# **Writing Lab (ENGL 00001) Sample Weekly Activities**

## **Lesson 1: Schedule Assignment**

Calendars are a useful tool—in school, work, and life—to keep you aware of upcoming events and project deadlines. Blackboard has a built-in calendar where assignments with due dates will appear. You can add your own entries to this calendar as well. This assignment will help you keep track of your academic due dates by taking advantage of the Blackboard calendar.

### Steps

1. In Blackboard, on the institutional homepage before you open any course, click the Calendar icon in the lefthand menu (Figure 1).Here is a page of instructions for navigating the Blackboard calendar: [Calendar Help](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Stay_in_the_Loop/Calendar)
2. Watch this video for advice and guidance on how to create events in the Blackboard calendar: [Use the Calendar in Blackboard Learn with the Ultra Experience for Student](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kFWg-XU-btw)
3. Click the Calendar Settings icon (Figure 2) and make sure there are checkboxes to the left of “My Personal Calendar” and all your current courses.
4. Create all-day events for all major assignments in the first four weeks of all your classes. You can, of course, go further. If you would like to add all your major assignments for the full term, feel free. Likewise, you can add your minor assignments as well, either for the first four weeks or for the entire term.
5. Find the university’s academic calendar for the current term. You can search for it using “uark academic calendar.” Here’s [a direct link to the calendar](https://registrar.uark.edu/academic-dates/academic-semester-calendar/).
6. Add all-day events for the first day of the semester, the last day of the semester, any holidays when the university will be closed, and any other information from the university calendar that you feel would be useful (e.g., “drop” dates, Reading Day, final exams week).
7. Put your calendar in month view and take a screenshot of the first four weeks of your classes. The events you added in Step #6 for the first four weeks should be visible.
8. Attach your image in the Submission box below and submit it.

## **Lesson 2: Annotation Assignment**

Annotating a text is simply taking notes on that text that will help you understand it and use it as a source. In this assignment, you’ll practice annotating your “diverse perspectives” reading in Comp 1, or a reading in your textbook. This practice should enhance your understanding of the text, and you’ll use these notes in a future assignment.

Read the book assigned in your Comp 1 class or "[Poor Shaming—But This Time in the School Cafeteria](https://www.newamerica.org/weekly/poor-shaming-time-school-cafeteria/)." Your goal is to understand the main points. In the first paragraph of the essay, note what the primary topic, argument, or direction of the document will be, or the thesis statement if there is one. In each following paragraph, note the main point and any important evidence. Submit those annotations here.

## **Lesson 3: Summary Practice**

Consider the text that you used for last week’s annotation practice. Take those annotations that you made and write a brief summary of that text, in 150-300 words.

You will want to organize the writer’s main points in a clear, coherent way in your own words, and in much shorter form than the original text. Practice identifying the main points that will communicate the writer’s overall message, without the detail, examples, illustrations, or material from sources. However, some of that researched evidence can be summarized as it may be essential to the main points of the text.

Finally, write a correct citation for the text that you have summarized, and use in-text citations if you include any quotations from the text.

Once you have submitted, go read 2 other students’ submissions and respond to their post. Give some constructive feedback, or something else substantive. Saying something like “This is good” is not sufficient.

## **Lesson 4: Revision Practice**

Choose one point of feedback that you received in peer review, or if you have not received feedback yet choose something in your Summary draft that you want to work on. This should not be correcting grammar or sentence structure, but should be a more significant change in organizing your content, making your content clear, or developing your content further.

Explain how you will apply this feedback or self-assessment in revising your draft, and carry out this part of revision. Attach your explanation and the revised portion of your text here. You’re part way to a final draft!

## **Lesson 5: Schedule Assignment**

For the last four weeks you've been using and reviewing a calendar schedule for your coursework and activities. You are going to develop that Blackboard calendar to take you forward in **weeks 5 through 8**of the semester. This time you will have a better feel for what needs to be included, what homework and study times work best for you, what extracurricular activities are likely to come up. So use this next four weeks of the calendar to keep track of your academic due dates, work, and activities on the Blackboard calendar. Here are those instructions again:

### Steps

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## **Lesson 6: Identifying Rhetorical Situation**

Consider your Diverse Perspectives reading in Comp 1, or a reading assigned by your instructor. Write a paragraph describing how you identify elements of the context for that piece of writing: audience, writer, purpose, and genre. There are other elements that your Comp 1 instructor may have taught you, but let’s start with those. Answer these questions in your paragraph:

* Who is the audience and how do you know that?
* Who is the writer and from what position or authority do they write?
* What is the genre, or type of writing, and why was that chosen to achieve the writer’s purpose and reach the audience?
* What is the writer’s purpose? How is that stated or revealed?

## **Lesson 7: Thesis Statement Activity**

Write out your thesis statement for Project #2: Rhetorical Analysis. If you cannot identify your thesis statement, reach out to your instructor or peers to get help.

Then, write a paragraph addressing these questions:

* Does this statement logically communicate the main findings and direction of your analysis? If it is successful, why is that?
* If it is not as successful as you would like, or as your instructor recommends, does the thesis statement need to be revised, or do some elements of your analysis need to be revised to align with your solid thesis statement?
* Once you have submitted, go read 2 other students’ submissions and respond to their post. Give some constructive feedback, or something else substantive. Saying something like “This is good” is not sufficient.

