

For most students, college is a new world. Students meet new kinds of people, engage in new kinds of discussions, read new kinds of books, and are asked to write new kinds of essays. Those who are drawn into this new world, who find questions and knowledge that excite them, who relate to the readings, who express their thoughts and learning—they succeed at college and get the most out of it. Those who have trouble communicating within this academic world and cannot connect its goals with their own—they often struggle and do not get from college all that they had hoped.

Whether college becomes an exciting environment or an alien one depends to a great extent on the mastering of college-level reading and writing, because texts are central to the life of the university. In college, students must absorb information of increasing sophistication from a range of reading materials. They are expected to think about, synthesize, and critique these materials and to use their knowledge to understand and investigate the world. Students, ultimately, are in college to become complex and knowledgeable participants in the world, able to articulate and argue their insights in effective writing.

These are tough demands that depend on students becoming deeply involved with their subject matters. Only that personal involvement can provide sufficient motivation to do the kind of disciplined work that allows one to get the most from college. Involvement is not a matter of luck, as many students may think. It is built through every act of reading and writing. Involvement increases every time a student finds some personally valuable meaning in a reading assignment, finds a class assignment stimulating, or a writing assignment to be an opportunity to develop thought. Involvement increases every time a student states his or her ideas forcefully enough to get a serious response from teachers and other students. Involvement increases whenever a student notices his or her reading, writing, and thinking going to a new level.

Involved: Writing for College, Writing for Your Self helps students to understand their college experience as a way of advancing their own personal concerns and to draw substance from their reading and writing assignments. By enabling students to understand what it is they are being asked to write—from basic to complex communications—and how they can go about fulfilling those tasks meaningfully and successfully, *Involved: Writing for College, Writing for Your Self* helps students to develop themselves in all the ways the university offers.

Distinctive Features of *Involved: Writing for College, Writing for Your Self*

- **The Involvement theme helps students to be active participants in their college education.** *Involved* encourages students to take responsibility for learning, to connect college and college writing to their personal concerns and development, and to recognize their own stakes and local opportunities. It approaches involvement, a key component in success, as something one builds through acts of careful reading and writing, through the finding of personal meaning in assigned work, and through the sharing of ideas with teachers and others.
- **Many examples of student writing appear in the book.** Student writing is carefully built into the chapters, exemplifying and reinforcing the writing tasks taught in the book. Questions entitled “Thinking About Student Writing” follow each example; they create a context in which student writing is taken seriously and foster analytical skills that the student then applies to his or her own writing.
- **Realistic readings and assignments teach critical thinking and college-level reading skills.** *Involved* approaches college as a unique rhetorical context, with distinctive agendas and expectations. The readings and assignments are intensely practical, directly tailored to the types of reading, writing, and class styles that students actually encounter. Integrated readings are drawn from a range of disciplines and from accessible, yet college-level articles, books, and textbooks.
- **The writing process is presented in an innovative way.** While speaking to the recognized needs of students and the familiar concerns of first-year writing, *Involved* presents the writing process not as a monolithic one-style-fits-all entity, but as a series of personal and social processes relating to the situation, the task, and the writer. It explores both how writing processes vary according to the situation and how some parts often recur.
- **Instruction focuses on writing tasks typical of the academy.** *Involved* aims to be highly practical for the college student, and thus concentrates on reading journals, summaries, essay exams, illustrative writing, autobiographical and reflective writing, analytical writing, investigative writing (library, field, and lab research), case studies, and argument.
- **A unique final part on “Dealing with Complexity” addresses a crucial need.** Chapters in this part treat “Writing About Complex Worlds,” “Writing About Problem Cases,” and “Arguing Your Case.”
- **Sidebars integrate rhetorical concepts, research findings, and localized examination of the writing process into the discussion.** The text features three types of sidebars: (1) Useful Concepts from Rhetoric; (2) News from the Field; and (3) Reviewing Writing Processes.

- ***Involved* covers relevant, up-to-date topics such as electronic discussion groups, the Web, memory techniques, and privacy issues.** Activities entitled “Getting Involved Electronically” also appear at the end of the chapters.
- ***Involved* incorporates the best of current research and theory.** Many people in the composition field recognize that freshman textbooks have lagged behind the latest developments of composition theory and research. This book combines a concern for process with a sociocultural perspective, which helps students understand their personal position, stake, and goals in writing. Its goal is to help students develop a reflexive understanding of their college situation and their activity in college so that they can become more focused agents. *Involved* provides students with a reflective frame for their college experience so they can understand the communicative situations they are in. Students learn to see the classroom and the disciplines as “discourse communities” in which they can become active participants for their own benefit.
- ***Instructor’s Resource Manual* provides a wealth of supporting material.** The 150-page manual moves chapter-by-chapter with
 - Chapter Goals
 - Some Potential Student Difficulties and How to Address Them
 - Some Useful Roles for the Instructor
 - Changing Classroom Relations
 - Providing Support for and Responding to Assignments
 - Further Related Activities and Discussion Topics
 - Working with the “Getting Involved Electronically” Activities
 It also contains five essays:
 - What’s Interesting?
 - Where Is the Classroom?
 - The Life of Genre and the Life of the Classroom (a review of the literature)
 - Students Being Disciplined (a review of the literature)
 - The Classroom as a Communication System
- **The Dictionary Deal is offered with *Involved*.** *The American Heritage Dictionary (complete/concise)* can be shrinkwrapped with the text at a substantial savings.

Acknowledgments

First and most profoundly, I must thank the many students I have had the privilege of teaching over the years. In their struggles to write with meaning

in their lives, they have shown me how difficult and how important writing is to living in the modern world. I also thank the many teachers of writing whose dedication has buoyed me and whose insights have opened my eyes. Finally, I thank the editors and sales representatives for Houghton Mifflin who for twenty years have taught me how to reach the classroom with books that serve the needs of students.

For this particular book, I have enjoyed the perceptive criticism of my consultants: Carol Berkenkotter of Michigan Technological University, Susan MacLeod of Washington State University, David Russell of Iowa State University, and Barbara Walvoord of the University of Cincinnati. In addition, the following colleagues served as valuable reviewers, offering helpful advice, ideas, and suggestions:

Marshall Alcorn, George Washington University (DC)
Wendy Bishop, Florida State University
Jo Ann Bomze, Beaver College (PA)
Patsy Callaghan, Central Washington University (WA)
Elaine P. Maimon, Queens College, CUNY (NY)
Douglas Richards, Keuka College (NY)
Duane H. Roen, Arizona State University
Lucille Schultz, University of Cincinnati
Kristin Snoddy, Indiana University, Kokomo
Molly Travis, Tulane University
Arthur Walzer, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
Steven Weisenburger, University of Kentucky
Irwin Weiser, Purdue University (IN)

I have also enjoyed the help and constructive wrangling of my editor, Martha Bustin, and the efficient and skillful help of my assistant, Michael Austin.

My son, Gershom Bazerman, I thank for his wisecracks, and my partner, Shirley Geoklin Lim, I thank for her wise comments.

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