

Press Release

The American Heritage® Guide to Contemporary Usage and Style

by the Editors of the American Heritage® Dictionaries

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". . . a usage and style guide with a heart, as well as a head. The editors offer wisdom and counsel about the choices that standard English speakers and writers have to make." — Richard Lederer, author of *The Write Way* and *Common Sense*

AUTHORITATIVE AND PRACTICAL ADVICE ON TODAY'S ISSUES OF USAGE, GRAMMAR, AND STYLE

About the Book

Have you ever *honed in* on a problem and wondered if you should have *homed in* on it instead? If you are *disinterested* in a matter, are you unbiased or uninterested? What is the difference between *flaunt* and *flout*? Should the word *niche* rhyme with *itch* or *quiche*?

The American Heritage® Guide to Contemporary Usage and Style answers hundreds of questions like these, offering guidance on almost any writing problem imaginable. Arranged in one easy-to-use A–Z list, the guide's 1,500 entries include examples and quotations that show not only correct and incorrect usage but also the relative effectiveness of different expressions in context.

For usage controversies, the guide presents the opinions of the American Heritage® Usage Panel — a group of two hundred prominent writers, scholars, and scientists who are polled on traditional and emerging usage problems. The panel makes clear when attitudes about a word are changing, when old meanings of a word have been laid to rest, and when today's innovations are likely to become tomorrow's standards.

This book discusses an extensive range of language problems, including

- traditional bugbears such as *lay vs. lie*
- commonly confused words like *impinge* and *infringe*

- emerging controversies such as *seeking closure* and *begging the question*
- pronunciation problems like *February* and *nuclear*
- differences between popular and technical uses of terms like *exponential growth* and *relativity*

Rulings are made on tough calls regarding grammatical conundrums, redundancy, and parallelism, and sensible guidance is provided on punctuation, capitalization, and other conventions of style.

According to the National Commission on Writing, states spend nearly a quarter of a billion dollars a year on remedial writing instruction for their employees. The indirect costs of sloppy writing probably hurt taxpayers even more — poor writing befuddles readers as they struggle with unclear instructions, and slows them down when they have to redo poorly written work. Armed with a copy of *The American Heritage® Guide to Contemporary Usage and Style*, writers in every field will be enlightened with authoritative and sensible guidance on language use.

Readable and well-researched, comprehensive and current, this book is an invaluable source of advice on how to use language effectively.