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2025/2026 SCHOOL YEAR

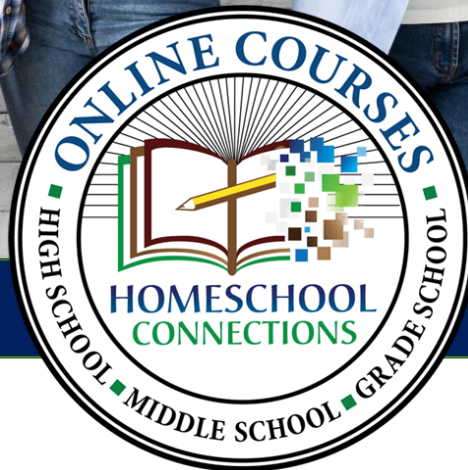
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# Aquinas Writing Advantage

## LIVE Course Guide



*Your complete, clearly laid out,  
easy-to-follow learn-to-write program online.*



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# Aquinas Writing Advantage: About the Program

*Your **complete, easy-to-follow, learn-to-write program** that's online—  
with LIVE and recorded courses **taught by world-class professionals** to  
**help your students become the best writers possible.***

**Aquinas Writing Advantage (AWA)** is an **award-winning writing program**, full middle through high school writing instruction program that's online—offering both LIVE, scheduled semester-based courses and recorded, self-paced courses that are available 24/7.

**AWA is a part of Homeschool Connections**, a Catholic online curriculum provider for students in grades three through high school, where courses are offered in all subject areas—including English and writing, mathematics, sciences, humanities, history, government, economics, languages, literature, theology, philosophy, logic, computers, the arts, and more. Anyone can take recorded courses in the Aquinas Writing Advantage program—and all middle and high school students are welcome in LIVE courses; we respect all students' beliefs and welcome you!

## What makes AWA *different* from other writing programs?



### **The Mastery Learning Approach**

Courses are designed for your student to learn one skill of writing at a time and then master the writing skill with immediate practice. You can learn no-error punctuation and grammar, essay and paper writing, higher vocabulary, fiction writing, journalism, poetry, literature and writing, and college prep writing—all with step-by-step knowledge and practice, to master writing skills easily.



### **Single-Topic Courses**

You won't find "general grade-level" English and Writing courses here. Courses are divided into single, specific topics so your student can focus on, and master, specific writing skills, one at a time, that build upon each other. Courses have an "order" and cover foundations before moving ahead to master specific advanced writing skills.



### **Clear, Easy, Stepwise Learning**

Writing skills are taught in a straightforward, 1-2-3 order. Unlike other writing programs, your student learns simple yet profound professional writing how-to practices, even at the middle school level. The easy, stepwise approach assures that your student can choose powerful words, group words into powerful phrases, and write with clear transitions and cohesive ideas for longer pieces of writing. Most importantly, we want writing to be easy and enjoyable for every student. All that's here can set your student up for success.



### **Taught by Skilled Instructors and Professional Writers**






All instructors are skilled teacher-leaders who are also highly skilled writing professionals, and many are professional editors, multi-book authors, learning specialists, and seasoned mentors with advanced degrees and years of experience guiding students to confidence and competency.

# Why Trust Aquinas Writing Advantage

Here, you'll find **clear expertise** that you can trust.

Your student learns **exactly what he or she needs to know**—for now, and for the future.

## Aquinas Writing Advantage courses are:

-  **Unique:** Not like any other program's content because each foundational skill is separated and practiced before moving ahead, with pro writing tips and a practical writing perspective, allowing your student to focus on mastering one skill at a time.
-  **Back-Designed:** Designed by a college writing instructor and professional writer of over 35 years, course content has been created by "working backward" from the skills needed for confident, successful college-level writing so your student gets exactly what's needed for future success.
-  **Linear:** Content is taught "in a line," with each course building upon the next, and the entire program is designed with complete continuity, so you don't have to worry "that everything is covered." You get exactly what's needed for Writing, English, and more.
-  **Simplified:** So there are no struggles, and your student learns easily, with professional writing tricks not seen anywhere else.
-  **Expert:** With fast how-to tips and specific, detailed instruction that comes from both the higher-level curriculum (designed by university-level experts) and professional writing instructors' expertise.

**Because the courses are unique, back-designed, linear, simplified, and expertly designed and taught, your student can understand how to write with the highest level of skill: to enjoy writing.**

### Designer/Senior Director

AWA is developed and led by Erin M. Brown, MA, MFA (aka author EB Conroy/Erin Brown Conroy), a professional writer/editor and 18-book author. A former college writing professor at two universities, she has designed/developed writing curricula for multiple college/university writing programs; well-known online middle and high school programs; Advanced Placement (AP) English Language and Composition programs; and professional writer trainings.

The Senior Writer/Writing Trainer and Supervisor for a worldwide company, she often presents to professional writers and judges teen and professional writing contests, and her *Simplified Writing* books are used in public and private schools and colleges across the world. Professor Brown holds a bachelor's degree in education, a master's degree in a special education field, and a terminal degree (MFA) in Creative Writing. At AWA, she oversees the Managing Director, Assistant High School and Middle School Directors, and 20 teaching staff.



**Erin M. Brown, MA, MFA**  
**AWA Senior Director**



## Middle School Writing Foundations LIVE Courses 2025-2026

**Foundations courses cover your middle school student's must-have skills to master writing**—covering exactly what you need for your middle school student to gain expertise in correct punctuation and grammar, understand and use all parts of speech in sentences and paragraphs, and learn the foundations of essay writing.

**In this section, you'll find an Overview page followed by specific course pages for your 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup>-grade students.** For easy identification, LIVE Fall courses are marked with a blue bar at the top of the page, and Spring courses are marked with a gold bar. Each course description links directly to your sign-up page. Turn the page now to find your courses.

# Middle School Writing Foundations: An Overview

For 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

## The 6/7 Series Courses

Designed for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>-grade students, the 6/7 Series of courses lay the foundation for everything to come at AWA. Your student learns punctuation and grammar errors that are “common” (and how to avoid them)—and your student becomes skilled in using commas, end punctuation, quotation marks, and “tricky punctuation.” You’ll also learn the most common grammar errors to avoid and master the use of the parts of speech that are critical to writing *anything* well.

### Coming from another writing program?

Sign up for the [AWA Writing Evaluation for Middle School](#) for course placement or email [info@homeschoolconnections@gmail.com](mailto:info@homeschoolconnections@gmail.com).

Your student learns that writing simple sentences isn’t enough. Knowing how to choose and use deeper language—including strong nouns, active verbs, clarifying adjectives and adverbs, and detailed prepositional phrases—is critical to writing well-crafted sentences, paragraphs, and future essays. In the 6/7 Series, your student develops a strong understanding and ability to craft clear text.

**MS 6/7-1 WRITING ESSENTIALS 1: Punctuation and Grammar I**

**MS 6/7-2 WRITING ESSENTIALS 2: Excellent Sentence & Paragraph Writing I**

**MS 6/7-3 WRITING ESSENTIALS 3: Punctuation & Grammar II**

**MS 6/7-4 WRITING ESSENTIALS 4: Excellent Sentence & Paragraph Writing II**

## The 7/8 Series Courses

Designed for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>-grade students, the 7/8 Series of courses build on the foundations laid in the 6/7 Series. Your student learns that composition depends on the ability to purposefully craft diction (word choice) and syntax (word arrangement), and your student continues to practice choosing precise and powerful words while arranging the words in strong paragraphs with purpose.

Your student also learns the elements of essay writing and form that are key to all future academics and finds out that there are many kinds of writing, each with its own purpose, audience, and style (way to write). Because learning to write isn’t just about academic writing, students learn to see differences and purposefully choose the writing techniques and styles needed for each type of writing.

Perhaps most importantly, students learn there are “secrets” to crafting paragraphs and essays—ways to make writing easier and more enjoyable—so your student comes away with a strong understanding and ability to craft longer portions of text confidently.

