

To the Student

Just as you cannot become a good soccer player or musician with only a few practices, you cannot become a good second language reader and writer without having many experiences with reading and writing. *The Reading-Writing Workshop* is designed to give you experiences with reading and writing in English. You will do a lot of writing, reading, and, of course, thinking. You will learn to write by writing and learn to read by reading. This book will also help you make connections—the connection between reading and writing and the connection between your ideas and the ideas of other writers. You will improve your writing by reading more. Reading shows you how other writers write, and reading gives you ideas for your own writing. Likewise, you can improve your reading by writing. The more you write, the more familiar you will become with structure and meaning in written English.

As you work through *The Reading-Writing Workshop*, you will understand how you are going to make connections between reading and writing. You will start by writing your own ideas about a topic. Then you will read the ideas of other writers and check your understanding by doing comprehension and vocabulary activities. Finally, after you are familiar with what other writers say about a topic, you will go back to your writing to add new ideas based on your reading. After completing the reading selections with writing, comprehension, and vocabulary work, you will focus on specific writing skills to apply to a paragraph based on the writing you have done earlier. **Chapter 1, To the Student: What's Important?** will show you how to do the activities in this book.

As you can see, you will be continually interacting with reading and writing in a back-and-forth process. The goal of all of this interaction is to develop strategies for using written English. Being an active learner is the key. We are offering you instruction and practice; you must be responsible for adding hard work and dedication.

Finally, you need confidence in yourself as you deal with your second language. Don't become discouraged by mistakes; learn from them. Making mistakes is part of learning to read and write a new language. Think of your learning as a garden that needs your care, and remember: sometimes you have to remove weeds to give the flowers room to grow.

