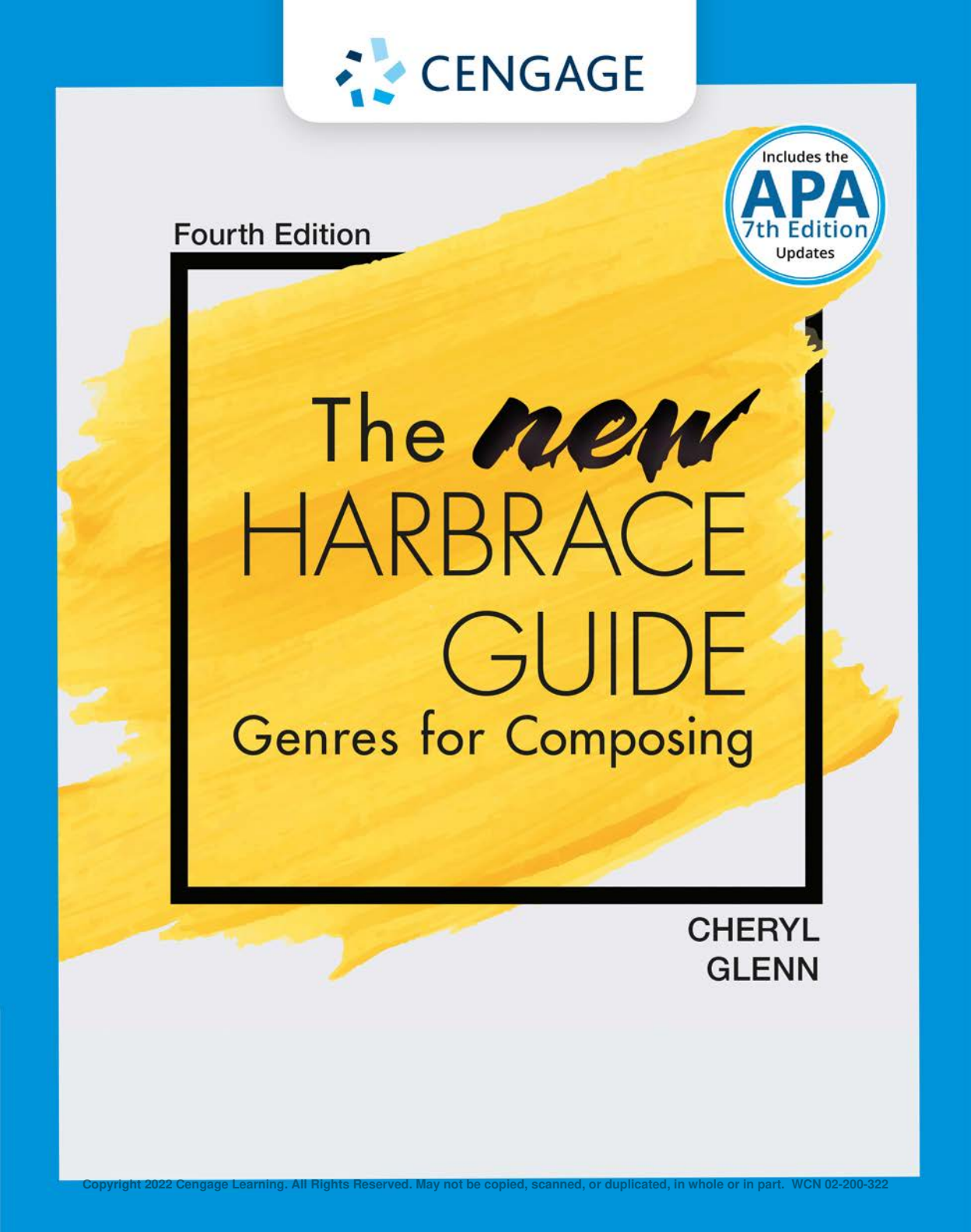

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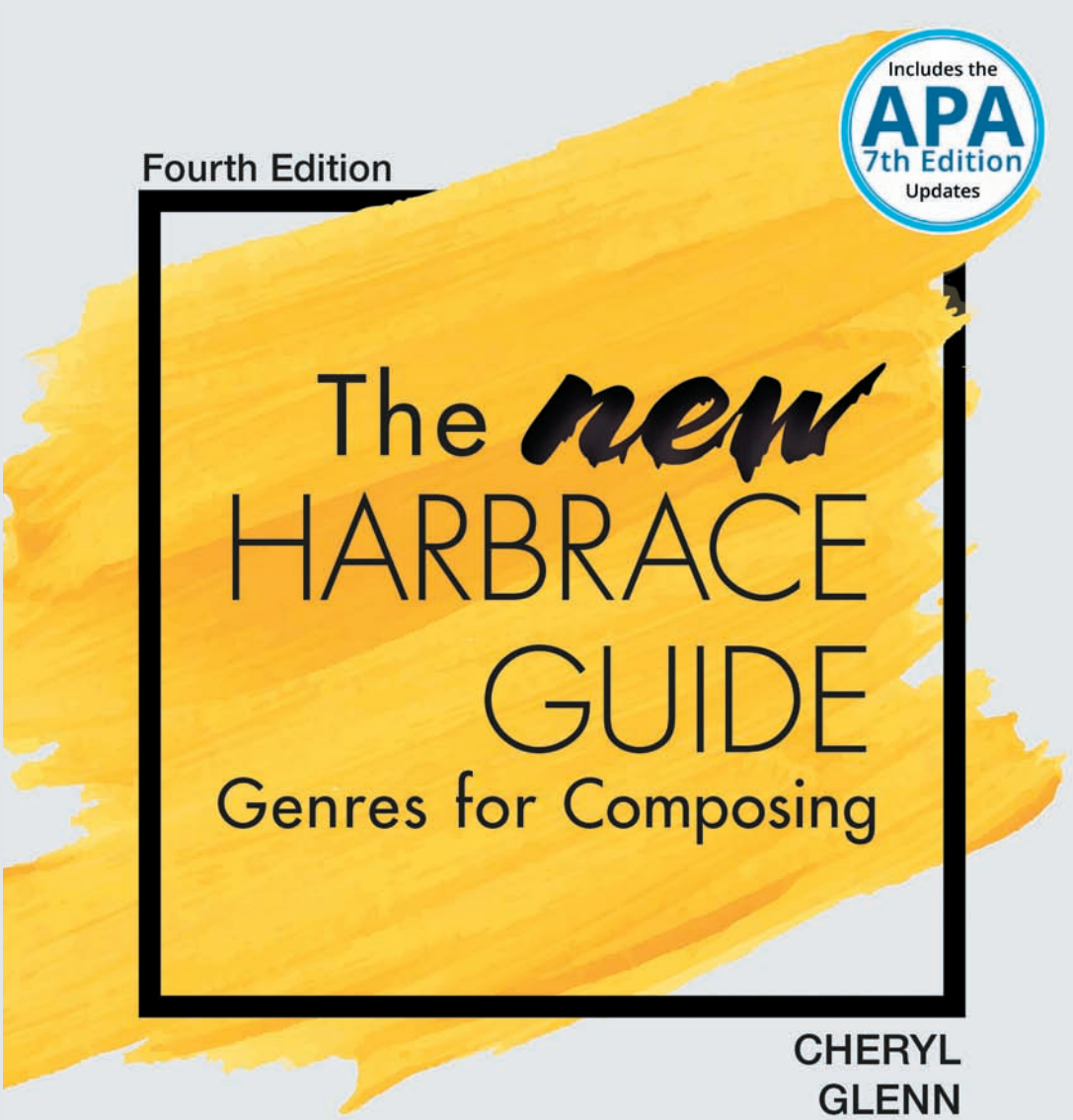

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***The New Harbrace Guide: Genres for Composing*, Fourth Edition**
Cheryl Glenn

Product Team Manager: Catherine Van Der Laan

Product Manager: Matt Filimonov

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Marketing Coordinator: McKenzie Keneavy

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Preface

Preface for the Instructor

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

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

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

Key Features

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

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

New features include

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

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

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

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

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

How Does the Book Work?

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

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

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

What Will You Find Online?

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

Key Features

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

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

Instructor Resources

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

Preface for the Student

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

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

> **You write in order to read what you've written and see if it's OK and, since of course it never is, to rewrite it—once, twice, as many times as it takes to get it to be something you can bear to reread.**
>
> **—Susan Sontag, "Directions: Write, Read, Rewrite. Repeat Steps 2 and 3 as Needed."**

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

What Is a Rhetorical Approach?