**MS 7/8-1 SIMPLIFIED WRITING FOR MS 1: Foundations of Composition I**

**MS 7/8-2 SIMPLIFIED WRITING FOR MS 2: Introduction to Essays and Papers**

**MS 7/8-3 SIMPLIFIED WRITING FOR MS 3: Writing the Excellent Essay**

**MS 7/8-4 SIMPLIFIED WRITING FOR MS 4: Writing Form and Style**

## How the Middle School Writing courses fit together...

GRADE	FALL SEMESTER		SPRING SEMESTER	
6 <sup>th</sup> (or 7 <sup>th</sup> )	<u><a href="#">6/7-1</a></u>	<u><a href="#">6/7-2</a></u>	<u><a href="#">6/7-3</a></u>	<u><a href="#">6/7-4</a></u>
7 <sup>th</sup> (or 8 <sup>th</sup> )	<u><a href="#">7/8-1</a></u>	<u><a href="#">7/8-2</a></u>	<u><a href="#">7/8-3</a></u>	<u><a href="#">7/8-4</a></u>

# Middle School Writing Foundations (6/7 Series)

For 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

**LIVE Fall Semester 2025** ~ To gain **one full semester** of credit, sign up for both courses below.

6/7-1



Writing Essentials 1: Punctuation & Grammar I

## WRITING ESSENTIALS 1:

### Punctuation and Grammar I (MS 6/7-1)

Help your middle school student gain confidence and master must-have skills for writing with this excellent foundational punctuation and grammar course using specific “helps,” tips, and how-to’s to make your student’s critical writing skills strong.

[This 6-week course is held in the first half of the Fall semester.](#)

6/7-2



Writing Essentials 2: Excellent Sentence & Paragraph Writing I

## WRITING ESSENTIALS 2:

### Excellent Sentence & Paragraph Writing I (MS 6/7-2)

Help your middle school student learn how to skillfully use the specific and powerful parts of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and complete phrases), transitions, linear writing, and more in this must-have foundational writing course that goes beyond “normal” writing courses with practical writing using critical thinking (no workbooks). [This 6-week course is held in the second half of the Fall semester.](#)

## LIVE Course Times Offered

### Punctuation and Grammar I (MS 6/7-1)

Click on a day and time below to register for the course.

[Mondays, 11:30 AM ET](#) (Donlon)

[Tuesdays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Schira)

[Tuesdays, 2:30 PM ET](#) (Coming soon!)

[Wednesdays, 1:00 PM ET](#) (Coming soon!)

[Thursdays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Schira)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time, above.

## Course Details

### Suggested Credit

Take 6/7-1 & 6/7-2 to gain one (1) full semester of writing credit.

### No Prerequisite

**Course materials** are provided; access to Word 2007 or newer version is required.

**Homework** is approximately one (1) to three (3) hours/week.

### Excellent Sentence & Paragraph Writing I (MS 6/7-2)

Click on a day and time below to register for the course.

[Mondays, 11:30 AM ET](#) (Donlon)

[Tuesdays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Schira)

[Tuesdays, 2:30 PM ET](#) (Coming soon!)

[Wednesdays, 1:00 PM ET](#) (Coming soon!)

[Thursdays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Schira)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time, above.

## Meet Your Instructors

Click on the links below to view the instructors' biographies



[Bonnie Donlon, BA](#)



[Natalie Schira, BA](#)



Coming soon!

# Middle School Writing Foundations (6/7 Series)

For 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

**LIVE Spring Semester 2026** ~ To gain **one full semester** of credit, sign up for both courses below.

6/7-3



Writing Essentials 3: Punctuation & Grammar II

## WRITING ESSENTIALS 3:

### Punctuation and Grammar II (MS 6/7-3)

Give your middle school student the mastery needed for punctuation to create strong sentences while avoiding the most common writing mistakes. This critical course helps your student write clearly, free of punctuation and grammar errors. [This 6-week course is held in the first half of the Spring semester.](#)

6/7-4



Writing Essentials 4: Excellent Sentence & Paragraph Writing II

## WRITING ESSENTIALS 4:

### Excellent Sentence & Paragraph Writing II (MS 6/7-4)

Help your student craft excellent sentences and paragraphs in writing practice through learning and using critical middle school must-haves for writing well and gain understanding with practice in this hands-on writing course that goes beyond "normal" writing courses with practical writing using critical thinking (no workbooks). [This 6-week course is held in the second half of the Spring semester.](#)

## LIVE Course Times Offered

### Punctuation and Grammar II (MS 6/7-3)

Click on a day and time below to register for the course.

[Mondays, 11:30 AM ET](#) (Donlon)

[Tuesdays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Schira)

[Tuesdays, 2:30 PM ET](#) (Coming soon!)

[Wednesdays, 1:00 PM ET](#) (Coming soon!)

[Thursdays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Schira)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time, above.

### Excellent Sentence & Paragraph Writing II (MS 6/7-4)

Click on a day and time below to register for the course.

[Mondays, 11:30 AM ET](#) (Donlon)

[Tuesdays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Schira)

[Tuesdays, 2:30 PM ET](#) (Coming soon!)

[Wednesdays, 1:00 PM ET](#) (Coming soon!)

[Thursdays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Schira)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time, above.

## Course Details

### Suggested Credit

Take 6/7-3 & 6/7-4 to gain one (1) full semester of writing credit.

**Prerequisites** are 6/7-1 & 6/7-2 via LIVE or Unlimited Access.

**Course materials** are provided; access to Word 2007 or newer version is required.

**Homework** is approximately one (1) to three (3) hours/week.

## Meet Your Instructors

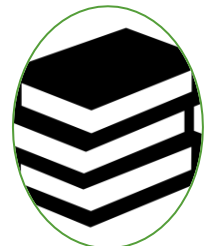
Click on the links below to view the instructors' biographies



[Bonnie Donlon, BA](#)



[Natalie Schira, BA](#)



Coming soon!

# Middle School Writing Foundations (7/8 Series)

For 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

**LIVE Fall Semester 2025** ~ To gain **one full semester** of credit, sign up for both courses below.

7/8-1



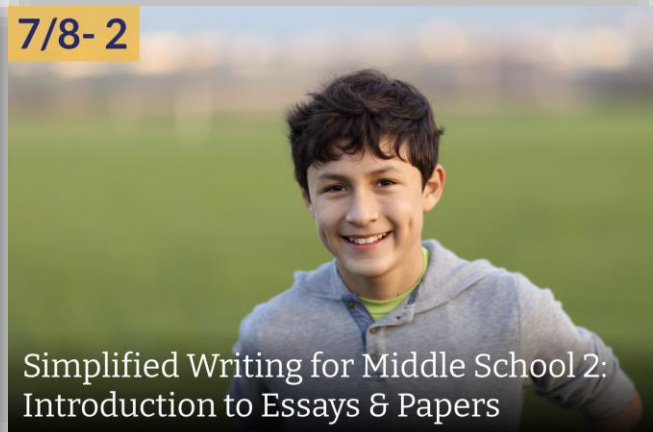
Simplified Writing for Middle School 1:  
Foundations of Composition

## SIMPLIFIED WRITING FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL 1: **Foundations of Composition** (MS 7/8-1)

Help your middle school student gain writing confidence and become a skilled writer with an introduction to informative, expressive, and persuasive writing, including choosing strong and clear words, crafting strong sentences and paragraphs, and understanding how to write the parts of an essay with personal help and feedback on your work.

[This 8-week course is held in the first half of the Fall semester.](#)

7/8-2



Simplified Writing for Middle School 2:  
Introduction to Essays & Papers

## SIMPLIFIED WRITING FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL 1: **Introduction to Essays and Papers** (MS 7/8-2)

Help your middle school student gain must-have essay writing skills with personal help and feedback on their work, while understanding how to write an excellent introduction with a hook and thesis statement; how to brainstorm, order, and outline; and how to draft, revise, and edit for excellence. Students also learn upper-level paragraph structure. This course prepares your student for high school and helps your student write longer works with confidence.

[This 8-week course is held in the second half of the Fall semester.](#)

## LIVE Course Times Offered

### Foundations of Composition (MS 7/8-1)

Click on a day and time below to register for the course.

[Mondays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Schira & Starrett)

[Wednesdays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Schira & Starrett)

[Wednesdays, 2:30 PM ET](#) (Maimone)

[Thursdays, 1:00 PM ET](#) (Coming soon!)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time, above.

