

# IHSPA Textbook Review

## Part I Basic Book Information

Name of Book: The Radical Write

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ISBN: 0961557001

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Author(s): Bobby Hawthorne

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Publisher: Jostens

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Cost at JEA Bookstore: \$22/\$19.80 (JEA)

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Chapter Titles: Please list below

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|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Go Ahead: Be Radical      | 5. Find an Angle            | 9. Look Beyond the Facts | 13. Put it in the Yearbook |
| 2. Find a Reader             | 6. Show Me, Don't Tell Me   | 10. Localize the Story   | 14. Express Yourself       |
| 3. Focus on Reporting        | 7. Talk to the Right People | 11. Make Your Story Flow | 15. Put Your Heart into It |
| 4. Tell Readers a Good Story | 8. Organize Your Facts      | 12. Make it Error-Free   |                            |

	Available	Available at Extra Cost	Not Available
<b>Teacher Edition</b>	<b>X (CD)</b>		
<b>Student Workbook</b>			<b>X</b>
<b>Online Help For Students</b>			<b>X</b>
<b>Online Help For Teachers</b>			<b>X</b>
<b>CD Rom For Students</b>			<b>X</b>

Part II Support  
Materials  
Please Mark an X  
under the appropriate  
column

Comments:

The book is now available with a CD-ROM for teachers, according to the latest JEA Bookstore catalog. However, I did not have access to the CD (see below).

Part III Teaching Tools  
Please Mark an X under the appropriate column

	Included	Not Included
Chapter Worksheets		
Chapter Activities		
Chapter Review Questions		
Vocabulary Words		
Writing Prompts		

Comments:  
**IMPORTANT NOTE:** These items may be included on the teacher's CD-ROM that was not included with my copy of the book. In its latest catalog, the JEA Bookstore indicates that the CD is now available for free with purchase of the book.

Part IV Reader Friendliness  
Please Mark an X under the appropriate column

	Very Well	They're Ok	Not Very Well	Does Not Have This Item
Visuals			X	
Diagrams			X	
Info Boxes	X			
Section Labels Within Chapter		X		
Student Examples	X			
Professional Examples				X

Comments:  
The book itself is not very visual; then again, it is a book primarily about writing and the writing process and not about design and graphics. However, that text-heavy approach may be a turnoff to some visual readers. It does contain lots of information boxes in the margins and lots of both good *and* bad examples (which are just as important for students to see). The book contains no *professional* examples, but personally I like the use of student writing instead, since, again, the audience is student writers.

## Part V Journalism Standards

Read the descriptions of each standard and mark an X under the appropriate column

### Standard 1: Historical Perspectives

Students understand the function, history, development of a free and independent press in the United States

	Covered Thoroughly	Covered but with Little Detail	Not Covered
JRN.1.1			X
JRN.1.2			X
JRN.1.3			X
JRN.1.4			X
JRN.1.5			X
JRN.1.6			X
JRN.1.7			X
JRN.1.8			X

Comments:

There is no mention of journalism history in this book. Again, though, it is a book about writing and the writing process, which are its strengths.

### Standard 2: Law and Ethics

Students understand and apply knowledge of legal and ethical principles related to the functioning of a free and independent press in the United States.

	Covered Thoroughly	Covered but with Little Detail	Not Covered
JRN.2.1			X
JRN.2.2			X
JRN.2.3			X
JRN.2.4			X
JRN.2.5			X
JRN.2.6			X
JRN.2.7			X
JRN.2.8			X

Comments:

There is no mention of law in this book. Again, though, it is a book about writing and the writing process, which are its strengths (see above).

### Standard 3:

#### Media Analysis

Students analyze and evaluate the accuracy and effectiveness of news and information found in print, on the Internet, and in other media.

	Covered Thoroughly	Covered but with Little Detail	Not Covered
JRN.3.1			X
JRN.3.2			X
JRN.3.3	X		
JRN.3.4	X		
JRN.3.5			X
JRN.3.6			X

Comments:

The book assumes that writers already know the basics of news gathering (finding news value, evaluating sources, etc.), so it doesn't use the terminology (timeliness, proximity, prominence, etc.). Hawthorne does spend an entire chapter discussing finding an angle, but again, that information already assumes writers' knowledge of news gathering techniques and media analysis.

