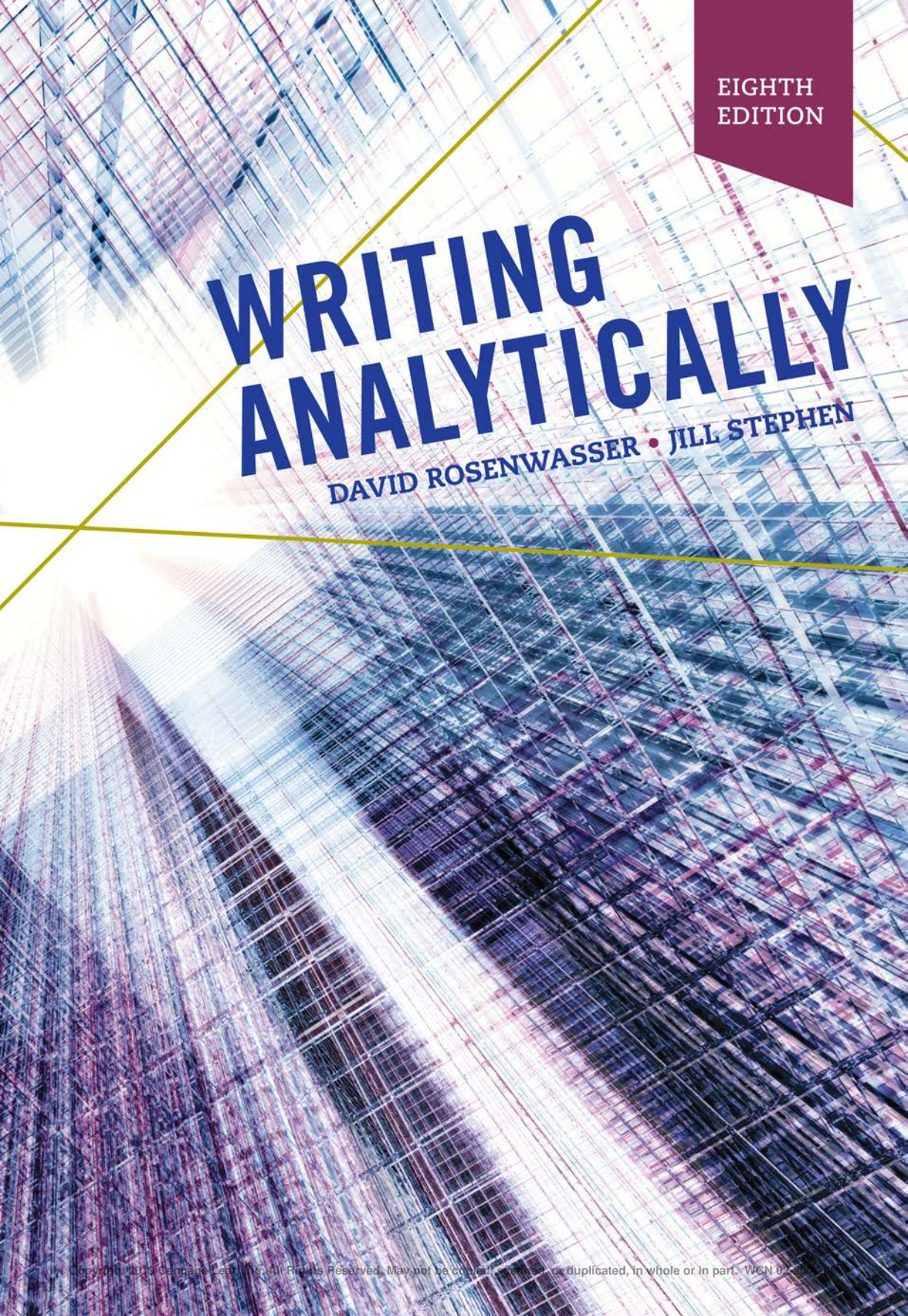

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WRITING ANALYTICALLY

EIGHTH EDITION

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PREFACE

Nearly three decades ago, we started writing the book that would become *Writing Analytically*. It is, as far as we know, still the only book-length text available focused on analytical writing. Analysis is not the only form of writing that students need to learn, but it is the one they will most often be called on to do in college and beyond. We continue to believe in the goal of helping students adopt analytical habits of mind, because we see this as the best way to help students become adults who are capable of sustained acts of reflection in a culture that doesn't sufficiently promote this goal.

