The Rite of Writing Right

A Language Explorers Story About Words and Much More

The Language Explorers Series – Volume 7

David I. Schoen



Toad University Press

Copyright © 2026 by David I. Schoen

All rights reserved.
No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise—without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles or reviews.

ISBN: 978-1-972332-08-5

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are products of the author's imagination, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental. The language concepts, however, are very real.

Published by Toad University Press
toaduniversitypress.com

Printed in the United States of America

Third Edition

Printing Code: PB3.0012290709260943 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Edited by Eleanor Whitman and Lexis Mollica

Illustrations, paintings, images, and cover designed by Serina Degami-Teawight



Appendix A

Teacher and Parent Notes
The Language Explorers Series – Book 7: *The Rite of Writing Right*

These notes are designed to support guided reading, discussion, and instruction for *The Rite of Writing Right*. As with previous volumes in the series, the goal is not to interrupt the story, but to give adults the tools to notice, reinforce, and extend the learning that is already happening naturally on the page.

Use what is helpful.
Skip what is not.
Curiosity, conversation, and enjoyment always come first.

Big Picture Goals of Book 7
The Rite of Writing Right

Book 7 marks a deliberate shift in the series—from learning *about* language to learning how to *use* it responsibly, thoughtfully, and with awareness of audience, purpose, and consequence.

In this volume, readers are invited to see writing not as a school task, but as a real-world act that carries meaning beyond the page.

Through story rather than instruction, readers explore:

- **Writing as process, not performance**
  Drafting, revising, finishing, and choosing restraint are shown as natural parts of clear communication, not signs of uncertainty or failure.

- **The relationship between writer and reader**
  Language is framed as an exchange. Correctness alone is not enough; tone, courtesy, and intention matter.

- **Precision without coldness**
  Readers learn that clarity and kindness are not opposites. The strongest writing often balances both.

- **Time as a narrative and practical force**
  The book examines how time is measured, named, anticipated, and respected—both in language and in life.

- **Numbers as a form of explanation**
  Percentages, quantities, and counting systems appear as tools for understanding, fairness, and planning rather than abstract math concepts.

- **Responsibility that comes with readiness**
  Lucia's growth is not marked by bold declarations, but by quiet competence—finishing tasks, making decisions, and understanding expectations.

- **Community learning**
  Knowledge continues to emerge socially: through conversation, observation, humor, disagreement, and shared responsibility.

- **Respect for endings and continuations**
  The book acknowledges loss without fear, showing how remembrance, language, and legacy coexist with forward motion.

Rather than presenting isolated lessons, Book 7 allows learning to **accumulate and converge**. Concepts introduced earlier—grammar, numbers, tone, structure—are no longer labeled. They are lived.

Readers are not asked to master formal writing, time management, or abstract reasoning.

They are invited to notice when words work—and why.

If a reader finishes this book thinking:

- *"That felt important,"*
- *"That sounded right,"* or
- *"I think I understand what writing is for,"*

then the book has done exactly what it set out to do.

Chapter-by-Chapter Learning Focus
The Language Explorers Series – Book 7: *The Rite of Writing Right*

Chapter 1 — A Letter, Carefully Written
Focus: Continuity, recap, and intellectual readiness

- Readers are reintroduced to the pond community with an emphasis on accumulated knowledge rather than novelty.
- The story reinforces that learning is cumulative and ongoing, not episodic.
- Lucia is presented as capable, prepared, and intellectually confident.
- A properly formatted business letter is introduced organically; readers see it as friendly, while the Prince explicitly acknowledges its formal structure and purpose.
- Possibly explain the Summa Cum Noctua. **Summa cum noctua** is a playful Latin pun on *summa cum laude* ("with highest honor"), replacing *laude* with *noctua*, the Latin word for *owl*. It humorously honors Mr. Bubo's wisdom and scholarship while reinforcing the book's tone of learned language used with wit rather than stiffness.

Discussion prompts:

- Why is it helpful to revisit what characters already know?
- How does familiarity allow the story to move forward more quickly?

Chapter 2 — Of Letters, and Rites, and Knowing Which Is Which
Focus: Writing as process and conceptual precision

- Writing is framed as an intentional act tied to meaning and transition.
- The concept of a *rite* is introduced and carefully distinguished from *right* and *write*.
- Readers see writing as a marker of change, responsibility, and growth.

Discussion prompts:

- Why does the story pause to define "rite"?
- How can writing mark an important transition?

