

Strategies for linking *Allyn and Bacon* (brief 5th ed.) chapters with UVU 1010 writing assignments

First of all, instructors will note that writing assignments are not always the explicit assignment of a single chapter or set of chapters in the textbook. Instead, instructors should help students link skill sets introduced and developed in chapters to assignments. Second, an instructor is not limited to the recommended chapters, but is, instead, encouraged to supplement them with handouts of his/her design, excerpts from other texts, and exemplary readings by professional and student writers.

Paper #1: "Problematizing a Topic." 2 pages. Chapters 1 and 2 in *Allyn and Bacon*.

Students are introduced to the habits of mind valued in college writing, specifically, the writer's ability to engage an idea in complex ways to resist rushing to easy, simplistic answers or pursuing a single thesis or claim. Spend 2-3 weeks on the assignment and related chapters.

Chapter 1: Students see themselves as "problem posers" rather than "answer givers" (5), thus moving from the 5-paragraph essay model they are probably familiar with from high school to the kind of rhetorical model expected in college writing.

- Understanding the distinction between subject-matter (content, topic) and rhetorical level (form, style, audience) issues in writing (5-6).
- Thinking about relationships between open and closed form writing (9-11)
- Introduce students to the process-oriented (i.e. exploratory) writing (10).
- Use writing assignment #1 in Chapter 1 (26). Consider options: using the assignment as presented; assigning a single topic to the class; making the assignment open topic, etc.

Chapter 2: Helping students move from seeing writing as expression of opinion to articulation of argument (28-29).

- Define key terms: "dualists," "multiplists," "relativists," etc. (29-30).
- The challenge of college writing may be seen as the challenge of "working through complexity" (30).
- Exploratory thinking/prewriting (32-38).
- Understanding basic thesis-support structures (41-45). These are skills that will help you make a good transition to introduce Paper #2 as students are drafting Paper #1.
- Understanding the relationship between points and particulars (45-47). This is an analogue for the relationship between thesis (point) and support (particular).

Paper #2: either "Solving a Local Problem" or "Significant Event." Instructor's Choice. 4-6 pages. Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 16 (if doing the problem-solution paper) or 7 (if doing the significant event paper) in *A&B*. Students build upon the problematizing skills learned in Paper #1 and begin to develop skills of critical inquiry. Longer papers offer the opportunity to work on argumentation skills such as making claims and providing evidence to support those claims. Students should be introduced to multiple organizational strategies and encouraged to make informed decisions about argument structure. Ideally, these are open topic assignments, so students should be introduced to basic strategies for making good topic choices. Spend 3-4 weeks on the assignment and related chapters.

In the **problem solution** paper, students must choose a local issue (on or around campus, or a local community). They must acknowledge multiple possible solutions, introduce terms of/criteria for evaluation, and identify/support the best possible solution. Instructors assign parts of Chapter 16 as appropriate.

Chapter 3: Writing with persuasive purpose—developing the "rhetorical" problems introduced in chapter 1. With this chapter, instructors should have students test their choices of topic, approach, structure, etc. Consider either using these concepts for preliminary peer review, or have students look at magazine or TV advertisements to identify the types and relative effectiveness of their modes of persuasion.

- Significance of a writer's perspective, or "angle of vision" (50-54). Understanding "angle of vision" should help students break out of seeing their personal opinions as universal truisms and learn the necessity of considering other perspectives. Each student must evaluate his/her solution out of a range of possible solutions, thus appealing to a broader range of readers than those who are already inclined to agree alone.
- Appealing to the audience (55-64)
- Using classical modes of persuasion (ethos/pathos/logos) (55-56).

Chapter 4: Style and design

- Writing with purpose (67-68). This will set up the local (and manageable) requirement for the problem/solution paper—the topic has to be one in which the student is genuinely interested in relatively knowledgeable about.
- The scale of abstraction as a model for choosing detail (69-72). Generating details is crucial to effective writing, whether instructors choose the problem/solution or significant event assignment for paper #2. For evaluating one solution from a range of possible ones, the success or failure of persuasion often lies in the details. For explaining the significance of an event, and for describing the event itself, descriptions have to evoke emotions, describe writer's reflection, etc

Chapter 5: "Seeing rhetorically": continuing to develop angle of vision and issues of perception in writing.

- Observation and purpose (89-97). How should students choose ways of presenting what and how they see a problem, and between open form ("thesis seeking") and closed form ("thesis driven") approaches to their problem and its solution? Instructors can model a single topic through multiple forms to demonstrate the difference in effect.
- Anticipating audience effect (98-104). Students should make strategic choices about thesis-support structures according to audience demographics and concerns.

Chapter 16: Proposing a Solution

- Identify the special demands of proposal arguments, how to justify arguments, and consider visual elements of proposals (448-455)
- Understand how to present a proposal speech (461-468). Students can present a brief version of their papers to the class. This assignment allows an integration of how visual rhetoric can support written argument.