Our aim in this book has been to evolve a common language for talking about writing, one that can move beyond the specialized vocabularies of different academic disciplines. We have worked to isolate and define the specific, writing-based cognitive skills that effective writers have at their disposal, skills that many students lack or simply don't recognize in their own thinking. These skills have become "the heuristics"—the moves and strategies—at the heart of the book.

Writing Analytically was something of an accident for us, one of those things you think will be a short detour in life that turns out to be a main road. The college at which we had just arrived was in the process of developing a Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program in which all faculty, not just English department faculty, would be teaching writing-intensive courses. Since we were the only ones on campus with training in writing pedagogy, we were asked to offer a week-long seminar for faculty on how to teach writing.

During the early years offering the seminar, we asked faculty to read the usual essays about writing that graduate students in English, Rhetoric, and Composition normally read. We asked our colleagues to freewrite about these materials and to keep a journal of their responses to the reading and to seminar discussion—and, if they were willing, to share these with us. And share they did. Their responses were filled with insecurity and self-doubt ("You want me to immerse myself in the welter of confusion that my students are experiencing as they try to learn?") and sometimes with anger ("So you want my students to sit in a circle and share their feelings about DNA?"). Prompted by this kind of honest talk across disciplinary lines, we started out on our project of studying what faculty wanted from student writing, and what students might not readily understand about the kinds of writing they were being asked to do in their college courses—something that our lives inside an English department might not have inspired us to do.

The clearest consensus we have found among college faculty is, in fact, on the kind of writing they say they want from their students: not issue-based argument, not personal reflection (the "reaction" paper), not passive summary,

but analysis, with its patient and methodical inquiry into the meaning of information. Here, in brief, is what we have learned about what faculty want:

- Analysis rather than passive summary
- Analysis before argument: understanding in depth before taking a stand
- Alternatives to agree-disagree & like-dislike responses
- Tolerance of uncertainty
- Respect for complexity
- Ability to apply theories from reading, using them as lenses
- Ability to use secondary sources in ways other than plugging them in as "answers."

We also discovered that there was no common language out there for talking about analysis with students and faculty beyond the simple definition of dividing a subject into its parts. Books on writing tended to devote a chapter at most to the subject, and sometimes as little as a couple of paragraphs in a chapter on rhetorical modes. Brief guides on writing in particular subject areas (for example, writing about economics, writing about film) tended to do a better job of explaining analytical habits of mind. As useful as they are, however, these books don't easily help students recognize common methods and values, as they move from course to course and department to department.

Here, in brief, are some definitions of analysis that we have derived from our work with faculty across the curriculum:

- Analysis seeks to discover what something means. An analytical argument makes claims for how something might be best understood, and in what context.
- Analysis deliberately delays evaluation and judgment.
- Analysis begins in and values uncertainty rather than starting from settled convictions.
- Analytical arguments are usually pluralistic; they tend to try on more than one way of thinking about how something might be best understood.

But these definitions alone are not enough. We thought, and still do, that the key to improving students' writing is helping them to become more aware of their own habits of mind. We thought, and still do, that this was a matter of attitude, not just of skills and knowledge of rules about writing. We believed, and still do, that process-oriented pedagogy need not be implicitly Romantic in theory and practice, but could instead—in keeping with the ideas of John Dewey—be methodical, consisting of teachable mental activities that students could consciously develop and practice, both individually and together.

Going into its eighth edition, *Writing Analytically* has been through many changes, but it is still what we hoped it would be in the beginning: a

process-oriented guide to analytical writing that can serve students' needs at different stages in their college careers and in different disciplines. We hope this new edition will continue to provide a basis for conversation—between faculty and students, between students and students, and, especially, between writers and their own writing. When students and teachers can share the means of idea production, class discussion and writing become better connected, and students can more easily learn to see that good ideas don't just happen—they're made.

