

review the sample genre analysis paper and our discussion of it in this chapter). For this assignment, write a paper (4 to 5 pages) for your instructor and classmates that makes a claim about what the genre you have chosen tells us about the people who use it and the scene in which it is used. Be sure that your paper makes a claim and has a controlling idea about what you think the genre reveals about some aspect of the situation or scene: How people behave, their goals and beliefs, or the actions they perform. (You might wish to review the description of controlling idea and how the sample genre analysis paper used its controlling idea, pp. 73–74.) Your controlling idea will also need to be supported by specific examples and explanations taken from your analysis of the genre.

Writing Project 2.2

Write a complaint letter of your own. First, select a subject (an actual problem you have had with a product or service). Then decide on an audience (someone who can address your problem, perhaps researching the name of the head of Customer Service for a specific company or the boss of someone whose service was inadequate—checking a company’s Web site is a good starting place for researching such information). Drawing on the analysis of the complaint letter and the samples in this chapter, write your own complaint letter. Finally, write a cover memo (a brief, straightforward description) addressed to your teacher that explains what choices you had to make about such things as your letter’s content, appeals, structure, format, sentences, and words and how your choices reflected your particular situation and scene.

Writing Project 2.3

As we mentioned earlier in the chapter, there are various ways to register complaints, the genre of the business complaint letter being one of them. Imagine a situation in which you wanted to register a complaint within the scene of your college or university, say about the availability of parking on campus or the cost of tuition or the lack of funding for student activities, etc. First identify an actual complaint and then decide to whom and where to address the complaint. Then choose a genre that would best accomplish your purpose for your situation and compose that genre. When you are finished, submit the genre along with a cover memo to your teacher explaining why you chose the genre you did and how it is an effective response given the scene and your purpose, audience, and subject.

Using Genres to Help You Write

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For many people writing is a mysterious and often difficult process. People who usually have no trouble talking to others in groups or individually sometimes feel stumped when they are asked to write. You might be one of them. If so, what do you think makes writing so difficult?

For many, the difficulty is not just with the “skills” of writing—such as grammar, punctuation, and spelling conventions—critical as these are. Rather, the difficulty lies in knowing what to write about and how to write it, when to begin and how, what sort of tone and style to use, when to explain ideas and why, when to move from one part to the next, and so on. There is no exact formula you can memorize to help you make these choices. And so many inexperienced writers feel as though they are wandering in the dark when they write. They recall the popular image of the writer sitting alone with a piece of paper or in front of the computer, writing away effortlessly, and they feel as though they can never live up to that image.

Part of the reason writers can never live up to this image is that this image is, by and large, a myth. Very few, if any, writers write completely on their own—that is, without drawing on any other writers or readers. Just as few write without a deep understanding of the scene in which they are writing. In fact, writers rarely start from scratch. Rather, they start with some kind of purpose related to a scene they are in, and then they choose a genre to help them achieve this purpose. Depending on the scene and situation, they may want to report on an experiment, complain about a faulty product, investigate a human behavior, celebrate their friends, express themselves, pass on office information, plan a course, and so on. With those purposes in mind, they may decide to or be asked to write a lab report, a complaint letter, a research paper in psychology, a toast, a novel, a sonnet, a memo, a syllabus, and so on. By making a choice, as we have been discussing in the first two chapters, writers realize they are in a scene that is already crowded with patterns of communication, behavior, and action—patterns that in turn affect

the ways they present and achieve their purposes. **Good writers use patterns to make informed and meaningful decisions about how and what to write**—about the structure and tone they should use, about the role they should assume as writers, about how they should relate to their readers, about what they should include and what they should exclude. As we saw in Chapter 2, genre knowledge demystifies writing, making writing very much like playing a part in an already existing scene with a script or map in hand.

In this chapter, we will explore the components of writing:

- ✎ Planning or inventing
- ✎ Drafting
- ✎ Revising
- ✎ Presenting

Then we will describe various writing processes that writers use when writing different genres in different scenes and situations and invite you to practice them. By the end of this chapter, you should have at your disposal various strategies you can use in order to make more effective writing choices within different scenes of writing. You will have a chance to further practice using these strategies in Parts II and III of this book.

The Roles of Genres in Writing Processes

Genres not only adapt to and shape our *purposes* for writing; genres (and the situations and scenes they participate in) also guide our writing *processes*. Sometimes people talk about “the writing process” as if there were only one way to write, or at least only one “good” way to write. **In fact, just as there are many kinds of writing and many kinds of writing situations and scenes, there are many kinds of writing processes.** What writers do when they write varies depending on the scene, the situation, and the genre. Although each writer may have a favorite way of writing, writers must *choose* strategies depending on what they are trying to accomplish.

In some writing situations, the typical way of writing is so quick that you would barely notice that a process actually occurred. For example, when we write a grocery list, an observer would see us pick up a scratch pad and pen, jot some words down in rows, and our grocery list would appear to be done. The full process is a bit more elaborate than that observation would reveal,

however. It begins Saturday morning when we ask our housemates—the people who share our scene—what they want from the grocery store; we generate part of a list that we then keep in our heads until we have the opportunity to write it down. It continues later that morning, after the first draft of our list has been written, when we check our coupons to see what particular brand we might want to add to our list. Even a quick writing process requires more planning and revising than it might at first appear.

Some writing situations call for much more elaborate writing processes. To write a scholarly article, for example, we may spend many months reading books and journal articles, writing notes, talking with academic colleagues, and even conducting independent, primary research before we are ready to draft very much. We may spend a week drafting a section of the article, pausing along the way to reread others’ research or to go back and revise earlier paragraphs. Once we have a draft done, we may ask two or three colleagues to read it and tell us what they think of it, and then we could spend weeks more revising the draft in response to their comments. The writing process for an article does not even end at that point. After we submit the article to a journal, the journal’s editor will probably send us still more readers’ responses and suggestions for change, which we will need to consider as we revise yet again. By the time the journal article is published, our writing process has become very elaborate and involved.

The writing situations we probably think of most often call for writing processes somewhere between that of the grocery list and the journal article. Many writing situations lend themselves to spending some time coming up with ideas, some time drafting, and some time revising the draft before calling it done. Many writers of academic papers, for example, spend some time coming up with ideas, perhaps including some library research or study of textbooks, spend time drafting, and finally go over the paper a few times to improve it before turning it in to the teacher. Writers of business letters often think about what needs to be accomplished in the letter, write a first draft, then revise it until it seems all right. A writer of a letter to the editor might decide to write about an issue that has been troubling him or her, generate a draft, then fine-tune it until it is time to put it in the mail.

Writing Activity 3.1

Think of a genre you already feel comfortable writing (perhaps e-mail messages, personal letters, class notes, research papers, Web sites, lab reports, or letters of application). Describe how you go about writing that genre. As you share your observations with the class, compare the different ways of writing different genres.

ANTICIPATING THE PROCESSES BEHIND DIFFERENT GENRES

Since writing processes differ for different genres, you might, when you begin to write something new, want to ask yourself: What is the writing scene and situation behind this kind of writing and how will they affect how I write it? Considering your scene and situation will lead you to more specific questions:

- 1. How much time do I have to spend on this writing task?
- 2. Is this the kind of text where I already know pretty much what I want to say, or will I need to gather a lot of information?
- 3. Is this a text that could have results that would make a big difference in my life or that of someone else?
- 4. Will the reader of this text fill in any gaps or ambiguities I might leave, or will the readers expect me to fill any potential holes?

The situation of a complaint letter, for example, requires responding quickly to whatever has caused your complaint; you need to complain about the bad product or service while the event is still fresh or the product still new. So you will not have much time to think about or craft your letter. Anticipating the process of the complaint letter, then, can encourage you to move quickly and direct you to the most important research you will need to do. Thinking about your audience will remind you that you need to learn the name and address of the appropriate person to whom to write, a task that might take some digging. Considering the kind of process that the writing task seems to require can save you time and effort, not to mention produce better results.

Particular genres tend to encourage or even demand particular ways of writing. One or more of the components of the writing process (see p. 100) may be emphasized or some may be combined. Grocery lists tend to encourage specific ways of planning or deciding what to say, called *inventing* (recalling from memory, asking housemates, checking refrigerators and cupboards, checking coupons, and for some people imagining moving around the grocery store). *Drafting* grocery lists tends to go along with *inventing* and *revising* them, as you keep adding to and changing a running list. Complaint letters, on the other hand, might require relatively little separate *invention* since the nature of the complaint is so clear in the writer's mind, but such letters might require careful *drafting* and *revising* to control tone since the writer is often angry or frustrated.

Once you become truly familiar with a particular genre, then, you also become familiar with a particular way of writing that

genre. You don't even have to stop and think about how to write a letter to a friend now, but you may recall yourself as a child asking your parent what to say after you had written "Dear Grandma, How are you? I am fine." You may also have a familiar process for writing academic papers. The ways you already have developed for inventing ideas to write about and for drafting and revising papers will probably benefit you as you write papers for other college contexts. Some academic genres in college, though, may call for writing processes that you are not so familiar with, so you will want to add new strategies. It also pays to become as flexible as possible in your writing processes, so you can handle any kinds of writing processes that seem to be appropriate. When you encounter new kinds of writing tasks in your life, both in college and after, one of the things you will want to learn is what kinds of writing processes that task calls for and learn whatever new strategies you need. In the rest of this chapter, we will help you develop such strategies.

Writing Activity 3.2

Can you remember a time when you learned how to write a new kind of text or piece of writing? If so, describe how you figured out what you needed to do. Could you learn about a new text the same way now? If not, why not? If so, how? If you can't remember such a time, think about a new writing task that you have encountered recently. How does it seem the same as what you've written before? How does it seem different?

THE DYNAMICS OF WRITING PROCESSES

We opened this chapter with a list of the parts of writing processes: planning or inventing, drafting, revising, and presenting. **Inventing**, or coming up with a plan and what you want to say, can include such hidden acts as thinking about a writing task, such visible acts as freewriting or keeping a journal, and such collaborative acts as group brainstorming or team research. **Drafting** can include composing titles in your head, writing down especially effective words and phrases or a section that will be combined with others, and, of course, writing a complete draft. **Revising**, too, includes a variety of actions, including changing specific words, moving sections around, deleting parts, or adding new material.

None of these parts of writing processes is really as distinct as this division makes it appear, though. They do overlap. When you add new material

during revision, you are drafting anew, and while you draft you usually discover new ideas to include. Even while you are planning, you may well write down ideas that become part of a draft, and invention you do later in a project may well lead directly to new revision. Remember that inventing, drafting, and revising interact when you write, even though the rest of this chapter will discuss these activities separately.

