor's name after the title:

Hemingway, Ernest. *Conversations with Ernest Hemingway*, edited by Matthew J. Bruccoli, UP of Mississippi, 1986.

20. Book author and translator

Add the translator's name after the title:

Ferrante, Elena. *My Brilliant Friend.* Translated by Ann Goldstein, Europa Editions, 2012.

If you are citing the work of the translator, place the translator's name in the author position:

Goldstein, Ann, translator. *My Brilliant Friend.* By Elena Ferrante, Europa Editions, 2012.

21. Book author and illustrator

Add the illustrator's name after the title. If you are citing the work of the illustrator, place the illustrator's name in the author position, as shown in the preceding example:

Fasler, Joe. *Light in the Dark: Writers on Creativity, Inspiration, and the Artistic Process.* Illustrated by Doug McLean, Penguin Books, 2017.

22. Work by an organization, a government, a corporation, or an association

If the author and publisher are *not* the same, start with the author:

United States Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration. *Healthy Living Resource Guide.* Government Printing Office, 2020.

If the author and the publisher *are* the same, give the title of the work in place of the author, and list the organization as the publisher:

MLA Handbook. 8th ed., Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

"This Is Who We Are." *U.S. Forest Service,* United States Department of Agriculture, Mar. 2019, www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/This-is-Who-We-Are.pdf.

23. Unknown author

If no author is given, start with the title.

"The Most Beautiful Battalion in the Army." *Grunt Magazine*, 1968, pp. 12-15.

Articles in Journals, Magazines, and Newspapers (MLA)

Articles, reviews, editorials, and other short works are published in journals, newspapers, and magazines. They appear in print, on databases, and on websites (though often through a paywall). As a student, you are likely to access many articles and other short research sources primarily through databases available through your library.

24. Basic format for a journal article in a database

Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal*, volume number, issue number, Date of Publication, page numbers. *Title of Database*, DOI or URL.

- **Author.** Give the last name, a comma, the first name, and any middle name or initial. Do not list an author's professional title, such as *Dr.* or *PhD.* End with a period.
- **Title of the article.** Give the full title and any subtitle, separating them with a colon. Capitalize all significant words in the title. Put the title of the article in quotation marks. End with a period inside the closing quotation mark.
- **Title of the journal.** Put the title of the journal in italics. Capitalize all significant words in the title. End the title with a comma.
- **Volume and issue numbers.** Use the abbreviations *vol.* and *no.* followed by the number and a comma.
- **Publication date.** Give the month or season and the year of publication, if available. Use the following abbreviations for months: *Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov.,* and *Dec.* Do not abbreviate May, June, or July.
- **Page numbers.** Give *p.* (singular) or *pp.* (plural) and the page number or numbers of the article, followed by a period.
- **Title of the database.** Put the database title in italics, followed by a comma.
- **Location.** Give a DOI if available, and end with a period. If there is no DOI, give a URL, preferably a permalink, without http://.

25. Article in an academic journal

- Database

  Daddis, Gregory A. "Out of Balance: Evaluating American Strategy in Vietnam, 1968–72." *War & Society,* vol. 32, no. 3, Oct. 2013, pp. 252-70. *EBSCOhost,* doi:10.1179/0729247313Z.00000000026.

- Print

  Daddis, Gregory A. "Out of Balance: Evaluating American Strategy in Vietnam, 1968–72." *War & Society,* vol. 32, no. 3, Oct. 2013, pp. 252-70.

- Online

  Squires, Scot. "Do Generations Differ When It Comes to Green Values and Products?" *Electronic Green Journal,* no. 42, 2019, escholarship.org/uc/item/6f91213q.

  The journal in the example numbers issues only, so no volume number is given.

26. Article in a weekly or biweekly magazine

To cite an article in a weekly or biweekly magazine, give the author, title of the article, title of the magazine, publication date (day, month, year), and page numbers. If you found the article through a database, add the title of the database and a DOI or URL. If you found the article online, add the URL.

- Database

  Sanneh, Kelefa. "The Color of Money." *The New Yorker,* 8 Feb. 2021, pp. 26-31. *EBSCOhost,* search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=aph&AN=148411685&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

- Print

  Sanneh, Kelefa. "The Color of Money." *The New Yorker,* 8 Feb. 2021, pp. 26-31.

- Online

  Ferrer, Ada. "My Brother's Keeper." *The New Yorker,* 22 Feb. 2021, www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/03/01/my-brothers-keeper.

27. Article in a monthly or bimonthly magazine

To cite an article in a monthly or bimonthly magazine, give the author, title of the article, title of the magazine, publication month and year, and page numbers. If you found the article through a database, add the title of the database and a DOI or URL. If you found the article online, add the URL.

- Database

  Sneed, Annie. "Giant Shape-Shifters." *Scientific American,* Sept. 2017, pp. 20-22. *EBSCOhost, doi:10.1038/scientificamerican1017-20.*

- Print

  Sneed, Annie. "Giant Shape-Shifters." *Scientific American,* Sept. 2017, pp. 20-22.

- Online

  Stewart, Jamila. "A Look Inside the Black Designers of Canada Initiative." *Essence,* July 2020, www.essence.com/fashion/black-designers-of-canada-digital-index/.

To cite a comment on an article, see Model 54.

28. Article in a newspaper

To cite an article in a newspaper, give the author, title of the article, title of the newspaper, publication date (day, month, year), and the page numbers. If you found the article through a database, add the title of the database and a DOI or a URL. If you found the article online, add the URL.

- Database

  Krueger, Alyson. "When Mom Knows Best, on Instagram." *The New York Times,* 27 Nov. 2019, pp. B1-B4. *EBSCOhost,* search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=aph&AN=139891108&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

- Print

  Krueger, Alyson. "When Mom Knows Best, on Instagram." *The New York Times,* 27 Nov. 2019, pp. B1-B4.