Alternative assignment. In the significant event paper, students must discuss a single autobiographical event. They describe the event, provide sufficient context, make wise choices about inclusion/exclusion of details, and explain the event's significance. Students should be taught to identify problematic issues suggested by the event and complicate simplistic interpretations of its significance. Through the requirement of reasoned argument, students are discouraged from explaining significance through clichés or binary moralized categories/truisms.

Chapter 7: Writing an Autobiographical Narrative

- Explore the way autobiographical narrative can problematize experience and the interpretation of experience. Consider the opposition of contraries and how to create textual tension (151-156)
- Examine the genre of literacy narrative to portray a significant learning event (160-171)

Note: Instructors should consider assigning chapter 18 ("Composing and Revising Closed-Form Prose") either in its entirety or in parts as students work on paper #2, and to be completed by the time paper #1 is marked and returned. Use the chapter as a group presentation activity—perhaps taking 15 minutes per day for groups to introduce, explain, and illustrate relevant concepts in the chapter.

Paper #3: "Summary/Strong Response." 4-6 pages. Chapter 6 and 21 (and catch up/review of previous chapters) in *A&B*. This paper builds upon problematizing strategies and skills of argument previously learned. 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.

Introduce students to research methods, and encourage them to explore academic arguments in areas of personal interest (including their anticipated majors/professional fields). Instructors should also devote some class time to independent research and offer individualized assistance during regularly scheduled class periods. Spend 2-3 weeks on the assignment and related chapters.

Chapter 6: Rhetorical analysis strategies

- Two goals: summarize *and* analyze/respond to the reading (109). Consider emphasizing the role of analysis/response in the assignment, such as 30% of content is summary; 70% is analysis/response.
- Use the sample reading (110-13) to identify the basic elements/strategies of effective summary and analysis/response.
- Especially if instructors have students use academic writing as sources text(s), focus on the unique challenges of academic writing (114), outline the features of academic writing (through model texts perhaps), and the strategies needed to read it (115-16). Focus especially on the need for critical reading strategies and multiple readings.
- Types of responses and prompts for generating responses (121-27)—ideally, students in English 1010 will produce a “blended” assignment.
- Note the relationship between paragraph—or section—content (what it “says”) and function (what it “does”) (131-33), as a key tactic in producing an effective summary.
- Emphasize the necessity of rereading (135-36).
- Use the writing assignment (135).

Chapter 20-22: Source location and use.

- Ultimately students will use academic sources in papers #4 and #5. This is a good time to get the process started. Focus especially on the distinguishing features chart on 579-80. Use the strong response assignment as an opportunity to make sure students can locate and identify an appropriate source. Instructors should distinguish between using licensed databases to find scholarship (i.e. using Academic Search Premier, Project Muse, JSTOR, etc.) and doing inappropriate “Internet research.”

Paper #4: “Proposal/Annotated Bibliography.” 3-4 pages. Chapter 8 and 23 in *A&B*.

Students move from working with a single text in paper #3 to multiple texts in paper #4 and paper #5. Students should include at least three texts in the proposal, then at least five texts in the exploratory research paper. Students explain a research question, the academic field in which they’re doing research, what they’ve found so far, and a plan for completion of research. The paper (1) cites each source in MLA style, (2) summarizes the source, and (3) analyzes/discusses the source for their specific project needs. One week of class meetings should be devoted to research and individual contact hours (perhaps including scheduled conferences). Spend 2-3 weeks on the assignment and related chapters.

Chapter 8: Explaining exploratory writing

- The focus of the paper is a question rather than a thesis (175-76).
- Use the writing assignment (179), but emphasize research and reflection and de-emphasize “field” research.
- A “generative tension” describes the writer’s need to see academic writing as a conversation and the assignment as an opportunity to enter that conversation (177-78).
- The assignment is an opportunity to trace the evolution of the writer’s question through research (181).

Chapter 23: Citing and Documenting Sources

- Learn MLA style for citing articles, books, and web sources (628-651)

Paper #5: “Exploratory Research.” 4-6 pages. Chapter 22 and 23 in *A&B* (writing project introduced on p. 179). Students execute the project they proposed in paper #4. They write a first person narrative of their

research process: what did they discover? how did their understanding of a topic change as they encounter new sources? They should consider organizational strategies for moving from source to source or grouping sets of sources. The paper cites sources in MLA style, integrates skills of summary, problematization, evaluation, analysis, and argument. The paper leads to a tentative, considered thesis or claim based on the evidence examined, and carefully demonstrates the complexity of the research issue. Spend 3-4 weeks on the assignment and related chapters.

Chapter 22: Using source material.

- Emphasize the importance of writers remaining aware of research goals (613). As with papers #2 and #3, students can often get lost in the details of a source and then over-summarize, rather than mining that source for relevant materials and arguments.
- Using the same source for different purposes (613-15).
- Summary/paraphrase/quotation (616-21).
- The necessity of attributive tags (621-24).
- Plagiarism (624-25).

Chapter 23: Citing and Documenting Sources

- Review MLA style for citing articles, books, and web sources (628-651)