

ENGLISH 10600-I FIRST YEAR COMPOSITON

Sequenced Writing Project Overview*

In this class you will carry out a sequenced writing project; that is, you will write a total of four papers on the same subject over the course of this semester. The idea of a series of assignments forming a sequenced writing project grows from the belief that students develop their writing skills best when each writing assignment they do can build quite directly on the experience and knowledge gained from completing the previous writing assignments.

In the sequenced writing project, you may write on any topic you wish with the approval of your teacher. However, to do the sequenced writing project, you must select a topic that meets three requirements.

1. You must feel very interested in the topic and want to learn more about it, since you will spend much of the term writing four full papers on the same subject.
2. You must already have had some personal experience with the topic you will write on.
3. This must be a topic that will allow you to do all four parts (Personal Narrative, Interview Report, Synthesis Paper, Argumentative Essay) of the project. Here are some examples of topics students have written on and their personal experience with their topics.

Financial aid for international students (This student was having financial problems.)

Making American friends (The student had no American friends and wanted some.)

The Iranian and American criminal justice systems (This student's father had been imprisoned for political activity, and she was taking a course in criminal justice.)

The question of Puerto Rico's becoming one of the United States (This student was from Puerto Rico and was going to have to decide on how to vote on this question.)

Day care in the United States and China (This student was sending his four-year-old son to day care while he and his wife attended classes.)

As you can see, in each case the student had already had some personal experience with the subject of their project before they began the project. For the sequenced writing project, take your time deciding on an appropriate topic, one that will keep your interest through four complete writing assignments. You can think of this sequenced writing project as gathering data for a research question. So consider choosing topics that you can and would like to do research on.

*Adapted from: Leki, I. (1998). *Academic writing: Exploring processes and strategies*, Second edition. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.