Chapter 3 — The Packet, Read Aloud (Against Better Judgment)
Focus: Institutional language and expectations

- Readers encounter formal institutional language through the Toad University packet.
- Logistics, requirements, and rules are introduced as neutral—not threatening—structures.
- The difference between friendly tone and formal expectations is highlighted.

Discussion prompts:

- Why does the packet sound different from everyday speech?
- How do rules help organizations function?

Chapter 4 — The First Draft
Focus: Drafting and intention

- Lucia writes her first response, emphasizing care and correctness.
- Drafting is shown as thoughtful but incomplete.
- Writing is framed as purposeful communication, not self-expression alone.

Discussion prompts:

- Why does Lucia pause so often while writing?
- What does it mean to write *for* a reader?

Chapter 5 — What Gets Cut
Focus: Revision and restraint

- Redundancy is introduced as repetition that adds no new meaning.
- Readers learn that clarity often improves when explanation is reduced.
- Emotional attachment to sentences is acknowledged as normal—and manageable.

Discussion prompts:

- Why is it hard to remove sentences we like?
- How does cutting improve meaning?

Chapter 6 — When Time Moves Faster Than Words
Focus: Time passing and narrative pacing

- The story explicitly marks seasonal and temporal movement.
- Readers see how time passing affects readiness, planning, and responsibility.
- Systems and routines quietly emerge without announcement.

Discussion prompts:

- How does the story show time moving forward without rushing?
- Why does change feel gradual here?

Chapter 7 — The Case of Saying It Again (and Again)
Focus: Redundancy vs. clarity

- Redundancy is reinforced through humor and contrast.
- Readers learn that repetition without added meaning weakens writing.
- Minnow humor makes the concept memorable and accessible.

Discussion prompts:

- When does repetition help?
- When does it get in the way?

Chapter 8 — The Matter of Percentages
Focus: Numbers as language

- Percentages are introduced through negotiation and fairness.
- Mathematical ideas are shown as explanatory tools rather than abstractions.
- Readers see how numbers communicate proportional meaning.

Discussion prompts:

- How do percentages help people agree?
- Why does "ten percent" feel intuitive?
- What is ten percent of… and choose a simple number. This will be life-changing information for most students. Do multiple examples. "Ten percent of 50 is? 5. Correct!" Most students forget or do not realize that a whole number (like 50) has a "silent" decimal point after it. This reminds them, or instructs them.

Chapter 9 — When Numbers Wear Words
Focus: Numerical language and approximation

- Words like *dozen*, *couple*, *few*, and *some* are explored.
- Readers learn that language can be precise or flexible depending on context.
- The limits and usefulness of approximation are examined.

Discussion prompts:

- Why do we sometimes use words instead of numbers?
- When can vagueness cause problems?

Chapter 10 — When Numbers Explain Themselves
Focus: Structure and transparency in math

- Number systems across languages are compared.
- Mandarin is shown as structurally transparent for numerical thinking.
- Readers see how structure reduces cognitive load.

Discussion prompts:

- Why do some number systems feel easier to learn?
- How does structure support understanding?

Chapter 11 — When Simple Isn't Enough
Focus: Tone, courtesy, and audience

- Lucia revises her message for warmth without sacrificing clarity.
- Readers learn that correctness does not guarantee connection.
- Writing is framed as relational, not merely transactional.

Discussion prompts:

- Can something be correct but still feel wrong?
- How does tone change meaning?

Chapter 12 — Chapter Shí Èr (Oh—Sorry! 12)
Focus: Words for time and logistics

- Temporal language (*soon, later, overmorrow*) is explored.
- Readers see how vague time words affect planning and coordination.
- Humor reinforces the importance of shared definitions.

Discussion prompts:

- Which time words are precise?
- Why does ambiguity matter in planning?
- Has anyone heard 'overmorrow' before? Why do you think it's not commonly used?

Chapter 13 — The Things We Say After
Focus: Loss, respect, and remembrance

- The service for Barker introduces death gently and respectfully.
- Readers learn how language honors memory and legacy.
- Silence is shown as meaningful communication.

Discussion prompts:

- Why is the service quiet?
- How do words—and silence—help us remember?

Chapter 14 — The Day That Arrived (and the Hours Inside It)
Focus: Arrival and anticipation

- The Prince's arrival reshapes the emotional rhythm of the story.

- Time becomes structured and intentional.
- Readers observe readiness as a form of maturity.

Discussion prompts:

- How does anticipation affect behavior?
- What does it mean to be ready?

