

Using *Adventures in Composition*

A Note to the Student

One of the best ways to learn how to write well is to read the work of good writers. The stories in this book will serve as guides for your own writing. Each part of the book is centered on a theme, and you will see how different writers use this theme or main idea. Your job is to read the work and notice how effective it can be to use the theme or main idea. Then you will develop your own writing skills through exercises and writing assignments.

You know that the foundation of a house must be built before you can add floors, walls, and a roof. In writing, the foundation of the paragraph is a good sentence. In Part One we will concentrate on writing good, clear sentences that hold the reader's interest. We will then combine these sentences into paragraphs. Strong and effective sentences build strong and effective paragraphs.

What you learn in Part One will be the foundation of all the writing assignments in this book. Subsequent parts will provide additional interest and dimension to your work. You will learn how to write a good descriptive paragraph using all the senses. You will learn how to compare and contrast places, people, or things. You will learn how to develop an essay showing cause and effect, and you will learn how to teach something by providing information in a process essay.

An added bonus to this text is that the instruction on how to become a good writer will be done through the context of short stories that will hold your interest and introduce you to the writings of famous authors. Your vocabulary will increase, and you will learn how to self-edit and be critical of what you read.

We suggest that you keep a folder for your writing assignments. There are four special assignments that you may work on and edit throughout the book. These are called *Focused Writings* and appear at the end of each

part. If you keep copies of these assignments from the first draft to the final copy, you will be able to evaluate your own progress.

Enjoy the stories as you explore writing in a unique way. Just like you, the authors whose stories appear in this book worked hard to perfect their stories. They can be your guides as you work to become better writers.