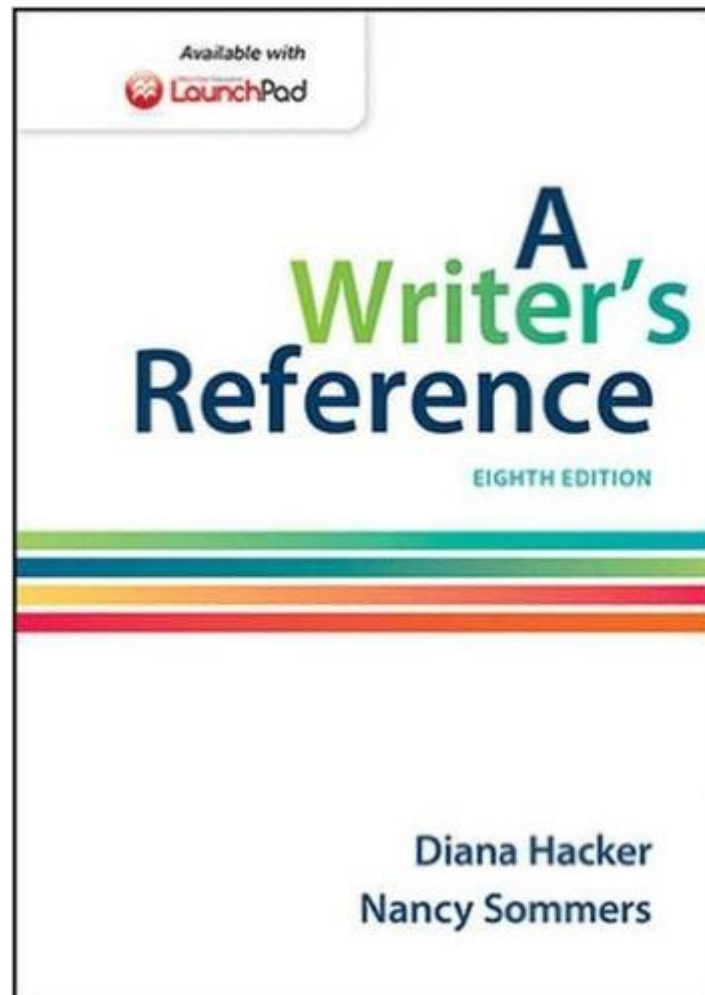


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A Writer's Reference



Synopsis

For success in college, no skill is more critical than writing; it's the very core of a student's academic experience. Tested and trusted, *A Writer's Reference* is an essential tool for students who are strengthening habits and skills that will support them throughout college. In an April 2014 survey of first-year writers, 75 percent reported that using a *Hacker* handbook made them a more confident academic writer. What's more, *A Writer's Reference* has been a powerful tool for change across college campuses—helping to create a culture of writing at many schools by supporting a common language for talking about academic writing. In that way, *A Writer's Reference* is uniquely positioned to help transform attitudes about the value of writing instruction and the role that writing plays in academic work and in higher learning. With this eighth edition of the handbook, author Nancy Sommers invites you to be part of a community of those who teach and assign writing; who believe that critical reading, analytical writing, responsible research, and clarity are at the center of effective writing across the academy; and who use the nation's best-selling and most responsive handbook to support the development of the college writer.

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Customer Reviews

This digital book does not work on Kindle in Windows 8. It is useless to me in class and I've tried everything to be able to use it on my Surface and ended up having to put it on my phone which is NOT conducive to using it with my class. I am soooo mad.

As someone who is of at least average intelligence and working towards completion of an MFA, I am an abysmally awkward wordsmith and my visual work tends to suffer because of the supplemental written discourse needed to accompany it for gallery proposals. This book is truly invaluable in helping you analyse your own weaknesses and strengths, while also offering many refresher tips on basic language structure that we tend to forget upon leaving grammar school and reaching higher academia. If you write for a living (and we all do to a degree), at minimum check this text out from your local library and copy what you find most important. I am positive you will be so impressed and intrigued by what is within its pages that you'll purchase your own. I can attest it is the single most important reference I have purchased in nearly five years and is used several times a month even now.

There are plenty of writers references out there. For me, this is the best. It's awesome that it's spiral bound and tabbed, making it easy to find almost anything you need. There are clear examples throughout the book on applying the different rules. I can't say enough great things about Hacker. I don't see a ton of difference between the eighth and the sixth edition of which I own both but I'm sure I'll find some. Overall, if you're a writer, I highly recommend you have a copy of this book and keep it on your desk. It's invaluable.