Another part of what people do when they write is to prepare the text for others to see—to focus on what we in this book will call **presentation**. Presentation includes choosing *layout* features like columns or tables, a *medium* like handwritten or digitized, and other aspects of the *visual* appearance of the document. Presentation also includes *editing*—choosing a set of conventions or styles appropriate to the document. Therefore presentation includes correcting punctuation, spelling, and grammar when the text needs to follow the conventions of Standardized Edited English (SEE)—the name for the more formal written English of schools, workplaces, and government. Presentation includes following formatting conventions like those for citing research sources that we describe in Chapter 7. But presentation also includes adding frames and graphics to a Web page or emoticons, such as the sideways smiley face :) in an e-mail message to a friend.

Naming these parts of writing processes—inventing, drafting, revising, and presenting—describes what is common to writing acts. These names can disguise, however, the fact that writing processes differ for different scenes, for different situations, for different genres, and for different people. We might prefer to think, read, and talk our ideas out with others before we draft, for example; we might prefer to draft a whole text on the computer; we might prefer to have a trusted friend read and respond to a draft before we revise further. But we do not write that way every time. Think about the process of writing a grocery list, which most people would never write on a computer. When a business executive writes a memo, he or she tends to handwrite it as soon as the need for it occurs, read it over once and, unless it addresses a very sensitive subject, give it to a secretary to type and distribute. When you write a letter to a friend, you may do both your invention and your revision as you draft. After all, the situation of a friendly letter includes a reader predisposed to like what you write, a comfortable relationship between writer and reader, and a primary purpose of keeping that relationship strong—all features that usually make the writing task and the process of writing a letter more relaxed. A college application, on the other hand, involves unknown readers and a high-stakes situation, so you would likely go through many drafts and spend a lot of time deciding exactly what to write. Each different scene and genre can encourage quite a different writing process.

Collaborative Activity 3.1

In groups, compare your preferred writing processes to those of your classmates. Are there preferred processes many of you share? If so, what are they? Do any of those common processes come from writing the same genres (for example, did you share processes for writing school papers)? In what ways do people's preferred processes differ most? How much did those differences result from different kinds of writing tasks and genres? How much from individual personalities?

Inventing with Genres

Inventing is coming up with all the things you want to say in a text and all the ways you want to say them. As we have mentioned, inventing is not something a writer finishes completely before drafting; writers invent throughout the writing process. In many scenes and their situations, though, writers do some invention first in order to find a starting place for a writing project. In some writing scenes, inventing comes easily, especially when you are writing something that matters to you or something relatively simple—an impassioned letter to the editor or an e-mail message to a friend, for example. In other writing scenes, even ones that you care a great deal about, inventing is hard work. It helps to have learned how to use as many different invention strategies as possible—whether freewriting, brainstorming, outlining, talking with friends, or other invention strategies—so that you have a range of strategies to choose from and to try.

Paying attention to the genre being written can help a writer select an effective invention strategy. In fact, as you saw in Chapter 2, learning something about the genre is itself an invention strategy. A writer who knows how to recognize the rhetorical situation embedded within a genre will be better able to produce (invent) the kinds of information called for by the genre. Each genre includes specific kinds of information about the writer's rhetorical situation:

- what kind of role or persona the writer should play;
- how a writer should frame his or her purpose for writing;
- who the readers are, what they expect, how best to relate to them;
- how best to present and treat the subject matter.

Let's look at a simple example. A letter to a friend typically begins with a form of address ("Dear Sam") and ends with a closing ("Cheers"). Knowing this convention of the genre, a writer does not have to spend a great deal of time *deciding* how to begin; instead, he or she can immediately begin to choose an appropriate strategy that suits his or her purpose and

relationship. For instance, a thoughtful writer considers what form of address would be most appropriate in each particular letter. Should I write “Darling Sam” and close with “Love”? Should I write “Dear Mr. Adams” and close with “Respectfully”? The exact form the greeting and closing will take depends on the scene of writing and its particular situation—on how the writer and reader relate to one another in that situation: as friends, lovers, business partners, colleagues, and so on; on the specific subject; and on the purposes that the writer and reader are trying to accomplish.

Inventing what the genre seems to call for can sometimes lead a writer into offering what readers expect more than what that writer thinks, so don’t become too locked into a plan. It would not be honest to write “Love” in signing a letter just because the reader might expect it; the reader’s feelings can still be spared and the writer can remain honest by signing “Cordially” or “Fondly” or “With affection.” In the same way, it would not be honest to write that *Hamlet* is a great piece of literature if the writer has carefully and critically assessed it and decided that the work is overrated, even if the literary analysis assigned seems to expect the writer to praise the work. ***As you use genre to guide invention, keep a careful eye on what you want to say in addition to what the genre and reader want you to say.***

INVENTION STRATEGIES FOR THE COMPLAINT LETTER

For a more specific example of how genre guides invention, consider again the genre of the complaint letter that we analyzed in Chapter 2. Complaint letters are written to companies or organizations to complain about a service or product that did not fulfill what it promised. For example, one might write a letter to an airline complaining about being bumped from a flight involuntarily, or write to an electronics manufacturer complaining about a cordless phone that has needed repeated repairs, or write to a concert promoter complaining about the way lawn seating was handled at a recent concert.

Knowing the genre of the complaint letter, you are in a better position to know what kinds of information you need to develop. For instance, you need to discover who your audience will be—that is, who is most capable of addressing your complaint. Then you need to gather all the specific details of the incident about which you are complaining—specific identification of the product or service, exactly what happened when, who was involved. You also need to decide what you want your audience to do in response to your letter, what redress you are seeking.

By knowing the genre of the complaint letter, you know what kind of invention you need to do, even if you don’t yet know exactly what your letter will request. You also know something about the rhetorical strategies you will select. Knowing that successful complaint letters use a matter-of-fact

tone and make direct statements of the problem and desired solution, you will know to begin your letter succinctly and directly, to treat the occurrence as a mistake rather than a willful attack, not to embellish with emotional outrage, and to treat the audience as a reasonable person who of course wishes to maintain your goodwill and the good reputation of the company. When you know the genre you are writing, you are well on your way to knowing how and what to invent for that text.

Below is the brainstorming list one person wrote when preparing to write a letter complaining about a recent airline trip. Notice how the writer, knowing the complaint letter genre, lists many of the kinds of information that complaint letters typically include.

-
- Atlanta to Asheville, #7805L, 9:05
 - flight canceled cuz of mechanical problems
 - new flight next morning (8:25)
 - no hotel offered, left on our own
 - all hotels booked cuz of weather probs
 - terrible taxi ride across town, awful traffic jam, took an hour to get there, \$50
 - no restaurants open, ordered pizza
 - slept only a few hours, then taxi back to airport
 - everything expensive
 - got to airport, found out airline had shuttled others to a hotel, but not us
 - what do we want? Give us back our money. Give us free tickets. Apologize.
-

Notice that the writer’s invention list includes details about the flight number as well as a chronology of events. At the end, the writer lists what she wants from the airline. Generating such an invention list comes more easily because the writer knows the genre of complaint letter and understands what kinds of information she needs to have at hand.

INVENTION STRATEGIES FOR OTHER GENRES

More complex and academic genres prompt invention in a similar way. Research-based genres by their nature require writers to conduct research in the library or on the Internet, a particular kind of invention. Personal narratives require the choice of a specific incident and details from personal

experiences to develop the writer's ideas, so invention from personal memory will be required. Literary analysis papers typically require response to a set of readings, so invention will involve careful reading and interpretation of other texts. Lab reports of course require laboratory experiments to be conducted as part of invention, but they also encompass specific topics in different sections, indicating what kinds of information and results need to be discovered. Remember: Whenever you begin working on a writing project, first examine the genre you will be working in to see what kinds of information, ideas, and approaches you will need to develop.

Writing Activity 3.3

Consider a writing assignment you have been given for this class, and write a paragraph or two describing what inventing you think will be necessary to complete the assignment successfully. Use Box 3.1 below to guide your response. If your teacher asks you to, share your response with others in your group, and discuss any differences in your expectations. How can group members help each other with the invention that seems most difficult?

Box 3.1 Questions for Inventing

1. What genre am I writing? What is the scene of writing behind this writing task? What is the nature of the situation I am writing in? What do I want to accomplish in this text?
2. What are the first thoughts that occur to me about what I want to say in this text?
3. What kinds of information do this writing task and genre ask for? What do I already know about this topic? What do I know I need to discover, learn, or develop?
4. How can I invent the kinds of information needed? How much of what I need can I develop from my own memory? From talking with others? From reading? From doing research?
5. Which invention strategies can help me develop the kinds of information I need for this genre? Try different strategies that seem most helpful to the particular writing task.
6. Am I still saying what I want to say? Check periodically to make sure you are writing something that is honest and true, not just convenient or expected.

In college and beyond, successful writers will have learned to use a variety of strategies so that they can adapt to any writing situation, even as they continue to use their favorite strategies whenever they are appropriate. For example, a student in one of our classes told of how she had to learn a new way of inventing when faced with writing a *longer* paper for one of her classes in her major. She had previously always invented *through* drafting, seeing what she had to say about a subject by writing a first draft, then doing research on specific gaps she had discovered. Faced with a 15-page paper, though, she could not draft the whole thing before she had done any research, so she had to learn how to anticipate what she would need to know.

As you become familiar with new genres, you will need to learn new writing processes, including new ways of inventing that you can combine with your preferred or customary ways of writing. Some people find commonly used invention strategies—especially the strategies of freewriting, brainstorming, and clustering—helpful in a variety of situations. (These strategies are described in more detail in Chapter 5, in case you do not yet know them.) Keep in mind, though, that no strategies apply in every situation. You will always need to adapt your inventing strategies to the particular scene and situation in which you are writing.

DISCOVERY DRAFTS AS AN INVENTION STRATEGY

Some writers, like our former student, discover what they think about a topic by writing about it, drafting full paragraphs and texts as a way of thinking through their ideas. However, drafting is one of the more time-consuming methods of invention. The draft written for invention is not a draft that becomes the final text. Instead, writers read what they have written to find the most promising ideas, the things they felt most passionate about, the trains of thought that might lead somewhere, and the gaps in what they have to say. Much if not all of that **discovery draft** will be discarded in favor of a newly written draft.

For example, writing a discovery draft of a complaint letter can allow you to vent your anger or frustration and discover what you want as recompense, but mailing such a draft is not likely to get you what you want. Below is the discovery draft written by our traveler stranded in Atlanta.

This draft was written before the brainstorming list we saw earlier in this chapter (p. 107), and the writer's purpose was to exhaust some of her anger before drafting the actual letter. Discovery drafting also allowed her to see what mattered most to her. After writing this draft, though, she threw it away and began on her invention list, separating what information would be useful and appropriate for the actual complaint letter from what she needed to write in her discovery draft.