## **Lesson 8: Revising to Include Evidence**

As you revise your final draft, you can assess the effectiveness of the evidence you have provided.

Make a list here of the points of analysis you are making in your draft about style, tone, argument, evidence, etc.

Then note the evidence you have provided for each point, in the form of an example from the text, a quote that demonstrates style, language, tone, etc.

If you have made a claim that the writer uses a certain strategy, but there is no example or evidence of that strategy in your draft, find one, include it in your draft, and list it here.

## **Lesson 9: Schedule Assignment**

At the beginning of a new unit in Composition 1 and Project 3: Synthesis, it is time to use the Blackboard Calendar tool to schedule the next four weeks, **Weeks 9-12**, of your school, work, and life activities so you can keep track of upcoming events and project deadlines. This should begin to feel like a habit by now, and you will likely have some improved methods for scheduling your time in Project Three. Here are the instructions again:

### Steps

1. In Blackboard, on the institutional homepage before you open any course, click the Calendar icon in the lefthand menu (Figure 1).Here is a page of instructions for navigating the Blackboard calendar: [Calendar Help](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Stay_in_the_Loop/Calendar)
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## **Lesson 10: Annotating Sources**

You are in the process of finding sources for Project 3, and creating an Annotated Bibliography. The bibliography is the list of citations for your sources. The annotation is the note that you will include for each of those sources, according to your Comp 1 instructions.

Keep in mind that this Annotated Bibliography is to help you use the sources in your assignment. Create annotations that have meaning to you. Here’s one approach:

* Write a brief summary of the article (several sentences) so that you remember the content, what it’s about.
* Note significant points or material that you plan to use, and where they will fit in your paper. For example, the history of the issue or problem might go in your introduction.
* Explain (remind yourself) how this source will support your argument and make your synthesis paper more effective.

For this activity, choose a source that you can use in Project 3 and read it with this notation technique in mind. Remember that you need to understand the article and its purpose first so that you don’t pick material or information out of context. Practice our reading strategies.

**Write a complete annotation for the chosen source and a correct citation. Submit it here. One down!**

## **Lesson 11: Identifying Strategies**

Choose a piece of writing (recommended: a sample synthesis paper—check the [course wiki](http://aer.uark.edu) for options) for students to look at. Have them answer the following questions:

* How does the writer use sources to strengthen the argument?
* What strategies do they use to make their point(s)?
* Which of these strategies might be useful in your synthesis paper, and how would you use it?

Now, try to apply those strategies to your work. Go for it!

## **Lesson 12: Revision Plans**

After your conference with your Comp 1 instructor, make an outline, list, or plan for the revisions you will make to your draft. Prioritize your list or plan so that you can address the most important tasks first. Do not worry about grammar or mechanical mistakes now. Make the big picture changes that you and your instructor discussed, and things that you know yourself need work. (Editing for grammar comes last.)

Submit that revision plan here.

Try to have a revision finished for peer review next week. Then you can use that feedback for further revision. Every time you return to a draft, you can make it more effective.

## **Lesson 13: Check Citations**

As you complete your final draft of the synthesis paper, using multiple sources, make sure you have a correct citation page and have cited all source material used in your text. Here are some steps to walk you through the process:

1. As you revise, check the in-text citations. Have you used in-text citations for all information, whether quoted or not, that came from a source?
2. Review your citation page. If you have not completed it, do so now, because you should already have these citations in your annotated bibliography (unless you’ve added research since then). Use those citations, without the annotations, for your Works Cited or References page.
3. Check the citations again for correctness and the page for formatting. Copy it into a separate document so that you can attach it here. (For your final draft of Project 3, the citation page will be part of the single document that you submit.)
4. Once you have submitted, read 2 other students’ submissions and respond to their post, making observations and suggestions and learning from checking their citations and formatting. You can help each other create a correct and complete citation page.

## **Lesson 14: Schedule Assignment**

By now, you have been using and adapting your calendar to help manage your workload and schedule and stay on track with both coursework and personal activities. We are in the final weeks of the semester, moving toward final exams, and this is your last calendar schedule to build for this course. We hope you will continue to use this tool to manage your future semesters.

Use the Blackboard Calendar to schedule **Weeks 14-16** of this semester, and the final exam week. Even though there is no final example for Composition 1 or Writing Lab, there are exam times different from your regular class periods and plenty of study time to manage in that week. Making a schedule for that week will be particularly helpful.

Again, here are the steps for the Blackboard Calendar:

### Steps

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## **Lesson 15: Reviewing and Editing**

To compile your Portfolio for Comp 1, you should review each final draft and edit (or revise if needed) to present them in what you consider to be completed form. There are other documents to include in your portfolio as well, as instructed in Comp 1, but these final drafts can be edited and “fine-tuned.” In your reflective essay, you are to identify key aspects of you rwriting that you’ve worked on this semester, and focus on one. This review of first and final drafts, and feedback, will illuminate those areas of focus.

Review your first draft and major assignment submissions. Make a list here of the suggestions you’ve received more than one in the feedback from your Comp 1 instructor. Write a paragraph about how you have applied that feedback and what improvement you see in the final drafts you’ll submit in your Portfolio.

This journal could contribute to your reflective essay, as well as the editing of your Portfolio items.