The following document links each writing project explicitly to chapters in The Allyn & Bacon Guide to Writing. Each writing project is designed to help students achieve the designated student outcomes for first-year writing.

Note that writing assignments are not necessarily the explicit assignment of a single chapter or set of chapters. Rather, chapters in the text help students develop the habits of mind and practice various processes to become successful academic writers. Instructors are welcome to supplement the text with handouts, excerpts from other texts, and exemplary readings by professional and student writers.¹

If instructors choose to utilize ePortfolio, this sequence of writing assignments leads toward a culminating collection of documents that enable students to assess and evaluate their own progress as academic writers. It also provides evidence for how well students are achieving the desired program outcomes for UVU first-year writing.

Week 1: Chapter 1

Introduce students to rhetorical principles of audience and purpose with a low-stakes personal writing project. Students should articulate goals for first-year writing, finding intersections between these goals and their personal interests.²

Discuss why instructors “want students to become gripped by problems” (3-7) and how people frequently encounter issues that may be analyzed or dealt with through a writing process.

Note that Chapter 1 is foundational to English 1010 because it identifies a key intellectual process that underlies not only academic writing, but education itself. Education entails a willingness to delve into conceptual complexity, rather than relying on simplistic binary thinking and preconceived absolute answers. Emphasize that successful academic writers engage, first of all, with “the life of the mind,”—the realm of ideas. Effective writing should provoke audiences to think.

Suggested Exercises

• Show examples to illustrate that closed-form academic writing can be just as intriguing as open form writing, but only if writers construct a mental challenge for their readers (17-19).

¹ While the Writing Assignments here are identified as Writing Project #1, #2, etc., these do not correspond to Writing Projects at the end of chapters in the Allyn and Bacon.
² If you’re using the ePortfolio throughout the semester, consider asking students to create a Welcome page that may include a picture or relevant image. Chapter 20 specifically addresses the process of composing multimodal texts.
• Practice in class the process of problematizing a banal topic into a provocative problem.
• Guide students towards an essential paradigm shift: academic writing is not just self-expression, but involves conscious rhetorical attention to purpose, audience, and genre (7-13).
• Make use of the Tables in the chapters when you can. For example, Table 1.2, “Purpose as Rhetorical Aim” (9), is helpful for clarifying the notion of an author’s purpose.
• The short writing exercise (21) provides an opportunity for students to construct an email message for various audiences and to begin reflective writing. Use this assignment to set the tone for emails that you may exchange with students throughout the semester.

Week 2: Chapters 2 and 16
Writing Project #1: Problematizing a Topic (2 pages)

The WPA Outcomes stipulate the students should learn to think, read, and write critically, but students may wonder how to develop these skills. Point out that these habits of mind are not automatically acquired, but demand sustained practice, just as any valued skill. Chapter 2 offers the basic training exercises that students should practice repeatedly in 1010, 2010/2020, and in future classes to become accomplished critical writers.

Suggested Exercises

• Use prewriting activities (freewriting, idea mapping, dialectic talk) in class to help students enjoy the process of “wallowing in complexity” (23-32). Discuss examples of how intellectual inquiry can be stimulating and exciting. Bring in another instructor or student to stage a debate. Make this process fun!
• Practice writing strong thesis statements in groups; begin the peer review process to help students distinguish between theses of varying strength (32-36).
• Create an in-class activity to practice rewriting questions as thesis statements (34-37). You could set up a competition between groups to practice this or any of the suggested activities in the chapter.
• Give students the valuable opportunity to play Elbow’s “Believing and Doubting Game” (29-31, 40).
• Create a list of typical topics that will help students avoid hot-button political topics that may be less than generative.
• Draw on Chapter 16 as needed throughout the semester to teach multiple drafts, revision, and peer review.
• The notion of “writing as a problem-solving process” may enable a more productive relationship between teacher and student (418-420). The instructor becomes the coach to help the writer work through various problems in drafts.
• Use the “Generic Peer Review Guide” or create your own rubrics for peer review (428).
• Discuss the types of comments students feel are most helpful for revision. Follow this exercise by practicing a peer review (429).
Weeks 3, 4, and 5
Writing Project #2: Problematizing a Significant Event (4-6 pages)  
(Chapters 3 and 6)  
OR  
Problematizing a Local Issue (4-6 pages)  
(Chapters 3 and 15)

To effectively decipher and interpret texts they encounter both as students and as citizens, students must develop and practice analytical skills. Writing Project #2, whether students take on the challenge of problematizing a significant event or problematizing a local issue, prompts them to analyze and assess meanings that various stakeholders assert in a given situation.