- Online

  Smith, Doug. "They're Building Affordable Housing for the Homeless—Without Government Help." *Los*

Angeles Times, 10 Feb. 2021, www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-02-10/theyre-building-affordable-housing-for-the-homeless-without-government-help.

To cite a comment on an article, see Model 54.

29. Editorial or letter to the editor

An editorial may or may not have an author's name attached to it. If it does, give the author's name first. If it does not, start with the title. In both situations, add the designation *Editorial* or *Letter to the Editor* after the title.

"For Better Elections, Copy the Neighbors." Editorial. *The Wall Street Journal,* 16 Feb. 2021, www.wsj.com/articles/for-better-elections-copy-the-neighbors-11613518448.

30. Review

To cite a review of a book, film, television show, or other work, give the name of the reviewer and title of the review, add *Review of* before the title of work being reviewed, and give the name of the work's author, director, or creator after the title.

Girish, Devika. "Refocusing the Lens on Race and Gender." Review of *Test Pattern,* directed by Shatara Michelle Ford. *The New York Times,* 18 Feb. 2021, www.nytimes.com/2021/02/18/movies/test-pattern-review.html.

Books and Parts of Books (MLA)

Use the following guidelines for books and parts of books, such as a selection from an anthology, an article in a collection, a published letter, and so on.

31. Basic entry for a book

Author's Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book.* Publisher, Year of Publication.

- **Author.** Give the last name, a comma, the first name, and any middle name or initial. Do not list an author's professional title, such as *Dr.* or *PhD.* End with a period.
- **Title of the book.** Put the book's title in italics. Give the full title and any subtitle, separating them with a colon. Capitalize all significant words in the title, even if the book's cover does not use conventional capitalization. End the title with a period.
- **Publisher.** List the publisher's name without words such as "Inc." or "Company." Shorten "University Press" to "UP." End with a comma.
- **Year of publication.** Provide the publication date, and end with a period.

32. Print book

Wilkerson, Isabel. *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration.* Vintage Books, 2010.

33. E-book formatted for a specific reader device or service

Wilkerson, Isabel. *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration.* Kindle ed., Vintage Books, 2010.

34. Book, anthology, or collection with an editor

Add the abbreviation *ed.* or *eds.* (if more than one) after the editor's first name:

Lunsford, Andrea, ed. *Reclaiming Rhetorica: Women in the Rhetorical Tradition.* U of Pittsburgh P, 1995.

35. Work in an anthology or chapter in an edited collection

After the author and title of the work, give the title of the anthology or edited collection, name of the editor, publication information, and page numbers of the work:

Royster, Jacqueline Jones. "To Call a Thing by Its True Name: The Rhetoric of Ida B. Wells." *Reclaiming Rhetorica: Women in the Rhetorical Tradition,* edited by Andrea Lunsford, U of Pittsburgh P, 1995, pp. 167-84.

36. Two or more works in an anthology or edited collection

When you cite two or more selections from the same anthology or edited collection, list the anthology separately under the editor's name. In the entries for the selections you cite, include the editor's name and the page numbers on which the selections appear:

Lipscomb, Drema R. "Sojourner Truth: A Practical Public Discourse." Lunsford, pp. 227-46.

Lunsford, Andrea, ed. *Reclaiming Rhetorica: Women in the Rhetorical Tradition.* U of Pittsburgh P, 1995.

Royster, Jacqueline Jones. "To Call a Thing by Its True Name: The Rhetoric of Ida B. Wells." Lunsford, pp. 167-84.

37. Revised or later edition

For a book published in an edition other than the first, give the edition number after the title:

Strunk, William, Jr., and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style,* 4th ed., Pearson, 2019.

38. Multivolume work

For a book published in more than one volume, give the total number of volumes after the title:

Klinger, Leslie S. *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes.* 2 vols., W. W. Norton, 2005.

39. One volume of a multivolume work

Klinger, Leslie S. *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes.* Vol. 2, W. W. Norton, 2005.

When each volume of a multivolume set has an individual title, list the volume's full publication information first, followed by series information (number of volumes, dates). When separate volumes were published in different years, give inclusive dates:

Churchill, Winston S. *Triumph and Tragedy.* Houghton Mifflin, 1953. Vol. 6 of *The Second World War.* 6 vols. 1948-53.

However, if the volume you are using has its own title, you may cite the book without referring to the other volumes as if it were an independent publication.

40. Book in a series

Add the title of the series at the end of the entry:

Thaiss, Christopher. *Language across the Curriculum in the Elementary Grades.* WAC Clearinghouse, 2011, wac.colostate.edu/books/landmarks/thaiss/. Landmark Publications in Writing Studies.

41. Republished book

Give the original publication date after the title and the date the book was republished after the publisher:

Evans, Elizabeth E. G. *The Abuse of Maternity.* 1875. Arno, 1974.

42. Sacred text

Give the complete title of the version you consulted followed by the name of the editor and/or translator, the edition, the publisher, and the publication date:

The Bible. Authorized King James Version. Edited by Robert Carroll and Stephen Prickett, Oxford UP, 2008.

The Koran. Translated by N. J. Dawood, rev. ed., Penguin Books, 2015.

43. Introduction, preface, foreword, or afterword

Start with the author of the introduction, preface, foreword, or afterword, followed by a description of the work you are citing, such as "Foreword." Give the author of the work after the title:

Offill, Jenny. Foreword. *Mrs. Dalloway,* by Virginia Woolf, Penguin Classics, 2021, pp. vii-xiv.

44. Published letter

Roosevelt, Theodore. Letter to Upton Sinclair. 15 Mar. 1906. *Theodore Roosevelt: Letters and Speeches,* edited by Louis Auchincloss, 2004, pp. 310-11.