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

Part 1: Entering the Conversation

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

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

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

Part 2: Writing Projects

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

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

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

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

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

Part 3: Processes and Strategies for Composing

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Part 4: A Guide to Research

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

Part 5: A Thematic Reader

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

A Value Proposition

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

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

What Does This Mean for You?

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

> **Before I could write what might be called human words in the English language, I eagerly emulated grown-ups' handwriting in pencil scribbles. My first "novels" . . . were tablets of inspired scribbles illustrated by line drawings of chickens, horses and upright cats.**
>
> **—Joyce Carol Oates, "To Invigorate Literary Mind, Start Moving Literary Feet"**

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

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

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

Acknowledgments

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

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

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

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

Gregory J. Underwood, *Pearl River Community College*
Karen Campbell, *Grayson College*
Jody Jones, *Alabama A & M University*
Abigail Crew, *Colorado Mountain College*

Cheryl Glenn
October 2020

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

It's the best treatment of rhetoric I've seen in any text in 8 years of teaching.
—Justin Jory, Salt Lake Community College

The "knowledge transfer" sections highlight re-purposing possibilities for projects to be delivered to different audiences with multimodal opportunities. This is an attractive feature.
—Jerry Peterson, Utah Valley University

Quite honestly, the best outline/guide structure I have seen yet in a text.
—Jamie Sadler, Richmond College

I like the student-friendly language and step-by-step guidance.
—Tyler Farrell, Marquette University

User friendly. Current. I like the structure! —Anna Maheshwari, Schoolcraft College

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

The book takes a rhetorical stance to writing, offering students clear advice for how several different genres can be rhetorically persuasive.
—Jeremiah Dyehouse, University of Rhode Island

This book makes critical thinking relevant to students.
—Krysten Anderson, Roane State Community College

GUIDE TO IDENTIFYING THE ELEMENTS OF ANY RHETORICAL SITUATION

AJ_Watt/Getty Images

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

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

1 Understanding the Rhetorical Situation

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

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

»» RHETORIC SURROUNDS US

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

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

rhetoric
communication to achieve a specific purpose with a specific audience

ACTIVITY: Analyzing the Rhetorical Situation

Your Writing Experience

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

IDENTIFYING A REASON TO WRITE

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

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

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

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

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

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

ACTIVITY: Analyzing the Rhetorical Situation

What Is an Opportunity for Change?