Dear Whoever:

We have just had the most horrible experience flying on your airline. When we got to Atlanta, we were told that our flight was canceled, supposedly because of mechanical problems. Then we were told we couldn't get there until the next morning, and that we were on our own finding a hotel for the night. I was very upset. We spent a long time in baggage claim calling every hotel, but every single one was booked up. Finally, we begged one hotel person to suggest where we might be able to get a room, and she suggested the Marriott and gave us the number, so we called there and fortunately the nice person said they had a room. We got a taxi to get to the hotel, which was a long way from the airport, and then it got stuck in a terrible traffic jam so that we just sat there for ages. We were beat and exhausted, but the taxi driver didn't seem to know what he was doing so we were stuck in traffic forever. Finally, we got to the hotel, only to find that no restaurants were open that late and our only chance for any food was to order in pizza. It was food, but it tasted pretty awful. Finally, we fell into bed, got a couple hours sleep, and took a taxi back to the airport in time for our flight.

Imagine our anger when we heard from other passengers waiting there that they had been bused to a hotel near the airport by the airline. They had had all their expenses paid and were bused back in time for the plane. That wouldn't have been great, but at least it would have saved us all that aggravation and we probably would have gotten more sleep. We were furious. We asked the ticket agent why this happened and to pay us back for all our expenses, but she insisted we had to write to the airline to ask for what we so obviously deserved. At last, we got on the plane and made it to Asheville, no thanks to you or your airline.

We had a terrible experience because of you. We want you to reimburse us for all our expenses, plus give us free tickets to wherever we want to go. It doesn't make up for what we endured, but at least it's some recompense for what you put us through.

Sincerely,

Some writers make the mistake of writing a discovery draft but treating the result as a final draft. That is, they begin to write without doing any invention work, yet they expect the resulting text to serve as a finished draft rather than as an aid to invention. That kind of drafting is not an effective

use of drafting for invention. Teachers often recognize it because the best idea turns up in the final paragraph. For important pieces of writing, drafting works as an invention strategy only if the writer intends to begin drafting anew once the discovery draft is done.

The exceptions are genres of writing that commonly merge drafting and invention: informal and less public genres—like letters to friends, casual e-mail messages, routine memoranda—or genres whose *purposes* are to discover what the writer thinks: journals and diaries, reading-response notebooks, even the genres of freewriting and brainstorming. Some teachers encourage such writing by asking for brief, in-class writings that will not be read for anything other than their initial ideas. Inventing and drafting at the same time is appropriate for these genres since that process suits the situations (the participants, the subject, the setting, and the purposes) of those genres.

Collaborative Activity 3.2

Discuss with a group your own use of invention strategies. When have you drafted as a means of inventing (appropriately and inappropriately)? What genres do you write that seem to call for drafting and inventing at the same time? What circumstances lead you to draft too quickly? What have been the results and consequences of drafting before inventing? What ways do you have of inventing that have worked for you? What ways used by your group seem most promising?

Drafting with Genres

Writers draft their texts differently in different scenes and for different situations and genres, just as they invent differently and, as we will see, revise differently. Drafting this chapter involved many days and even weeks of sitting in front of the computer, in addition to the time spent inventing and revising. Since this book is co-authored, drafting this chapter also involved later drafting, as each co-author read the first draft and contributed new sections. In contrast, drafting the grocery list required only a few minutes of writing things down. Drafting a job application form may take only several minutes in the employer's office. On essay exams, drafting is deliberately limited to a set time, place, and manner (handwritten rather than typed or word-processed). The scene of a complaint letter allows more time for drafting, yet it needs to be written soon after the event prompting the complaint in order to be most effective. Many writers, like our stranded traveler in the last example, draft an initial complaint letter in the heat of the

moment and then write a second draft after their anger or frustration has cooled. (You will see her draft in the next section, when we will also see how she revised that draft.) Drafting varies in time, location, and manner, depending on the genre, the particular situation to which it is responding (who will be writing and reading it, what the subject is, the setting in which this interaction is taking place, and the purposes for the response), and the individual writer's preferences.

Since some genres, like essay examinations, can require particular methods of drafting, successful writers learn how to write under different circumstances. Writers tend to have favored ways and places to draft. One of us prefers drafting on a computer in the home study, with a cup of coffee nearby. Others prefer drafting on legal pads in coffee shops. Many writing situations, though, do not allow the luxury of choosing the manner and place of drafting. A manager may need to dictate a memo while standing at the typist's desk. A petition may need to be drafted collaboratively in someone's living room while a recorder copies down the group's composition onto scratch paper. A novelist may need to jot down the perfect title on a napkin in a diner. Flexibility again is an important goal for writers who wish to be able to write successfully in a range of genres.

To some extent, writers can prepare for different ways of drafting if the scene, situation, and genre are known ahead of time. If you know you are visiting a potential employer, for example, you know that a job application may need to be filled out. Knowing what the genre of job application is like, you can gather the kinds of information often asked for on applications (inventing) and write it down carefully, deciding on such issues as official titles of past jobs (drafting). You can even draft descriptions of job duties, in case they are needed, and draft career objectives and reasons for wanting the particular job with the particular company. Then the drafting required in the employer's office has a better chance of going smoothly. Similarly, if you know you are going to write an essay examination, you can study hard and anticipate the kinds of questions that might be asked (inventing), and you can practice composing good responses to those questions (drafting). You can prepare similarly to write an in-class theme for an English class, especially by doing as much invention as possible beforehand so that you can be ready to draft when you see the specific writing prompt.

Writing Activity 3.4

Write a paragraph describing how you deal with drafting under time pressure, as in essay examinations or in-class writings. What strategies have you used to try to draft effectively in such situations? What gives you the most difficulty? How might you prepare to draft more effectively?

Collaborative Activity 3.3

Share what you wrote for the previous activity with a group of classmates, looking for strategies that have worked for some people. As a group, write a few paragraphs for this textbook suggesting how writers can deal more effectively with time-pressured writing tasks. (If you wish to send your material to us in care of the publisher of this textbook, we will consider incorporating it in later editions.)

DRAFTING COLLABORATIVELY

While some genres like poetry and personal letters are most often written individually, other genres call for more collaborative drafting. Some scenes of writing, especially workplaces and scientific disciplines, often use multi-authored genres such as reports and research articles. Such collaborative writing projects may still involve individual drafting, if the writing team has decided to draft different sections separately first. For instance, for an assignment to write a business proposal, one group of students divided drafting duties based on the various sections of the proposal, with one student writing the background, another defining the problem, another laying out the plan, etc. Another student group chose to assign drafting roles based on their own interests and areas of expertise, with artistic students creating the graphics for the proposal and business students drafting the budget section, for example. These longer, more complex genres are well suited to such **collaborative models**, in which each writer contributes to the development of a single text.

In many ways, technology has changed the scene of collaboration, allowing writers who are separated in time and space to share drafts more easily. Writers can transmit files electronically, attaching a file to an e-mail message. They can also interact asynchronously (with time lapses in between) through e-mail messages and postings to Internet bulletin boards or newsgroups, or synchronously (in real time) in Internet chat rooms or MUDs or MOOs (places or "rooms" on the Internet where live, online chats occur). Students working on group projects may have conflicting work schedules or may not live on campus or near one another, and for them electronic collaboration can be extremely useful. It enables people from different locations to interact without having to meet face to face—to meet instead in cyberspace.

Collaborative drafting, electronic or otherwise, requires some special strategies and carries its own difficulties and rewards. Perhaps most importantly, as we mentioned above, collaboration can build on the diverse knowledge and expertise and talents of the group members as well as their wide-ranging interests and particular strengths and talents. The diverse

backgrounds of group members result in richer feedback during the drafting process and a more critical process of inquiry and response. With the input of several people, there is a better chance of catching inconsistencies and problems with reasoning. Finally, with shared responsibilities and writing tasks, working as a team also increases the confidence and morale of writers.

However, despite all of these advantages, you have no doubt worked as part of a group that did not function effectively. Perhaps members did not equally contribute to the writing project. Or maybe you ended up with an uncohesive document, with ideas that never really came together. There might have also been a breakdown in communication among group members or some sort of interpersonal conflict. It's no secret that drafting as a team can be a slow process at times, if people debate each word. The best strategy for collaborative drafting may be to generate as much text as possible first without censoring or editing, and then to revise that draft extensively. That way, the group might not get bogged down in local decisions before the larger structures and arguments have been determined. The following activities are designed to get you thinking about guidelines for effective collaboration, including collaborative invention as well as drafting.

Collaborative Activity 3.4

Imagine the following scenario. A new president will be joining your university next fall, and you have been assigned to a task force (along with three other students) to determine the most significant issues facing students. Your group is to prepare a report that prioritizes and ranks the top five issues as well as proposes guidelines that the new administration might put into practice.

After three heated meetings, the group is divided. Two of you argue for making rising tuitions the top-ranked issue, while the other two think parking should be the top-rated issue. The group can't even reach consensus on the top five issues, with individual lists focusing on issues as diverse as overcrowded residence halls, lack of adequate lighting on campus, inadequate advising, an outdated system of registering for classes, and inadequate dining hall services. The group is further divided on proposed solutions to these problems: For instance, some group members are in favor of building more residence halls to deal with overcrowding, but the others believe this would mean fewer parking spaces for students, overall.

Your group has reached a deadlock and will be unproductive as long as these conflicts go unresolved. Based on the above scenario, how would you respond? What strategies would you use to work through the deadlock? How would you begin to draft the report—as a group or by assigning individual roles? Be prepared to share your responses with the rest of the class.

Collaborative Activity 3.5

Since you are spending quite a bit of time working with each other and responding to each other's writing, work in groups to formulate a set of guidelines for group work. Consider your own experiences with collaboration—particularly peer group responses to drafts—both positive and negative. What factors led to some of the most productive feedback you've received on papers, and what factors led to less helpful feedback? What made the group interactions work effectively, or what could have been done to make these interactions more effective? What responsibilities should the individual have to his or her group members? What guidelines are needed to ensure that the group functions well and acts efficiently on the tasks before it? Once you have drafted your guidelines, your instructor might choose to compile and synthesize your responses, adding his or her own thoughts and then distributing the guidelines for use throughout the class and for the many collaborative activities still to come in this textbook.

Collaborative Activity 3.6

Try collaborative drafting with members of a group. Work together to write a summary of Chapter 1 or 2 of this textbook. (If you have not yet studied those chapters in your class, write a summary of this chapter instead.) A **summary** selects and restates the major points of a text, using your own words. When you are finished drafting your summary, describe your experience. What process did your group follow for collaboratively writing the summary? How did the group ensure that all members had a role in the writing? Was the process effective? Why or why not? What would you change for the next time you work on a collaborative writing project?