Suggested Exercises

• The notion of “angle of vision” cannot be overemphasized. If students can grasp this important idea, and see the implications of the Kenneth Burke citation at the beginning of Chapter 3, that “A way of seeing is also a way of not seeing,” they will be well on their way to demonstrating intellectual growth (46-48).

• Modeling Figure 3.1, “Different Angles of Vision on ‘Sweatshops’” (44), ask students to create a cartoon representation of different angles of vision on an issue.

• Students enjoy studying rhetorical appeals (logos, ethos, pathos); show examples from advertising, television, etc., to add interest (48-50).

• The ability to resist visual rhetoric becomes a valuable component of critical citizenship. Help students develop their resistance/analysis strategies.

• Perhaps invite in a guest speaker to tell about his or her political activism.

Use Chapter 6 to build on the skills of problematizing and critical inquiry. Point out that problematizing an issue or topic may be difficult, but it may become even more difficult when writing about personal experience.

Suggested Exercises

• Illustrate to students how problems (and interpretations of problems) create good autobiographical narrative (125-130).

• The literacy narrative functions to connect education and life experience and may provide an excellent option for this Writing Project (130-134).

• Perhaps share your own literacy narrative to provide a model for students.

• Show students the Digital Archive of Literacy Narratives http://daln.osu.edu/.

Use Chapter 15 to discuss how productive change does not occur in communities until someone problematizes a situation to convince others that change is needed. This chapter can build students’ identities as critical citizens as they identify themselves as change agents.

It may be less important for the purposes of English 1010 to propose a solution to a problem than to fully demonstrate the complexity of a problem. Nonetheless, students may enjoy evaluating and assessing various solutions and coming up with the most viable one.
Encourage students to show flexibility in their solution proposals and to identify possibilities for negotiation and compromise with vested stakeholders.

**Suggested Exercises**

- Audiences can be influenced by rhetorical appeals; help students learn to see an issue through the eyes of a specific audience (384-387).
- Consider how multimodal proposal arguments serve as powerful forms of communication (389-391). Especially if you’re using ePortfolio, help students utilize images and sound to compose a proposal on the web. Use Figure 15.1 to discuss style, color, space, and movement in the ad. (Use Chapter 19 to aid discussions regarding the composition process of multimodal texts.)

**Weeks 6, 7, and 8: Chapters 5 and 20-23**

**Writing Project #3: Summary/Strong Response (4-6 pages)**

Instructors may assign a common text for students to write about, or use this paper to begin teaching research methods. Schedule research instruction in the library to supplement this unit and to prepare students for their future research. Students may explore academic arguments in areas of personal interest (including their anticipated majors/professional fields).

In **Chapter 5**, students are introduced to strategies for reading and summarizing difficult material, and then learn to analyze and respond to that material, entering the scholarly conversation in which their text participates.

**Suggested Exercises**

- Use the sample reading to identify the basic strategies of effective reading and summary (114-124).
- Focus on the unique challenges of academic writing (84-88). Emphasize the need for critical reading strategies and multiple readings. Students may benefit from the opportunity to teach a high school student about reading college-level material. Perhaps find an opportunity for your students to do some service learning in this regard.
- Practice writing summary of an academic article (88-92); offer multiple opportunities for students to master the skill of summary.
- Distinguish between personal response (not the goal of this assignment) and analysis (strong response as rhetorical critique, ideas critique, analytical reflection, 92-98). Teach the possibility of strong response/analysis that blends these techniques (98-102).
- Note the relationship between paragraph content (what it says) and function (what it does) as a key analysis tactic (102-105). Model in class the process of analyzing paragraph function.
- Work in groups to examine examples of theses for a strong response essay (106-109).
- Use peer response groups to work on students’ thesis statements.
Chapters 20-23 address research methods related to locating, citing, and evaluating sources. Because students are expected to use academic sources in Writing Projects #4 and #5, this is a good time to get the process started.

