

Academic Reading & Writing 12

Outline

Many first year students of post-secondary institutions find the reading load and level they encounter, as well as the writing standards expected of them, rather overwhelming. The transition between high school and university or college can therefore be a rather difficult one.

Academic Reading & Writing 12 is a course designed to “bridge the gap” between English 12 and the literacy skills required in first year college/university programs. The main objective is to improve students’ reading and writing skills in all academic areas, including the Arts-based disciplines (English, history, political science, sociology, etc.), psychology, the sciences, business, and others.

The goals of this course include:

- Improving students’ reading comprehension of academic texts
- Developing a more mature vocabulary
- Improving academic writing skills (ie. going beyond the standard 5-paragraph essay)
- Making the transition from writing as individual response to writing that makes an argument
- Developing critical thinking skills
- Developing study skills preparatory to college and university programs
- Developing an understanding and appreciation of the language of academic writing

Specific topics that will be covered in this course include:

- College/university expectations
- Effective study skills
- Effective reading strategies
 - annotating
 - reading for inference
 - SQ3R
 - Skills to be used for reading across the academic disciplines
- Vocabulary – context clues, implied meaning, morphemes, etc.
- Exam-writing/test strategies; understanding what an essay question is asking
- Academic writing:
 - moving from the personal to the analytical
 - academic style – standards and conventions of language
 - “do’s and don’t’s”
 - editing skills – grammatical issues, common problems
 - summary
 - critical stance
 - critical analysis of essays/selected writings
- Academic honesty – sourcing, citation styles (MLA, APA)
- Discussion skills – moving from personal responses to analytical responses

Throughout the course, students will read selected articles from the text and other sources, and engage in discussions or activities and assignments based on these articles. Writing development will include a variety of essay types, including expository, argumentative/persuasive, compare/contrast, cause/effect, and so on. A field trip experience to a local post-secondary institution will be planned for this year.

Textbook: *Essay Writing for Canadian Students*, 4th ed.
Kay L. Stewart, Chris J. Bullock and Marian E. Allen

Assignments

You will be asked to read a variety of articles from the many academic disciplines. This will mirror your post-secondary experience, as most first and second-year students are expected to complete breadth requirements that involve a selection of courses from across the disciplines. We will discuss these articles and work to develop your reading level and ability through effective and commonly-used strategies.

In addition, you will be expected to perform a variety of written tasks for the purpose of developing and enhancing your writing abilities. This will involve paragraph writing, essay writing, and editing and revising. You will receive feedback from both your teacher and your peers. You are expected to keep all your writing and essays so that you may monitor your progress throughout the year. While most writing assignments will be individual, there will be opportunities for group work and activities.

Much writing will be done in-class although you will be expected to do reading and some assignments at home. Every effort will be made to keep your homework to a minimum.

Vocabulary-building will be an important part of the course. You will be asked to keep track of the school words of the day and you will be quizzed monthly on the proper use of these words. The goal is that these words will become an integral part of your working vocabulary.

Assessment and Evaluation

Written work	45%
Quizzes	15%
Assignments	35%
Participation	5%
(includes attendance, group work, class participation, oral presentations)	
Total	100%