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

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

»» DECIDING TO WRITE

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

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

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

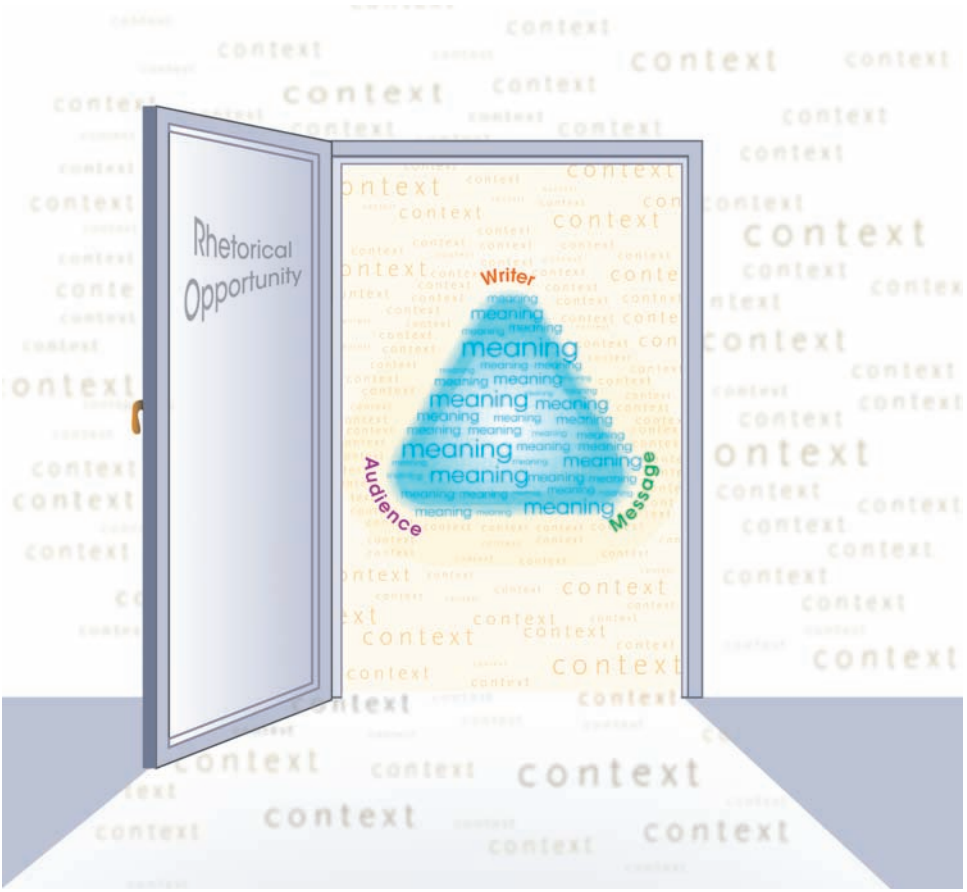


Figure 1.1 *When a writer enters a rhetorical situation, she composes a purposeful message for a specific audience and chooses whether to deliver the message verbally, orally, with images, in print, or digitally.*

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

message the main point of information shaped to influence an audience

audience those who receive and interpret the message of a communication

The Force Awakens // NOVEMBER 4, 2015

Photo 12 / Alamy Stock Photo

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Photo 12/Alamy Stock Photo

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

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

»» ANALYZING THE ELEMENTS OF THE RHETORICAL SITUATION

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

rhetorical situation the context that influences effective communication

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

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

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

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

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

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

ACTIVITY: Analyzing the Rhetorical Situation

Identify the Elements of the Rhetorical Situation

For each of the rhetorical situations in the examples that follow, reflect on the way that the genre, medium of delivery, and stance are considered to help you craft an effective response to the opportunity and the purpose, as well as the audience and the message.

- A friend of a friend, whom you have never met, has invited you to be his Facebook friend.
- You are applying for a scholarship and need three letters of recommendation. You do not know any of your instructors very well.
- As a member of a wedding party, you are expected to make a toast at the reception in front of two hundred guests.

After considering the following rhetorical situations, share your response to the numbered activities with the class.

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

purpose in rhetoric, the reason for a communication

rhetorical purpose the specific change the writer wants to accomplish through the use of language

rhetorical audience the specific audience most capable of being changed by a message or of bringing about change

THINKING RHETORICALLY ABOUT PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

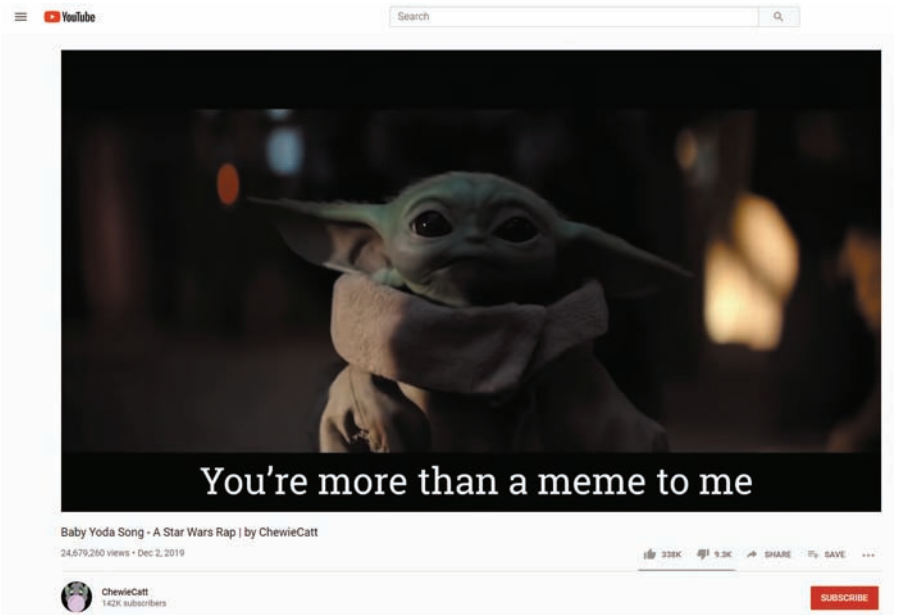
Many writers equate **purpose** with their reason for writing: they are fulfilling an assignment, or meeting a deadline; they want a good grade or want to make money. When you are writing with a **rhetorical purpose**, however, you move beyond goals like those to consider how you might influence a specific **rhetorical audience**, those people you hope to influence in some way.