### Introduction to Essays & Papers (MS 7/8-2)

Click on a day and time below to register for the course.

[Mondays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Schira & Starrett)

[Wednesdays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Schira & Starrett)

[Wednesdays, 2:30 PM ET](#) (Maimone)

[Thursdays, 1:00 PM ET](#) (Coming soon!)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time, above.

## Course Details

### Suggested Credit

Take 7/8-1 & 7/8-2 to gain one (1) full semester of writing credit.

**Prerequisite is** 6-series courses via LIVE or Unlimited Access.

**Course Materials** are provided; access to Word 2007 or newer version is required.

**Homework** is approximately three (3) to four (4) hours/week

## Meet Your Instructors

Click on the links below to view the instructors' biographies.



[Natalie Schira, BA](#)



[Ryan Starrett, MA](#)



[Gracie Maimone, BA](#)



**Coming soon!**

# Middle School Writing Foundations (7/8 Series)

For 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

**LIVE Spring Semester 2026** ~ To gain **one full semester** of credit, sign up for both courses below.

7/8-3



Simplified Writing for Middle School 3:  
Writing the Excellent Essay

## SIMPLIFIED WRITING FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL 3:

### Writing the Excellent Essay

(MS 7/8-3)

In this advanced-level essay writing course for middle school students, help your student master essay writing with advanced concepts leading the student into high school writing. Taking the concepts learned in the 7/8-1 and 7/8-2 courses, the successful student finishing this course has the tools and is ready for successful high school essay writing. **This 8-week course is held in the first half of the Spring semester.**

7/8-4



Simplified Writing for Middle School 4:  
Writing Form and Style

## SIMPLIFIED WRITING FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL 4:

### Writing Form and Style

(MS 7/8-4)

Help your middle school student be fully prepared for high school writing by learning the forms of nonfiction, fiction, informational writing, journalism, descriptive writing, reviews, speeches, Biblical writing, & more. Your student will learn to write in all these forms and how to choose the exact, clear style needed for future writing success. **This 8-week course is held in the second half of the Spring semester.**

## LIVE Course Times Offered

### Writing the Excellent Essay (MS 7/8-3)

Click on a day and time below to register for the course.

[Mondays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Schira & Starrett)

[Wednesdays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Schira & Starrett)

[Wednesdays, 2:30 PM ET](#) (Maimone)

[Thursdays, 1:00 PM ET](#) (Coming soon!)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time, above.

### Writing Form and Style (MS 7/8-4)

Click on a day and time below to register for the course.

[Mondays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Schira & Starrett)

[Wednesdays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Schira & Starrett)

[Wednesdays, 2:30 PM ET](#) (Maimone)

[Thursdays, 1:00 PM ET](#) (Coming soon!)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time, above.

## Course Details

### Suggested Credit

Take 7/8-3 & 7/8-4 to gain one (1) full semester of writing credit.

**Prerequisites are** 7/8-1 & 7/8-2 courses via LIVE or Unlimited Access.

**Course Materials** are provided; access to Word 2007 or newer version is required.

**Homework** is approximately three (3) to four (4) hours/week.

## Meet Your Instructors

Click on the links below to view the instructors' biographies.



[Natalie Schira, BA](#)



[Ryan Starrett, MA](#)



[Gracie Maimone, BA](#)



**Coming soon!**



## Middle School: Critical Thinking & Vocabulary Courses LIVE Courses 2025-2026

**Critical Thinking and Vocabulary courses give your middle school student the must-have skills to master the most important tools of writing**—including understanding words and their meaning, growing your student's "word bank," and increasing your student's ability to think, ideate, and craft ideas more fully and clearly.

**In this section, you'll find** LIVE Fall courses, marked with a blue bar at the top of the page, and Spring courses are marked with a gold bar. Each course description links directly to your sign-up page. Turn the page now to find your courses.

# Middle School: Critical Thinking & Vocabulary Courses

For 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

**LIVE for Fall Semester 2025**



## Course Details

### Suggested Credit

One-half (1/2) of a semester's credit for Writing or Literature.

*Please note— this class does not take the place of the 7/8 foundational essay writing course within the Middle School writing program. We encourage 7<sup>th</sup> graders to take the 7/8 course either concurrently or previous to this course.*

### Total Classes: 12

**Prerequisites** are 6/7-1 & 6/7-2 courses via LIVE or Unlimited Access.

**Course materials** are provided; access to Word 2007 or a newer version is required.

**Homework** is approximately one (1) to two (2) hours/week.

## Meet Your Instructor

Click on the link below to view the instructor's biography.



**Natalie Schira, BA**

## INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE & WRITING 1: How to Read, Interpret, & Write about Literature, Part One

Studying and writing about literature is a part of school success, and middle school is the time to start! In this course, learn how to read, interpret, and write about literature, gaining a strong foundation for literature and writing courses for high school, college, and beyond. Learn the beauty and importance of the world of literature and build the skills to write with understanding about the basic literary genres. Analyze and write about the elements of plot, setting, characterization, point of view, metaphor, irony, and symbolism, examining why authors write their stories (and make their writing choices). Most importantly, learn how to write an analysis using key literary works such as *The Gift of the Magi* and chapters from C.S. Lewis, Robert Louis Stevenson, and more! Here, you'll write each week and gain the tools necessary for literary analysis in future academic courses.

**This Fall course is Part One of a two-part series; take both courses (Fall and Spring) for a full year's credit of literature and writing!**

## LIVE Course Time Offered

Click on the day and time below to register for the course.

### **Tuesdays, 1:00 PM ET**

For exact course dates, click on the day and time, above.

### LIVE for Spring Semester 2026



## Course Details

### Suggested Credit

One-half (1/2) of a semester's credit for Writing or Literature.

*Please note– this class does not take the place of the 7/8 foundational essay writing course within the Middle School writing program. We encourage 7th graders to take the 7/8 course either concurrently or previous to this course.*

### Total Classes: 12

**Prerequisite** is *Introduction to Literature and Writing: How to Read, Interpret, and Write about Literature, Part One*.

**Course materials** are provided; access to Word 2007 or a newer version is required.

**Homework** is approximately one (1) to two (2) hours/week.

## Meet Your Instructor

Click on the link below to view the instructor's biography.



**Natalie Schira, BA**

### INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE & WRITING 2:

## How to Read, Interpret, & Write about Literature, Part Two

Continue studying and writing about literature with this middle school course, and learn how to read, interpret, and write about literature, guiding you to understanding the literary genres, increasing critical thinking through the knowledge of story elements in literature, and introducing authors' writing techniques. Learn alliteration, assonance, colored narrative, dialogue, narrative elements, tone, description, and more! Analyze stories and famous poems, including works by Tolkien, while focusing on group discussions leading to stronger analysis and writing skills. Explore more literary elements and learn how to write about the elements with confidence. You'll also get a chance to write every week; after the course, you'll be prepared to move into any middle or high school literature course with confidence.

**This Spring course is Part 2 of a two-part series; take both courses (Fall and Spring) for a full year's credit of literature and writing!**

## LIVE Course Time Offered

Click on the day and time below to register for the course.

### **Thursdays, 1:00 PM ET**

For exact course dates, click on the day and time, above.

# Middle School Critical Thinking & Vocabulary Courses

Word Mastery Skill Building For 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

**LIVE for both Fall & Spring Semesters 2025-2026**

MS WM-3



Word Mastery Skill Building 3

MS WM-4



Word Mastery Skill Building 4

## Course Details

### Suggested Credit:

For a full year's credit for vocabulary, take *Word Mastery Skill Building 3* (Fall 2025) and *Word Mastery Skill Building 4* (Spring 2026).

### Total Classes: 12/course

### No prerequisites

**Course Materials:** *Word Mastery Skill Building, Book 3* and *Word Mastery Skill Building, Book 4*, by Erin M. Brown, MA, MFA; access to Word 2007 or a newer version is required.