Chapter 15 — Dinner, and All That Came With It
Focus: Culmination and integration

- Language, math, etiquette, generosity, and community converge.
- Learning is lived rather than explained.
- Growth is demonstrated through action.

Discussion prompts:

- Which lessons came together at dinner?
- How did characters show growth without naming it?

Notes and Ideas

Appendix B

The Language Explorers Series – Book 7: The Rite of Writing Right

Glossary (English, Spanish, Mandarin)

acknowledgement *(n.)* A written response that confirms something has been received and understood.
adjustments *(n.)* Small changes made to improve something.
aligned *(adj.)* Lined up; arranged to match.
announced *(v.)* Said officially or clearly so others know.
anticipation *(n.)* The feeling of waiting for something important or exciting to happen.
approximate *(adj.)* Close to the correct number or amount, but not exact.
arranged *(v.)* Put in order; organized.
arrive *(v.)* To come to a place.
authority *(n.)* A position of respect or leadership; someone others listen to.
behaved *(v.)* Acted in a certain way.
between *(prep.)* In the middle of two things.
blinked *(v.)* Closed and opened eyes quickly.
brief *(adj.)* Short.
bundle *(n.)* A group of things tied or held together.
business *(n.)* Related to official work or professional matters.
business letter *(n.)* A formal style of writing used for official or professional communication.
calm *(adj.)* Not worried or excited; steady.
careful *(adj.)* Done with attention and caution.
ceremony *(n.)* A special event with meaning and purpose.
checked *(v.)* Looked at to make sure something is correct.
clarified *(v.)* Made clearer; explained so it is easier to understand.
clipboard *(n.)* A flat board used to hold paper for writing.
clustered *(v.)* Gathered close together in a group.
confirmed *(v.)* Proved true; made certain.
consequence *(n.)* A result that happens because of an action.
continued *(v.)* Kept going.
coordinate *(v.)* To organize different parts so they work together.
courtesy *(n.)* Polite and respectful behavior, especially in language.
culmination *(n.)* The point at which many things come together or reach completion.
decimal *(n.)* A number written with a point to show parts of a whole.
discount *(n.)* A reduction in price.
efficient *(adj.)* Working well without wasting time or effort.
eulogy *(n.)* A speech or message that honors someone who has died by remembering their life.

infrastructure *(n.)* The systems and structures that allow something to function smoothly.
logistics *(n.)* Planning and organizing how things are delivered, arranged, or managed.
overmorrow *(n.)* An old word meaning the day after tomorrow.
percentage *(n.)* A way of describing part of a whole using "per hundred."
precision *(n.)* Careful accuracy in language, numbers, or actions.
redundancy *(n.)* Repeating the same idea more than once without adding new meaning.
revision *(n.)* The act of reviewing and improving writing after it is first created.
structure *(n.)* The way something is organized or put together.
temporal *(adj.)* Related to time.
tone *(n.)* The attitude or feeling conveyed by words.
validation *(n.)* Recognition or confirmation that something has value or importance.
veneration (*n.*) Praise

Spanish Words

usted *(oos-TEHD)* The universal Spanish word for "you," used to show respect. Used for all except close friends and family. (Note- most Spanish speakers, especially in the United States, use the "*tu"* form of "you" in almost all situations. This is not incorrect – but – in many cultures it would be considered rude. It depends on the culture. *Usted* is never wrong, but *tu* can be, depending on the listener.)

pan *(pahn)* Spanish for *bread.*

arroz *(ah-ROHS)* Spanish for *rice.*

despedida *(dehs-peh-DEE-dah)* A Spanish word meaning *farewell.*

Mandarin (Chinese) Words

(Written in Pinyin, the Romanized spelling system for Mandarin)

èr *(halfway between air and our. Think of a pirate saying "RRrrr")*
The Mandarin word for *two.*

shí *(shir)*
The Mandarin word for *ten*. Said like the first part of 'shirt' with a rising tone, almost like a question.

shí yī *(shir ee)*
Eleven — literally "ten one." Said like the first part of 'shirt' and 'eee' with no Y sound. The 'eee' part is said in a flat, even tone.

èr shí *(air shir)*
Twenty — literally "two ten."

èr shí èr *(air shir air)*
Twenty-two — literally "two ten two."

sān shí sì *(sahn shir suh)*
Thirty-four — literally "three ten four."

bā shí qī *(bah shir chee)*
Eighty-seven — literally "eight ten seven." 'qi' is said with an English 'ch' Chee.