45. Conference paper

Killi, Stainer, and Andrew Morrison. "Could the Food Market Pull 3D Printing Appetites Further?" *Industry 4.0—Shaping the Future of the Digital World: Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Sustainable & Smart Manufacturing,* edited by Paulo Bartolo et al., CRC Press, 2021, pp. 197-203.

Websites and Parts of Websites (MLA)

Use the following guidelines for works that are published *only* online and do not have an overarching publication, such as a journal, newspaper, magazine, or database.

46. Basic format for a short work or page on a website

Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Short Work." *Title of Website,* Publisher, Publication Date, URL.

- **Author.** Give the last name, a comma, the first name, and any middle name or initial. Do not list an author's professional title, such as *Dr.* or *PhD.* End with a period.
- **Title of the short work.** Put the title in quotation marks. Give the full title and any subtitle, separating them with a colon. Capitalize all significant words in the title. End with a period inside the closing quotation mark.
- **Title of the website.** Put the title of the website in italics. Capitalize all significant words in the title. End the title with a comma.
- **Publisher.** If the publisher of the website is different from the title of the website (as shown in Model 48), give it next, followed by a comma. If they are the same (as shown in Model 47), give only the title of the website.
- **Publication date.** Give the day, month, and year the work was posted, if available. Use the following abbreviations for months: *Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., and Dec.* Do not abbreviate May, June, and July.
- **URL.** Give the URL, without "http://."

47. Short work or page on a website

Shetterly, Margot Lee. "Katherine Johnson Biography." *NASA*, 24 Feb. 2020, www.nasa.gov/content/katherine-johnson-biography.

If the source you are citing has no author listed, start with the title. If the page has no title, give the name of the site and a descriptive label, such as "Home page" or "Blog post."

48. Blog post

Blazich, Frank A. "The Cold Morning of the Day After." *Smithsonian Voices*, Smithsonian Magazine, 5 Feb. 2021, www.smithsonianmag.com/blogs/national-museum-american-history/2021/02/05/cold-morning-day-after/.

49. Entire website

Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Yale U, 2021, beinecke.library.yale.edu/.

If the website lists an editor, give the person's name as you would an author, followed by a comma and *ed.*

50. Wiki

"Coronavirus." *Wikipedia.* Wikimedia Foundation, 22 Feb. 2021, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coronavirus.

Social Media (MLA)

Social media include posts made to various platforms and forums, comments made by individuals to posts, and online articles.

51. Basic format for a social media post

Author. "Text of untitled post" or "Title of post" or Descriptive label. *Title of Site*, Date of Post, Time of Post, URL.

- **Author.** Give the author's handle and name. End with a period.
- **Text, title, or description of post.** Match the capitalization exactly, add quotation marks, and end with a period inside the closing quotation mark.
- **Title of the social media site.** Put the title of the site in italics, ending with a comma.
- **Publication date and time.** Give the day, month, year, and time of the post. Use the following abbreviations for months: *Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov.,* and *Dec.* Do not abbreviate May, June, and July.
- **URL.** Give the URL, without "http://."

52. Social media post

@Holleratcha (James Holler). "People go out and vote tomorrow!" *Twitter,* 2 Nov. 2020, 2:08 p.m., twitter.com/holleratcha/status/1270432672544784384.

Death Valley National Park. "What does it mean to protect something you love?" *Facebook,* 23 Feb. 2021, 5:01 p.m., www.facebook.com/DeathValleyNPS/posts/4108808255810092.

See Model 54 for how to cite a comment.

53. Online forum post

@Duckpond318. "Turkeys in the arboretum." *Reddit,* 15 Mar. 2021, 11:22 a.m., www.reddit.com/r/Wildlife/comments/lqlbo3/turkeys_in_the_arboretum/. Accessed 4 Feb. 2021.

54. Online comment

AKJersey. Comment on "Can We Stop Fighting about Charter Schools?" *The New York Times,* 22 Feb. 2021, www.nytimes.com/2021/02/22/opinion/charter-schools-democrats.html#commentsContainer.

Personal Communication (MLA)

Use the following guidelines to cite email, text messages, and letters that you sent or received.

55. Email

Roberts, Jeffrey. "Study results." Received by Kenneth Berg, 21 Oct. 2020.

56. Text message

Igoe, Beverlee. Text message. Received by Alison McGrath, 2 Apr. 2020.

57. Personal letter

Atwood, Margaret. Letter to the author. 11 Mar. 2007.

Video, Audio, and Other Media Sources (MLA)

Use the following guidelines to cite various media sources.

58. Film

Begin with the title, followed by the director, the studio, and the year released.

Casablanca. Directed by Michael Curtiz, Warner Brothers, 1942.

You may also cite other contributors and their roles after the title (as illustrated below). If your paper is concerned with a particular person's work on a film, such as the director, an actor, or someone else, begin with that person's name and arrange all other information accordingly. For a film you stream, add the title of the streaming service and the URL:

Moonlight. Directed by Barry Jenkins, performances by Mahershala Ali, Naomie Harris, and Trevante Rhodes. A24, 2016. *Netflix,* www.netflix.com/watch/80121348?trackId=13752289&tctx=8%2C.

59. Online video

NASA. "Apollo 11 Moonwalk – Original NASA EVA Mission Video." 20 July 1969. *YouTube,* 17 July 2014, www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9HdPi9Ikhk.

60. Television series or episode

- TV Series

  The Good Place. Michael Schur, creator. NBC, 2016-20.

- Streamed TV episode

  "Jason Mendoza." *The Good Place,* season 1, episode 4, NBC, 2016. *Netflix,* www.netflix.com/watch/80191852?trackId=13752289&tctx=%2C%2C.

