

Writing Matters: A Handbook for Writing and Research (Third Edition)

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This present book is the 3rd edition of *Writing Matters: A Handbook for Writing and Research* by Rebecca Moore Howard. It is one of the must-have handbooks for EFL teachers and university lecturers who teach academic writing as well as graduate students and researchers who are writing their thesis and preparing their academic papers for publication. This finely crafted writing handbook offers significant pedagogical benefits for both lecturers and students with advanced English proficiency throughout its handy contents and highly applicable knowledge of how to write academically with appropriate grammar, language styles and presentation details. This book consists of 58 chapters grouped together into ten parts, with 863 pages of contents excluding the index and glossary of key terms. This edition contains sample student projects, diverse professional writing models, and coverage of current databases and technology. In addition, the other outstanding features of this edition include current MLA style and APA citation guidelines, a complete and practical grammar guide for composition writing, and the *Writing Responsibly* tutorials.

This academic writing handbook begins with Part One: Writing Matters, which covers the first six chapters and focuses on foundation knowledge for the writing process. Readers can learn to craft their writing systematically following the process of planning, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and formatting. In Part Two: Reasoning Matters, critical reading and thinking knowledge is covered from Chapters 7 - 8 to develop argumentative writing skills. Part Three: Media Matters from Chapters 9 - 11 can help the readers to learn to craft effective writing pieces. The topics of designing printed and electronic media; writing for multiple media; and presenting with multiple media allow readers not only to develop planning and writing skills, but also format their message layout to suit particular communication platforms. Part Four: Research Matters (Chapters 12 - 17) contains essential research writing knowledge, ranging from planning and gathering resources for a research project to writing a research report with proper citation. Part Five: Documentation Matters continues to discuss academic citation in more detail as it emphasizes compiling and citing sources in MLA, APA, Chicago, and CSE styles, in Chapters 18 - 21. Part Six: Genre Matters provides readers with practical models in various genres including Chapter 22: Writing in Literature and Other Humanities; Chapter 23: Writing in Sciences and Social Sciences; Chapter 24: Preparing for Taking an Essay Exam; and Chapter 25: Professional and Civic Writing. Part Seven: Style Matters (Chapters 26 - 32) presents practical guides for writing concisely with appropriate language strategies such as using effective words, coordination and subordination, and parallelism to help improve writing accuracy. Part Eight: Grammar Matters (Chapters 33 - 42) provides readers with a complete English grammar reference guide. Part Nine: Language Matters (Chapters 43 - 47) gives functional guidance for

effectively using particular grammar features that can be problematic for non-native speakers/writers of English. Finally, Part Ten: Detail Matters (Chapters 48 – 58) completes this writing handbook with clear and concise guidance for punctuation and mechanics.

As each part of this book can be utilized independently, university lecturers can select individual parts that cover particular writing issues for certain courses. They can direct their focus on specific aspects of writing without having to drag students through the entire book. For example, university lecturers who teach a basic writing course for first year undergraduate students can develop their curriculum and course materials based on Part One of this book, which covers fundamental knowledge of the writing process including planning, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and formatting. In order to develop a critical reading and writing course for second year students, lecturers could use Part Two: Reasoning Matters, and Part Seven: Style Matters. These two parts combined could be appropriate materials for students on an advanced writing course, helping improve their analytical and critical thinking skills as well as their ability to write with compelling language. In addition, those who teach and develop pre-sessional courses for students at graduate level can take advantage of Part Four: Research Matters and Part Five: Documentation Matters, which provide practical contents focusing on planning, gathering, evaluating, and using information responsibly. This can help provide a good foundation knowledge for graduate students, teaching them to write accurately and appropriately, take concise notes and avoid plagiarism by accurately citing the sources. Apart from being a good book for developing a research writing course, it can also be a complete grammar reference. Because it covers all grammar topics necessary for writing, this book can benefit EFL teachers who need to provide their students with particular instructions to help them improve both accuracy and fluency in academic writing. Part Nine, in particular, offers guidance for correctly using discrete grammar items including articles, auxiliary verbs, prepositions, and solving other problematic grammar issues.

In addition to the benefits for university lecturers and EFL teachers, this book is an excellent resource for graduate students who are preparing themselves for qualifying or comprehensive exams as it offers helpful guidance for writing exam essays with appropriate writing techniques as presented in Chapter 24. Graduate students who are pursuing their masters or doctoral degrees can consult this practical academic and research writing handbook when polishing their writing assignments, term papers, thesis and other academic publications. Furthermore, when writing their thesis, they can follow effective guidelines for appropriately compiling information, accurately citing resources, and crafting academic compositions with concise, correct, and comprehensible language. The writing techniques and language tactics presented in this book, ranging from selecting appropriate vocabulary at word level to employing effective composition at discourse level, can be very useful for graduate students in all fields.

As writing is considered the most basic tool for keeping records and sharing knowledge, researchers can make their notebooks and reports useful to others by carefully writing clear explanations of their methods, data, and findings (Howard, 2018, pp. 475). This book is hence considered extremely beneficial for researchers. It offers empirical guidance on planning, gathering, evaluating, and using information responsibly when conducting a research project and writing research reports for publication. The practical knowledge of taking notes properly and citing expertly to avoid plagiarism is very useful for researchers who intend to get their research papers and academic articles published. Researchers can follow the research writing guidelines

and citation tutorials in order to write accurate in-text citations and compile references in MLA, APA, CSE, and Chicago styles.

However, this book is likely to be rather complicated for EFL students whose English proficiency is at beginner or intermediate level. Despite the glossary of key terms, beginner and intermediate students could still find the detailed content of this book somewhat overwhelming. They might struggle with the writing exercises as there are no concrete answer keys provided. The open-ended exercises and self-assessment checklists can probably help promote learner autonomy among advanced and experienced students (River, 2002), yet it may not work very well with students whose language proficiency is rather limited. This current edition of Howard's (2018) "Writing Matters: A Handbook for Writing and Research" can be highly recommended for lecturers of English, researchers and graduate students whose English proficiency is at advanced level.

About the Author:

Pirada Anuwecha is a lecturer of English Language Program Department of Humanities, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Chandrakasem Rajabhat University. Before taking the present post she taught at Air Technical Training School, RTAF. She received a bachelor's degree in English from Mahasarakham University, and a master's degree in English for Specific Purposes from Kasetsart University. She is currently attending an international/interdisciplinary PhD program majoring in English as an International Language at Chulalongkorn University. Her current field of research studies is focusing on English language assessment and evaluation. She is interested in developing English for Specific Purposes tests with constructs and content appropriate to authentic target language usage.

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