Although you may not have the budget to create a media project on the scale of *StarWars*, their producers implicitly understand—and expect—that their

creations will be appropriated and reused in any number of different ways in the culture at large. With the launch of their digital streaming channel, Disney+, the creators of their tentpole series *The Mandalorian* were rewarded when one of the main characters, "Baby Yoda," became a viral sensation. Possessed of preternatural cuteness, Baby Yoda has become a favorite subject for fan posts, GIFs, videos, and memes, a true mark of success in terms of reaching a rhetorical audience. In one such fan-created video (which has had over 18 million views at the time of writing) the singer even croons, "You're more than a meme to me" (Figure 1.4). The humor of the line is a direct consequence of the author's understanding of who the core audience for the video will be: fans who love Baby Yoda memes.

As you direct your message to your rhetorical audience, you will need to keep in mind the nature of your audience (their power, status, values, interests) and their character (sympathetic or unsympathetic, opposed to or in favor of your message). These people are capable of being influenced by your message and bringing about change, either by their own actions or their influence on others. How you approach your rhetorical audience affects the success of your message. Your writing conveys an attitude toward your topic and audience, your **stance**. Try to shape your stance in terms of content, tone, examples, appropriateness,

stance the attitude your writing conveys toward your topic, purpose, and audience



Source: YouTube

Figure 1.4 *Baby Yoda from the Disney+ Star Wars spinoff,* The Mandalorean, *inspired* A Baby Yoda Song - A Star Wars Rap *by ChewieCatt.*

and timeliness to enhance its chances of influencing your audience. Consider whether you are talking to your instructor, one of your parents, your physician, or a friend—and how in each case you would respectfully and truthfully represent your beliefs and values if your audience held beliefs and values that differed from yours. Try to keep in mind the kind of information you would need to deliver—as well as how and when to deliver it.

»» THINKING RHETORICALLY ABOUT GENRE AND MEDIA

As you know by now, narrowing your purpose is important because each rhetorical opportunity for change requires its own audience, genre, and medium of delivery. Fortunately, genre and medium are fairly easy to identify.

Considering Genre

genre a category of writing that has a particular format and features, such as memoir or argument

A **genre** is a type of writing categorized by a well-established format with familiar features. Writers deliberately choose a single genre or a purposeful combination of genres in order to reach a specific audience. For instance, the genre of memoir usually follows a chronological narration (sometimes peppered with flash forwards or flashbacks), features distinctive characters who contribute to dialogue in unique ways, and presents a well-described setting—all of which are rich in sensory details. You would never mistake a memoir for a lab report. And you would not want to submit a memoir instead of a résumé to a potential employer. But, because the features of any genre are flexible and adaptable, you might employ many of the same features as those in a traditional memoir in a job application letter—such as describing the significant points in your life that led you to a particular career. Or you might include your personal experience as evidence in an argument. And you might find yourself considering a memoir as a historical document in your research. Some familiar genres include the position argument, profile, evaluation, and proposal. The more you learn about the qualities of each of these genres, the easier it will be to determine which genre is most effective for your message and when it would be effective to blend genres to best address your rhetorical situation.

medium method of communication: oral, visual, verbal, digital, or print

media (plural of *medium*) *mass media* is a term used for media like radio, television, and various online forums that reach a broad audience

Considering Medium of Delivery

You choose a particular **medium** (method of communication)—or a combination of spoken, visual, written (digital or print) **media**—for delivering your message because it most effectively reaches your rhetorical audience. How you deliver

your message can be just as important as the content of that message, whether you are speaking, building a website, or text messaging. A person without a powerful computer may prefer print documents; a techno-wizard may abhor paper and prefer to receive everything digitally.

Because we enjoy so many ways of communicating—visually, verbally, digitally—we rarely stop to consider why we have chosen a particular medium for delivery. Thinking rhetorically, however, you will consider which medium you should use to deliver your purposeful message in order to reach your rhetorical audience: a letter, an e-mail, a phone message, a greeting card, an oral presentation with PowerPoint, or a YouTube video. Naming the medium is not as important as analyzing the reasons for the writer's decision, however. What are the advantages to this choice of medium? Are there limitations, or disadvantages, in this choice? Should you deliver your message orally (face to face or over the phone), in writing (using a letter or note, an e-mail or instant message, or a web page), or via film, video, still images, or other visuals? Where might you most successfully deliver that message: in class, at church, at the coffee shop, at a town meeting? For instance, if you are interviewing for a job, would you prefer to present yourself on paper, in person, over Skype, or in a phone call?