61. Advertisement

- Print

  XOFLUZA. Flu medication advertisement. *The New Yorker,* 8. Feb. 2021, pp. 5-6.

- Online

  General Motors. "Will Ferrell Super Bowl Ad." *YouTube,* 3 Feb. 2021, www.youtube.com/watch?v=mdsPvbSpB2Y&t=24s.

62. Cartoon or comic

- Print

  Davis, Jim. "Garfield." Cartoon. *Courier* [Findlay, OH], 17 May 1996, p. 18.

  If the source you cite appears in a local newspaper, as it does here, give the city and state in brackets after the name of the newspaper if the city is not part of the newspaper's name.

- Online

  Gauld, Tom. "Waiting for Godot to Join the Zoom Meeting." *You're All Just Jealous of My Jetpack,* 31 Jan. 2021, myjetpack.tumblr.com/.

63. Painting or other visual artwork

- Original work

  Rivera, Diego. *Detroit Industry Murals.* 1932-33. Detroit Institute of Art.

  If the city is not part of the name of the museum, add it after museum. For example, if the work you viewed was at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, you would end the entry as follows: Museum of Modern Art, New York.

- Reproduction

  Neel, Alice. *Elenka.* 1936. *Alice Neel: People Come First,* by Kelly Baum and Randall Griffey, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2021, p. 142.

- Online

  Basquiat, Jean-Michel. *Untitled.* 1983. *Museum of Modern Art,* www.moma.org/collection/works/63997?artist_id=370&page=1&sov_referrer=artist. Accessed 24 Sept. 2020.

64. Map, chart, or diagram

- Print

  Everglades National Park. National Geographic Society Maps, 2019.

- Online

  "Map: Expedition of Lewis and Clark." *National Park Service,* 2 Jan. 2018, nps.gov/subjects/travellewisandclark/map.htm.

65. Sound recording

Sound recordings include songs, albums, and spoken word. If you stream a sound recording or watch a performance online, add the name of the streaming service, such as Spotify, Apple Music, or Amazon Music, after the date. If you access the recording online, add the name of the website and the URL after the date.

- Album

  Prince. *Purple Rain.* Warner Brothers, 1984.

- Song

  The Supremes. "Baby Love." *Where Did Our Love Go,* Motown, 1964. Spotify.

- Online

  Gorman, Amanda. "The Hill We Climb." 20 Jan. 2021, *YouTube,* www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZ055ilIiN4.

66. Radio

The Road to Higher Ground. Hosted by Jonathan Overby. WPR, 9 Jan. 2021.

If you listened to the radio program online, add the URL after the date.

67. Podcast

McEvers, Kelly, host. "This Is Not a Joke." *Embedded,* season 9, episode 2, NPR, 7 Nov. 2019, Apple Podcasts.

If you listened to the podcast on the web, add the URL instead of the podcast service.

68. Interview

- Broadcast

  Wilkerson, Isabel. Interview. *Fresh Air,* NPR, 4 Aug. 2020.

- Online

  Sowell, Thomas. Interview. *Hoover Institution,* 3 Jan. 2015, www.wsj.com/video/uncommon-knowledge-thomas-sowell-basic-economics/51837CB6-9FF2-305AE55D179A.html.

- Personal interview

  Wong, Diana. Personal interview. 12 Sept. 2020.

69. Video game, software, or app

Houser, Dan, et al., writers. *Grand Theft Auto V.* Rockstar Games, 2013. Xbox 360.

Other Sources (MLA)

70. Live lecture, speech, address, or reading

Diaz, Shanna. "Your Dazzling Brain: The Symphony of Sleep." Community Lecture Series, University of New Mexico Health Science and the City of Albuquerque, 13 Mar. 2018, Albuquerque Academy.

71. Live performance

Hamilton. By Lin-Manuel Miranda, directed by Thomas Kail, 11 Mar. 2018, CIBC Theater, Chicago.

If you watch a video of a performance online, cite it as you would cite an online video.

72. Letter in an archive

Mucklestone, Ada. Letter to Maj. Gen. Ralph J. Olson. 6 Nov. 1958. Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Alphabetical Subject File, 1950-66, 1715, Box 13.

73. Dissertation

- Database

  Park, Eun Jung. *Korean American Artists and the 1992 Los Angeles Riots.* 2013. U of California, San Diego, PhD dissertation. *ProQuest,* www.proquest.com/doc-view/1425303659.

- Print

  Boothby, Daniel W. *The Determinants of Earnings and Occupation for Young Women.* 1978. U of California, Berkeley, PhD dissertation.

74. Pamphlet

"Facts about Fallout." Civil Defense Administration, 1961.

MLA Paper Format

Follow your instructor's formatting guidelines or those indicated here. For sample papers with MLA format and works-cited pages, visit this site (https://openstax.org/r/this-site1).

- **Margins.** Use one-inch margins on all sides.
- **Spacing.** Double-space throughout the paper, including the works-cited page.
- **Paragraph format.** Indent paragraphs one-half inch.
- **Page numbers.** Start numbering on the first page of your paper and continue to the end of the works-cited page. Place page numbers in the upper-right corner, and add your last name before the page number: "Coleman 3."
- **Identifying information.** Put your name, your instructor's name, the course title, and the date in the left corner of the first page of the body of the paper, not in the header. Double-space this information.
- **Title.** Center the title on the first page. Do not use italics, boldface, all capitals, or quotation marks. Do not add extra space below the title.
- **Long quotations and quotations from poetry.** See Quotations for how to cite long quotations and poetry quotations.

H 14. APA Documentation and Format

Disciplines in the social sciences—psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science, economics, social work, and often education—use the APA name-and-date system of documentation. APA style highlights authors and dates of publication because timeliness of published material is of primary importance in these

disciplines. The following are general features of APA style:

- All material borrowed from sources is cited in the text of a paper by the author's name, date of publication, and page numbers (if available).
- A list of references at the end of a paper provides full publication data for each source cited in the text of the paper.