DEALING WITH DRAFTING DIFFICULTIES

When a genre is one that is familiar to you, you may choose your preferred ways of drafting: at your desk or in the coffee shop, on a legal pad or computer, in all-night marathons or daily bursts. When it comes time to draft less familiar genres, though, the writer may feel left alone with the blank page. It might help to remember, however, that the page is not really blank, that the writing scene, situation, and genre have already inscribed the page with a purpose, a relationship between writer and reader, a particular way of addressing the subject, and, as we will learn more in coming chapters, with certain structures, style, even particular language.

No doubt, though, some genres seem to create more drafting blocks than others. If you do encounter difficulty drafting, you might return to invention strategies, to see if you can become more comfortable with what you

want to say. Freewriting—writing your thoughts down as quickly as you can, without rereading or editing what you write—can help you get past a writing block, as can doing more research if your genre requires it. Discussing your idea with a teacher or a trusted reader might help you articulate orally what you are having trouble putting down in writing.

The genres that often seem easiest to draft, like grocery lists and complaint letters, have a strong and focused sense of purpose. Since all genres, from the most thesis-oriented to the least, are driven by some kind of purpose, one trick for effective drafting is to make sure that your purpose for writing matches the purpose embedded within the genre. ***Keeping the controlling purpose in mind when drafting keeps the writer's attention focused on the primary goal of the drafting.*** In fact, research has shown that successful experienced writers focus on their primary purpose and refine their goals as they draft. **Attending to purpose** means not focusing too much, while drafting, on sentence-level concerns like precise wording, spelling, grammar, or punctuation. When you draft, keep your main goal, your main readers, and the main genre you are writing in mind first. Remember that you can revise once you have a draft, even in situations where you have very little time.

Writing Activity 3.5

For the same writing assignment to which you responded in Writing Activity 3.3, describe your drafting process. Use Box 3.2 below to guide your reflection before and while you draft. If your teacher asks you to, share your reflections with others in your class. How can working collaboratively help you with parts of the drafting that seem most difficult?

Revising with Genres

The kind of *revising* a writer does depends, not surprisingly, on the kind of *writing* being done. In some writing scenes, the situation and genre both call for extensive revising. In others, minimal revising is either necessary, appropriate, or possible. Of course, the importance of the text to the writer and reader always weighs heavily in deciding how much revision is appropriate. The more important the consequences of the text, the more important it becomes to revise thoroughly and carefully.

Even genres that seem to allow for limited revising entail some reworking, though it might be nothing more than a quick rereading to catch any

Box 3.2 Questions for Drafting

1. Given what I know about the scene, situation, and genre, what strategies for drafting will be most effective?
2. What is my controlling purpose, and how does it relate to the purpose embedded in the genre? That is, what am I trying to achieve in this text, and how does this text help me achieve it?
If possible, write that controlling purpose somewhere where it will be in front of you while you are drafting. Return to it any time you get stuck.
3. What parts will I need to include to conform to the genre and to achieve my purpose?
If you have a plan or an outline of needed parts, keep it in front of you while drafting.
4. Who will read this text? What role does the genre define for the readers? What kind of relationship do I want to establish with the readers? What do they know already?
5. What should my text look and sound like to fit the genre I am writing?
As you write, ask periodically whether what you are writing seems similar to the texts you have seen of the genre you are writing.
6. Am I saying what I wanted to say? If not, have I discovered a better idea so that I need to begin inventing and drafting anew?
Ask yourself these questions periodically to help keep you on track before you get too far off track. Ask these questions also any time you feel stuck, when every word comes only with difficulty.
7. Am I worrying about wording too much?
Especially when drafting with others, try to get a draft of the text out before searching for the best words to achieve your purpose. You can concentrate on words during a round of revision.
8. Am I editing too much?
Try not to edit as you draft if editing interferes with your progress in drafting; do not stop to check spelling, correct punctuation, or look up a grammar issue in your handbook. Work to get your ideas out first. You can edit later.

major problems. Rereading a grocery list reveals forgotten items to add. Even when writing privately about personal experiences, thoughts, and feelings, most writers would reread their diaries and journals, perhaps adding forgotten experiences or ideas afterwards. Revision occurs throughout the drafting of a text-in-progress, too, as writers reread paragraphs and sections as they write and make changes before going on. Rereading is the beginning of revising, for you have to read your own text to be able to re-see it as others would.

But what do you look for when you reread to revise? What are you trying to see? Revision is actually a complex process itself, with several parts:

1. The writer first must gain distance from the text.
2. The writer must recognize problems or gaps in the text.
3. Even after recognizing that something is not quite working right, the writer has to decide what the source of the problem is and how to fix it, what to change.

Some inexperienced or unconfident writers may make seemingly random changes in a draft, trying to improve it without really knowing what might not be quite right. Effective revising is not just changing a text; it is changing a text in ways that make the text better. That statement may seem obvious, but it can be difficult to achieve. The difficulty, of course, involves knowing how to define “better.” *Better* can mean different things in different scenes, situations, and genres. For example, a better research paper might need to include more examples, while a better memo might need to be more direct. Likewise, a better letter might conclude with “Love” in one situation but “Sincerely” in another.

Improving a text will vary in different scenes, but in all cases learning how to revise a text to make it better involves learning how to gain distance from the draft, learning how to recognize what is not quite right in that draft, and learning how to make appropriate changes.

Writing Activity 3.6

Write a paragraph describing your usual revision strategies for revising important texts. How do you go about reviewing your draft? How do you decide what to change? What works especially well for you; what gives you trouble in revising?

Collaborative Activity 3.7

In a group, compare your responses to the previous activity. Did you describe revising different kinds of texts, or did you all describe revising academic papers? If you all described the same kind of writing, generate lists of how revising other genres differs from revising the one you already described. If you described different kinds of writing, discuss how similar or different it is to revise in different genres.

GAINING DISTANCE

Writers have many strategies for gaining the needed distance from a draft, depending on individual preferences as well as situational and generic differences. *Time* almost always helps. Setting a draft aside for a day or more allows the writer to separate from the drafting process, though it requires careful time management. Not all writing situations allow the luxury of time, though, and spending a lot of time on a text is not always appropriate. Groceries may need to be bought that day, for example, and waiting a day to send out a memo might delay transmitting news too long. When the text you are writing matters to you, though, and you have enough time before it must be completed, taking time before revising helps enormously in gaining distance and perspective on what you have written.

With less time, simply *reading aloud* can help the writer hear the text anew. Hearing rather than seeing the text gives a different perspective, which can reveal especially effective sections and rougher patches. Read with a pencil in hand to mark spots that seem to need work. Printing out a hard copy of an electronic draft is also a good idea. It not only gives you distance but also allows you to mark the draft without deleting the original draft, in case you want to try several versions before picking one or even returning to the original.

Another way of gaining distance and objectivity is *asking for response from readers*, whether members of a writing group, friends, a teacher, or an assistant in the writing center. Take care with choosing a responder, since that person will need to be able to read the draft *as* a reader involved in your writing situation. It doesn't help to have your roommate tell you a draft of your history paper is great if he doesn't know what historians—the readers in your writing scene—think or expect. Your fellow traveler on the disastrous airline trip might not be the most levelheaded reader of your complaint letter to the airline and might not be able to read it from the airline executive's perspective. Skillful readers of drafts—well-trained writing

assistants, your teacher, and often your writing group—adopt the role of the readers in your scene of writing.

Some of the most helpful responses are **guided responses**, where the writer asks the reader to attend to particular aspects of the draft. When one of us asks for response to a draft of an important memo or business letter, the question often is “Is the tone of this all right? Do I write anything that might offend someone or give the wrong impression?” Those questions work especially well because they target what a reader should focus on—possible problems an outside reader can spot more easily than the writer can—and they reflect what is critical to the particular genre being written. When asking for a response on a scholarly article, a writer might be more likely to ask whether the argument is clear or whether important ideas or objections are being neglected rather than whether the tone is right.

The questions, then, should reflect the kind of writing scene, the particular situation, and the most important or difficult elements of the genre being written. In the early revision stages on a draft in a less familiar genre, the writer might ask simply what stands out as the draft’s major strengths and weaknesses. It is important to see the strengths as well as the weaknesses in order to know what qualities to keep as well as what to change. As the writer gets farther along in the process, the questions can become more specific, asking about aspects of the draft that the writer is most insecure about or that the writer knows do not match well with what the genre requires or what the writer is trying to achieve.

Writing Activity 3.7

Find out what writing assistance is available at your school. Is there a writing center? Other sources of help? How do they operate? Do you have to make an appointment or can you drop in? What kinds of assistance can they provide? What is their approach to working with student writers and their texts? What is their philosophy toward revising? Are they experienced in addressing all kinds of texts, or will their help be limited to academic writing? How could you make use of the services now for any writing project you are working on? Write a one-page description summarizing your answers to the above questions.

Writing Activity 3.8

Return to the writing assignment for which you began inventing (Writing Activity 3.3, p. 108) and drafting (Writing Activity 3.5, p. 116), and write out a set of questions for your current draft that you would like a reader to respond to in order to

help you revise. Find an appropriate reader (perhaps a classmate or a writing associate at the writing center), and ask for responses to those questions. Then find another reader and ask for responses to the same questions. Notice the differences in how various readers respond.

DETECTING DISSONANCE

After gaining distance from a draft, you will have some ideas of places in the draft that need improvement. To detect additional opportunities to improve, you will need to examine your draft even more carefully and methodically. What you are seeking is **dissonance**—aspects of the draft that do not match what you are trying to achieve. ***Such gaps between your goals and your draft can be filled through revising.***

Dissonance can take many forms:

- An example does not illustrate well
- An explanation does not clarify
- An attention-grabber bores.

You recognize dissonance whenever what you intended and what you achieved differ. Much of what you are trying to achieve will be established by the genre you are writing. Remembering the genre you are writing in, then, can remind you of what you intended and can help you perceive dissonance between your text and others of your genre. Remember the scene behind what you are writing, especially the situation (the readers, subject matter, setting, and purpose) behind that genre. Remember, too, your own individual goals for drafting the genre.

Large sources of dissonance (the situation and your response to it) can be particularized, brought down to the level of a text, partly by comparing your draft to others of its genre. Since genre responds to common situations, you can examine your draft’s response to its situation through examining its similarity to others of its genre. Where does your draft seem most like others of its genre? Where does your draft seem not to be like others of its genre? Where you detect dissonance between your draft and its genre, you can consider more closely whether your draft is different because you are trying to do something a bit different or because you have not yet achieved what the genre is designed to do.

