

Strategies for Linking *Allyn and Bacon* (brief 5 ed.) chapters
with Writing Assignment Genres for UVU 2010/2020 (Updated summer 2008)

This document details chapters and features in the *Allyn and Bacon Guide* supporting the sequence of assignments for English 2010/2020, for instructors to help students link concepts and skill sets introduced in the text with writing projects. Instructors should help students combine a variety of concepts and skills introduced and developed in chapters to assignments.

In 2010/2020, students continue to develop habits of mind, rhetorical knowledge, and skills related to college-level inquiry. Regardless of the ways instructors choose to develop them, the course's writing projects should either be research focused, or work in some way toward developing research focused projects for later in the semester. Instructors are not limited to the recommended writing assignments and chapters, but are, instead, encouraged to supplement them with handouts of their own design, excerpts from other texts, exemplary readings by professional and student writers, etc.

Writing Project #1: "Informative and Surprising Essay" 4-6 pages. Chapter 9 in *Allyn and Bacon*.

Students write a paper that informs readers about an issue and, more importantly, identifies and explores nuances of the issue in an attempt to critically "intervene" in it. The work of problematizing and exploring issues introduced in earlier *A&B* chapters—particularly 1 and 2—remain essential to academic thinking and writing. Through research, students examine prevailing perspectives, seek new ways of considering an issue, and then—in the bulk of the paper—pose a surprise or contrasting perspective. Students add their voices to an existing "conversation," using writing as a means of inquiry into commonly held views of problems. **Spend 3-4 weeks on the assignment and related chapters.**

Chapter 9: The Informative Essay. Students should move beyond what the *AB* calls "all-about" or "data-dump" papers by considering multiple ways of critically thinking about issues. This chapter is analogous to *A&B* chapters 1-2, where students are encouraged to problematize the issues they may think are simple or self-evident. Instructors should assign a writing project similar to the one on p. 221, and emphasize library or otherwise sufficiently academic research.

- Distinguish simple informative writing from informative writing with a "surprising reversal" (208-209)
- Identify specialized language, terms and concepts (212-13)—consider introducing students to library reference section where discipline and field-specific language is explained;
- Distinguish between common and informed views to create a thesis with tension (215-17);
- Use writing assignment #3. Consider ways of encouraging students to contrast common ways of knowing—the evening news, blogs, conversations with friends—from highly problematic, academic ones. How can academic reading (reading in the field) help students make the surprising reversal move?

Chapter 10: Field Research. To be assigned if instructors encourage students to conduct interviews, administer surveys, or even perform critical observations.

Reviewing Skills and Strategies from English 1010

Instructors should spend significant time during this project revisiting and reviewing essential skills and knowledge in related chapters used in English 1010—not because *only* review is needed, but because students will already have begun working on these issues and additional work should build from what they already know. Among them are:

- Summary/strong response and critical reading techniques in Chapter 6. Instructors might assign a brief summary/strong response assignment on a common course text in preparation for students' independent work on Paper #1.
- Research and source evaluation techniques in Chapters 20 and 21. Consider introducing and/or reacquainting students to library holdings and emphasizing online search/retrieval strategies. Simple "Internet research" should play only a limited role in student papers.
- Source use and documentation strategies in Chapter 22. Emphasize purposeful uses of source materials; discuss quotation, paraphrase, and summary; review strategies for introducing, contextualizing, and attributing sources.

- Chapters 1-4 (short quizzes and/or classroom activities).

Writing Project #2: “Analyzing and Synthesizing Ideas” 4-6 pages. Chapter 13 in *Allyn and Bacon*

Students write a paper that brings together multiple sources in order, first, to rhetorically analyze arguments and concepts (the analysis), and second, to reorganize and integrate them in a creative way in order to produce a “new, enlarged perspective” of the writer’s own (the synthesis). Student papers should demonstrate a negotiated, earned, and contextualized position in a well-researched and documented “conversation” on a problem or question (students should avoid extensive evaluation—which would be supported by *A&B* ch 15—at this point, as such moves add a significant level of complexity to analytical and synthesis writing). Perhaps continuing with their issue, question, or problem from project #1, students should use two or more scholarly (or sufficiently complex) sources for this project. **Spend 3-4 weeks on the assignment and related chapters.**

Chapter 13: Analyzing and Synthesizing Ideas. There are advantages to incorporating both common readings, such as those on surveillance technology (347-50) and immigration (369-76), and supporting individual research. Using common texts focuses less on academic research, but when students use their own sources, it is much more difficult for instructors to monitor the quality of their reading and use class time to teach aspects of analysis and synthesis that are more easily demonstrated when everyone shares a text. Accordingly, while sample readings in the textbook will give students practice at reading source material, students should also work with texts that are significantly more substantial and complex at some point during the project.

