

Approved Textbooks for English 1A and 1B

Effective Fall 2010

\*Selections in alphabetical order by title

English 1A

***The Allyn & Bacon Guide to Writing*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, by John D. Ramage, John C. Bean, June Johnson. Pearson, 2008.**

**List price: \$92.00**

The Fifth Edition of the *Allyn & Bacon Guide* provides a strong process-based rhetoric, instructs students on incorporating research into a variety of writing projects, and focuses on critical thinking, reading, and writing. The text organizes chapters into both brief and major “projects” which explain a genre-based approach to composition for students. The included readings are from across the curriculum and deal with a variety of sociological concerns. Included also are student essays and extensive revision models. The book’s strength is how it is organized into both thematic units and the aforementioned “projects” units. Each new unit builds and informs the previous unit: this sort of cohesive approach would be attractive to many composition instructors.

***Between Worlds: A Reader, Rhetoric, and Handbook*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, by Susan Bachmann and Melinda Barth. Pearson, 2009.**

**List price: \$77.33 (\$58.73 on Amazon)**

Description from publisher: “This immediately engaging composition resource features a thematically-organized collection of readings, a modes-based rhetoric, and a concise handbook. *Between Worlds* opens with more than 75 multi-genre readings reflecting the human condition of being “in between”—generations, cultures, genders, perceptions, points of view. A research chapter with information on using and documenting sources emphasizes the importance of reading, critical thinking, and analysis in all writing.”

This text contains a preface chapter about critical reading and a six-chapter rhetorical section (including one chapter on the modes), a four-chapter handbook section, plus five chapters of readings arranged thematically. The readings range from popular culture to relationships to public controversies.

***The Call to Write*, brief 4th edition, by John Trimbur. Cengage (Houghton Mifflin), 2007.**

**List price: \$81.99 (\$73:46 on Amazon)**

“...*The Call to Write* takes as its starting point the view that writing is much more than a school subject. Writing is an activity individuals and groups rely on to communicate with other, organize their social lives, get work done, entertain themselves, and voice their needs and aspirations.” (Trimbur xxxiv)

In his section, “Distinctive Features...” Trimbur lays out the practical value and range of goals his text focuses upon.

\*Emphasis on rhetorical situations or social contexts, including speeches, news stories, government reports, op-ed pieces, posters, graffiti, ads, flyers, academic articles, literary essays and student work (Part 2, “Writing Projects”)

\*Genre-based writing assignments use the notion of genre as the basis for guided writing assignments (Part 2)

\*Integration of reading and writing works to help students see that reading in college involves understanding how academic writing formulates issues to investigate by considering what others have written. (Part 1, “Writing and Reading”)

\*A focus on visual design, both with regard to text presentation as well as graphics (Part 5, Presenting Your Work”)

\*An emphasis on ethics and the writer’s responsibilities (Part 4, “Writers at Work”)

\*An emphasis on collaborative learning (Part 4)

It is exhaustive in breadth of sample writing contexts and thorough in its coverage of purpose, audience, voice and genre. The author has included a healthy selection of textual samples running from missives to formal arguments. Instructors would have appropriate models to rely upon, whether teaching 1A’s autobiographical retrospectives or the formal research project in 1B. Sections also focus on the writing process, from fieldwork to evaluation of appropriate sources through peer commentary models and presentations. Chapters 13 and 14 cover plagiarism, MLA and APA citation formats, print publications and provide a thorough treatment of print, electronic and “non-traditional” sources (films, TV and radio programs, speeches, etc.).

***The Curious Writer*, 2nd edition, by Bruce Ballenger. Pearson, 2008.**

**List price: \$45.00**

The strength of this text is its emphasis on writing (and reading & seeing) as inquiry: it stresses discovery, questioning, and social context rather than hollow formulas for writing. That being said, it also includes chapters on personal essays, reviews, proposals, arguments, ethnographic essays, research papers, and more. It is very well written, & it’s attractively designed despite its bulk in its longer version. (It’s about 650 pages in the long version, which can accommodate a full-year writing sequence; the concise version is about 450 pages.) The longer version contains about 50 readings and a 75-page handbook; the concise version has about half the readings and no handbook. The concise version was well received by TAs who used it in 2009-2010.

