4-2009

Oxford American Writer's Thesaurus

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A worthwhile update to the first edition (2004), this volume combines a dictionary-style thesaurus with notes, comparisons, and brief essays from notable contemporary writers and editors that clarify complexities and ruminate on points of contention. In addition to the helpful contextual labels (e.g., dated, informal, derogatory) and examples typical of the genre, this thesaurus features word links, usage notes, and tables highlighted in pull-quote style boxes that enhance the work's browsability. The new edition uses research based on the Oxford English Corpus to generate "Word Toolkits" that take sets of synonyms and link them with related terms or concepts to illustrate distinctions (e.g., artificial: intelligence, reef; synthetic: chemical, hormone; man-made: canal, pollutant). A new "Wordfinder" section in the center groups nouns in categories for anyone desiring to browse the names of different types of winds (simoom, tramontana, cow-killer), social events, types of pasta, or dozens of other things. This edition also supplies brief guides to archaic and literary terms. Finally, while this work is no substitute for an editorial style manual, its language and punctuation guide elucidates core concepts in grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Summing Up: Recommended. All levels.

-- P. Finley, University of Nevada, Las Vegas