The instruction in this section follows the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association,* 7th edition (2020). For more information on APA style, visit this site (https://openstax.org/r/link). For examples of student papers in the textbook using APA documentation style, see Section 4 in Chapters 6, 8, and 15.

In-Text Citation Models (APA)

In-text citations feature author names, dates of publication, and page numbers, depending on what information is available. The Index located in H12 provides a listing of the models that are included below.

75. One author

When you quote, paraphrase, or summarize a source, include the last name of the source's author, if known, in a signal phrase or in parentheses at the end of your sentence. Give the publication date after the author's name. Provide the page or pages on which the original material appeared preceded by *p.* or *pp.* See Spotlight on ... Citation.

> According to Thomas (1974), many bacteria become dangerous only if they manufacture exotoxins (p. 76).
>
> Many bacteria become dangerous only if they manufacture exotoxins (Thomas, 1974, p. 76).

If you cite two or more works by the same author, published in the same year, use letters after the year to distinguish them: (Gallivan, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c).

76. Two authors

> Smith and Hawkins (1990) confirmed that bacteria producing exotoxins are harmful to humans (p. 17).
>
> The study confirmed that bacteria producing exotoxins are harmful to humans (Smith & Hawkins, 1990, p. 17).

77. Three or more authors

For works with more than two authors, give the last name of the first author followed by "et al.":

> The results indicate that alcohol use rose during the period of the study (Dominic et al., 2021, p. 16).

78. Authors with the same last name

> When authors of different sources have the same last name, include their initials:
>
> Since the legalization of marijuana for recreational use, frequent use among adults has risen (J. T. Greene, 2019, p. 21; M. Greene, 2020, p. 30).

When authors of the same source have the same name, do not include their initials: (Kim & Kim, 2018, p. 47).

79. Organization, government, corporation, or association as author

When citing a well-known organization, government agency, corporation, or association, introduce an abbreviation of the name in the first reference and use it in subsequent references:

> On multiple occasions, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA, 2018) reported that formal efforts to reintegrate combat veterans into civilian life were beneficial.

80. Unknown author

When the author of a work is unknown, use the work's title in a signal phrase, or put the title in parentheses. Put quotation marks around article titles, and put book or journal titles in italics:

> In a pointed editorial, *The New York Times* argued that college athletic departments should support public health by canceling sports seasons until athletes and the public were vaccinated ("Don't Let the Games Begin," 2020).

> In its pointed editorial, "Don't Let the Games Begin" (2020), *The New York Times* argued that college athletic departments should support public health by canceling sports seasons until athletes and the public were vaccinated.

81. Two or more works in the same citation

When you cite more than one work in parentheses, put the works in the same order that they appear in your list of references, and use a semicolon between them:

> Americans who resisted or ignored civil defense were later cast as heroic people who chose not to build fallout shelters or as marginalized people who could not afford them (Garrison, 2006; Mechling & Mechling, 1991).

82. Work with no page numbers

If the work you are citing has no page numbers, help readers find the quotation by providing a heading, a section name, and/or a paragraph number (using the abbreviation *para.* or *paras.*):

> According to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH, 2019), research on PTSD includes gene research and brain imaging technologies (Next Steps for PTSD Research section, para. 6).

For audio or visual works, give the time stamp of the beginning of the source: (Wong, 2020, 34:16).

83. Source quoted in another source (indirect quotation)

When a quotation or any information in your source is originally from another source, try to track down the original source. If you cannot find the original, use the words "as cited in":

> The research collective, which has studied global health including access to food, sounded the alarm about a potential "worldwide food crisis" in the early 2000s (as cited in Sing, 2018, p. 32).

84. Entire work

When you cite an entire work, you do not need to give a page number. See Models 79 and 80. When you mention an entire website, link to the website directly or give the URL. You do not need to include the website in the references list:

> The Department of Veterans Affairs maintains a website for PTSD, which contains resources and help for families and healthcare providers as well as veterans (https://www.ptsd.va.gov/).

85. Personal communication

Because personal communications such as emails, letters, personal interviews, and the like cannot be found by other researchers, cite them in the text only:

> During our interview, Morales explained that she had quit her job to help her children with their schooling (personal communication, January 4, 2021).

APA References

Each source cited in the text of your paper refers readers to the list of references, a complete list of all the sources you quoted, paraphrased, or summarized. Every source cited in the text of your paper must be

included in the references list, and every source in the references list must be cited in the text of your paper.

Format of the References List (APA)

After the last page of your paper, start a new page with the centered, boldfaced title **References** at the top. Create an entry for each source using the following guidelines and examples.

- Begin each entry at the left margin, and indent subsequent lines one-half inch. (In Microsoft Word, you can also highlight the entire page when you are finished and select "Hanging" from the Special options on the Indentation section of the Paragraph menu.)
- Alphabetize the entries according to authors' last names. If two or more authors have the same last name, alphabetize by the initials of their first and middle names. Alphabetize sources with unknown authors by the first word of the title, excluding *a, an,* or *the.*
- Double-space the entire page.

Core Elements (APA)

Each entry in the list of references consists of core elements:

- **Author.** *Who is responsible for the work?*
- **Date of publication.** *When was the work published?*
- **Title.** *What is the work called?*
- **Publication information.** *Where can the work be found so that others can consult it?*

Sometimes core elements are unknown or missing. In such cases, the entry in the reference list entry must be adapted:

- **No author?** If the source has no known author, cite it by the title. See Models 90 and 98.
- **No date of publication?** If the source has no publication date, write *n.d.* instead of the publication date. See Model 110.
- **No title?** If the work has no title, put a brief description in square brackets.
- **No publication information?** If the source is a personal communication that only you have a record of, cite the source in your text, not in the references, because it cannot be retrieved by other readers. See "Personal communication" above.

