



Project IV: Reading & Writing

"Writing is nature's way of showing us how disorganized our thinking is."

-Jules Feiffer

Required Reading: *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk and E.B. White, pp. 66-85.

Writing is a design process we have all been practicing since the first grade. We do not normally consider writing a paper designing, but in fact the steps to creating a successful essay or compelling product are the same. Both require that one define a context, construct a logical structure, and develop a consistent argument. It is my hope that examining a text ostensibly about the writing process will inform your thinking about the process of design.

E.B. White was born in Westchester County, New York in 1899. He was one of the founders of *The New Yorker*, and he wrote for that magazine for thirty years. However, he is dear to most of us as the author of *Stuart Little*, and *Charlotte's Web*. He was sixty when he sat down to revise *The Elements of Style*. While this work has stood the test of time, its point of view is still just that: one viewpoint out of the infinite possible. As such, I do not present White's book as a blueprint for design success. Instead, I hope you will treat White's comments as the distillation of many years of experience from a long-time and well-respected practitioner of the art.

Your assignment is:

1. Read the excerpt.
2. Think about the relationship between what White has written and your understanding of the design process
3. Write not more than one page in which you analyze an example of contemporary design using White's approach to style. Some possibilities are Oakley shades, Calvin Klein Obsession advertising, the Dodge Viper, Nike AirFlite shoes, or Pulp Fiction.

You may write about anything you wish, but a page is not much space. The most success-