

Series Editors' Preface

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Rhetoric and Composition scholars have long shared an interest in how the knowledge and writing abilities that students gain in our writing classrooms can transfer to wider university, professional, and public contexts. Over the past two decades, research on “writing knowledge transfer”—on how writing knowledge and abilities learned in one context are repurposed and recontextualized within new writing contexts—has proliferated. A rich body of scholarship has explored the transfer of writing knowledge across multiple contexts: transitions from high school to college composition courses; transitions from first-year writing (FYW) to writing-in-the disciplines (WID) or writing-across-the-curriculum (WAC); and transitions from WAC/WID courses to writing in the workplace and beyond.

While the concept of “learning transfer” has long been a topic of discussion in Education and Educational Psychology, Rhetoric and Composition scholars have looked to the various cognitive, affective, material, linguistic, and social perspectives informing our understanding of writing transfer-ability and the transformation of writing knowledge across situations and contexts. Writing studies scholars, in a series of wide-ranging studies, have explored the relationship between generalizable and local (or situated) writing knowledge; the role of rhetorical awareness, genre knowledge, and metacognition in facilitating transfer; and the influence of dispositional, ecological, material, and affective factors shaping writers’ repurposing and reinvention of knowledge in new contexts. Recent transfer scholarship has examined the intersections of various “trans” approaches: knowledge transfer,

transmodality, translation, translingualism, with some of the work informed by mobility studies, all of which has added useful layers of complexity to how we understand “trans” as a prefix and as an action.

This reference guide explores the rich body of research conducted on this complex cognitive and social phenomenon, including numerous studies examining the transfer of writing strategies across multiple contexts, such as academic, professional, public, global, and digital contexts. In addition, because research on transfer of learning takes place in a wide range of disciplines, this volume presents an important and much-needed multi-disciplinary overview of transfer scholarship, explaining key issues and concepts in research and theory both within and outside of rhetoric and composition—and exploring intersections with related fields/subfields of education, cognitive psychology, literacy studies, human resources and management, training and professional development, and second-language writing research on transfer. Perhaps of most interest to writing studies scholars and practitioners, the volume includes a comprehensive overview of transfer research within the contexts of FYW, WAC/WID, writing centers, and school-to-work transitions. The authors analyze the methods of current transfer research, synthesize core themes that intersect across transfer scholarship, and suggest areas for future research on writing knowledge transfer. The volume concludes with an inclusive and wide-ranging glossary and annotated bibliography to guide readers in using transfer concepts for research and teaching.