After using the book my grades improved

I don't know why I just bought this book. I should have used this when I was in undergrad. Very helpful!

A WRITER'S REFERENCE, EIGHTH EDITION
By Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers
Reviewed by C. J. Singh (Berkeley, California)
(To read the EIGHTH EDITION UPDATE, please scroll to the Addendum below, posted on May 26, 2016,)

-----A WRITER'S REFERENCE, SEVENTH EDITION
By Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers
16 of 16 people found the following review helpful
Reviewed by C. J. Singh (Berkeley, CA), Nov. 11, 2012

THE ALL-TIME BESTSELLING COLLEGE TEXTBOOK

While teaching UC Berkeley's courses in "The Professional Sequence in Editing," I regularly assigned "The Harbrace Handbook" as a basic reference. At the suggestion of a former colleague, I agreed to take a look at his favorite, "The Bedford Handbook" and its compact version "A Writer's Reference." The first thing I noticed was its publisher's claim that the Bedford/A Writer's Reference is the all-time best-selling college textbook now. I had been introducing the Harbrace to my classes by quoting its publisher's identical claim. *Sic gloria transit mundi* (Thus transits the glory of the world). After perusing the Bedford/A Writer's Reference, I agreed it was more user-friendly. For example, Harbrace's opening chapters on grammar introduce adjectival and adverbial clauses without adequate explanations, which discourages many students. Bedford/A Writer's Reference begins its grammar section with the traditional parts of speech; in contrast, Harbrace mentions "parts of speech" only in its Glossary of Terms at the very end of the book. Bedford/A Writer's Reference invites readers to visit its open-access website comprising: electronic writing exercises; electronic grammar exercises; electronic research exercise; resources for writers and tutors; model papers; research online, and language debates. This feature makes Bedford a truly amazing tool for self-learning. The seventh edition includes exercises with solutions. The pages on Language Debates, I hope, will be enhanced in future editions. Too few entries; for example fewer/less usage issue is not mentioned. Moreover, Bedford makes no mention of The Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of English Usage, published in 1989, which comprises 2300 usage issues and 20,000 quotations from works, both classic and contemporary. On the fewer/less issue, the MW Usage book presents a detailed history, with a cheery endorsement of "less" with count nouns; for example, "Ten items or less" sign on the express lanes at supermarkets is perfectly acceptable. (No doubt the editors of the Bedford are aware of MW Usage book; however, the books they cite are much more prescriptive.) "A Writer's Reference, Seventh Edition with Exercises" is a beautifully designed compact version of "The Bedford Handbook, Seventh Edition." Both five-star books.

-----Addendum for the eighth edition: May 26, 2016

THE MOST WIDELY ADOPTED COLLEGE TEXTBOOK: THE UPDATE

In the eighth edition, Nancy Sommers has retained many of the features of the seventh, retained because numerous writing instructors found them effective in teaching their writing courses. (See my detailed review of the seventh below this

addendum.) New features in the book include guidelines for speaking effectively by preparing students to remix, or adapt, their writing for delivery to a live audience. For example, open with an engaging question that establishes a relationship with the audience (page 122). On pages 310-34, in the section "Multilingual Writers and ESL Challenges," Sommers presents a detailed example of unacceptable paraphrasing of the source by retaining its sentence structure and merely substituting synonyms, making the paraphrasing plagiarized. Book-review writers are exempt from the charge of plagiarizing even when they don't bother to find synonyms or change the sentence structure because they can readily claim doing so to convey the author's diction and syntax to the review readers. To be safe, I use quotation marks. On pages 33-45, Sommers presents the first two of five new "practical" writing guides to reflective writing: literacy narrative and reflective cover letter. Three other guides are presented in the book: analysis essay; argument essay; and annotated bibliography in MLA, APA, Chicago Manual Style. -- an excellent index makes them readily accessible. Although the five guides in the seventh edition were also practical, the new writing guides are a welcome relief from having gone over the earlier ones many times over. Five-star book.

Every college freshman needs this book. I took AP English courses in high school but this book is helpful to me. You will learn how to do different types of formatting and how to make the most efficient paper. Even small things like P.O.V. and number shifts can become clearer to you for editing your paper. You won't ever need to go to the writing center after you study this material.

Writer tries to milk the customer dry by making the e-book rent period shorter than a typical college semester. And, to top it off, renting twice costs more than buying once. I hope Diana Hacker feels good about herself.

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