If you are writing a complaint letter, for example, your choice of genre suggests that you want to describe your experience to someone in a position to recompense you in some way. Your goal is to get the reader to give you what you request. Dissonance in a complaint letter, then, appears wherever part of

your draft seems not to encourage the reader to give you what you want. Below is the draft of the complaint letter written by our stranded traveler. Highlighted in italics are parts of the draft that the writer noticed and underlined after she had put it away for an hour, parts she thought might need rewriting.

Dear Mr. Knight:

When my husband and I flew from Kansas City to Asheville, *you abandoned us* in Atlanta and forced us to find our own hotel and pay for all our own expenses. *We need you* to reimburse us for all of these expenses immediately and to send us free tickets for our next flight.

Flying on States Airlines to Atlanta, we were supposed to connect to your airline to fly to Asheville. When we got to Atlanta, we were told that your airline had canceled our flight due to mechanical problems and that we were rebooked on your flight leaving the next morning. We were also told that we had to find our own hotel room for the night and were directed to the hotel courtesy phones in the baggage claim area. After calling *every single* hotel in the vicinity of the airport and being told there were no rooms available (there were weather problems in Atlanta that night), the only room we could find was at a Marriott well across Atlanta. Since we could find no other room, we took a taxi to that Marriott. *The taxi took forever because we hit a traffic jam on the interstate, and our driver didn't seem to know any ways around the mess.* By the time we got to the hotel, we were exhausted and starving. We ordered pizza *that was barely edible.* Exhausted, we fell into bed for a few hours and took another taxi early the next morning back to the airport.

We were *horrified* to discover, when we arrived at the airport, that you had shuttled some passengers to a hotel for the night, *but not us!* We would gladly have accepted it over the *nightmare* of trying to find a hotel room in an unfamiliar town when all the airport hotels were full. We asked at *your ticket counter* to reimburse us right away, but all three agents we *argued* with insisted that we had to wait and write to customer service later. *That's you,* and so that's why I'm writing.

You treated us very badly and made our travel experience a nightmare. *We demand* that you reimburse all our expenses and give us two free tickets to *anywhere we might want to go.*

Sincerely,

You might notice, as the writer did, that the tone is a bit snippy and overly outraged, so the reader might be offended—and not eager to help. The writer noticed especially the direct assaults on the reader, where she had accused him of harming her directly (“You treated us very badly,” for example). Knowing the genre of the complaint letter, she knew that effective letters treat the reader as a reasonable representative of the company who intends no harm and wants to make things right. She also thought she had gotten lost in irrelevant details about the experience (the quality of the pizza, for example, that the reader could not have helped). And she noticed she left out some details usually included in complaint letters, including the details of exactly what flight she was on so Mr. Knight could check the details of her experience. The request she made in the end, she thought, might be asking for too much, for she knew the most effective complaint letters asked for recompense directly related to the harm, and she had, after all, gotten to her destination eventually.

Since every genre is different, revising a genre involves attending to different textual qualities—qualities that are specific and significant to that genre. The quality of controlling ideas is critical in revising academic papers, for example, but not relevant when revising memoranda. A personal voice is essential in personal essays but not in lab reports. The best revision, then, targets the particular qualities of the particular genre.

When you detect dissonance between your text and the genre you are writing in, you may or may not want to make a change. You may prefer your way of doing things to the genre’s expected ways. The next chapter of this book takes up questions of adopting genres to better meet certain goals. For now, aim for becoming aware of the traits of different genres so you can choose when you revise whether to conform to or break those traits. Based on general elements of genres and situations, Box 3.3 below can serve as a rough guide to detecting dissonance in a draft. Once you have analyzed your genre, as we demonstrated in Chapter 2, you can specify the most likely sources of dissonance and examine your draft more precisely.

Writing Activity 3.9

Return to the writing assignment for which you began inventing (Writing Activity 3.3, p. 108), drafting (Writing Activity 3.5, p. 116), and revising (Writing Activity 3.8, p. 120). Examine your draft more precisely by detecting dissonance between it and the genre you are writing in. Use Box 3.3: Questions for Detecting Dissonance Based on Genre to help you. Record your responses to the questions since you will likely be using them to make final revisions of your draft.

Box 3.3 Questions for Detecting Dissonance Based on Genre

1. What am I trying to achieve? What is this genre designed to achieve? Does my purpose fit with the purpose of the genre I am writing? How well does my draft achieve my controlling purpose? Where does it fail to achieve that purpose?
2. What kinds of people read this genre and for what purposes? Does my draft give them what they need and expect?
3. Does my draft offer the kinds of information usually supplied in texts of this genre? Does it cover appropriate topics at an appropriate level of detail?
4. Is my draft structured like others of its genre? Does it have all components that the genre requires? Does it include components that are unnecessary in this genre? Have I structured the draft in a way that supports my controlling purposes?
5. What kinds of language do texts of this genre usually use? How simple or complex are the sentences? How varied in structure? What specialized vocabulary is appropriate? What kinds of words are favored? Does my draft sound like other texts of this genre?
6. What conventions do texts of this genre usually follow? Is Standardized Edited English expected? Is slang allowed? Are particular formats followed for citing sources or for other specialized information? Does my draft follow those conventions fully and carefully?
7. Am I saying what I want to say, even if it does not match the genre? If it does not match the genre, how am I helping readers to accept my text?

MAKING CHANGES

Using questions like those in Box 3.3 (for yourself or for use in a guided response), you will find aspects of a draft you want to improve; you might, for example, find it lacking in terms of items 2 and 3 in the checklist above. You will need to draw on all your skills as a writer to make appropriate changes. **When revising, writers make changes by adding, deleting, and reordering things in the draft.** Adding to sections that inadequately develop or refine your controlling purpose may well require further inventing and drafting. We needed to create new examples to illustrate many points, including many of the examples in this paragraph, in response to readers' questions. You might need courage to *delete* words, sentences, and

whole sections that do not contribute to your goals. When revising this chapter, for example, we found the courage to delete 15 pages from the original manuscript that we decided were not relevant. The chapter is better for that deletion. We also deleted repetitious sentences and wordy structures. *Substituting* one example, one word, or one topic for another combines the courage to delete what you have drafted and the creativity to discover something better. In revising this textbook, we substituted readings and switched sample situations and genres to make them more interesting to readers. *Moving* sections around can sometimes rescue a faltering argument, and an organizational pattern might become clearer if the sentences in a paragraph were *reordered*. We reordered whole chapters and many sections and sentences in this book. When you detect a spot that needs improvement, then, you might try asking whether you should add something to it, delete part or all of it, or move it or parts of it around.

Sometimes, making changes involves choosing an entirely different genre for communicating about a certain subject for a certain audience. In the following example, one of our students, Cathleen Ceremuga, decided to write what she called an "informative paper" to tell other students about the benefits of working as an intern at the Philadelphia Children's Zoo. Here is her analysis of the writing situation for the informative paper:

Writing Situation Analysis (for informative paper, "Meeting Spindles")

Topic Area: The Philadelphia Children's Zoo

Message:

The Internship Program at the Philadelphia Children's Zoo offers a variety of opportunities for college students to gain experience working with animals and educating the public.

Audience:

I think the people who would benefit the most from this paper are college students, specifically those with backgrounds in the biological sciences and those interested in dealing with animals. This paper may also be helpful to those that really want some sort of job experience but do not know where to go.

Purpose:

My main purpose is to inform. After reading the paper, students might be interested in applying for a position at the Children's Zoo, or at least be more educated about what goes on at a Children's Zoo. I plan to describe the internship program in detail and to draw on my own experiences from the summer of 1998 there as examples. Certainly the last part of my paper will focus on the question "What's in it for me?" and describe the benefits of the internship.

Persona:

I will speak from my own knowledge of and experience with the Children's Zoo. My goal in this paper is to open college students' eyes to one of the possibilities for gaining job experience. I will be honest and give a straightforward account of what should be expected of an intern. I will not neglect the drawbacks of the program (e.g., no pay, a lot of manual labor, etc.), but I will try to put the program in a fair light. To give the paper some character, I'll even detail some of my own experiences. I want my tone to be helpful and credible.

Based on her analysis of the situation, the student, Cathleen Ceremuga, then drafted the following informative paper, which she titled "Meeting Spindles, or Interning at the Philadelphia Children's Zoo."

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Meeting Spindles,
or Interning at the Philadelphia Children's Zoo
"Will she bite me?" I asked, eyeing the buck-toothed
South American porcupine with suspicion. The Lead Keeper

Ceremuga 2

shook his head, a smile on his face, and unlocked the giant cage door. Spindles and I stared at each other warily until I took a deep breath, gathered my courage and walked in the cage. Following the keeper's instructions, I held out my right hand and gently grabbed Spindles's thick, prickly tail. As if on cue, she immediately spun around and felt with her human-like hind paws for my outstretched left hand. The porcupine slowly backed up onto my arm, and I felt a joy and amazement at the trust which this gentle creature had shown me. From that moment on, I realized how much new knowledge and fulfillment I had gained from my internship at the Philadelphia Children's Zoo as well as the unique situations I had never dreamed I would ever experience.

The Philadelphia Children's Zoo was the country's first Children's Zoo and houses over 30 species of domestic and exotic animals. As an essential part of the Zoo's Education Department, it works to educate the public about the intrinsic value and protection of all animals. In doing so, the Children's Zoo offers various demonstrative programs, hands-on exhibits, and interactive areas. The Children's Zoo also boasts an extensive internship program for high school graduates, which I took advantage of last summer. This internship program targets college students who have an interest in pursuing a career in the biological sciences, especially those with a background in biology or wildlife management. Three seasonal internships are offered: Spring, Summer, and Fall, with each requiring at least 16 hours per week for 12 weeks. Of these, the summer session is usually the most popular, and thus the most competitive. In fact, during my internship at the Zoo, I worked with 11 other interns, but usually the number at a given time is much smaller. Overall, the internship provides an excellent opportunity to gain experience working with animals and educating the public.

Ceremuga 3

Responsibilities of Interns

Two types of interns work at the Children's Zoo—Animal Program and Animal Care. Duties of these interns differ and require distinct skills and qualities. For instance, Animal Program interns are mainly involved with education—they present animal programs and perform specialized animal care duties, such as maintenance of the hatchery. Animal Care interns, however, perform the daily cleaning of the Children's Zoo and are under the direct supervision of the Lead Keeper and the Foreman.

In general, the Animal Program internship is a more specialized program than the Animal Care internship. While Animal Program interns may be asked to help out with the morning cleaning duties, they mostly deal with presenting animal programs to the public. For this reason, Animal Program interns should be comfortable talking to large groups of people and be able to develop new and creative educational demonstrations. Furthermore, since anything can happen when handling wild animals, Animal Program interns should be able to deal calmly with unexpected situations.