- Exploring “connections and contradictions” in and between texts (346)
 - Analysis and synthesis defined (346)
 - Choice of texts shapes possible synthesis questions (351-52)
 - Writing assignment (356). The easiest way into this paper is to have student find two sources (i.e. academic articles) taking different positions on an issue; consider other options, such as encouraging students to compare studies of one phenomenon through lenses of two academic fields; or compare a study on a topic from a recent journal with one from a decade or more ago;
 - Summary (357-59)
 - Rhetorical analysis (359-60)
 - Catalogue similarities and differences (360-61)
 - Generating responses (362-63)
 - Taking a position (363-64)
 - High and low level theses (366-67)
- Each of these skills is introduced as reading log practices, which can help structure homework assignments and class activities*

Writing Project #3: “Proposal/Annotated Bibliography” 3-4 pages. Review Chapter 8 in *Allyn and Bacon* as necessary.

Students write a brief paper that anticipates and demonstrates their preparation for the final writing project. Students explain a research question, including topic, the academic field (or fields) in which they’re doing research, present preliminary research, and a plan for completion of research. They create an annotated bibliography with references to article/book chapter length academic works in an appropriate bibliographic style, and summaries of those works. One week of class meetings may be devoted to research and individual contact hours (perhaps scheduled conferences). **Spend 2-3 weeks on the assignment and related chapters.**

Project #4: “Classical Argument.” 10-12 pages. Chapters 14 and 15 in *Allyn and Bacon*

In the culminating assignment in 2010/2020, students develop a problematic question, research and summarize the existing conversation on it, and develop an argument in the form of a persuasive, thesis-driven paper. Like the 1010 exploratory research project, the classical argument requires the integration of multiple (primarily scholarly) sources around a sufficiently problematic research question; here, however, students should rally source materials, rhetorical reading, analyses, and syntheses to argue a claim—specifically, one developed in relation to values and beliefs held by their intended audience. Arguments are clearly and carefully guided by the use of claims, reasons, evidence,

warrants, concession, and refutation. Students develop and apply evaluative criteria for supporting and refuting evidence from sources. **Spend 5-7 weeks on the assignment and related chapters (and portfolio development as desired).**

Chapter 14: Classical Argument: Students acquire a problem seeking orientation to thesis development, which contrast with common perceptions of debate; they begin to develop arguable issues and apply concepts from Toulmin's classification of argument.

- The truth-seeking and persuasive purposes of argument (377)
- Argument is not side taking in a pro/con debate (377-78)
- Invention starts with personal perception/perspective (378-79)
- Students can use the proposal to trace the basic stages of argument (379-82)
- Toulminian classifications of argument (claim, reason, warrant, etc.) introduced and explicated (382-95)
- Using evidence with purpose (385-93)

Source Summarization: Instructors should help students manage and evaluate sources by requiring 1) a summary and response for each source used, and/or 2) a second annotated bibliography with references to sources in an appropriate bibliographic style, and brief descriptive and evaluative annotations. Both approaches should include a sufficient number of article/book chapter length academic works, and instructors might consider how descriptive or evaluative responses, or some blend, will be most effective in helping students grasp their sources and prepare to synthesize them in the classical argument.

Chapter 15: Evaluation: Students acquire strategies for critically evaluating and incorporating source materials as means of strengthening their arguments. Learning how to evaluate and develop criteria for validating source material, in the support of an argument are central features of a formal research project. Note that Toulmin's classification of argument links ch 14 and 15.

- Judging the quality of an evaluative question (423-26)
- Combine this chapter's writing assignment (436) with the chapter 14 assignment
- Effective evaluations are made from clear evaluative criteria (427-31)
- Linking purpose to criteria selection (429)
- Review of Toulmin (431-32)
- Developing class appropriate evaluative criteria (432-36)

A Note on Portfolio Evaluation

Instructors are strongly encouraged to incorporate some form of portfolio-based writing evaluation in their course grading designs. Portfolios by their nature encourage revision and *development* of ideas and writing that allows students both to understand the role of revision in writing and to generate their best possible work. They also typically provide students opportunities for crucial after-the-fact reflection on their writing experiences and products. Grading each of the three main projects by portfolio is a natural and reasonably easy evolution from grading individual papers in isolation. Alternately, or in addition, instructors might set aside a portion of total course credit for a final "showcase" portfolio that includes final revisions of some combination of the papers and projects developed during the course. Such an alternative allows instructors to distinguish between "draft," for-credit-only work (even major assignments), and finalized, "produced" pieces suitable for grading. We will continue to have faculty development sessions focused on designing portfolio-based writing assessment/grading that helps instructors see the best possibilities for designing portfolios into their syllabi. Eventually, instructors should assume, some form of portfolio assessment will be mandated in these assignment sequences.