**Homework** is approximately two and a half (2.5) hours/week.

Students will complete pages in the *Word Mastery Skill Building* book, which has homework divided over five (5) days. **This is a "flipped course," meaning students will complete the homework before class.**

### Critical Thinking & Vocabulary:

## Word Mastery Skill Building 3 & 4: Champion & Hero Levels (MS WM-3, MS WM-4)

Join these powerful 12-week courses that guide you through ultimate vocabulary and word mastery to gain smooth, upper-level reading, writing, and speaking! By taking a few moments each day, and then participating in the weekly class, you'll learn Greek and Latin roots, prefixes, homonyms, homophones, easily confused words (special word distinctions), sentence writing for comprehension, and more! It's the fastest, easiest way to raise your word mastery, writing, and communication skills!

## Meet Your Instructor

Click on the link below to view the instructor's biography.



Vania Kent, MA

## LIVE Course Time Offered

Click on the day and time to register for the course.

**Word Mastery Skill Building 3: Champion Level**  
**Tuesdays, 11:30 AM** (Fall 2025)

**Word Mastery Skill Building 4: Hero Level**  
**Tuesdays, 11:30 AM** (Spring 2026)



## Middle School Spelling

### RECORDED Courses

### 2025-2026

**Spelling mastery gives your middle school student the ability to write with confidence.**

Many students struggle with spelling, which holds them back from writing with certainty, self-reliance, boldness, and *enjoyment*. And often, spelling instruction today is steeped in outdated methods that actually hinder a mastery of spelling. But your student doesn't have to struggle.

**In this section, you'll find information on the Spelling Bootcamp course**, a recorded "short course" that can show your student a new, successful way to approach spelling that can give your student success. Turn the page now to find your course.

# Middle School Spelling

For 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

## Recorded Course – Access Any Time!

**If you want to make spelling effortless and fun, then this is for you!** Learn new ways to think about spelling to make it simple, discover games that make spelling downright fun, and turn spelling into something you don't have to worry about because you have "insider information" to make it easier.



### Course Details

#### **Suggested Credit:**

Supplemental, ¼ to ½ credit (may be extended with additional work)

#### **Total Classes: 6**

#### **No prerequisites**

**Course Materials:** All learning materials for the course are provided FREE by the instructor.

Students should be prepared with two (2) packs of 3x5 cards, a black marker, an 8 ½ x 11 notebook, and a highlighter.

**Homework** is approximately one hour of homework between classes.

Homework includes creating fun learning materials, playing spelling games, and practicing the ideas presented in the course.

#### **Spelling:**

### **Middle School Spelling Bootcamp**

Is spelling a challenge? Do you want to find out what's going wrong and make spelling easier?

Join Erin M. Brown, MA, MFA, the Creator/Director of True North Reading: The Complete Mastery Reading & Spelling Program and the Aquinas Writing Advantage to get a new and powerful approach to spelling with the top how-to skills and easy tips (based on research and a powerful, successful approach) to make spelling easier.

Revolutionize the way you "do" spelling, understand what's missing, and find out how to remember the spelling of words much faster.

***This course is available only as a recorded course for the 2025-2026 school year.***

### Meet Your Instructor

Click on the link below to view the instructor's biography.



**Erin M. Brown, MA, MFA**

AWA Senior Director



## High School Writing Foundations

### LIVE and RECORDED Courses

### 2025-2026

**Foundations courses cover your high school student's "must-have skills" to master writing fully.**

Here, your student learns how to get rid of common punctuation and grammar errors, craft powerful sentences with meaning, and gain competence in forming strong academic paragraphs, essays, and papers. Courses are progressive and sequential, with the 9 Series covering critical writing essentials, the 10 Series for growing vocabulary and practicing higher-level critical thinking and writing, the 11 Series for increasing the creative and critical thinking necessary for college and career (particularly for STEM courses), and the 12 Series pre-college courses that rival Advanced Placement (AP)-level writing mastery.

**In this section, you'll find an Overview page followed by specific course pages.** For easy identification, LIVE Fall courses are marked with a blue bar at the top of the page, and Spring courses are marked with a gold bar. Each course description links directly to your sign-up page. Turn the page now to find your courses.

# High School Writing Foundations: An Overview

For 9<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

Your 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade writing courses cover what you need to be fully prepared for college and beyond.

## The 9 Series Courses

The **9-Series** courses cover essential writing foundations with rare tips to write faster, solidify upper-level punctuation and grammar, and get new ways to think about writing that make writing easier. Be sure to take these prerequisite courses, because what's taught here is different — not like any other program. Students learn special terms, tips, and ways to think about writing that are used throughout the entire AWA program (9-12th grades). [Click on the course photos for more information.](#)



## The 10 Series Courses

With the **10 Series Vocabulary and Writing** courses (for 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grade students), your student learns over **750** vocabulary words in one year—vocabulary that's important for succeeding in college-level writing, literature, and college entrance exams. Your student also gets weekly writing practice, memory training and studying tips, and enhanced critical thinking strategies. [Click on the course photos for more information.](#)



**Coming from another writing program?**  
Sign up for the [Aquinas Writing Advantage Assessment](#) for course placement or email [info@homeschoolconnections@gmail.com](mailto:info@homeschoolconnections@gmail.com).

## The 11 Series Courses

### OPTION #1: Fiction Writing Track (LIVE)

The **11 Series** Fiction Writing courses develop narrative and creative writing skills in a powerful, experiential way, so your student gains the skills that apply to academic, creative, and critical expressive forms. Under the fun, exploratory writing of “creating your own book,” students learn first-hand the elements that make literary form great and become better writers through ways only narrative writing can powerfully influence skill and style.

### OPTION #2: Business Writing Track (RECORDED)

The **Business Writing** courses are designed as both Writing Excellence courses (additional courses for additional skills) or as an alternate track to the 11-Series Creative Writing and Literary Form/Fiction Writing courses during the 11<sup>th</sup>-grade year. These courses give your student the edge for job preparation and professional writing skills.



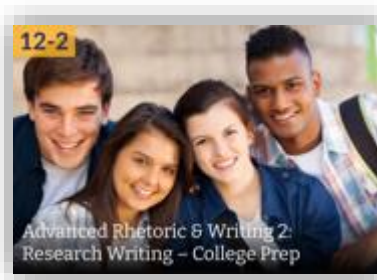
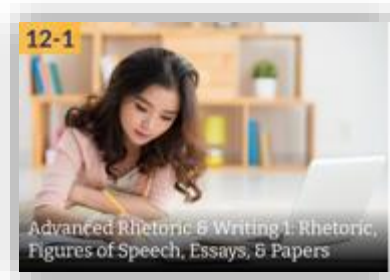
# High School Writing Foundations: An Overview (cont'd)

For 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students/Advanced Pre-College

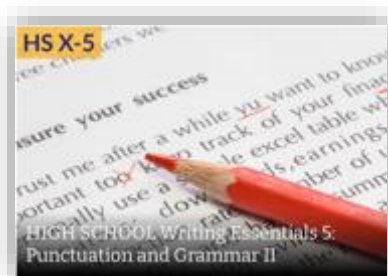
## The 12 Series Courses

The **12 Series courses** (for college prep) give teens advanced skills to make writing strong, clear, and ready for college. Students write within the nine rhetorical modes, identify and use rhetorical strategies and figures of speech; and pre-write, draft, and edit a comparison and contrast paper, using advanced writing methods for a paper's hook, thesis, introduction, body, and conclusion. Students get specific, individual feedback from the instructor; learn vocabulary related to upper-level writing; and gain advanced editing and revising skills for upper-level work. These courses prepare college-bound students for success.