New to This Edition

- The biggest change in this edition is a new chapter called "Thinking Like a Writer" (Chapter 5). The chapter's aim is to help writers become more confident about and more engaged with their own writing. After a brief review of the heuristics in the book's first four chapters, the chapter offers a variety of writing prompts including description-based observation exercises, ways of keeping a Writer's Notebook, and experiments with personal writing as a means of learning to use writing as a mode of inquiry. The emphasis throughout the chapter is on making the writing classroom a collaborative space. Toward that end, the chapter suggests alternatives to the usual ways of prompting revision and of working in groups with other writers.
- We have located the book's chapters in three units in order to better distinguish different phases of the writing process and different levels of concern. **Unit One** contains the book's primary observation heuristics along with definition of the aims and methods of analysis. **Unit Two** addresses issues relevant to writing analytical papers such as finding and developing a thesis, finding and evaluating sources, and putting sources into conversation in research-based writing. **Unit Three** explains forms and formats across the curriculum, basic writing errors and how to fix them, and ways of becoming more adept at seeing sentence shapes and understanding the impact of various style choices.
- We have relocated the "Interpretation" chapter (now Chapter 3) so that it comes immediately after and is better connected with the book's opening two chapters, "The Five Analytical Moves" and "Reading Analytically."
- We have rearranged the thesis chapter to better foreground its primary heuristic—the six steps for making a thesis evolve.
- We have extensively rewritten the chapter on research-based writing ("Conversing with Sources"), adding new and more accessible examples of effective student writing about sources.
- The chapter on finding, evaluating, and citing sources (including online sources) has been revised and updated by its author, a reference librarian.

- The table of contents more clearly flags each chapter's heuristics, "Try This" exercises, and "Voices from Across the Curriculum."
- There is now a two-page chart of many of the book's heuristics located inside the back cover.
- We have done what we could to correct infelicities of style and to make the book's explanations more concise—while still respecting students' need for rationale in support of our advice on how to become smarter, more observant, and more independent thinkers and writers.

How to Use This Book

For a quick introduction to the ideas and activities that the book offers, read the "Overview" paragraphs at the beginning of each chapter.

For a compact guide to the book's heuristics, see the two-page chart inside the back cover. *Writing Analytically* is activity-based; it offers a variety of ways to make writing happen in the classroom and to help students function collaboratively as learning communities.

To sample the kind of writing-to-learn assignments the book suggests, browse the "Try This" exercises dispersed throughout the book's chapters. These can be used to generate class discussion and as prompts for short writing assignments to be done in class or as homework.

There is also an extensive Instructor's Manual for *Writing Analytically* that is available to teachers of the book. It contains a wealth of materials on writing pedagogy as well as detailed discussions of how to work with each chapter in the book. If you are teaching the book, contact your Cengage representative to get access to a copy.

Although we assume that users of this book will most often wish to provide their own writing assignments and readings, we have provided writing assignments at the end of each chapter that can be adapted to various kinds of course content and various levels of student readiness for college writing. (*Writing Analytically with Readings*, 3rd edition, contains a series of analytical readings arranged into five thematic units.)

The following features of *Writing Analytically* should eliminate, in most cases, the need for an additional handbook:

- A concise but thorough guide to finding, evaluating, and citing sources—both print and digital (Chapter 9)
- A chapter with exercises, a punctuation guide, and a compact glossary of grammatical terms that teaches students how to recognize, understand, and correct nine basic writing errors (Chapter 12)
- A chapter on syntax and word choice that teaches students how to discern different sentence shapes and understand them not in terms of a single one-size-fits-all set of rules but as a range of options with different rhetorical effects (Chapter 11)

- A chapter on conversing with sources in research-based writing (Chapter 8)
- Extended discussion of various organizational schemes and discipline-specific formats across the curriculum (Chapters 6, 7, and 10).

Using Unit One: The Analytical Frame of Mind

Spend as much time as you can afford to spend on **Chapter 1** ("The Five Analytical Moves") and **Chapter 2** ("Reading Analytically"), giving students the necessary practice to make these chapters' observation heuristics habitual before moving on to the more paper-oriented focus of Unit Two. The rest of the book rests on the assumption that students have learned to apply these heuristics informally to everything they are asked to read and think about.