Animal Program interns present a variety of programs for the public. Most are held in the Amphitheater, while others take place at the various exhibits. One of the most popular is the Cow-Milking Demonstration, where an Animal Program intern interacts with the audience while an Animal Care intern milks the Jersey cow, Moonlight. Another popular program is the Hawk Talk, a demonstration that involves an intern presenting one of the raptors to the audience. Other presentations include Live Animal Demonstrations, Good Pet/Bad Pet, Reptile Raps, Turtle Talks, and Animals of South America/North America.

Although they are not as involved as the Animal Care interns in the care of the animals, Animal Program interns

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also have husbandry duties. One of the main responsibilities is cleaning of the Hatchery, where the incubating eggs as well as the newly hatched chicks are displayed to the public. In addition, Animal Program interns clean the silky chickens' pen and are in charge of filling all of the feeders in the Barnyard (the Zoo's petting area) and the duck pond. On days when the Children's Zoo is understaffed, however, Animal Program interns will help with the daily cage cleanings in the Animal Room or Bird of Prey Barn.

Animal Care interns, while not as involved in presenting animals to the visitors as Animal Program interns, mainly perform basic husbandry duties. Besides cleaning cages and yards, Animal Care interns prepare the animals' daily diets, deliver food, and administer medication. They also take part in general upkeep tasks, such as trimming branches and raking the grounds. Animal Care interns should possess a strong love for animals as well as a strong stomach and not mind performing a fair amount of manual labor.

My Summer Experience

I spent my summer at the zoo as an Animal Care intern and, as such, had a variety of daily duties. For the Children's Zoo Animal Care interns, each day was divided into a morning session and an afternoon section. The morning half of each day generally involved cleaning of the animals' habitats. First, we fed the pigs, goats, and sheep in the Barnyard and changed the hay in their yards. Then we raked the yards of the other animals, such as parrots, rabbits, ducks, and turtles. Depending upon the day, we drained, scrubbed and refilled the turtle and duck ponds--Monday for turtles, Tuesday for ducks. Finally, we cleaned the cages in the Animal Room and Bird of Prey Barn. These two facilities housed such animals as ferrets, porcupines, parrots, and chinchillas in the Animal Room, while the

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armadillos and raptors resided in the Bird of Prey Barn. At this time, we recorded the weight of the ferrets' remaining food, as we were changing their diets and observing how much new food they consumed. One of my favorite duties was bathing the armadillos, especially one named Brillo, while their cages were cleaned.

After lunch, the afternoon duties commenced, which varied for each intern according to the daily schedule. Usually, however, the duties included feed preparation and delivery. Two interns prepared the diets for all of the Children's Zoo animals each day, a project that took about 1-2 hours, depending upon the interns' knowledge and swiftness. I thoroughly enjoyed this time in the kitchen once I learned each animal's diet. Afterwards, we fed the raptors in the Bird of Prey Barn as well. Sometimes, to the delight of the young audience, the Animal Program interns would feed the terrapins during their Turtle Talk. After that, the Animal Care interns presented an animal in the Play Yard; monitored the Parrot Yard, Barnyard, or Backyard Bugs, the arthropod exhibit; presented a hands-on Activity Table full of animal skins and antlers; and/or performed a Cow-Milking Demonstration at 12:30 or 3:30 pm. The interns also assisted the Lead Keeper with general maintenance, such as trimming branches and refilling food supplies. Often, the Director had assignments for the interns as well, such as taking surveys of the visitors and other special tasks.

Internship Benefits

Internships at the Children's Zoo provide many benefits to the participants. One benefit includes the knowledge and experience gained through working at the zoo. Animal Care as well as Animal Program interns gain training in handling a variety of domestic and exotic animals, from sheep to armadillos. Specifically, Animal Care interns learn the animals' diets and how to administer medication to sick animals. While I was at the zoo, we had a sick ferret which

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we treated with medication each afternoon as well as a pig with a scratched eye that we anointed with ointment at the end of each day. We also had three chinchillas that were infected with a parasite, so we had to learn how to properly sanitize their dishes and cages. Animal Program interns may gain more experience speaking formally to large groups, and in doing so, learn many general facts about the animals.

Aside from gaining knowledge about the animals, interns learn how to better deal with people. In the summer especially, patience and politeness are a must. Interns learn how to react in all sorts of situations, from escaped goats to missing children. During this time, interns also form valuable connections. In fact, the internship program is a valuable source of references since the end of the internship calls for evaluations made by the Children's Zoo Foreman. On this paper, he rates each intern's performance with animals as well as with other staff and visitors. This evaluation is then kept on file and can be used as a reference by the Foreman. Moreover, since the program involves much cooperation between interns, the staff, and the volunteers, friendships are relatively easy to make. In fact, I still e-mail one of the other Animal Care interns on a regular basis.

I thoroughly enjoyed my summer as an Animal Care intern at the Philadelphia Children's Zoo. Although I did a lot of manual labor and received no stipend, the knowledge and friendships I gained more than compensated for these drawbacks. Even now, more than 5 months after the end of my internship, I can still feel the grip of Spindles' paw around my fingers and see the sleepy, contented expression on Brillo's face as I scrub his back during his daily bath. I cherish these memories and am grateful for all that my internship taught me. I highly recommend this internship to any college student interested in caring for animals, gaining job experience, and making new friends. Of everything that can be said of the

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program one thing is certain: the experiences gained through working at the Philadelphia Children's Zoo are not easily forgotten.

After drafting the informative paper and then gaining some distance from it, the student decided that the informative paper was not the most effective way for her to communicate to other students about the internship. She decided to choose a genre more appropriate for her subject, purpose, and audience and to revise the paper into a brochure. The writer explains her decisions in the following revision plan:

Revision Plans

(for revising paper "Meeting Spindles" into brochure,
"Internships at the Philadelphia Children's Zoo")

Overview:

I am going to alter the purpose of my writing situation. Instead of being informative, I am going to make my paper more persuasive. I am going to try to convince students to actually intern at the Philadelphia Children's Zoo, not just tell them about it. In doing so, I will change the format—I will make it into a brochure, which is more reader-based. I imagine I will also need to eliminate some of the more specific details, especially the unsavory ones, and include more detailed benefits of the internship.

Evaluation of Focus, Content, and Organization:

Focus: I believe in my first paper I focused more on informing the audience than persuading the audience. I've communi-

cated the idea clearly—presented the information—but I feel the paper does not aim to "sell" students on the idea of an internship at the Philadelphia Children's Zoo. I may need to revise the main idea to concentrate on the benefits of the internship, rather than so many specific examples of duties. I want less of an "I" focus and more focus on the reader.

Content: My supporting evidence is adequate for informing students about the internship itself, but in order to persuade students, I'll need more information and details about the benefits and will need to trim any irrelevant material. I will also need to decide what information is most crucial to include.

Organization: My organizational strategy for the informative paper uses regular paragraphs divided into sections by sub-headings; this will need to be revamped in the revision, which will follow a brochure format. I'll need a central focus on benefits of the internship, in order to sell readers on the idea, and I will need to highlight these benefits. I will probably also have to redo the introduction and conclusion and will need to end with information about applying for an internship. The organization should reflect less of an "I" focus and more focus on the reader.

Revision Goals:

- Focus on benefits of the internship
- Add more detail to the benefits
- Take out some personal experiences without losing the tone
- Persuade the readers to become interns at the zoo
- Rework into brochure format

Notice how once she chooses this new genre, the brochure, the student re-evaluates her writing situation. Her choice of a new genre helps shape a new purpose and guides her decisions about changes in focus, content, and organization. Based on the new writing situation and her revised goals, the student wrote the brochure reproduced here.

Internships at the Philadelphia Children's Zoo



**What are you doing
this summer?**

Front Cover

What are Internships at the Philadelphia Children's Zoo?

- Have you ever thought about working with exotic animals?
- Do you like to work with children?
- Do you like to teach people?

If you answered yes to these questions, then an internship at the Philadelphia Children's Zoo may be what you're looking for.

The Children's Zoo boasts an extensive internship program for high school graduates. This program targets college students who have an interest in pursuing a career in the biological sciences, but there are a variety of internship programs available, ranging in type from animal husbandry to education to public relations.

Besides the Summer term, the Children's Zoo offers internships in the Spring and Fall, with each requiring at least 16 hours per week for 12 weeks. Of these, the Summer session is usually the most popular, and thus the most competitive.

Since the Animal Program and Animal Care programs are the most popular, this brochure will detail only these positions. Descriptions of the other programs can be found on the Philadelphia Zoo's Web site, which is listed in the How Do I Apply? section.

Panel 2

What's So Special About the Philadelphia Children's Zoo?

The Philadelphia Children's Zoo was the country's first Children's Zoo and houses over 30 species of domestic and exotic animals. As an essential part of the Zoo's Education Department, it works to educate the public about the intrinsic value and protection of all animals. In doing so, the Children's Zoo offers various demonstrative programs, hands-on exhibits, and interactive areas.

Some of the unique features of the Children's Zoo include:

- **Amphitheater:** the central structure of the Children's Zoo, where various programs and demonstrations take place.
- **Backyard Bugs:** a pavilion that houses the Zoo's extensive arthropod collection. Always staffed, it encourages hands-on learning and questions.
- **Barnyard:** the most popular part of the Children's Zoo, it houses the domestic and farm animals, such as goats, sheep, calf, and turkeys. Part of the Barnyard is also a petting zoo.



Panel 3

What Will Be My Duties as an Intern?

Two of the most popular internships at the Children's Zoo are the Animal Program and Animal Care positions. While both work with the animals, duties of these interns differ and require distinct skills and qualities.

Animal Program interns are mainly involved with education—they present various animal programs and demonstrations to the public. Such programs include the handling of exotic as well as domestic animals. They also perform specialized animal care duties.

Animal Program interns should be comfortable talking to large groups of people and be able to develop new and creative educational demonstrations. Since anything can happen when handling wild animals, Animal Program interns should be able to deal calmly with unexpected situations.

Animal Care interns mainly perform basic husbandry duties. Besides cleaning cages and yards, Animal Care interns prepare the animals' daily diets, deliver food, and administer medication. They also take part in general upkeep tasks, such as trimming branches and raking the grounds.

Animal Care interns should possess a strong love for animals and basic knowledge about handling various animals. They should also have a strong stomach and not mind performing a fair amount of manual labor.

Panel 4

What's In It For Me?

Internships at the Philadelphia Children's Zoo provide many benefits to the participants. One benefit includes the knowledge and experience gained through working at the zoo. Animal Care as well as Animal Program interns gain training in handling a variety of domestic and exotic animals, from sheep to armadillos.

Knowledge. Specifically, Animal Care interns learn the animals' diets and how to administer medication to sick animals. Meanwhile, Animal Program interns may gain more experience speaking formally to large groups, and in doing so, learn many general facts about the animals.