[Click on the course photos for more information.](#)



## Advanced Academic & Pre-College Writing Courses



### High School Writing Essentials 5: Punctuation and Grammar II (X-5) **RECORDED Course**

This course continues punctuation and grammar instruction and practice exercises to take your student to college-level understanding. Students will move beyond common writing to mastering advanced sentence construction skills. If you want your teen never to struggle with punctuation and grammar and be able to be skillful in upper-level, college-prep punctuation and grammar, then this is the course for you. [Click on the course photo for more information.](#) **This course is available only as a recorded course for the 2025-2026 school year.**



### Pre-College Essentials: Essay Test Mastery for College-Bound Students (COLL-1) **RECORDED Course**

This course is foundational for preparing students for college-level writing. If a student plans on attending any level of college, university, or specialized post-high school training (any major). Master in-class essay tests with this how-to course with practical, prescriptive, clear direction on how to decipher a prompt, think and process the instructions clearly, quickly brainstorm an answer, and write an essay in a linear narrative format with few errors — to "show the teacher what you know" with style. Take this course along with the 12 Series courses to be fully prepared and make college-level writing easier. [Click on the course photo for more information.](#) **This course is available only as a recorded course for the 2025-2026 school year.**

## How the High School Writing courses fit together...

GRADE	FALL SEMESTER		SPRING SEMESTER	
9 <sup>TH</sup>	<u>9-1</u>	<u>9-2</u>	<u>9-3</u>	<u>9-4</u>
10 <sup>TH</sup> or (11 <sup>TH</sup> )	<u>10-1</u>		<u>10-2</u>	
11 <sup>TH</sup>	<u>11-123</u> (Fiction Writing) OR <u>11-9</u> (Business Writing)		<u>11-457</u> (Fiction Writing) OR <u>11-10</u> (Journalism)	
11 <sup>TH</sup> or (12 <sup>TH</sup> )	<u>12-1</u> & <u>X-5</u> (Advanced)		<u>12-2</u> & <u>COLL-1</u> (Advanced)	

# High School: Writing Foundations (9 Series)

For 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

**LIVE Fall Semester 2025** ~ To gain **one full semester** of credit, sign up for both courses below.

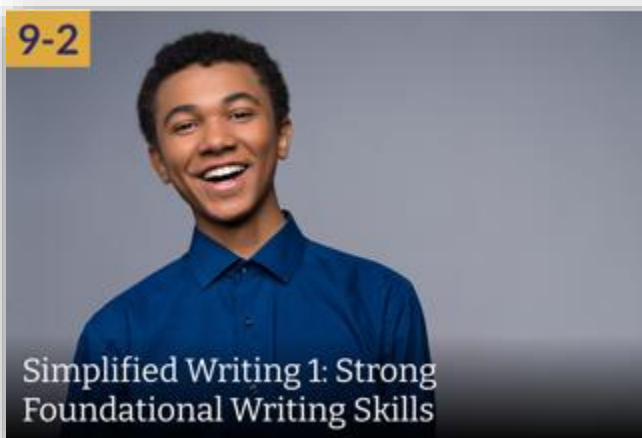


## ESSENTIAL WRITING 1:

### Essential Punctuation & Grammar (HS 9-1)

Get rid of punctuation and grammar struggles and learn the must-have writing skills for mastering commas, tense, colons, semicolons, dashes, ellipses, and overcome punctuation and grammar mistakes for good.

*This 6-week course is held in the first half of the Fall semester.*



## SIMPLIFIED WRITING 1:

### Strong Foundational Writing Skills (HS 9-2)

Make your writing strong and clear and master the most critical foundations needed for excellent high school writing, including writing for an audience and purpose, perfecting word choice, strong sentences and paragraphs, linear writing, rhetoric, transitions, and more.

*This 8-week course is held in the second half of the Fall semester.*

## LIVE Course Times Offered

### Essential Punctuation & Grammar (HS 9-1)

Click on a time below to register for the course.

**Mondays, 11:30 AM ET** (Hamric-Weis)

**Mondays, 2:30 PM ET** (Keefe)

**Tuesdays: 1:00 PM OR 2:30 PM ET** (Keefe)

**Wednesdays: 11:30 AM OR 1:00 PM ET** (Maimone)

**Thursdays, 2:30 PM ET** (Hamric-Weis)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time, above.

### Strong Foundational Writing Skills (HS 9-2)

Click on a time below to register for the course.

**Mondays, 11:30 AM ET** (Hamric-Weis)

**Mondays, 2:30 PM ET** (Keefe)

**Tuesdays: 1:00 PM OR 2:30 PM ET** (Keefe)

**Wednesdays: 11:30 AM OR 1:00 PM ET** (Maimone)

**Thursdays, 2:30 PM ET** (Hamric-Weis)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time, above.

## Course Details

### Suggested Credit

Take 9-1 & 9-2 to gain one (1) full semester of writing credit.

### No Prerequisite

### Course Materials

*Simplified Writing 101: Top Secrets for College Success*, by Erin Brown Conroy is required. The course requires access to Word 2007 or newer version.

**Homework** is approximately two (2) to four (4) hours/week.

## Meet Your Instructors

Click on the links below to view the instructors' biographies.



**Sara Keefe, BA, MA**



**Sharon Hamric-Weis, BS, JD**



**Gracie Maimone, BA**

# High School: Writing Foundations (9 Series)

For 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

**LIVE Spring Semester 2026** ~ To gain **one full semester** of credit, sign up for both courses below.



## ESSENTIAL WRITING 2:

### Excellent Paragraph & Essay Writing (HS 9-3)

Master the details of writing that you need to succeed, and perfect the essential tools necessary for excellent high school writing, including clear sentence and paragraph construction, summary and paraphrase, answering essay questions, linear and process writing, advanced paragraph structure, and more. [This 6-week course is held in the first half of the Spring semester.](#)



## SIMPLIFIED WRITING 2:

### Beyond the Five-Paragraph Essay (HS 9-4)

Go beyond writing standard essays to mastering the secrets of advanced essay writing, including different essay types, advanced brainstorming techniques, using parallelism, cohesive writing, bookending, and more. These must-have essay skills apply to all high school and college courses.

[This 8-week course is held in the second half of the Spring semester.](#)

## LIVE Course Times Offered

### Excellent Paragraph and Essay Writing (HS 9-3)

Click on a time below to register for the course.

[Mondays, 11:30 AM ET](#) (Hamric-Weis)

[Mondays, 2:30 PM ET](#) (Keefe)

[Tuesdays: 1:00 PM OR 2:30 PM ET](#) (Keefe)

[Wednesdays: 11:30 AM OR 1:00 PM ET](#) (Maimone)

[Thursdays, 2:30 PM ET](#) (Hamric-Weis)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time, above.

### Beyond the Five-Paragraph Essay (HS 9-4)

Click on a day and/or time below to register for the course.

[Mondays, 11:30 AM ET](#) (Hamric-Weis)

[Mondays, 2:30 PM ET](#) (Keefe)

[Tuesdays: 1:00 PM OR 2:30 PM ET](#) (Keefe)

[Wednesdays: 11:30 AM OR 1:00 PM ET](#) (Maimone)

[Thursdays, 2:30 PM ET](#) (Hamric-Weis)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time, above.

## Course Details

### Suggested Credit

Take 9-3 & 9-4 to gain one (1) full semester of writing credit.

**Prerequisites** are 9-1 & 9-2 courses via LIVE or Unlimited Access.

### Course Materials

[Simplified Writing 101: Top Secrets for College Success](#), by Erin Brown Conroy is required. The course requires access to Word 2007 or newer version.

**Homework** is approximately two (2) to four (4) hours/week.

## Meet Your Instructors

Click on the links below to view the instructors' biographies.



[Sara Keefe, BA, MA](#)



[Sharon Hamric-Weis, BS, JD](#)



[Gracie Maimone, BA](#)

# High School: Writing Foundations (10 Series)

For 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

**LIVE for Fall Semester 2025**

**10-1**



## Course Details

### Suggested Credit

Take 10-1 (Fall) & 10-2 (Spring) to gain one (1) full year of writing credit.

### Total Classes: 14

**Prerequisites** are 9-1 & 9-2 courses via LIVE or Unlimited Access; 9-3 & 9-4 courses are recommended.

### Course Materials

EB Conroy's [\*Simplified Vocabulary Guide\*](#). The course requires access to Word 2007 or newer version.

**Homework** is approximately three (3) to four (4) hours/week.

## Vocabulary & Writing I (Part 1) (HS 10-1)

In this course (the first of two successive courses), your student will learn over 350 upper-level vocabulary words related to writing that are needed for high school advanced writing, Advanced Placement (AP) English Language and Composition courses, the ACT and SAT, advanced writing courses, and all of college writing—and an introduction to the concepts associated with the terms. Because vocabulary is the number one indicator of success on college entrance testing, if you want your student to not only score well on testing but also be able to be prepared for college writing and vocabulary, this course is for you. Coursework will be focused on the critical thinking and writing practice needed for your future success, and each week, you'll learn tips and how-to's for learning the words with comprehension and memory, giving you comprehension methods that can be used in any course.