A note on retrieval dates: APA recommends adding a retrieval date for sources that are not archived or are likely to change over time, such as a developing news story. If you add a retrieval date, place it at the end of the references entry in this format: "Retrieved April 4, 2020, from https://www.nytimes.com." Ask your instructors if they require retrieval dates.

Authors (APA)

Give the author's last name, comma, and first and middle initials if available. For works with more than one author, put a comma and an ampersand (&) before the final author's name, even when there are two authors.

86. One author

Milanovic, B. (2016). *Global inequality: A new approach for the age of globalization.* Harvard UP.

87. Two authors

Kristoff, N. D., & WuDunn, S. (2009). *Half the sky: Turning oppression into opportunity for women worldwide.* Alfred A. Knopf.

88. Three to twenty authors

Provide last names and initials for up to and including 20 authors.

Barlow, D. H., Durand, V. M., & Hofmann, S. G. (2017). *Abnormal psychology: An integrative approach.* Cengage

Learning.

For more than 20 authors, include the first 19 authors' names, insert an ellipsis, and then add the final author's name.

89. Work by an organization, a government, a corporation, or an association

Works published by organizations often have the same author and publisher, which is frequently the title of a website. When the author and publisher are *not* the same, give the author and the title of the website:

National Institute of Mental Health. (2020). *Post-traumatic stress disorder.* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health. https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/index.shtml.

When the author and the publisher or title of the website *are* the same, omit the latter:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, February 17). Variants of the virus. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/index.html.

90. Unknown author

If no author is given, start with the title:

The most beautiful battalion in the army. (1968). *Grunt magazine,* 12-15.

91. Two or more works by the same author

List two or more works by the same author (or the same author team listed in the same order) chronologically by year in the reference list, with the earliest first. Arrange works published in the same year alphabetically by title, placing lowercase letters after the publication dates:

Bandura, A. (1969). *Principles of behavior modification.* Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.

Bandura, A. (1977a). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review, 84,* 191-215.

Bandura, A. (1977b). *Social learning theory.* Prentice Hall.

Articles in Journals, Magazines, and Newspapers (APA)

Articles, reviews, editorials, and other short works are published in journals, newspapers, and magazines, and they appear in print, on databases, and on websites (though often through a paywall). As a student, you are likely to access many articles and other short research sources primarily through databases available through your library.

92. Basic format for an article in an academic journal

Author's Last Name, Initials. (Date of Publication). Title of article. *Title of Journal, Volume* (number), Pages. DOI or URL.

- **Author.** Give the last name, a comma, and the initials of the first name and middle name (if available). Do not list an author's professional title, such as *Dr.* or *PhD.* End with a period.
- **Date of Publication.** In parentheses, give the year of publication, a comma, and the month or season of publication. End with a period outside the closing parentheses.
- **Title of the article.** Give the full title and any subtitle, separating them with a colon. For articles and book chapters, do not use quotation marks or italicize the title. Capitalize only the first word of the title and the first word of a subtitle and any proper nouns.
- **Title of the journal.** Put the journal title in italics. Capitalize all significant words in the title. End the title with a comma.
- **Volume and issue numbers.** Italicize the volume number, and follow it with the issue number in

parentheses (not italicized). End with a comma.

- **Page numbers.** Give inclusive page numbers without *p.* or *pp.* End with a period.
- **DOI or URL.** Provide a DOI (if available) or a URL. Include "http://," and do not add a period at the end. The preferred format for a DOI is "https://doi.org/" followed by the number. You may encounter older formats for DOI; if so, change them to this format. If the article is online and does not have a DOI, give the URL instead.

93. Article in an academic journal

- **With DOI**

  Gawande, A. A. (2017, April). It's time to adopt electronic prescriptions for opioids. *Annals of Surgery, 265*(4), 693-94. https://doi.org/10.1097/SLA.0000000000002133

- **With URL**

  Squires, S. (2019). Do generations differ when it comes to green values and products? *Electronic Green Journal, 42*. http://escholarship.org/uc/item/6f91213q

  The online journal in the example numbers issues only, so no volume number or page numbers are given.

- **Without DOI or URL**

  Lowther, M. A. (1977, Winter). Career change in mid-life: Its impact on education. *Innovator, 8*(7), 9-11.

An older journal article you consult in print may not have a DOI. In that case, end with the page numbers.

94. Article in a magazine

For a magazine article you read on a database or online, give the DOI if the article has one; otherwise give the URL. For a magazine article you consulted in print, end the entry after the page number unless a DOI is provided.

- Database

  Sneed, A. (2017, September 19). Giant shape-shifters. *Scientific American, 317*(4), 20. https://doi.org/10.1038/scientificamerican1017-20

- Print

  Sneed, A. (2017, September 19). Giant shape-shifters. *Scientific American, 317*(4), 20.

- Online

  Myszkowski, S. (2018, October 10). On the trail of missing American Indian women. *The Atlantic.* https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2018/10/trail-missing-american-indian-women/571657/

95. Article in a newspaper

For a newspaper article that you read on a database or in print, end the entry after the page numbers. For a newspaper article that you read online, give the URL instead of page numbers.

- **Database or print**

  Krueger, A. (2019, November 27). When mom knows best, on Instagram. *The New York Times,* B1-B4.

