

questions to complete in 2 hours, whereas the actual NBRC examination is 120 questions in 2 hours. Both the practice tests monitor and display the elapsed time. Neither practice test includes the NBRC option to hide the clock. The clock in Sills' program displays tenths of a second, which some might find distracting. Persing's program allows the student to turn feedback review off or on. Additionally, the student can suspend test-taking and select to either exit or have the program score the completed portion of the examination. Sills' program provides feedback on all pre-test examination questions. No scoring information is provided on the post-test until the entire 140-question examination is completed, and there is no option to exit early with scoring.

Although both books are new editions, each book is somewhat dated in both content and references. Sills reviews ventilator discontinuance using a "T-piece trial," but does not review methods that use low levels of continuous positive airway pressure and/or low levels of pressure support (5–7 cm H₂O). Sills's book includes excellent figures, which depict the comparisons of peak and plateau pressures with various compliance and airway resistance values, but uses a manometer to do so. While most students will appreciate the pressure/time tracings that are also included, most students will only recognize and relate to electronic digital (not manometer) displays of pressure. Persing uses the term "pressure-cycled" when describing the cycling of infant ventilators and "pressure support," and in the section "Maintenance of the Ventilator Circuit" he states that the "circuit should be changed at least once per week." Neither author reviews volume-targeted ventilation nor airway-pressure-release ventilation, possibly because they are not specifically listed in the examination content matrix.

Both books list ventilator weaning criteria that are not supported by the published evidence-based guidelines¹ (namely, vital capacity > 10–15 mL/kg) or are not inclusive of all evidence-based variables (eg, Sills does not list the ratio of P_{aO₂} to fraction of inspired oxygen, or the ratio of respiratory frequency to tidal volume). Persing lists a 15% increase in flow as indicative of bronchodilator response, but the American Thoracic Society recommendation is a 12% increase and 200 mL.² In this same section the 6th edition of the Manual of Pulmonary Function Testing is referenced, but an 8th edition was published in 2004.³ Similarly,

Sills lists the National Asthma Education Prevention Program Expert Panel Report II, but does not include the 2002 Update on Selected Topics.⁴ Both books include a few other dated references. Each book contains occasional content errors, but I found no typographical errors, and, given the amount of information reviewed, I commend the authors on how much they got right.

Sills and Persing kept the features that made the previous edition popular with students, and added and updated content to reflect the most recent NBRC examination matrix. While the primary audience of these books is the student preparing for the NBRC examinations, either book could be used as a study guide while in a respiratory care program. Both books provide a remarkable expanse of information, at a very affordable price. I will not hesitate to recommend these books to my students.

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Write It Down: Guidance for Preparing Effective and Compliant Documentation, 2nd edition. Janet Gough. Boca Raton, Florida: CRC Press/Taylor & Francis Group. 2005. Hard cover, illustrated, 479 pages, \$229.95.

The 2nd edition of **Write It Down: Guidance for Preparing Effective and Compliant Documentation** is an excellent addition to a reference library. Written mostly by one person, but with contributions by 14 professionals in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and medical-device industries, this book would be useful for anyone interested in preparing effective documentation and extensive information on the structure of lan-

guage, with focus on those components that are particularly troublesome for non-native writers of English.

The author points out in the introduction that this book is not a book of regulatory guidance, but instead is written with a 3-pronged focus: (1) to help writers understand the "why" of what they must write and the current industry standards for good documentation practice, (2) to provide effective examples of a broad spectrum of documents, and (3) to provide in-depth explanation of grammar and punctuation conventions. The book incorporates examples from working documents, including data-collection forms, audit reports, standard operating procedures, laboratory methods, development reports, excerpts from quality manuals and plans, and sections of dossiers.

The format in the first part of each chapter is easy to read, letting the reader know in the beginning what each chapter provides, from various perspectives of writing instructions, and examples of documents from first-hand industry experience. The reader can quickly determine which chapters might offer the information needed for the material they are attempting to write. This style of providing information develops throughout the book.

The opening chapter gives a good overview of writing within the regulated environment, with Title 21 of Code of Federal Regulations, Part 211, as the primary regulatory focus. This chapter establishes the reader's interest and provides essentials of why writing plays such an integral part in companies that develop, manufacture, and market therapeutic products. The following chapters cover various applications of writing for all types of industry settings. Each chapter is divided and organized so that the reader can walk through the information, focusing on the different components of writing as the information relates to what he or she may be working on at that particular time.

The content of Chapter 2, "Connecting Writer and Reader," focuses on how knowing who your documents address and what response you want is key to successful technical writing. This chapter provides additional information on how to ensure that the documents address the intended audience and elicit the desired response. It is important to be objective about who the intended readers are and to pay attention to how they will receive and use the information.

In Chapter 3 the author develops the process of organizing and delivering information. The writer of any document must learn to “look at it from 2 angles: logic and development of ideas.” While this is often difficult for writers, this chapter walks through the process in a manner that helps the writer understand how to develop this skill, with written examples to support and explain the process.