[Sign up for Part Two \(Spring semester\), for a complete year of writing credit.](#)

## Meet Your Instructors

Click on the links below to view the instructors' biographies.



[Sara Keefe, BA, MA](#)



[Sharon Hamric-Weis, BS, JD](#)



[Maureen Ryan, BA](#)

## LIVE Course Times Offered

Click on a time below to register for the course.

**Mondays, 1:00 PM ET** (Hamric-Weis)

**Tuesdays, 10:00 AM ET** (Ryan)

**Wednesdays, 11:30 AM ET** (Ryan)

**Wednesdays, 2:30 PM ET** (Keefe)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time above.

# High School: Writing Foundations (10 Series)

For 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

## LIVE for Spring Semester 2026

10-2



### Course Details

#### Suggested Credit

Take 10-1 (Fall) & 10-2 (Spring) to gain one (1) full year of writing credit.

#### Total Classes: 14

**Prerequisites** are 9-1 & 9-2 courses via LIVE or Unlimited Access; 9-3 & 9-4 courses are recommended.

#### Course Materials

EB Conroy's [\*Simplified Vocabulary Guide\*](#). The course requires access to Word 2007 or newer version.

**Homework** is approximately three (3) to four (4) hours/week.

### Vocabulary & Writing II (Part 2) (HS 10-2)

In this second (Part 2) of two successive courses, you'll continue learning advanced concepts associated with over 350 more upper-level vocabulary words necessary for success in all high school writing and literature courses, Advanced Placement (AP) English Language courses, and college-level writing. Coursework will be focused on the critical thinking and writing practice needed for your future success, and each week, you'll learn tips and how-to's for learning the words with comprehension and memory, as well as use the words in writing. Because vocabulary is an indicator of success in college *and* for the best communication practices in adult life, if you want to be prepared for college courses and beyond, this course is for you.

[Be sure to sign up for Part One \(Fall semester\) along with this course, for a complete year of writing credit.](#)

### Meet Your Instructors

Click on the links below to view the instructors' biographies.



[Sara Keefe, BA, MA](#)



[Sharon Hamric-Weis, BS, JD](#)



[Maureen Ryan, BA](#)

### LIVE Course Times Offered

Click on a day and time below to register for the course.

**Mondays, 1:00 PM ET** (Hamric-Weis)

**Tuesdays, 10:00 AM ET** (Ryan)

**Wednesdays, 11:30 AM ET** (Ryan)

**Wednesdays, 2:30 PM ET** (Keefe)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time, above.

**Registration will open soon!**

# High School Writing Foundations (11 Series)

## Fiction Writing Track for 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

### LIVE for Fall Semester 2025



### Fiction Writing, Part One (HS 11-123)

“What makes great fiction? And how can I use fiction writing to make all of my writing dynamic, interesting, and strong?” In this course (the first of two successive courses), you’ll understand what makes excellent fiction writing and hone your writing skills as you write your own story using the elements and writing techniques of excellent storytelling.

Whether you want to write a novel or want to be a dynamic, successful writer in all that you do, learning great plot and structure, description and setting, and characters and dialogue skills will allow you to write exceptionally well, raise your written communication skills, become skilled in the elements of literary analysis, and be fully prepared for college and beyond. Learn skills, be creative, and enjoy writing!

**Be sure to sign up for Part Two (Spring semester) along with this course, for a complete year of writing credit.**

### Course Details

#### Suggested Credit

Take 11-123 (Fall) & 11-457 (Spring) to gain one (1) full year of writing credit.

#### Total Classes: 12

**Prerequisites** are 9-1 & 9-2 courses via LIVE or Unlimited Access

**Course materials** are provided; access to Word 2007 or a newer version is required.

**Homework** is approximately three (3) to four (4) hours/week.

### Meet Your Instructors

Click on the links below to view the instructor's biography.



**Cherise Papa, BA**



**Erin M. Brown, MA, MFA**  
AWA Senior Director

### LIVE Course Times Offered

Click on a day and time below to register for the course.

**Mondays, 4:00 PM ET** (Brown)

**Thursdays, 1:00 PM ET** (Papa)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time above.

### LIVE for Spring Semester 2026

11-457



### Fiction Writing, Part Two (HS 11-457)

“What makes great fiction? And how can I use fiction writing to make all of my writing dynamic, interesting, and strong?” In this course (the second of two successive courses), you’ll learn what makes excellent fiction writing and hone your writing skills through the elements and writing techniques of writing an excellent story.

Whether you want to write a novel or want to be a dynamic, successful writer in all that you do, learning the elements of theme, writing style, point of view, creating conflict, and “what makes a short story great” allows you to write exceptionally well, raise your written communication skills, become skilled in the elements of literary analysis, and be fully prepared for college and beyond.

**Be sure to sign up for Part One (Fall semester) along with this course, for a complete year of writing credit.**

### Course Details

#### Suggested Credit

Take 11-123 & 11-457 to gain one (1) full year of writing credit.

**Prerequisites** are 9-1 & 9-2 courses via LIVE or Unlimited Access

**Course materials** are provided; access to Word 2007 or a newer version is required.

**Homework** is approximately three (3) to four (4) hours/week.

### Meet Your Instructors

*Click on the links below to view the instructor's biography.*



**Cherise Papa, BA**



**Erin M. Brown, MA, MFA**  
AWA Senior Director

### LIVE Course Times Offered

*Click on a day and time below to register for the course.*

**Mondays, 4:00 PM ET** (Brown)

**Thursdays, 1:00 PM ET** (Papa)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time above.

# High School Writing Foundations (12 Series)

For 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

**LIVE for Fall Semester 2025**

**12-1**



Advanced Rhetoric & Writing 1: Rhetoric, Figures of Speech, Essays, & Papers

## ADVANCED RHETORIC AND WRITING 1:

### Rhetoric, Figures of Speech,

### Essays, & Papers

(HS 12-1)

Give your teen the advanced skills to make writing strong and clear. In this course, your student learns foundational college writing skills, including in-depth use of the nine basic forms of rhetoric (rhetorical modes); identifying and using major rhetorical strategies and figures of speech; and pre-writing, drafting, and editing a comparison and contrast paper. Students also use advanced writing methods for a paper's hook, thesis, introduction, body, conclusion, and key rewriting skills with specific, individual feedback from the instructor. Vocabulary related to upper-level writing is introduced and integrated into the learning. Specific class time will be used to show how to edit and revise upper-level work. This course's content is a prerequisite for many colleges for college-bound students.

**Be sure to sign up for Part Two of the 12 Series (Spring semester) for a complete year of writing credit.**

## Course Details

### Suggested Credit

Take 12-1 (Fall) & 12-2 (Spring) to gain one (1) year of writing credit.

### Total Classes: 10

**Prerequisites are** 9-1, 9-2, 9-3, & 9-4 courses via LIVE or Unlimited Access

**Course Materials** *Simplified Writing 101: Top Secrets for College Success*, by Erin Brown Conroy; requires access to Word 2007 or newer version.

**Homework** is approximately four (4) to five (5) hours/week.

## Meet Your Instructors

Click on the links below to view the instructors' biographies.



**Coming soon!**



**Sharon Hamric-Weis, BS, JD**



**Maureen Ryan, BA**

## LIVE Course Times Offered

Click on a day and time below to register for the course.