### Standard 4:

#### Journalistic Writing Processes

Students discuss ideas for writing with others. They write coherent and focused stories that demonstrate well-researched information, appropriate journalistic structure and style, and a tightly reasoned flow of ideas. Students progress through stages of journalistic writing processes.

	Covered Thoroughly	Covered but with Little Detail	Not Covered
JRN.4.1	X		
JRN.4.2		X	
JRN.4.3		X	
JRN.4.4		X	
JRN.4.5	X		
JRN.4.6	X		
JRN.4.7	X		
JRN.4.8	X		
JRN.4.9	X		
JRN.4.10	X		

Comments:

This standard is one of the biggest strengths of the book; it is primarily a book about writing, not law or history or design. Standards 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 deal with news analysis, information-gathering and ethical standards respectively, which, as mentioned earlier, are

not the emphasis of the text. There is some mention of off-the-record comments and what to do with them. Also, the book favors a narrative style of writing over the inverted pyramid.

**Standard 5:  
Writing for Media**

Students write news stories, features stories and columns, in-depth issue features, reviews, editorials, or opinions and commentaries effectively and accurately in print and media, while adhering to legal and ethical standards for journalist. Students demonstrate an understanding of the research, organizational, and drafting strategies in journalistic writing processes. Student writing demonstrates a command of Standard English and the use of media formats that follow specific style manual guidelines for consistency.

	Covered Thoroughly	Covered but with Little Detail	Not Covered
JRN.5.1	X		
JRN.5.2	X		
JRN.5.3	X		
JRN.5.4	X		
JRN.5.5	X		
JRN.5.6	X		

Comments:

Standard 5 is another strength of this book, particularly as it relates to the narrative style of writing. Within the standards, Hawthorne does not address headline, title and summary deck writing, nor does he discuss citing sources, but these are minor flaws in the larger goal of instructing students how to write readable, well organized, stylistically correct stories.

**Standard 6:  
Technology and Design**

Students use principles, elements, tools, and techniques of media design to analyze, navigate, and create effective, aesthetically pleasing media formats.

	Covered Thoroughly	Covered but with Little Detail	Not Covered
JRN.6.1			X
JRN.6.2			X
JRN.6.3			X
JRN.6.4			X
JRN.6.5			X
JRN.6.6			X

Comments:

This is simply not a book about technology or design (see law and ethics and history). Teachers would need to supplement the book with other materials to address this standard.

## Standard 7:

### Media Leadership and Career Development

Students understand the organization, economics, and management of media staffs. They explore career paths and further educational opportunities in journalism.

	Covered Thoroughly	Covered but with Little Detail	Not Covered
JRN.7.1			X
JRN.7.2			X
JRN.7.3			X
JRN.7.4			X
JRN.7.5			X
JRN.7.6			X
JRN.7.7			X
JRN.7.8			X

Comments:

See comments from Standards 1, 2, 5 and 6. This standard is not the focus of this book.

### GENERAL COMMENTS REGARDING *THE RADICAL WRITE*:

I have used Bobby Hawthorne's *The Radical Write* for years, and I have found it to be a useful tool in my introductory journalism classes, particularly at the beginning of the year when I discuss narrative writing, finding angles, discussing audience and organizational skills. The book does not pretend to be about design, technology, law, ethics, photography, etc. (see individual standards above). So if you're looking for a text that contains all of the standards in one volume, this isn't it.

Also, the book rides on the assumption that its readers already have a basic understanding of news value and information gathering techniques. It assumes that writers have already determined a story's newsworthiness and already understand how to find credible, relevant sources. Again, this isn't so much of a "ding" against the book itself, but rather a general bit of information that its readers must understand.

What this book *does* excel in is its treatment of writing. It has fantastic examples (both good and bad) and, what's more, it's written with a rather humorous overtone that carries across well for students. It's both easy to read and easy to comprehend. But, as I mentioned above, if you need information regarding design, law, etc. you'll need to supplement with other books and materials. It is less expensive than many books on the market, but teachers should keep in mind that they might need to purchase additional books that deal with other standards.