- **Online**

  Healy, J. (2021, January 12). Tribal elders are dying from the pandemic, causing a cultural crisis for American Indians. *The New York Times.* https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/12/us/tribal-elders-native-americans-coronavirus.html

96. Blog post

Blazich, F. A. (2021, February 5). The cold morning of the day after. *Smithsonian Voices.* https://www.smithsonianmag.com/blogs/national-museum-american-history/2021/02/05/cold-morning-day-after/

97. Published interview

Beard, A. (2013, May). Life's work: An interview with Maya Angelou. *Harvard Business Review.* https://hbr.org/2013/05/maya-angelou

98. Editorial or letter to the editor

An editorial may or may not have an author's name attached to it. If it does, give the author's name first. If it does not, start with the title. In both situations, add *Editorial* or *Letter to the Editor* in square brackets after the title.

For better elections, copy the neighbors [Editorial]. (2021, February 16). *The Wall Street Journal.* https://www.wsj.com/articles/for-better-elections-copy-the-neighbors-11613518448

99. Review

To cite a review of a book, film, television show, or other work, begin with the reviewer's last name, followed by the first and middle (if any) initials. In parentheses, add the year, followed by the title, month, and day of the review. Then in square brackets, add *Review of the* and the type of work being reviewed, followed by the title and the name of the author, director, or creator and their role. Then give the publication in which the review appeared, ending with a period, and the URL:

Girish, D. (2021, February 18). Refocusing the lens on race and gender [Review of the film *Test Pattern,* by S. M. Ford, Dir.]. *The New York Times.* https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/18/movies/test-pattern-review.html

Books and Parts of Books (APA)

Use the following guidelines for books and parts of books, such as a selection from an anthology, a chapter in a collection, a published conference paper, and so on.

100. Basic entry for a book

Author's Last Name, Initials. (Year of Publication). *Title of book.* Publisher.

- **Author.** Give the last name, a comma, and the initials of the first name and middle name (if available). Do not list an author's professional title, such as *Dr.* or *PhD.* End with a period.
- **Year of publication.** In parentheses, give the year of publication, ending with a period outside the closing parentheses.
- **Title of the book.** Put the book's title in italics. Give the full title and any subtitle, separating them with a colon. Capitalize only the first word of the title and the first word of a subtitle and any proper nouns.
- **Publisher.** Give the publisher's name as shown on the work, omitting words such as *Inc.* or *Company.*

101. Print book or e-book

Aronson, L. (2019). *Elderhood: Redefining aging, transforming medicine, reimagining life.* Bloomsbury Publishing.

Use the same format for an e-book when the content is the same. If you consult a book that has a DOI, provide it after the publisher, using the format "https://doi.org/" followed by the number. (If you encounter older formats for DOI, change them to this format.) If you read a book online, give the URL.

102. Book, anthology, or collection with an editor

Schaefer, C. E., & Reid, S. E. (Eds.). (2001). *Game play: Therapeutic use of childhood games* (2nd ed.). Wiley.

103. Article or chapter in an edited book, an anthology, or a collection

Burks, H. F. (2001). Using the imagine game as a projective technique. In C. E. Schaefer & S. E. Reid (Eds.), *Game play: Therapeutic use of childhood games* (2nd ed., pp. 39-66). Wiley.

104. Translated or reprinted book

Freud, S. (1950). *The interpretation of dreams* (A. A. Brill, Trans.). Modern Library. (Original work published 1900)

105. Revised edition

Strunk, W., Jr., & White, E. B. (2019). *The elements of style* (4th ed.). Pearson.

106. One volume of a multivolume work

Waldrep, T. (Ed.). (1988). *Writers on writing* (Vol. 2). Random House.

107. Report or publication by a government agency or other organization

National Institute of Mental Health. (2020). *Post-traumatic stress disorder.* U.S. Department of Health and Human Service, National Institutes of Health.

If you consulted the publication online, include the URL after the publisher. See Model 89.

108. Conference paper

Killi, S., & Morrison, A. (2021). Could the food market pull 3D printing appetites further? In J.D. da Silva Bartolo, F. M. da Silva, S. Jaradat, & H. Bartolo (Eds.), *Industry 4.0—shaping the future of the digital world: Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Sustainable & Smart Manufacturing* (pp. 197-203). CRC Press.

Web Sources (APA)

Use the following guidelines for works published *only* online that do not have an overarching publication, such as a journal, newspaper, or magazine.

109. Basic format for a page or work on a website

Author's Last Name, Initials. (Publication Date). Title of work. *Title of website.* URL.

- **Author.** Give the last name, a comma, and the initials of the first name and middle name (if available). Do not list an author's professional title, such as *Dr.* or *PhD*. End with a period.
- **Date of publication.** In parentheses, give the year of publication and a comma, followed by the month and the day. End with a period outside the closing parentheses.
- **Title of the work.** Put the title of the work in italics. Give the full title and any subtitle, separating them with a colon. Capitalize only the first word of the title and the first word of a subtitle and any proper nouns.
- **Title of the website.** Give the title of the website and end with a period. If the author and the website title are the same, you can omit the title of the site.
- **URL.** Copy and paste the URL from your browser window.

110. Page or work on a website

Shetterly, M. L. (2020, February 24). *Katherine Johnson biography.* NASA. https://www.nasa.gov/content/katherine-johnson-biography

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (n.d.). *What is PTSD?* National Center for PTSD. https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand/what/index.asp

If the source you are citing has no author listed, start with the title. See Model 90.

111. Wiki

Coronavirus. (2021, February 22). In *Wikipedia.* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coronavirus

Social Media (APA)

When you cite a social media post as a source, use labels in square brackets to indicate the type of post and whether images were attached to it.

112. Social media post

Holler, J. [@holleratcha]. (2020, November 2). *Everyone get out and vote tomorrow!* [Tweet]. Twitter. http://twitter.com/holleratcha/status/1270432672544784384

Death Valley National Park. (2021, February 23). *What does it mean to protect something you love?* [Images attached] [Status update]. Facebook. www.facebook.com/DeathValleyNPS/posts/4108808255810092.