***Patterns for College Writing with 2009 MLA Update: A Rhetorical Reader and Guide.***  
**Laurie G. Kirsznner. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006**  
**List price \$56.95**

Description from publisher: "Patterns also has the most comprehensive coverage of the writing process in a rhetorical reader with a five-chapter mini-rhetoric; the clearest explanations of the patterns of development; and the most thorough support for students of any rhetorical reader. With loads of exciting new readings and updated coverage of working with sources, Patterns for College Writing helps students as no other book does. There's a reason it is the best-selling reader in the country."

Many SJSU faculty have used this text for English 1A and find its readings provoke good discussions with students. The portions devoted to writing instruction are clear, accessible, and fairly thorough, organized around the stages of the writing process and writing the modes. Readings cover a broad range of perspectives, from Malcolm X to Stanley Fish to George Orwell. Newer readings bring in discussion of such popular trends as "friending" on Facebook.

***Writing & Community Action, by Thomas Deans. Pearson, 2002.***  
**List price: \$60.40**

This text is organized around the idea of literacies: academic literacies; community literacies; personal literacies. The text supports a class that takes a traditional "learning academic literacies" approach to English 1A and supports the more common "personal voice" approach to English 1A. But, it is really designed to support instructors who want either a service-learning focus to the whole course or to a single unit.

The book features a nice chapter on academic discourse communities, as well as writing about literature and writing research (if instructors want to add brief forays into those areas in English 1A). The introductory chapter is about the writing process with a selection of oft-assigned readings such as Anne LaMott's "Shitty First Drafts." The second chapter is structured around the perennial "Literacy Narrative" assignment, again replete with frequently assigned readings included.

For those instructors who wish to try out or continue teaching service-learning writing, there is a fulsome chapter on the ethics of writing about, for, or with the local community. The other outstanding feature of this book is that Deans publishes successful student essays as models alongside the assignments in the book.

***Writing Now, Lee Odell and Susan M. Katz. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010.***  
**List price: \$73.95 (\$53.83 on Amazon)**

From the Preface:

"Writing isn't magic, but then magic isn't magic either. Magicians know their craft, and writers must also know their craft."  
--Donald Murray

The authors suggest we replace the word “writing” with “composing.” Students need to analyze visual and verbal information in many different rhetorical settings: essays for composition class, research for biology class, their memoir for discussion on Oprah (my idea), etc.

The authors say the writing courses must help students do the following:

- Understand the rhetorical context, addressing the needs of different audiences.
- Read critically
- Work through the processes of developing ideas and revising a draft
- Communicate through a variety of genres, such as memoirs, reports, proposals, etc.

**Table of Contents:**

Part 1: **Writing Assignments:** Memoirs, profiles, reports, position papers, evaluations, proposals.

Part 2: **Strategies for Design and Research:** Reading & Writing about Visual Images, Designing Pages and Screens, Conducting Field Research, Documenting Sources: MLA & APA style

Part 3: **Strategies for Special Writing Situations:** Writing for essays exams, portfolios, the Community, online, and oral presentations.

This book is glitzy and modern and could very well represent college textbooks of the future. The readings are good and the rhetorical support is very thorough. You could use just Part 1 for the entire semester. The research and documentation section is complete enough to eliminate the need for a handbook, (although grammar and sentence level support would not be represented).

