



Preparing To Teach Writing: Research, Theory, and Practice

James D. Williams

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Preparing to Teach Writing: Research, Theory, and Practice, Third Edition is a comprehensive survey of theories, research, and methods associated with teaching composition successfully. The primary goal is to provide practicing and prospective teachers with the knowledge they need to be effective teachers of writing and to prepare them for the many challenges they will face in the classroom.

Overall, the third edition of *Preparing to Teach Writing* is clearer and more comprehensive than the previous editions. It combines the best of the old with new information and features. The discussions and references to foundational studies that helped define the field of rhetoric and composition are preserved in this edition. Also preserved is most of the pedagogical apparatus that characterized the first two editions; research and theory are examined with the aim of informing teaching.

New in the Third Edition:

- *a more thorough discussion of the history of rhetoric, from its earliest days in ancient Greece to the first American composition courses offered at Harvard University in 1874; *a major revision of the examination of major approaches to teaching writing--current-traditional rhetoric, new rhetoric, romantic rhetoric, writing across the curriculum, social-theoretic rhetoric, postmodern rhetoric, and post-postmodern rhetoric--considering their strengths and weaknesses;
- *an extension of the discussion of strengths and weaknesses of major approaches to its logical conclusion--Williams advocates an epistemic approach to writing instruction that demonstrably leads to improved writing instruction when implemented effectively;
- *a more detailed account of the phonics--whole language debate that continues to puzzle many teachers and parents;
- *a new focus on why grammar instruction alone does not lead to better writing, the difference between grammar and usage, and how to teach grammar and usage effectively;
- *an expanded section on Chicano English that now includes a discussion of Spanglish;
- *more information on outcome objectives; the Council of Writing Program Administrators' statement of learning outcomes for first-year composition courses has been included to help high school teachers better understand how to prepare high school students for college writing, and to help those in graduate programs prepare for teaching assistantships in first-year composition courses; and
- *a more comprehensive analysis of assessment that considers such important factors as the validity, reliability, predictability, cost, fairness, and politics of assessment and the effects on teaching of state-mandated testing, and also provides an expanded section on portfolios.

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