**Mondays, 10:00 AM ET** (Ryan)

**Wednesdays, 11:30 AM ET** (Coming soon!)

**Thursdays, 10:00 AM ET** (Hamric-Weis)

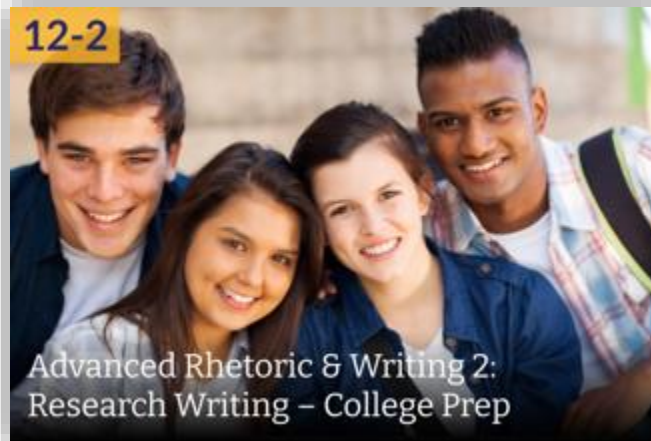
**Fridays, 11:30 AM ET** (Hamric-Weis)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time, above.

# High School Writing Foundations (12 Series)

For 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

## LIVE for Spring Semester 2026



### ADVANCED RHETORIC AND WRITING 2: Rhetoric, Figures of Speech, Essays, & Papers (HS 12-2)

Would you like to be completely prepared for college writing? When you take this college prep course, you'll learn advanced research and writing techniques for argumentative research writing, how to craft an advanced research paper, and understanding style guides (APA, CMS/Turabian, MLA, AP), and become comfortable with the writing skills you'll use in college-level writing. A bibliography and research paper will be written during the course, and students will learn how to cite sources, use advanced methods of outlining, and master revising, editing, and final draft completion for upper-level academic papers.

**Be sure to sign up for Part One of the 12 Series (Spring semester) along with this course, for a complete year of writing credit.**

### Course Details

#### Suggested Credit

Take 12-1 (Fall) & 12-2 (Spring) to gain one (1) year of writing credit.

#### Total Classes: 10

**Prerequisites** are 9-1, 9-2, 9-3, & 9-4 courses via LIVE or Unlimited Access

**Course Materials** [Simplified Writing 101: Top Secrets for College Success](#), by Erin Brown Conroy; requires access to Word 2007 or newer version.

**Homework** is approximately four (4) to five (5) hours/week.

### Meet Your Instructors

Click on the links below to view the instructors' biographies.



Coming soon!



[Sharon Hamric-Weis, BS, JD](#)



[Maureen Ryan, BA](#)

### LIVE Course Times Offered

Click on a day and time below to register for the course.

[Mondays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Ryan)

[Wednesdays, 11:30 AM ET](#) (Coming soon!)

[Thursdays, 10:00 AM ET](#) (Hamric-Weis)

[Fridays, 11:30 AM ET](#) (Hamric-Weis)

For exact course dates, click on a day and time, above.



## High School Fiction, Creative, & Business Writing

LIVE and RECORDED Courses  
2025-2026

**Did you know that AWA's Fiction Writing program is the largest and most complete faith-based Creative and Fiction Writing program in the world?!** Here, your student can increase both creative expression and the advanced critical thinking that is necessary to master all writing and more! With these courses, students dive into every element of literary analysis, learn how to expand ideas, and get excited about writing. Whether you want to increase your student's enjoyment of writing, give your student a top-tier, transferable skill, or give your creative writer the tools to succeed, this is the place to be.

For easy identification, LIVE Fall courses are marked with a blue bar at the top of the page, and Spring courses are marked with a gold bar. Each course description links directly to your sign-up page. Turn the page now to find your courses.

# Fiction & Creative Writing

## LIVE Course for 8<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

**LIVE for Fall Semester 2025**

**HS X-23**



Writing for Video Production, Media, and More, Part One: Secrets of Videography and Writing to Help You Become a Great Visual Communicator

### Creative Writing

#### **Writing for Video Production, Media, and More, Part One: Secret of Videography and Writing to Help You Become a Great Visual Communicator (HS X-23)**

Are you interested in what makes a great vlog, podcast, or even social media post? Do you see yourself using writing creatively along with video production to change hearts and minds for good? Do you long to make a difference and inspire others through creativity? If so, then this course is for you!

Here, you'll learn how videography and writing work together to tell stories, motivate people to action, and inspire hearts. From interviews to creative storytelling, you'll learn what goes into creating videos; the processes and equipment in videography and writing; different purposes and styles of video communication; writing scripts for your purpose and audience; and how to integrate narrative storytelling into video projects that grab the viewer's attention. This course will allow you to raise your written communication skills, become skilled in the elements of visual communication, and gain exceptional, real-world skills for college and beyond. **This 10-week course is offered in the Fall.**

### Course Details

#### **Suggested Credit**

Sign up for this course and the companion course, [Writing for Video Production, Media, and More, Part Two: Creating a Video Production Project](#) (HS X-24), offered in the Spring, for a combined 20 weeks of writing credit.

#### **Total Classes: 10**

#### **No prerequisite**

**Course materials** are provided; access to Word 2007 or a newer version is required.

**Homework** is approximately two (2) to three (3) hours/week.

### Meet Your Instructor

Click on the links below to view the instructor's biography.



**Doug Hughes, MA**

### LIVE Course Time Offered

Click on the day and time below to register for the course.

**Thursdays, 5:30 PM ET**

For exact course dates and cost, click on the day and time, above.

This fun and engaging entry-level high school fiction course can be taken at the same time as any other writing course. Also, this course is not a replacement for any of the AWA foundational writing courses but instead is an "above-and-beyond" course.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the AWA foundational writing courses

# Fiction & Creative Writing

## LIVE Course for 8<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

### LIVE for Spring Semester 2026



## Course Details

### Suggested Credit

Sign up for this course and the previous course, [Writing for Video Production, Media, and More, Part One: Secret of Videography and Writing to Help You Become a Great Visual Communicator](#) (HS X-23), offered in the Fall, for a combined 20 weeks of writing credit.

### Total Classes: 10

### No prerequisite

**Course materials** are provided; access to Word 2007 or a newer version is required.

**Homework** is approximately two (2) to three (3) hours/week.

## Meet Your Instructor

Click on the links below to view the instructor's biography.



**Doug Hughes, MA**

## Creative Writing

### Writing for Video Production, Media, and More, Part Two: Creating a Video Production Project (HS X-24)

Now that you've taken Part One of the series, it's time to dig in and create collaboratively with video production to change hearts and minds for good!

Here, you'll learn more about the foundational elements of writing for a video "story" (including the Three Act Structure, story arc, and more); "The Five-Shot Film" (what it is and how to use it); sound effects and music; your story's supporting elements (props, sound, lighting, and more); understanding and using camera angles, movements, and shots; how to collaborate in a creative team to make a cohesive video story; video editing; post-production; and how to engage in positive, constructive feedback in any environment. This course will allow you to raise your written communication skills, become skilled in the elements of visual communication, and gain exceptional, real-world skills for college and beyond.

**This 10-week course is offered in the Fall.**

## LIVE Course Time Offered

Click on the day and time below to register for the course.

### Thursdays, 5:30 PM ET

For exact course dates and cost, click on the day and time, above.

**Registration will open soon!**

This fun and engaging entry-level high school fiction course can be taken at the same time as any other writing course. Also, this course is not a replacement for any of the AWA foundational writing courses but instead is an "above-and-beyond" course.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the AWA foundational writing courses

# Fiction, Creative, and Business Writing

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## RECORDED Courses for 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

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**Creative Writing** courses are designed for any 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade student who wants to increase his or her writing skills while cultivating a love of creative composition. Students hone their skills by diving into various creative writing processes, styles, genres, mediums, and expressions. The following writing courses can be taken alongside any Aquinas Writing Advantage course. While not a replacement for any foundational writing courses, these courses offer a fun and engaging way to learn creative writing. [Click on the course photo for more information and to access this recorded course.](#)



### **Writing for Video Production, Media, and More, Part One: Secrets of Videography and Writing to Help You Become a Great Visual Communicator (X-23) RECORDED Course**

If you're interested in the exciting world of creating videos and storytelling that informs, inspires, and changes minds, then this videography and writing course is for you! Learn all that goes into production, writing, and expressing yourself in a powerful visual medium.



### **Writing for Video Production, Media, and More, Part Two: Creating a Video Production Project (X-24) RECORDED Course – Coming Soon!**

It's time to create a video story within a collaborative learning team! Dig into production, writing, and expressing yourself in a powerful visual medium with a semester-long project focusing on illustrating a Bible verse or passage. This course furthers your practical knowledge of excellent writing, storytelling, interpersonal communication skills, and core competencies.