In the last few years, students have begun to use multimedia to address rhetorical opportunities in a number of inventive ways. *TXTmob*, *coup de texte*, *going mobile*, *text brigades*, and *swarms* are some of the terms used all over the world for the ways political mobilizations are conducted, allowing group leaders to control, minute by minute, the appearance and movements of demonstrators. The demonstrators themselves—the TXTmobbers and text brigaders—analyze the multimedia messages in order to read the situation, decide what to do, and stay synchronized. Thanks to such untraditional media outlets as Twitter and YouTube, the rest of the world became aware of Iraqi protests over the internet and satellite channel shutdowns ordered by the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Major General Abdul Karim Khalaf in 2019 (Figure 1.5).

Not all situations that call for multimedia responses or analysis involve wide-scale political movements. Not everyone will be able to stream videos or download podcasts. While some people might be browsing from a smartphone or a powerful notebook, others might be using a computer lacking the capacity to handle large video or audio downloads.

Sajjad Harsh/ShutterStock.com

Figure 1.5 *Najaf, Iraq - January 10, 2020, Iraqis demonstrate against the internet shutdowns imposed by the government.*

Mario Tama/Getty Images

Figure 1.6 *The "I'm Not A Plastic Bag" tote was designed by Hindmarch in collaboration with Antidote and the global social change movement We Are What We Do (now known as Shift).*

Still others may not always have access to broadband connections. Knowing that people could be easily reached with the use of everyday items, designer Anya Hindmarch sent messages on tote bags as an expression of creative vision as well as a political statement (Figure 1.6).

In other words, accessibility is always a rhetorical issue for you and your audience: the medium of delivery you select affects how much of, and what parts of, your message an audience ultimately sees, hears, and appreciates. Thus, your delivery choices determine not only who constitutes your audience but also how your audience experiences your message.

ASSIGNMENT: IDENTIFYING REASONS TO WRITE

Whether you are reading an essay, listening to a speech, or looking at a visual, you will understand the message better if you begin by determining the rhetorical opportunity that calls for specific words or visuals. Very often, the responses you are reading or viewing call for even further responses. Whether your response is spoken, written, or composed visually, its power lies in your understanding of the rhetorical opportunity. Reading for rhetorical opportunity helps you develop your skills in analyzing the way the elements of the rhetorical situation work together to influence change.

Life as We Know It

MICHAEL BÉRUBÉ

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English professor Michael Bérubé writes widely about academic matters: curriculum, teaching loads, classroom management, tenure, and cultural studies. But with the birth of his second son, James (Jamie), Bérubé ventured into another kind of writing aimed at a wider audience. The following piece is from the introduction to Life as We Know It: A Father, a Family, and an Exceptional Child, *a chronicle of his family's experiences with Jamie, who has Down syndrome.*

My little Jamie loves lists: foods, colors, animals, numbers, letters, states, classmates, parts of the body, days of the week, modes of transportation, characters who live on Sesame Street, and the names of the people who love him. Early last summer, I hoped his love of lists—and his ability to catalogue things *into* lists—would stand him in good stead during what would undoubtedly be a difficult "vacation" for anyone, let alone a three-year-old child with Down syndrome: a three-hour drive to Chicago, a rush-hour flight to LaGuardia, a cab to Grand Central, a train to Connecticut—and *then* smaller trips to New York, Boston, and Old Orchard Beach, Maine. Even accomplishing the first of these mission objectives—arriving safely at O'Hare—required a precision and teamwork I do not always associate with my family. I dropped off Janet and nine-year-old Nick at the terminal with the baggage, then took Jamie to long-term parking with me while they checked in, and then entertained Jamie all the way back to the terminal, via bus and shuttle train. We sang about the driver on the bus, and we counted all the escalator steps and train stops, and when we finally got to our plane, I told Jamie, *Look, there's Mommy and Nick at the gate! They're yelling that we're going to lose our seats! They want to know why it took us forty-five minutes to park the car!*

All went well from that point on, though, and in the end, I suppose you could say Jamie got as much out of his vacation as might any toddler being whisked up and down New England. He's a seasoned traveler, and he thrives on shorelines, family gatherings, and New Haven pizza. And he's good with faces and names.