Service. Aside from gaining knowledge about the animals, interns learn how to better deal with people. In the summer especially, patience and politeness are a must. Interns learn how to react in all sorts of situations, from escaped goats to missing children.

Connections. The internship program is a valuable source of references since the end of the internship calls for evaluations made by the Children's Zoo Foreman. This evaluation is then kept on file and can be used as a reference by the Foreman when needed.

Friendships. An internship is a great way to make friends, since the program involves much cooperation between interns, the staff, and the volunteers. Because of this constant interaction, many of the friendships formed at the Children's Zoo turn out to be long-lasting.

Folded Overleaf

How Do I Apply?

To apply for an internship at the Philadelphia Children's Zoo, just send a resume, copy of a current college transcript, and cover letter. In the letter include the program for which you are applying, why you are interested, and dates you are available.

Send these materials to:

Human Resources
The Philadelphia Zoo
3400 W. Girard Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Deadlines for applying are December for Spring, March for Summer, and September for Fall.

*Note: For the Summer positions, paid positions in Guest Relations are also available.

Any questions?
Contact the Philadelphia Zoo:
Call (215) 243-5326
or visit the Web site at
www.phillyzoo.org/intern.htm

Back Cover

Collaborative Activity 3.8

Working in groups, examine the changes the student made as she revised the informative paper into a brochure. How does the change in genre (from informative paper to brochure) affect the changes that she made? To what extent do the changes accomplish what she set out to do in her revisions? What is the effect of these changes? Do you agree with her reasons for changing genres? Explain, and then share your responses with the class.

REVISING FOR STYLE

Once you have addressed and are satisfied with the more substantial changes to a text, you can begin to focus on **stylistic revision**. For instance, the writer of our complaint letter chose language—words and sentences—that established an appropriate tone, conveyed a certain directness, and presented her as an aggrieved, determined, yet reasonable customer. She

achieved that tone and persona (image of the writer) partly through her choice of style.

Style includes the structure and length of your sentences, the particular words you choose, and the persona and tone you create. Because different kinds of texts make different stylistic demands, you will again want to work for flexibility, to be able to adjust your sentences and words for different effects in different situations. Although a literary, essayistic style is common in English classes, no one style is the best style for all circumstances. Descriptive images would bog down and potentially mislead readers of a lab report, for example. Passive voice helps lab reports stay focused on the experiment rather than the experimenter, but active voice keeps essays more engaging. Later chapters will examine different stylistic expectations for different genres in different scenes. When you are working with an unfamiliar genre, try reading examples of that genre to capture the flavor and tone of it; then work to create a comparable flavor and tone in your own draft.

Examine the sentence level changes our stranded traveler made in her complaint letter. Deleted text is bracketed, new text italicized.

Dear Mr. Knight:

When my husband and I flew from Kansas City to Asheville, North Carolina, your airline stranded us overnight [you abandoned us] in Atlanta and forced us to find our own hotel and pay for all our own expenses. I am enclosing copies of all of our receipts, and I ask that [We need] you [to] reimburse us for all of these expenses as soon as possible. [immediately and to send us free tickets for our next flight.]

Flying on States Airlines to Atlanta on March 7, we were [supposed] to connect to your airline to fly to Asheville—flight #7805L, leaving Atlanta at 9:05 pm to arrive in Asheville at 10:03 pm. When we [got to] arrived in Atlanta, we were told by two of your agents that your airline had canceled our flight due to mechanical problems and that we were rebooked on your flight leaving the next morning. We were also told that we had to find our own hotel room for the night and were directed to the hotel courtesy phones in the baggage claim area. After calling every [single] hotel in the vicinity of the airport and being told there were no rooms available (there were weather problems in Atlanta that night), the only room we could find was at a Marriott well across Atlanta. Since we could find no other room, we took a taxi to that Marriott, [The taxi took forever because we hit a traffic jam on the interstate, and our driver didn't seem to know any ways around the mess. By the time we got to the hotel, we were exhausted and starving. We] ordered pizza, [that was barely edible. Exhausted, we] fell into bed for a few hours, and took another taxi early the next morning back to the airport. Receipts for our hotel room, food, and two taxi fares are enclosed. These are the expenses we need to have reimbursed.

We [were horrified to] discovered, when we arrived at the airport, that your airline had shuttled some passengers to a hotel for the night, but that offer had not been extended to us. [not us!] We would gladly have accepted it over the nightmare of trying to find a hotel room in an unfamiliar town when all the airport hotels were full. We asked at your ticket counter to have this problem resolved right then, [reimburse us right away,] but all [three] agents [we argued with] insisted that we had to wait and write to customer service later. [That's you, and so that's why I'm writing]

[You treated us very badly and made our travel experience a nightmare. We demand] *Although we do not believe that we were treated well by your airline, we are most concerned right now that [you reimburse all] our expenses be reimbursed. [and give us two free tickets to anywhere we might want to go.] I appreciate your help in resolving our problem.*

Sincerely,

You can see the changes our writer made in response to the dissonance she had perceived between her draft and the genre of complaint letters: She removed many of the emotionally laden and accusatory words and substituted less pointed phrasings, adding details about the flights and removing details about the quality of meals and taxi rides. She even changed her request to a more moderate stance, one she hoped Mr. Knight would more likely approve. And she added language at the end to project her reader as a reasonable and helpful man. Knowing how her genre works and why—knowledge gained through genre analysis—enabled her to make decisions about how to change her draft once she had perceived the places of dissonance. Our suggestions for using genre to guide revision are summarized in Box 3.4: Questions for Revising below.

Writing Activity 3.10

Return to the text you were working on in Writing Activity 3.9 (p. 123), in which you identified places you might want to revise based on dissonance between the text and the genre. Using Box 3.4, revise that text, adding, deleting, moving, or substituting things in ways that you think bring the text closer to achieving your controlling purpose and the target genre. Try to explain what elements of your genre you were trying to match better with your revisions.

Presentation


How your text looks reflects on you. It forms a first impression with the reader, one that may incline the reader favorably or unfavorably toward you. *Presentation*, the physical appearance of a text, is a part of every genre,

Box 3.4 *Questions for Revising*

1. What kind and amount of revising is appropriate for this writing task?
2. How can I gain distance from this draft, given my writing situation?
 - Do I have time to leave it for a day or two?
 - What rough spots do I hear when I read it aloud?
 - Who might understand the writing situation well enough to serve as an effective responder for this draft?
 - What guided questions can I ask that responder; what do I want to know?
3. What dissonance do I detect between my draft and the genre?
 - Does my purpose fit with the purpose of the genre I am writing? How well does my draft achieve my controlling purposes? Where does it fail to achieve those purposes?
 - How would the readers of this writing scene and situation respond to this text? Where would they be likely to respond differently from how I intended?
 - In what ways is my draft similar to others of its genre? In what ways does my draft seem different from others of its genre? Are those differences deliberate ones, due to differences in my situation? If not, how can I change my draft to fit the genre more closely and better achieve the goals it is designed to achieve?
4. How well does my style suit my genre? Have I achieved a tone and persona I want?
5. What additional inventing might be helpful? Do I need to do more research? Are there facts or details I need to generate? Do I need more ideas or information?
6. What do I need to add? What needs to be deleted? What can be improved by being moved to a different place?

though its importance varies from one genre to the next. When you are writing a letter to a friend, you might take care to choose the stationery you think your friend will like best; that's attending to the presentation of your letter. When you send an e-mail, you have probably already chosen a default font, spacing, and margins, and you may end with one of two or three signatures. Those elements of form are part of presentation. Even writers of personal journals, which would seem to require little presentation, attend to the type of paper they use, whether the pages are bound or not, and often to

the type of pen used. They also often develop conventions, such as dating each entry.

Other genres may have more extensive expectations for how they are presented. The use of visuals, for example, plays a particularly important role in workplace genres—such as instruction guides or procedures manuals—where graphics and pictures can help communicate complicated technical concepts or large amounts of technical information. Furthermore, the visual presentation of a text in a workplace scene can be crucial not just to the reader's comprehension of information but to his or her safety. Safety warnings in some technical documents are often visually represented in a contrasting color or larger type size or using a graphic  so that readers can easily access this information. The visual characteristics or design elements of a text can be crucial, then, in conveying information to your readers and are an important part of presentation in many genres. In the sections that follow, we will highlight the main elements of presentation:

- **Visual presentation**, which includes page layout, typography, and graphics
- **Editing** for stylistic conventions and Standardized Edited English (SEE), including punctuation, usage, and spelling

To better understand how to revise for presentation, consider the complaint letter below, whose process we have been following in this chapter. The letter has been formatted and edited as part of the revision for presentation.

2306 Rhode Island Street
Richardson, Missouri 77055
March 19, 2001

Dan Knight
States Airlines
200 Marchfield Avenue
Atlanta, Georgia 30355

Dear Mr. Knight:

When my husband and I flew from Kansas City to Asheville, North Carolina, your airline stranded us overnight in Atlanta and forced us to find our own hotel and pay for all our own expenses. I am enclosing

copies of all of our receipts, and I ask that you reimburse us for all of these expenses as soon as possible.

Flying on States Airlines to Atlanta on March 7, we were to connect to your airline to fly to Asheville—flight #7805L, leaving Atlanta at 9:05 p.m. to arrive in Asheville at 10:03 p.m. When we arrived in Atlanta, we were told by two of your agents that your airline had canceled our flight due to mechanical problems and that we were rebooked on your flight leaving the next morning.

We were also told that we had to find our own hotel room for the night and were directed to the hotel courtesy phones in the baggage claim area. After calling every hotel in the vicinity of the airport and being told there were no rooms available (there were weather problems in Atlanta that night), the only room we could find was at a Marriott well across Atlanta. Since we could find no other room, we took a taxi to that Marriott, ordered pizza, fell into bed for a few hours, and took another taxi early the next morning back to the airport. Receipts for our hotel room, food, and two taxi fares are enclosed. These are the expenses we need to have reimbursed.

We discovered, when we arrived at the airport, that your airline had shuttled some passengers to a hotel for the night, but that offer had not been extended to us. We would gladly have accepted it over the nightmare of trying to find a hotel room in an unfamiliar town when all the airport hotels were full. We asked at your ticket counter to have this problem resolved right then, but all agents insisted that we had to wait and write to customer service later.

Although we do not believe that we were treated well by your airline, we are most concerned right now that our expenses be reimbursed. I appreciate your help in resolving our problem.