The primary goal of the heuristics is to habituate students to being more observant, less quick to move to judgments, and more able to move from observations to implications—which is not the same thing as selecting pieces of evidence solely for the purpose of supporting some single claim. These goals require hands-on practice. Students are asked to recognize that observation is not natural, but learned.

When students are first learning to do The Method (looking for patterns of repetition and contrast), we often ask them to produce the lists and the single analytical paragraph that the exercise calls for as a regular homework assignment. In this way, they get repeated, low-stakes practice in thinking and writing analytically before being asked to present the results of their thinking in a more formal, thesis-driven or disciplinary format-driven mode.

For those instructors who need to assign papers from an early point in the semester, the writing prompts that are part of the heuristics called The Method and Notice & Focus in Chapter 1 can easily generate a series of short papers.

The heuristics in Chapter 2, form a sequence that students can use with reading that they are asked to prepare for class: Commonplace Book, Pointing, Paraphrase × 3, Passage-Based Focused Freewriting, Finding the Pitch and the Complaint, Uncovering Assumptions, Reformulating Binaries.

As these practices become habitual, students become increasingly comfortable doing the work for themselves, rather than expecting teachers to explain the readings and other course materials for them. The chapter's heuristics, like others in the book, help students learn to find their own starting points for writing and discussion, which we think is an important skill for them to learn as part of learning to write.

Chapter 3, "Interpretation," follows from and further develops the move from observation to implication stressed in Chapters 1 and 2. The chapter answers two questions: What makes some interpretations better than others? and What makes interpretation more than a matter of opinion? The chapter's primary concept is that interpretation always takes place within some context that a conscientious writer takes care to specify along with his or her reasons for choosing it.

Chapter 4, "Responding to Traditional Writing Assignments More Analytically," shows students how to achieve greater analytical depth on traditional kinds of college writing topics, such as summary, comparison/contrast, and personal response. See, for example, the heuristic we call DIFFERENCE WITHIN SIMILARITY for sharpening the focus of comparing and contrasting.

Chapter 5, "Thinking Like a Writer" (new to this edition) offers a variety of writing assignments and exercises designed to encourage students to use the writing process as a source of ideas and personal growth. The chapter contains projects, such as keeping a Writer's Notebook (not the same thing as a diary or a journal) and doing descriptive (observational) freewriting. The assignment at the end of this chapter, "Writing a Literacy Narrative," is one that many writing courses start with. This chapter also contains rubrics for students' self-evaluation and offers two formats for conducting small group peer review that rely on description rather than critique.

Using Unit Two: Writing the Analytical Paper

Early in a writing course, while students are learning to use the heuristics in Unit One, you might have students read about and try in **Chapter 6** ("Reasoning from Evidence to Claims") the practice we call 10 on 1 (saying 10 things about a single, representative example) as an alternative to 1 on 10—attaching the same, usually overly general claim to a series of examples. The chapter offers alternatives to rigidly deductive formats (such as five-paragraph form) that inhibit analyzing evidence in depth. The chapter explains the problem with mustering evidence only in order to prove that "I am right."

Chapter 7, "Finding and Developing a Thesis," confronts the idea that a thesis is an unchanging (static) claim and shows students how to use complicating evidence to make a thesis evolve. The chapter emphasizes the importance of qualifying claims. This orientation toward thesis-driven writing is challenging for students, and so we usually delay teaching it until students have learned in Unit One how to use writing in order to arrive at ideas. A good way to ease students into the methods prescribed in this chapter (under "Six Ways of Making a Thesis Evolve") is to have them track the evolution of a thesis in things they are reading.

Chapter 8, "Conversing with Sources," offers alternatives to agreeing or disagreeing with sources and to plugging them in as answers. It shows students how to do more than simply assemble sources in support of (or against) some point of view. A good place to start is to ask them to choose a single sentence from source A and a single sentence from source B and use these to determine what each author would say to the point of view implicit in the other's statement.

Chapter 9, "Finding, Evaluating and Citing Sources," was written by a college reference librarian, Kelly Cannon. It takes students on a tour of the research process, introducing them to useful indexes and bibliographies, showing