Then again, as we learned toward the end of our brief stay in Maine, he doesn't care much for amusement parks. Not that Nick did either, at three. But apparently one of the attractions of Old Orchard Beach, for my wife and her siblings, was the small beachfront arcade and amusement park in town, which they associated with their own childhoods. It was an endearing strip, with a roller coaster just the right size for Nick—exciting, mildly scary, but with no loop-the-loops, rings of fire, or oppressive G forces. We strolled among bumper cars, cotton candy, games of chance and skill, and a striking number of French-Canadian tourists: perhaps the first time our two little boys had ever seen more than one Bérubé family in one place. James, however, wanted nothing to do with any of the rides, and though he loves to pretend-drive and has been on bumper cars before, he squalled so industriously before the ride began as to induce the bumper cars operator to let him out of the car and refund his two tickets.

Jamie finally settled in next to a train ride designed for children five and under or thereabouts, which, for two tickets, took its passengers around an oval layout and over a bridge four times. I found out quickly enough that Jamie didn't want to *ride* the ride; he merely wanted to stand at its perimeter, grasping the partition with both hands and counting the cars—one, two, three, four, five, six—as they went by. Sometimes, when the train traversed the bridge, James would punctuate it with tiny

jumps, saying, "Up! Up! Up!" But for the most part, he was content to hang onto the metal bars of the partition, grinning and counting—and, when the train came to a stop, pulling my sleeve and saying, "More, again."

This went on for about half an hour, well past the point at which I could convincingly share Jamie's enthusiasm for tracking the train's progress. As it went on my spirits began to sink in a way I do not recall having felt before. Occasionally it will occur to Janet or to me that Jamie will always be "disabled," that his adult and adolescent years will undoubtedly be more difficult emotionally—for him and for us—than his early childhood, that we will never *not* worry about his future, his quality of life, whether we're doing enough for him. But usually these moments occur in the relative comfort of abstraction, when Janet and I are lying in bed at night and wondering what will become of us all. When I'm *with* Jamie, by contrast, I'm almost always fully occupied by taking care of his present needs rather than by worrying about his future. When he asks to hear the Beatles because he loves their cover of Little Richard's "Long Tall Sally," I just play the song, sing along, and watch him dance with delight; I do not concern myself with extraneous questions such as whether he'll ever distinguish early Beatles from late Beatles, Paul's songs from John's, originals from covers. These questions are now central to Nick's enjoyment of the Beatles, but that's Nick for you. Jamie is entirely *sui generis*, and as long as I'm with him I can't think of him as anything but Jamie.

I have tried. Almost as a form of emotional exercise, I have tried, on occasion, to step back and see him as others might see him, as an instance of a category, one item on the long list of human subgroups. *This is a child with Down syndrome,* I say to myself. *This is a child with a developmental disability.* It never works: Jamie remains Jamie to me. I have even tried to imagine him as he would have been seen in other eras, other places: *This is a retarded child.* And even: *This is a Mongoloid child.* This makes for unbearable cognitive dissonance. I can imagine that people might think such things, but I cannot imagine how they might think them in a way that prevents them from seeing Jamie *as* Jamie. I try to recall how I saw such children when I was a child, but here I guiltily draw a blank: I don't remember seeing them at all, which very likely means that I never quite saw them *as* children. Instead I remember a famous passage from Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations:* "'Seeing-as' is not part of perception. And for this reason it is *like* seeing, and then again *not* like." Reading Wittgenstein, I often think, is something like listening to a brilliant and cantankerous uncle with an annoying fondness for koans [riddles]. But on this one, I know exactly what he means.

ACTIVITY: Analyzing the Rhetorical Situation

"Life as We Know it"

1. What rhetorical opportunity called for the writing of this essay? State that opportunity in one sentence.
2. Who composed this message? What information does the writer supply about his identity?
3. What does this essay say? Compile the details that describe the writer's feelings about his son; then write one sentence that conveys Bérubé's main message.
4. Why does the essay say that? Drawing on your previous answer, identify three or four passages from the text where Bérubé supports his main message.
5. How does the essay respond to that opportunity? What change in attitude, opinion, or action does the author wish to influence in his audience?