Sincerely,

Dana Feldman

Since complaint letters follow conventions of other formal business letters—including the use of spacing to highlight formal elements such as addresses, dates, salutations, and signatures—our writer added this formatting in her revised draft. She also adjusted the paragraphing in her letter to create the

shorter paragraphs expected in a business letter, while continuing to use the visual cues of line spacing to indicate new paragraphs and to help break up or “chunk” information for readers. In addition, the writer of the complaint letter checked her text to make sure it followed stylistic conventions, such as using a colon after the salutation, and the conventions of Standardized Edited English (SEE); doing that reduced distractions for readers who expect certain conventions, allowing them to concentrate on what the writer has to say. While the writer’s observance of the conventions of SEE creates clarity and correctness, which add to the writer’s professional ethos, this professionalism is further enhanced by the writer’s use of the conventional business letter format. The visual presentation of the letter, meeting the standards of formal business correspondence, makes the writer more likely to be taken seriously and to prompt action on the part of the reader.

VISUAL PRESENTATION

As the letter above illustrates, *the effectiveness of your text depends not just on what it says but how it looks*. Think, for example, of the effect that a text full of dense type has on you as a reader. What is your first impression of a page full of lengthy paragraphs with no breaks and with no white space? If you are like most readers, it can both intimidate you and turn you away. Using visual cues and paragraphs to break up the information into smaller units or chunks makes a text not only easier to read but also easier to comprehend. If Dana Feldman’s letter was all one paragraph, it would be difficult to follow the sequence of events and to comprehend and recall all of the details. The writer chunks the information for easier comprehension and uses visual features to present a hierarchy of information that helps readers understand and navigate the text.

Visual presentation includes physical as well as visual elements:

- The size of the document (such as 8½ × 11" vs. legal size)
- Type of paper (such as recycled vs. glossy coated paper)
- Binding of a text (stapled vs. spiral bound)
- Page layout: white space, margins, line length, columns, placement of headers, footers, and page numbers, use of lists (numbered, lettered, or bulleted), use of headings and subheadings
- Typography: typeface (such as *Arial* or **Palatino Bold**), type size (10-point vs. **14 point**), type styles (**bold**, *italics*, underline, SMALL CAPS), line spacing (single or double spaced)

- Graphics: drawings, maps, photographs, diagrams, charts, graphs, tables; letterheads and logos; boxes; use of color

Consider, for example, how the student brochure on “Internships at the Philadelphia Children’s Zoo” (pp. 134–135) uses the visual presentation of the text, especially the use of headings (“What Are Internships at the Philadelphia Children’s Zoo?” or “What Will Be My Duties as an Intern?”), to organize information for readers and visually alert readers to new ideas. The writer makes it easier for readers to find those headings by using a larger type size and boldface type to make them stand out visually—to announce to readers that she is beginning a new idea. These and other visual cues are like road signs that a writer leaves for readers to help them navigate through the text.

Collaborative Activity 3.9

Look back at the informative paper “Meeting Spindles” (p. 126) and the brochure on “Internships at the Philadelphia Children’s Zoo” (pp. 134–135) and, in your small group, discuss how the differing visual presentations of the same subject matter have differing effects on you as readers. Then examine the page layout: What are the differing effects of the use of white space, margins, and line length? What other layout features (headings, subheadings, lists) are used, and what is their effect on your processing of information in each of the documents? Do the texts use a legible, functional typeface that is appropriate to the message? How is type size and type style used to organize and highlight information in each of the texts? Is the line spacing (the amount of white space between lines of text) effective? What is the effect of the photographs included in the brochure? How do they reinforce the writer’s message? Be prepared to discuss your group’s findings and to share strategies for how each of the texts could improve its visual presentation.

Today, the use of technology in writing is making visual presentation a more important part of the content of all kinds of text—not just in workplace genres but even in more traditional genres such as argument papers in English courses. More and more teachers are inviting students to include visual elements such as photographs, text boxes, and graphics in their writing (see, for example, the sample student brochure on pages 134–135, or the student Web site (pp. 433–438) or student newsletter (pp. 425–428) in Chapter 7. These visual elements do not just create a visually attractive text; they actually *contribute* to the argument the writer

is trying to make. As such, these visual elements deserve the same strategic attention that a writer would give to paragraph organization, word choice, and voice.

Attention to the visual is referred to as **visual rhetoric**, which suggests that the visual and other design elements of a text contribute to the way that the text communicates. Effective Web sites, for example, depend as much on their visual presentation as they do on their content. How the writer—or, more commonly, the writers—of a Web site structure the home page, what colors and fonts they use, where they mark links, and so on affect the meaning they are trying to convey. These visual rhetorical choices also affect how readers of the Web site negotiate the links between the pages. As such, when you are writing a genre that involves a strong visual impact, be sure to examine similar genres to see how other writers have used *presentation* in the service of their writing. When preparing your text for presentation, think about how visual elements might help you achieve your purpose for writing, and consult with your teacher and classmates about how best to use these elements in your writing. Be prepared to make a case for how the use of visuals will enhance your text.

Collaborative Activity 3.10

In groups, find a Web site and analyze its presentation, looking to see how the visual aspects of the text (layout, typography, graphics) work with or do not work with the written aspects. What makes the site effective? What does not? How would your group revise and edit the Web site to make it more effective?

EDITING

Editing a text for its presentation should come last, after all other revisions are completed. Fixing the format of a table that will be revised or correcting the punctuation in a sentence that will be deleted in revision wastes time, so save all editing and presentation tasks until last. Editing is an essential part of the writing process, though, one not to be skipped. For most formal texts, editing requires checking your text carefully for conformity to SEE, including spelling expectations, grammatical expectations like subject-verb agreement, usage expectations (for example, do you need to say *affect* or *effect*?), and punctuation expectations such as apostrophes. Editing also includes checking the formatting conventions of such elements as source citations. Before you give a completed text to

someone else, then, be sure you have constructed its presentation thoughtfully. Look at other texts of the same genre and make your text look like those texts, whether that means enclosing it in a binder, using graphs and charts, adding images, or including a Works Cited page. *The way your text looks makes a statement. Make sure it says what you want it to say.*

Take advantage of tools that exist to help you as you write, especially with visual rhetoric. A variety of software programs help create tables, graphs, and charts or insert graphics into text. Word processing programs have various templates to help with presentation, though they are often too general to fit many genres. Dictionaries, handbooks, spell checkers, thesauruses, and computerized style checkers can all help as you edit and revise for style, though use them as guides only since no machine can know what you intend to say. Word processing itself now allows much easier drafting and especially revision. Writers can make changes, then cancel them, can try out several different wordings and choose the best, can move around single words or whole sections to see what makes the most sense. To take advantage of the flexibility of word processors, writers need to be careful not to let the beauty of an apparently printed page lure them into thinking the text is finished. Just because it's neat doesn't mean it's good. Technology can even help with invention. Internet and online catalogues, indices, and databases have made it easier to do thorough research or to find some specific facts.

Writing Activity 3.11

In a paragraph or two, describe how new computer technologies (word processing programs, electronic tools like spell checkers and grammar checkers) have influenced your writing processes. Which tools do you use, and which do you choose not to use? Why? How does your use of tools differ in different writing situations? In what ways have these technologies enhanced your writing processes (particularly drafting and revision)? In what ways have they made your processes more difficult or less effective?

Writing Activity 3.12

Now that you have revised your draft in response to Writing Activity 3.9, page 123, you are ready to prepare the text for presentation. Use Box 3.5 to guide you as you make final revisions.

Box 3.5 Questions for Presentation

1. Does my text look like others of its genre? Have I formatted the text appropriately (margins, length of paragraphs, typeface, etc.)? Have I labeled and bound the pages appropriately?
2. Have I included any expected visual elements (graphs, images, figures)? What other visual and formatting elements would be appropriate given my situation—my purpose, subject, audience, and setting?
3. Have I followed all the expected conventions for my genre? If Standardized Edited English is expected, have I edited carefully for spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage? Have I followed appropriate citation systems?

Putting Writing Back Together Again

Fortunately, writing is not Humpty Dumpty. Even after we have taken the process of writing apart as we have in this chapter, writing always goes back together again. The act of writing moves in an intricate dance of inventing, drafting, and revising. It may start slow, change its tempo, stop suddenly, or glide smoothly across the floor. The explanation and advice offered in this chapter may help when part of the writing bogs down or when you reach a stage that always gives you difficulty or when you encounter a new writing situation and must expand your skills.

We all encounter new situations within new scenes as we go through life, and writing often helps us meet those situations. With new situations come new genres, all with their own scenes and appropriate writing processes. The more aware we are of how others have responded to those situations and the more we have learned to adapt our favored writing processes to different genres, the better prepared we will be to join the scene of writing as effective, successful participants.

Writing Projects

Writing Project 3.1

Having invented, drafted, revised, and presented the text you first began in response to Writing Activity 3.3, collect your final draft along with all previous drafts and responses to the activities you produced along the way and submit them as a writing portfolio for your teacher. As part of the portfolio, write a cover letter in which you reflect on your process of writing this paper, including the changes you made along the way, the reason you made these changes, and the results of these changes.

Writing Project 3.2

Using the interview techniques you learned in Chapter 1 (see Box 1.1), interview several people who all have experience writing the same genre, to learn how they tend to approach writing that genre. What processes does each use for inventing, drafting, and revising? How do those processes differ from one writer to the next? Do differences exist between the writing practices of people who have been successful users of that genre and those who have been less successful? What parts of inventing, drafting, and revising seem to matter most in creating effective texts in that genre? Write a summary of your findings for novices who will need to write in that genre.

Writing Project 3.3

For the next edition of this book, we would like to add new sections to the chapter on writing in workplace scenes (Chapter 9), and are seeking your assistance. We would like to know more about the processes of writing that people use in particular situations in workplace scenes. Using the interview techniques you learned in Chapter 1 (Box 1.1), interview a professional in the workplace (perhaps in a field or profession that you are interested in entering), and ask about his or her writing process for a specific kind of writing done on the job. How does he or she gather information, think through ideas, draft documents, get feedback, and revise? Are these individual or collaborative processes or both? Do the parts we have described in this chapter—inventing, drafting, revising—capture accurately the processes your interviewee uses? How do they differ and why? How do the processes used reflect the workplace scene, situation, and genre? Based on your interview findings, write your contribution to this new section of our textbook, which we would entitle “Writing Processes in Workplace Scenes.”

Writing Project 3.4

Based on a genre of your choosing (or one that we worked with in this chapter or previous chapters), write instructions for writing the genre for writers who are new to the scene. What do writers of this genre need to know about the scene and the rhetorical situation? How can they use this information to make more effective writing choices? For example, you might include instructions for how to write a syllabus that meets student expectations without sounding overly formal or distant, a description of how to write an effective laboratory report or in-class essay that will get a good grade, or suggestions for how to write a good advice column. It is up to you to decide how to present your instructions, given the task at hand. Think about what genre would be most effective in allowing you to fulfill this task, whether it is a Web site, a brochure, a handbook, etc.