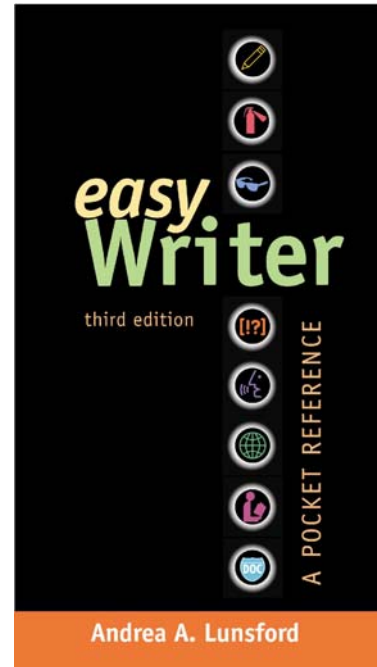

EasyWriter, 3e, Andrea A. Lunsford

Why do I need a handbook?

Ever find yourself asking:

What's the definition of *byzantine*?
What's the quickest route from St. Louis to New Orleans?
What's offered at the Career Services Center?
What's my instructor's email address?
What's the first step in creating a PowerPoint template?
How much garlic goes in my favorite marinara sauce?



Where do you find the answers? Perhaps you consult:

A dictionary	A phone book	Your student handbook
An encyclopedia	A computer manual	A calendar or planner
A road map or atlas	A cook book	Some Web sites

These are all **reference tools**, sources of information people consult as needed. Nobody reads these linearly; nobody studies or memorizes them. References are resources people consult to solve specific problems. The key to their usefulness is how quickly you can find what you need and understand and use what you find.

You never doubt the usefulness of these tools, except when you cannot find one.

Now you find yourself in a bind. Your paper is due tomorrow, you know it's not ready to go, and you find yourself asking questions your writing instructor has asked all term:

Do I have a strong thesis statement?
How should I organize my essay/proposal/report?
Should I use *who* or *whom*?
Does punctuation go inside or outside of quotation marks?
How can I evaluate a Web site?
How should I format a *References* page for a research paper?

Where do you turn? Consult your *handbook*.

A handbook is a **reference resource that writers go to for solutions to common writing problems**—not only those in first-year composition, but throughout college courses and beyond. Handbooks are designed to be easy to use, easy to understand, and invaluable—especially at the eleventh hour.

Please visit your local bookstore to purchase your course materials. **If you are considering buying a used text, please confirm that any free software for your course is included.**