Notes and Ideas

Appendix C

Optional Extension Activities

The Language Explorers Series – Book 7: The Rite of Writing Right

These activities are **entirely optional**.
They are designed for readers who want to linger a little longer with the ideas in the story, and for adults who enjoy noticing how learning can extend naturally beyond the page.

There is no requirement to complete every activity.
Choose one. Choose none.
The story works either way.

---

1. Writing With a Purpose (Letters That Matter)

Story connection: Lucia's acknowledgement letter to Toad University

Invite the reader to write a short letter for a real reason:

- Thanking someone
- Confirming that something was received
- Asking a clear, polite question

Encourage the reader to think about:

- Who the letter is for
- What the reader already knows
- How many words are truly necessary

Optional discussion:

- How does this letter sound different from a note to a friend?
- What makes it feel respectful without being stiff?

---

2. One Sentence Is Enough (Redundancy Awareness)

Story connection: Lucia's discovery that she had said the same thing three times

Ask the reader to:

- Write one idea in three different sentences
- Then choose *only one* sentence to keep

Optional discussion:

- Which sentence felt strongest?
- Did removing the others make the idea clearer or weaker?

This is not about "less writing."
It is about **intentional writing**.

---

3. Time Words in Real Life

Story connection: Soon, later, in a bit, overmorrow

Invite the reader to listen for time words during the day:

- soon
- later
- tomorrow
- next week

Optional discussion:

- Which words are exact?
- Which words depend on who is speaking?
- Why do people sometimes prefer flexible words?

For fun:

- Ask whether *overmorrow* should make a comeback.

---

4. Numbers That Explain Themselves

Story connection: Mandarin counting with Juan Zhong

Try this verbally, not on paper:

- Say "two tens three" instead of twenty-three
- Say "four tens" instead of forty

Optional discussion:

- Does this make addition easier?
- Why might some languages prefer this structure?

No calculations required.
This is about **noticing patterns**, not mastering them.

---

5. Respectful Disagreement

Story connection: The swan, the seal, and the fish delivery

Talk about a time when:

- Something wasn't quite right
- A problem needed to be addressed politely

Optional discussion:

- How did the swan ask for a discount without being rude?
- Why is tone as important as correctness?

---

6. Remembering Well

Story connection: Barker's service

Invite the reader to think about:

- Someone (or something) they remember fondly
- What made that presence meaningful

This does **not** need to be written.
It can be spoken.
Or simply thought.

Optional discussion:

- Why do we pause together when something ends?
- How does remembering help us move forward?

---

7. Looking Ahead

Story connection: The Prince's dinner and Lucia's readiness

Ask the reader:

- What feels different about Lucia now compared to the beginning?
- What do *you* feel ready for next?

No answer is required.
Readiness is not always loud.

Closing Note

Book 7 is not about finishing learning.
It is about **recognizing when learning has taken root**.

If a reader notices language more carefully,
chooses words with more intention,
or pauses before repeating themselves—

Then the work is already happening.

And that is enough.

Book 7 does not introduce many new *terms*.
It introduces **expectations**.

Readers are trusted to:
• Remember
• Connect
• Notice
• Reflect

If a reader finishes this book feeling capable rather than instructed—
thoughtful rather than corrected—
ready rather than rushed—

then *The Rite of Writing Right* has done its work.

Note to Parents, Teachers, and Readers

This book is about waiting.

Not the restless kind.
Not the kind that feels empty or unfinished.

It is about the kind of waiting in which something is quietly forming.

In *The Rite of Writing Right* , many of the most important moments are not loud. They happen between conversations, during observation, and in the careful use of language. Rumors are examined. Expectations are tested. Newcomers arrive, and readers are invited to notice not who they are, but how they are met.

This volume continues the series' exploration of language as a living tool. Words can elevate, simplify, confuse, or clarify. They can invite others in—or keep them at a distance. Learning to recognize this power is part of becoming a thoughtful reader and communicator.

Lucia's growth in this book is subtle but meaningful. She becomes more deliberate, more patient, and more serious about her learning. Her acceptance letter is not an ending. It is recognition of work already underway.

For parents and teachers, this book offers opportunities to notice and discuss:

- how language shapes perception
- why unfamiliar does not mean unwelcome
- how patience supports real growth
- and how learning continues even when time passes quietly

For readers—especially growing readers—the message is simple and reassuring:

You do not need to be finished to be learning.
You do not need to arrive to be becoming.

There is still much to do.
There is still much to learn.