English 1B

***Compose, Design, Advocate*, Anne Frances Wysocki, Dennis A. Lynch. Pearson, 2006.**

**List Price: \$69.33**

Wysocki and Lynch’s *Compose, Design, Advocate* is a genre-based rhetoric with a strong focus on written, oral, and visual modes of composition. The text provides detailed instruction on the rhetorical design of essays, analyzing multimodal visual media, and forging a dialogue between the design, production, and performativity of a composition. *Compose, Design, Advocate* contains a strong advocacy focus, and encourages students to produce rhetorically purposeful and researched documents for a variety of communication contexts. The text might work best in a technologically-driven course that analyzes visual media and the visual rhetoric of document design.

***Critical Thinking, Thoughtful Writing*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, by John Chaffee. Pearson, 2008.  
List price: \$81.99**

A rhetoric with readings, this textbook emphasizes the direct correlation between thinking skills and composing skills. Its premise is that students who have developed higher-order thinking skills will be able to better articulate their ideas through writing and/or other multimedia texts. Thus, each chapter focuses on a particular critical thinking skill (i.e. evaluating perspectives, problem solving, or developing reasoned arguments) with strategies, activities, writing exercises, and readings to supplement the chapter's critical thinking skill.

In Chapter 1, students are introduced to a thinking-writing model. The graphically pleasing model includes five elements: the rhetorical situation, the writing process, core abilities, collaboration, and communicating. The core abilities emphasized are thinking critically, thinking creatively, and writing thoughtfully. The last four chapters of the book walk students through analysis and construction of meaningful arguments. Overall, this book is a good fit for the 1B classroom. The step-by-step approach to the writing process and the emphasis on developing students' abilities to think critically in order to write persuasively are the book's highest appeals.

***Everything's an Argument*, 5th edition, by Andrea A. Lunsford and John J. Ruskiewicz. Bedford /St. Martin's, 2010.  
With readings \$64.95, Brief Edition, 41.95**

The title says it all. The book offers extensive coverage of pathos/ethos/logos and focused chapters on several types of argument, including arguments of fact, of definition, and of cause (and one on arguing through humor). The text also features chapters on proposals, evaluations, rhetorical style, fallacies, use of sources, documentation, and more. The book comes in a "brief edition" without reading and a longer version with seven chapters of argumentative readings, on stereotypes, friendship, bilingualism, food & water, religion, campus diversity, and work. Both editions are visually "hip" and solidly academic.

***Public Literacy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition by Elizabeth Ervin. Pearson, 2003.  
List price: \$31.60**

This is a perfect text for supporting service learning assignments in English 1B classes. Ervin starts the book with an extended discussion of *the public* and "public spheres." These opening chapters should serve well as a framework for writing assignments designed to reach a public audience (as is the case for many service learning assignments in composition classes); these chapters could also easily support assignments written for a teacher about students' service learning experiences as they relate to notions of *the public*. The middle section of the book focuses on typical genres used in service-learning projects: letters, media kits, grant proposals, petitions. Ervin also has a short chapter on research, which covers primary and secondary research as well as assessing credibility of sources. However, this would need to be supplemented with a handbook, because the

online information is out of date (note the 2003 publication date). The book ends with an interesting chapter on careers in public literacy. While these could serve as models for biographies students might write of public servants (either local or national/global), they also can be used to help our 1B students consider the importance of writing across careers. Chapter 10: “Public Literacy, Community Service, and Activism” is out of place. It is a strong chapter full of key definitions for service-learning work, but it comes far too late in the book. Instructors might want to assign it in the first few weeks of class to help familiarize students with the nuances among *service learning*, *activism*, *community service*, *volunteerism*, and *public literacy*. Because most service-learning classes draw many class texts from the community, the brevity of this book works well – one can work through the entire book along with other sets of readings.

