

Instructor: Mrs. Allison Birch

Format: Live Online via Zoom – 90 minutes weekly

Term 1: February 20 – April 26, 2026

Theme: *Finding Your Voice: From Ideas to Impact*

Introduction:

Welcome to Term 1! This is where your journey as an academic writer begins. Over eight weeks, you'll discover how to **express your ideas clearly, persuasively, and creatively within a structured framework**. You'll practice crafting strong paragraphs, analyzing texts, and integrating evidence—all while building your unique academic voice. Through hands-on activities, mini-challenges, and collaborative exercises, you'll start producing work you can be proud of and begin assembling your first portfolio.

Note: Example readings are provided for each week, but some selections may change to suit class interests or current events.

Term 1 Objectives:

By the end of Term 1, students will be able to:

1. Write well-structured paragraphs with topic sentences and evidence.
2. Develop a confident academic voice in persuasive and analytical writing.
3. Integrate textual evidence smoothly and accurately.
4. Outline and draft multi-paragraph essays with logical organization.
5. Revise writing for clarity, cohesion, and style.

Weekly Snapshot

Week 1 – Unlock Your Academic Voice

- **What's exciting:** Learn how your words can sound confident, clear, and uniquely yours, even in formal academic writing.
- **Activities:** “This I Believe” paragraph, tone exercises, word-choice games
- **Reading Examples:** *A Student's Guide to Academic Writing* (Moran & Soiferman), sample opinion paragraphs

Week 2 – Sentence Superpowers

- **What's exciting:** Transform ordinary sentences into clear, impactful ones that flow like a pro writer's.
- **Activities:** Sentence variety labs, paragraph unscramble, quick creative twist for vivid examples

- **Reading Examples:** Mentor paragraphs from *Introduction to Academic Writing* (Oshima & Hogue)

Week 3 – Hook, Thesis, and Outline

- **What's exciting:** Grab your reader's attention and organize your ideas logically from the very first sentence.
- **Activities:** Hook and thesis workshop, essay outlining
- **Reading Examples:** Short opinion pieces from *Time for Kids*

Week 4 – Persuasive Paragraph Power

- **What's exciting:** Turn each paragraph into a strong argument that convinces readers.
- **Activities:** Ethos/pathos/logos scavenger hunt, counterargument exercises, creative scenario examples
- **Reading Examples:** Sample persuasive essays, student-friendly editorials

Week 5 – Reading Between the Lines

- **What's exciting:** Think like a writer while reading, uncovering hidden themes and ideas.
- **Activities:** Annotating for theme and tone, theme mapping, guided discussion
- **Reading Examples:** *Thank You, Ma'am* (Langston Hughes), *The Fun They Had* (Isaac Asimov)

Week 6 – Literary Paragraphs

- **What's exciting:** Combine your voice with evidence to write sharp, focused literary analysis.
- **Activities:** Quote integration practice, peer review games
- **Reading Examples:** Same as Week 5 + mentor literary analysis paragraphs

Week 7 – Research for Impact

- **What's exciting:** Learn to find credible sources and use them to make your arguments stronger.
- **Activities:** Source scavenger hunt, paraphrasing, MLA mini-lesson
- **Reading Examples:** TED Talk transcripts, age and grade appropriate research articles

Week 8 – Showcase & Reflection

- **What's exciting:** Polish your best work and celebrate your progress with your first portfolio.
- **Activities:** Peer feedback, editing games, reflective writing