113. Online forum post

National Aeronautics and Space Administration [NASA]. (2020, November 14). *We're engineers, astronaut trainers, and other specialists working to launch humans on commercial spacecraft from U.S. soil! Ask us anything about the NASA SpaceX Crew-1 mission!* [Online forum post]. Reddit. https://www.reddit.com/r/space/comments/jsx91g/were_engineers_astronaut_trainers_and_other/

Video, Audio, and Other Media Sources (APA)

When you cite nonprint sources, such as visual and multimedia sources, use labels in square brackets to indicate the type of source, such as a film, a TV episode, a song, a painting, a photograph, and so on.

114. Film

When you cite a film that you saw in a theater or streamed, you do not need to specify how you watched it.

Jenkins, B. (Director). (2016). *Moonlight* [Film]. A24.

115. Online video

For an online video, give the name of the person or organization that uploaded it as the author:

TED. (2017, February 27). *Sue Klebold: My son was a Columbine shooter. This is my story* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BXlnrFpCu0c

116. Television program

- TV series

  Schur, M., Miner, D., Sackett, M., & Goddard, D. (Executive Producers). (2016-20). *The good place* [TV series]. Fremulon; 3 Arts Entertainment; Universal Television; NBC.

- TV episode

  Mande, J. (Writer), & Benz, P. (Director). (2016, September 29). Jason Mendoza (Season 1, Episode 4) [TV series episode]. In M Schur, D. Miner, M. Sackett, & D. Goddard (Executive Producers), *The good place.* Fremulon; 3 Arts Entertainment; Universal Television; NBC.

117. Music recording

For an artist whose music is available only through a website, include the URL. If the artist's music is available on multiple platforms, you do not need to specify how you accessed it.

- Album

  Prince. (1984). *Purple rain* [Album]. Warner Brothers.

- Song

  The Supremes. (1964). Baby love [Song]. On *Where did our love go.* Motown.

118. Radio

Overby, J. (Host). (2021, January 9). *The road to higher ground: World music with African roots and more.* WPR.

119. Podcast

McEvers, K. (Host). (2019, November 7). This is not a joke (Season 9, Episode 9) [Audio podcast episode]. In *Embedded.* NPR.

120. Painting or other visual artwork

For a work of visual art, give the location of the museum or gallery. If you saw the work online, add the URL after the location:

Rivera, D. (1932-33). *Detroit industry murals* [Painting]. Detroit Institute of Art, Detroit, MI, United States.

Basquiat, J-M. (1983). *Untitled* [Painting]. *Museum of Modern Art,* New York, NY, United States. https://www.moma.org/collection/works/63997?artist_id=370&page=1&sov_referrer=artist

121. Map, photograph, infographic, or other visual

If the work you consulted names an author, start with the author. If there is no author, start with the title and a description of the work in square brackets, such as [Map], [Photograph], [Infographic], [Diagram], or another appropriate descriptor:

Expedition of Lewis and Clark [Map]. (2018). *National Park Service.* http://nps.gov/subjects/travellewisandclark/map.htm

122. Video game, software, or app

Benzies, L., & Sarwar, I. (2017). *Grand theft auto V* [Video game]. Rockstar Games. https://www.rockstargames.com/games/V

APA Paper Format

Follow your instructor's formatting guidelines or those indicated here. For sample papers showing APA paper format, see this site (https://openstax.org/r/this-site2).

- **Title page.** Give the title of the paper in bold, centered. Then, on separate lines and not boldfaced, give your name, academic department, name of your college or university, course number and name, instructor's name, and the due date, all centered. Repeat only the title on the first page of the text of your paper.
- **Margins.** Use one-inch margins on all sides.
- **Spacing.** Double-space throughout the paper, including the references page.
- **Paragraph format.** Indent paragraphs one-half inch.
- **Headings.** Give headings for the major sections of your paper, such as *Method, Results* or *Findings,* and *Discussion*. Put the headings in bold and center them on the page. Put the next level of headings in bold and place them flush left.
- **Page numbers.** Start numbering on the title page of your paper and continue to the end of the references page. Place page numbers in the upper-right corner.
- **Long quotations.** See Quotations for how to cite long quotations.

H 15. Further Reading

MLA Handbook, 8th ed., Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

MLA Handbook, 9th ed., Modern Language Association of America, 2020.

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th ed., American Psychological Association, 2020.

H 16. Works Cited

Addams, Jane. *Twenty Years at Hull-House. Digital Public Library of America*, 1910, dp.la/primary-source-sets/theodore-dreiser-s-sister-carrie-and-the-urbanization-of-chicago/.

Becker, Jo. *Forcing the Spring: Inside the Fight for Marriage Equality.* Penguin Press, 2014.

Behn, Aphra. "The Character." *The Works of Aphra Behn.* Edited by Montague Summers, vol. 6, *Project Gutenberg*, 2014, www.gutenberg.org/files/45777/45777-h/45777-h.htm#Page_113.

Behn, Aphra. "Love's Power." *The Works of Aphra Behn*. Edited by Montague Summers, vol. 6, *Project Gutenberg,* 2014, www.gutenberg.org/files/45777/45777-h/45777-h.htm#Page_113.

Brooks, Gwendolyn. "We Real Cool." *Blacks*, Third World Press, 1994.

Da 5 Bloods. Directed by Spike Lee. Netflix, 2020.

Eisenberg, Richard. "How to Fix Social Security for Vulnerable Americans." *Forbes,* 5 July 2018, www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2018/07/05/how-to-fix-social-security-for-vulnerable-americans/.

"Environmental Impacts of Natural Gas." *Union of Concerned Scientists,* 19 June 2014, www.ucsusa.org/resources/environmental-impacts-natural-gas.

Garrison, Dee. *Bracing for Armageddon: Why Civil Defense Never Worked.* Oxford UP, 2006.

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