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THE *NEW* SCIENCE OF SCIENTIFIC WRITING

**Using Reader Expectations to
Transform Scientific Communication**

GEORGE DAVID GOPEN

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FRONT COVER

THE *NEW* SCIENCE OF SCIENTIFIC WRITING

Using Reader Expectations to
Transform Scientific Communication



GEORGE DAVID GOPEN

"George is one of the most masterful teachers, erudite scholars and
decent human beings I have ever encountered in the Academy"
—Dr. CORNEL WEST author of *Race Matters* and *Democracy Matters*

For more than four decades, **George David Gopen's** Reader Expectation Approach has transformed how scientists, lawyers, and other professionals write — not by prescribing rules, but by revealing how readers read. The structural framework for

writing clearly and persuasively in the English language was introduced in George's landmark 1990 article, co-authored with Judith A. Swan, "[The Science of Scientific Writing](#)," published in *American Scientist*.

[The New Science of Scientific Writing: Using Reader Expectations to Transform Scientific Communication](#) is an updated and greatly expanded book treatment of George's internationally acclaimed article, which has been credited with [reshaping scientific writing](#). The core premise and interrelated concepts of REA have been [corroborated by studies](#) in cognitive psychology and psycholinguistics. A substantial body of [peer-reviewed literature](#) has been published validating its effectiveness.

“Dr. Gopen’s [1990] article is our #2 most viewed online article overall, for the entire period since 2017, with almost 148,000 views. It is certainly fair to say that it is one of our most popular, read, cited, and requested articles.”

**— Fenella Saunders, Editor-in-Chief, *American Scientist*
(May 26, 2026)**

The New Science of Scientific Writing expands and deepens George's foundational work, drawing on decades of [seminar teaching](#) and workshops across research institutions, national laboratories, medical schools, and law firms worldwide.

By January of 2027, this book will have appeared translated into 17 languages: Italian, French, German, Spanish, Mandarin traditional, Mandarin simplified, Hindi, Urdu, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Ukrainian, Hausa, Arabic, Hebrew, Portuguese, and Swedish.

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BACK COVER

"With admiration and gratitude. I thought of your work with every sentence I wrote in 'If I Understood You, Would I Have This Look on My Face?'" – *Alan Alda, actor, author, and founder of the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science, The State University of New York, Stonybrook.*

"Dr. Gopen's [1990] article is our #2 most viewed online article overall, for the entire period since 2017, with almost 148,000 views. It is certainly fair to say that it is one of our most popular, read, cited, and requested articles." – *Fenella Saunders, Editor-in-Chief, American Scientist (May 26, 2026).*

"George gave me my life, my career, my future. He gave me my dreams. I owe him everything." – *Victoria Seewaldt, MD, Ruth Ziegler Chair in Population Sciences, The City of Hope.*

"George Gopen is nothing less than a prophet leading writers to a promised land free of obfuscated meaning and consequent misunderstanding." – *Anna Mukamal Stevens, Assistant Professor of Digital Humanities in the Department of English and Comparative Literature at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.*

"Both native and nonnative English speakers hearing the principles described in this book tend to exclaim, 'Why didn't someone tell me this before??'" – *L. McPhee-Kimminau.*

A revision and expansion of Gopen's highly acclaimed and widely influential 1990 *American Scientist* article "The Science of Scientific Writing," this book introduces the Reader Expectation Approach—how writers need to understand certain expectations of readers in order to control both the writer's writing process and the reader's interpretive process.



Creator of the Reader Expectation Approach to writing in the English Language, **George David Gopen**, JD, PhD, is Professor Emeritus of the Practice of Rhetoric at Duke University. His landmark 1990 *American Scientist* article, "The Science of Scientific Writing," has been reprinted and taught at universities worldwide for more than 35 years.

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FIRST HILL BOOKS

THE NEW SCIENCE OF SCIENTIFIC WRITING

GEORGE DAVID GOPEN



English language release date: August 11, 2026.
Available in 18 different languages within the year.

More Books by George David Gopen forthcoming from Anthem Press

• ***The Shape of English*** is a synthesis of the major works of George's career. Release is expected late 2026 with translations into Mandarin and Hindi.

Four additional volumes will be following these two books. The first is a book on legal writing, the title of which has not yet been chosen. The second is a book on punctuation as seen from the perspective of the reader instead of society. The working title is *Mark My Words*. The third will be a textbook with the working title *Writing Transformed*.

The fourth is George's book on the music of English prose. The focus throughout is on the lifelong development of the rhetoric of Abraham Lincoln. The working title is *Mr. Lincoln's Music: How Elegance Produces Eloquence*.

George's new books will be available wherever books are sold. As a subscriber, we will send you links for early ordering as publication dates approach.

Thanks again for subscribing!

***"Write well. In your life you will be known by many important people only by your writing."
—George David Gopen***



George David Gopen's Reader Expectation Approach

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