As with all books in *The Language Explorers Series*, these stories are meant to be shared, discussed, questioned, and enjoyed together. Questions, observations, and thoughtful disagreement are always welcome.

If you would like to share how this book is being used, or what it has sparked in your home or classroom, you are invited to reach out.

http://www.thelanguageexplorersseries.com or tleseries.com

Curiosity is always appreciated.
Conversation is always encouraged.

And sometimes, being *ready enough to try* is exactly where learning begins.

Books by the Author

Professor Dave's Educational Series
Clear, student-friendly guides built around strategy, confidence, and real mastery.

Professor Dave's Owner's Manual for the Digital SAT
Professor Dave's Owner's Manual for English Vocabulary

Learn more: thetutormonster.com

The Language Explorers Series™ (Complete 10-Book Series)
Learning language through story—grammar, writing, rules, and how communication really works.
(Available in hardcover (full color), paperback (color), paperback, and e-version.)

1. **The Adventures of Lucia & Mr. Bubo**
2. **Lucia Gets a Letter**
3. **Lucia on New Ground**
4. **The Restaurant at the End of the Reeds**
5. **The Quest for Minnowlin Stars**
6. **The Wealth of Words (and Minnows)**
7. **The Rite of Writing Right**
8. **Depends How You Look at It**
9. **The Bridges of the Pond**
10. **The Weight of the Wait**

Learn more: www.thelanguageexplorersseries.com or tleseries.com

---

The Math Explorers Series® (Complete 10-Book Series)
Math and music concepts taught through story—systems, patterns, structure, and thinking clearly.
(Available in hardcover (full color), paperback (color), paperback, and e-version.)

1. **The Bridge That Never Fell**
2. **Dams, Clams, and Cricket Jams**
3. **With a Little Kelp From My Friends**
4. **Still Water, Busy Minds**
5. **Three Sides to Every Story**
6. **Round and Round the Stream**
7. **Land, Air, and Stream**
8. **The Minnowlin Inn and Spa**
9. **Rest, Rest, Kelp and Sway**

10. **A Tour of the World's Shapes**
    Learn more themathexplorersseries.com or tmeseries.com

The Flying Explorers Series® (10-Book Series)
Real flight training taught through story—airplanes, weather, rules, judgment, and the mindset of a pilot.
(Available in paperback and e-version.)

1. **The Day Tamias Looked Up**
2. **The Sky Has Rules**
3. **Never Trust a Flying Squirrel**
4. **Over the River and Over the Woods**
5. **Seeing When You Can't See**
6. **The Tale of the Useless Tail**
7. **Between Heat and Horizon**
8. **The Cargo Conundrum**
9. **Where the Runway Ends**
10. **Clouds and Classrooms**

Learn more:
theflyingexplorersseries.com or tfeseries.com

The TutorMonster Cookbook Collection
Family-tested recipes with personality—practical, flavorful, and built for real kitchens

---

The Whining Mill
A light novel about life, friction, dogs, and the strange ways people end up together.

About the Author

David I. Schoen, known to generations of students as Professor Dave, has spent decades teaching language, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and careful thinking, helping learners of all ages discover clarity, confidence, and even a little joy in the way words work.

A veteran educator, tutor, writer, and lifelong lover of books, Professor Dave specializes in turning complicated ideas into simple, friendly explanations that actually stay with the reader. He has guided thousands of students through English, writing, grammar, vocabulary, test preparation, and the often-surprising process of learning how language works.

The Language Explorers Series grew from that same teaching spirit. These books are built on the idea that grammar and language do not have to feel dry, cold, or frightening. They can be playful. They can be musical. They can be funny. Most of all, they can help young readers understand not only how words are used, but why they matter.

Professor Dave is a great lover of English grammar, language, usage, vocabulary, and the maintenance of high standards in each. He believes that strong language skills give students more than better sentences. They give them sharper thinking, clearer expression, and a stronger voice in the world.

Before becoming an author and educator, Dave worked for nearly two decades as an Air Traffic Controller at JFK International Airport, one of the busiest airports in the world. That experience sharpened his respect for precision, timing, communication, and getting the words exactly right.

When he is not teaching or writing, Professor Dave can usually be found creating new educational books, experimenting in the kitchen, playing the piano, or working on inventive projects that combine family, learning, and fun. He lives on Long Island, New York, where he is constantly surrounded by stories waiting to be told.

The author can be reached at:
tleseries.com
tmeseries.com
tfeseries.com