***A Sequence for Academic Writing*, Laurence Behrens & Leonard Rosen. Pearson, 2010.**

**List price: \$54.67**

**\*Thanks to Peter Gambrill for the annotation**

The textbook is split into two main sections, the first labeled “Structures” and the second labeled “Strategies.” The chapters in the first sections are organized around different modes of writing, though they are cleverly titled to avoid suggesting the rigid structures of current-traditional rhetoric: Critical Reading and Critique, Explanatory Synthesis, Argument Synthesis, Analysis. The authors of *A Sequence* seem to have taken the criticisms of the process theorists to heart, for within each chapter they mostly avoid rigid structures or outlines, favoring instead open-ended suggestions for organizing different types of writing. In the second main section of the textbook, the authors lean even more heavily on process pedagogy, the centerpiece being Chapter 6-Writing as a Process. They go far beyond the simplistic process outlined by most current-traditional methods, summed up by Tobin as “think, then write”(5). Here there are short sections titled “The Myth of Inspiration” and “The Myth of Talent”; the authors attempt to get the student to think about the process of writing as one of intellectual and personal discovery, not just a means to a finished product.

Behrens and Rosen are not focusing on collaborative learning or writing per se, but they do seem to believe in the power of writing instruction to unlock doors to the professional and academic communities. Their intentions as belied in the introduction also explain how they set about to write and structure the textbook. It is a sprawling set of instructions, meant to encompass every imaginable writing assignment a student might face in college. It may be intimidating for the students—and the instructor(!)—to use such an open-ended text to learn writing, but it includes enough detail and examples to accomplish what the authors set out to do.

*A Sequence* supports a Writing Across the Curriculum or Writing in the Disciplines approach to second semester composition instruction.

***They Say, I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*. Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein. Norton, 2009.**

**List Price: \$ 20.63 (\$16.20 on Amazon)**

Publisher description: “The book that demystifies academic writing, teaching students to frame their arguments in the larger context of what else has been said about their topic—and providing templates to help them make the key rhetorical moves. The best-selling new composition book published in this century, in use at more than 1,000 schools, *They Say / I Say* has essentially defined academic writing, identifying its key rhetorical moves, the most important of which is to summarize what others have said (“they say”) to set up one’s own argument (“I say”). The book also provides templates to help students make these key moves in their own writing. The Second Edition includes a new chapter on reading that shows students how to read for the larger conversation and two new chapters on the moves that matter in the sciences and social sciences.”

Students seemed to find it quite accessible and even sort of hip, with a lively, humorous style. Very thorough coverage of how to join the public discourse, incorporating other people’s ideas and words. No handbook or discussion of research.

**Writing Arguments: A Rhetoric with Readings 8<sup>th</sup> ed., John D. Ramage, John C. Bean, and June Johnson. Pearson, 2010.**  
**List price: \$76.00, (\$39.99 on Amazon)**

The authors preface the text by accentuating an exploratory rather than a debate-driven focus for teaching and learning about formal argument. The 8<sup>th</sup> edition features six parts: (1) framing argument as inquiry; (2) anatomy of argument, including consideration of audience, counterargument and evidence; (3) analysis of argument; (4) further analysis of claims, including an extended section on visual arguments; and (5) use, citation, and documentation of a variety of sources. These are followed by a rather brief appendix featuring fallacies, as well as a further one focused on small-group strategies.

Part 6 provides 235 pages of argumentative essays and visual representations of controversial issues. This expansive section ranges from Martin Luther King Jr.’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail” to Al Gore’s “Nobel Lecture.” Most of these are brief enough to allow for concentration on anywhere from 1 to three arguments per class meeting, giving the instructor great flexibility in shaping the course according to students’ aptitudes and interests.

Each of the text’s 17 chapters also provides samples of both visual and paragraphed arguments appropriate for class discussion. These also feature a multitude of concisely formatted informational and process-oriented highlights, ranging from a helpful of genres to various graphs to examples of idea mapping in support of causal speculation.

The book’s range and depth of discussion, along with its student-centered chapter breakdowns are most suitable to an introduction to formal argument. The text’s cost, balanced against the extent of material available, makes it a reasonable value. My major

quibble is with the relatively short section that covers but a few of the many logical and psychological fallacies students may encounter or commit.