Chapter 4 will be very helpful for anyone who writes business correspondence, letters, memoranda, electronic correspondence, and facsimiles. A letter is, in many cases, the first contact a party has with a company, and you want their first impression to be the correct one. While letters are usually inter-organization communications and memoranda are intra-organization communications, facsimiles can be either, and you want to make sure that you are conveying the correct message in your wording. Knowing how to convey an accurate and professional piece of correspondence is very important. This chapter offers many good ideas and examples.

Chapter 5 addresses the skill of writing policies, plans, manuals, procedures, and methods, and describes why it is very important to understand the process of writing these correctly. The chapter explains the backbone process documents that must be in place for companies to operate compliantly. Examples of various process documents are provided. Chapter 6 discusses data-collection and routine reporting. Chapter 7 discusses process reports. Chapter 8 discusses summary writing. These chapters address the differences and similarities in writing routine reports, process reports, and summary reports. There are many different examples, along with specific information on what to include and what not to include in each.

The book's largest section, Chapters 9 through 12, extensively covers grammar, writing style, sentence structure, managing verbs, and punctuation. These chapters are very informative and useful for developing clear, professionally written papers.

Chapter 13 is a glossary, which is very informative and offers good insights for avoiding inappropriate words in formal writing. Chapter 14, “Acronyms, Symbols, and Abbreviations,” offers help for eliminating the confusion and possible misunderstandings when using these in formal writing.

In summary, **Write It Down: Guidance for Preparing Effective and Compliant**

Documentation, is very helpful and informative, and the format makes it easy to read. It would be useful to professionals, both as a reference and a teaching aid, to enhance the preparation of effective documents. I would conclude that any person who has to provide documentation in a clear, effective, and professional manner will find it invaluable.

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The Respiratory Therapist's Legal Answer Book. Anthony L DeWitt RRT CRT JD FAARC. Sudbury, Massachusetts: Jones and Bartlett. 2006. Hard cover, 501 pages, \$59.95.

DeWitt, an attorney and former respiratory therapist, has written a sound basic overview of general legal principles a respiratory therapist or nurse may encounter (and many that they will wish to avoid) in the regular course of their profession. The legal points included are sound, the analysis is accurate, the examples are usually helpful; for the most part, this is a handy reference or starting point to research the legal issues that can accompany many health-care situations. It contains information that will help avoid liability in the practice and legal problems relating to employment, and perhaps can even help address some of the ethical issues routinely confronted in this field.

A book can never replace an attorney. While this book may help practitioners to avoid some legal problems, and briefly explain the legal system, it cannot be relied upon for specific situations. Yet it does provide answers to common legal questions that can arise. It is written in an easy-to-use question-and-answer format, and it provides a complete survey of the legal principles that a respiratory therapist might encounter in employment settings. An understanding of some of those basic legal principles might help a nurse or therapist avoid legal pitfalls and lawsuits.

A treatise such as this should be restricted to legal principles and guidelines. Sometimes DeWitt's bias and opinions creep in. On page 1, in the first paragraph, DeWitt says, “It is difficult to adequately describe ‘the legal system’ in a book that isn't filled with legal jargon, because the legal system tries very hard to make itself difficult to

understand.” That opinion is incorrect. The legal system does not use jargon in a deliberate attempt to make itself hard to understand. Books on pathology or physiology contain medical terminology, but that does not mean that the health-care field deliberately uses jargon in order to be difficult to understand. Legal books and journals use legal terminology for the same reason medical books and journals use medical terminology: to be precise and accurate.

DeWitt wrote in simple, easy-to-understand language; at times maybe too simple. While there is nothing wrong with using examples, DeWitt uses the names Curly, Moe, and Shemp as parties in contract negotiations, which seemed somewhat condescending. Phrases such as “Lawyers are like nuclear weapons” (page 447) and “A lawsuit is much more like a ride through a haunted house on Halloween,” (page 2) seemed out of place in a serious work.

I expected this book to confine itself to legal issues that arise in the practice of respiratory care, such as liability for negligence, battery, lack of informed consent, and contractual issues. Indeed, these issues are covered, but so are other legal issues, including homeowners insurance, consumer-protection litigation, and domestic relations (divorce). Perhaps this broad focus will make the book more valuable to some readers, but the target audience will most likely be using this as a tool for legal issues that relate directly to their profession. If DeWitt intended to write a broad survey of the law for every occasion, there are many other issues (eg, tax law, estate planning, and securities law) that should have been included.

One problem with such a broad-based survey of law is that it is too general. If the author had concentrated on the legal issues that relate to the profession of respiratory care, he could have included more detailed analysis, including reference to more relevant legal cases. Legal research in the LEXIS and WESTLAW databases would have produced numerous citable cases where respiratory care was involved in allegations of negligence. Including a description of some of those cases might have made the book more interesting and relevant to the target readers.

DeWitt includes his own opinions in some sections, and that is fine, but he could have been clearer in differentiating between law, fact, and opinion. For example, in Chapter 8 he strongly recommends that respiratory therapists obtain their own malpractice in-