The strong response project provides an opportunity for students to locate and identify an appropriate source. Instructors should carefully teach the difference between using licensed databases to find scholarship (Academic Search Premier, Project Muse, JSTOR, etc.) and using inappropriate Internet research.

**Suggested Exercises**

- Focus on the chart, “A Rhetorical Overview of Print Books and Periodicals” (516-517), to help students understand the distinguishing features of academic sources.
- Have students evaluate online sites using Table 21.2, “Criteria for Evaluating Web Sites” (535), as an in-class group activity.
- Schedule a library tutorial at the UVU Library; prior to the tutorial, ask students to learn about library searches and databases (519-523).

**Weeks 9, 10, and 11: Chapters 7 and 20-23**

**Writing Project #4: Annotated Bibliography/Proposal (3-4 pages)**

Chapter 7 introduces students to the Exploratory Research Project so that they can envision the ultimate goal of their research. If students have not already chosen a research question, they will want to create one at the beginning of this unit.

**Suggested Exercises**

- Show contrasting examples of Annotated Bibliographies that are more or less substantive.
- Take advantage of the instruction on Double Entry Research Notes (150). Students will find it much easier to write the Annotated Bibliography and the later Research Paper if they create good research notes along the way.

**Chapters 20-23** address research methods related to locating, citing, and evaluating sources. Draw on these chapters as needed during the remainder of the semester.

**Suggested Exercises**

- Use movie clips about research (e.g. *First Do No Harm*) to make the research process more compelling for students.
- Introduce MLA documentation style (561-576). Perhaps conduct a group MLA competition on Annotated Bibliographies; students try to perfect the group’s work and then trade with another group to check for errors.
Weeks 12, 13, and 14: Chapters 7 and 20-23
Writing Project #5: Exploratory Research Paper (6-8 pages)

Review Chapter 7 chapter as students compose their drafts.

**Suggested Exercises**

- Discuss the options of the “Real-time strategy,” versus the “Retrospective strategy” (152).
- Emphasize that Exploratory Research allows the writer to keep the problem open (148). Tell students that for this project it is less important to come up with a final answer or definitive conclusion than it is to show the complexity of the problem or issue.
- Show examples of theses that do not close off the issue, but rather show a complex and open-ended trajectory.

Review Chapters 20-23 as needed. It is vital that students learn to incorporate sources effectively. Chapter 22 offers excellent instruction and examples.

**Suggested Exercises**

- Spend class time on summary, paraphrase, and quotation (546-552). Divide into groups and have each group teach one of the techniques to the class.
- Discuss plagiarism and cover the material in the text on unacceptable “patchwriting” (547). Discuss rhetorical and philosophical issues surrounding plagiarism in today’s Internet culture.
- Teach the use of attributive tags (554).
- As students devote out-of-class time to conducting research, you can employ class time to do further work on MLA citation.

**Week 15: Chapter 25**
**Final Requirement: Two Final Drafts and Reflective Essay**

Before completing English 1010, students are required to write/revise three documents:

1. A final draft of the Problematizing a Significant Event or Issue Essay.
3. A final Reflective Essay that addresses a student’s progress over the semester.

Use Chapter 25 to discuss the purpose of the self-reflective essay, which can be an in-class assignment or assigned as homework. If using ePortfolio, instructors can also ask students to show their final reflection to the class as part of the final exam period (review Chapter 19 for tips on composing multimodal texts).
Suggested Exercises

- Ask students to spend the final week of the semester revising the two final drafts of essays. For the course final exam, students should come prepared having read “Understanding Reflective Writing” (599-605) and can spend time writing reflections and sharing their experiences with their classmates.

- Decide the format of the ePortfolio. If you would like students to include multimodal elements (see Chapter 19), consider making the ePortfolio a required assignment at the beginning of the semester—an academic space that students can revise as their writing develops over the semester.

Notes:

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