**Business Writing** courses are designed as both Writing Excellence courses (additional courses for additional skills) or as an alternate track to the 11-Series Creative Writing and Literary Form/Fiction Writing courses during the 11<sup>th</sup>-grade year. These courses give your student the edge for job preparation and professional writing skills. [Click on the course photo for more information and to access this recorded course.](#)

### **Business Writing 1: Professional Business Writing Essentials (HS 11-9) RECORDED Course**

Learn how to present yourself professionally in multiple areas of writing! Because business writing is distinctive from academic or creative writing, writing powerfully in your dealings with others in any organization, mastering business writing is essential. In this course, you'll write letters and professional correspondence, create a professional resume, and write pieces critical to getting a job. Whether you plan on entering college, getting a job right out of high school, or building your own business as an entrepreneur right now, this course is for you.



### **Business Writing 2: Foundations of Journalism (HS 11-10) RECORDED Course**

If you want to get all the must-have foundational knowledge about journalism and get hands-on writing experience, this course is for you! Introducing journalism in a sturdy overview, you'll understand and practice writing skills in the genre of reportive writing as a journalist. Whether you're interested in learning about how the news that you read is created, or you're considering becoming a writer of news stories yourself – look over the course outline below. If you see yourself enjoying all that's here, sign up for this course today.



# More Fiction & Creative Writing!

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## RECORDED Courses for 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

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**Developing Characters** courses are designed for the 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade student who wants to create compelling characters in any genre. While **not a replacement** for any foundational writing courses, these 4-week elective courses can be taken alongside any writing course and combined for 12 weeks of writing credit as a fun and engaging way to learn writing skills!

[Click on the course photo for more information and to access this recorded course.](#)

### Developing Characters Series

#### **Developing Characters 1: Writing Villains, Antagonists, and Bad Guys from a Faith-Based Perspective (X-13) *RECORDED Course***

Learn the craft of story writing with villains, antagonists, and “bad guys.” Every great story has a “bad guy”; using the elements of great storytelling, we’ll craft unique characters and learn how to create tension and stakes with opposing forces. We’ll discuss how to build a compelling character arc with conflict and reader engagement while understanding the great potential of using strong opposing characters to help our protagonists grow. We’ll also dive into the types of “bad guys,” what drives an antagonist, and how a well-formed villain can actually bring out the best in a story.



#### **Developing Characters 2: Writing Characters with Superpowers (HS X-14) *RECORDED Course***

Learn the craft of writing characters with superpowers and magical abilities. Superheroes and characters with powers have been a popular speculative fiction category with fame that comes through movies in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU), DC movies, comic books, magical stories in Middle Earth, and more! What makes a great Superman, Ironman, Gandalf, Animorph, or Spiderman? Using the elements of great storytelling, we’ll craft unique characters and learn how to create superheroes that make us cheer. We’ll discuss what makes a superhero, how to build a compelling character arc, and how to craft a memorable superhero in our story.



#### **Developing Characters 3: Writing Kings, Queens, Courts, and Jesters (HS X-15) *RECORDED Course – Coming Soon!***

Learn the craft of writing royal characters, including kings, queens, princes and princesses, dukes and duchesses, and jesters! Characters of medieval royalty have been popular in fantasy fiction since their existence in our history—and there is a reason! In this course, we’ll explore the qualities of and fascination with characters of the courts. Using the elements of great storytelling, we’ll craft unique characters and learn how to create royalty that tugs at our hearts, stirs our anger, makes us laugh, and inspires us to live with honor and passion.



#### **Developing Characters 4: Friends, Buddies, and Teammates – Oh My! (HS X-16) *RECORDED Course – Coming Soon!***

Learn the craft of writing characters who are friends, family, teammates, sidekicks, buddies, and confidants—all people we love. And let’s not forget the close companionship of the human-animal connection! Honorable friendships and tight alliances, both human and animal, make for excellent and powerful stories. Adding characters to our story who support our heroes with emotions and empathy creates a new level of commitment and loyalty. But perhaps most importantly, especially as people of faith, we are inspired by such characters. You’ll hone your creativity, improve your writing skills, and learn how to communicate the emotions of powerful human bonds in a compelling and transformative way.





# Advanced Fiction Writing

RECORDED Courses

2025-2026

**AWA's Advanced Fiction Writing courses are some of the most complete, mastery-level creative writing courses for teens in the world.** Here, your student can increase creative expression and the advanced critical thinking that is necessary for all advanced areas of study. Learning from published authors, professional editors, and award-winning videography storytellers, your student can explore a creative career or gain specialized skills that college application readers love to see. Yes, students of these courses have gone on to become published authors!

**In this section, you'll find an Overview page followed by specific course pages.** All advanced recorded courses can begin at any time. Turn the page now to find your courses.

# Advanced Fiction Writing: An Overview

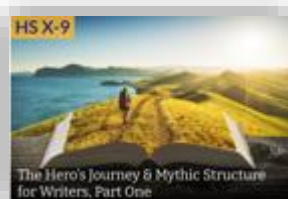
## RECORDED Courses for High School Students

**Advanced Fiction Writing** courses give your student “the edge” for college-level writing success. Future authors and poets can gain the professional-level knowledge needed to succeed in the published world. *A number of students who have taken the advanced courses are now published writers and authors.* [Click on the course photo for more information and to access this recorded course.](#)



### **Advanced Fiction Writing: Authoring a Book, Part One & Part Two (HS 11-6 & HS 11-8) RECORDED Courses**

Do you want to publish a book? Get your need-to-know essentials here, for how to be an author as you learn what professional authors do every day, what goes into a manuscript, how to write a query letter, what you need to know about agents and publishers, and more. Learn how to get your work noticed by perfecting your Query Letter and synopsis with this recorded workshop. You will also get what you need to be ready to submit your book to an agent or publisher now.



### **Advanced Fiction Writing: The Hero's Journey & Mythic Structure for Writers, Part One & Part Two (HS X-9 & HS X-10) RECORDED Courses**

Learn advanced story writing structure and the steps of putting a story together—and get to know all of the major character archetypes, such as the hero, the mentor, the gatekeeper, the herald, and more! Find out what goes into any story for future college literature class must-haves—and get the know-how to author your own story.



### **Advanced Fiction Writing: Screenwriting, Part One & Part Two (HS X-11 & HS X-12) RECORDED Courses**

In this hands-on writing course, you will practice your advanced writing skills and learn how to design stories for film—including how to build characters, write dialogue, learn what makes a good movie, and craft scenes that make sense and engage the viewer. This course is for all writers who want advanced writing skills, especially for those who want to explore writing as a part—or full-time career.



### **Advanced Fiction Writing: Write Your Own Science Fiction/Fantasy Short Story (HS X-19) RECORDED Course**

Imagine, design, outline, and finish your own science fiction or fantasy short story in this how-to high-interest writing course -- and grow your writing skills with a dynamic, fun adventure to make writing engaging and exciting!



## Critical Thinking & Vocabulary and Writing RECORDED Courses 2025-2026

**Critical Thinking and Vocabulary courses give your high school student the must-have skills to master the most important tools of writing**—including understanding words and their meaning, growing your student's "word bank," and increasing your student's ability to think, ideate, and craft ideas more fully and clearly.

**All good writing hinges on your student's ability to think clearly and with ease, with powerful word choice.** That's why the following courses help every single high school student excel. Each course description contains links directly to your sign-up page. Turn the page now to find your courses.

### Recorded Course – Access Any Time!



### Course Details

#### Suggested Credit:

For a full year's credit for critical thinking, take *Word Mastery Skill Building 5* (one semester) with *Leadership & Interpersonal Communication* and *How to Be an Excellent Student* (one semester)

#### Total Classes: 12/course

#### No prerequisites

**Course Materials:** [Word Mastery Skill Building, Book 5](#), by Erin M. Brown, MA, MFA; access to Word 2007 or a newer version is required.

**Homework** is approximately two and a half (2.5) hours/week. Additional quizzes for checking understanding are provided in the course.

Students will complete pages in the *Word Mastery Skill Building* book, which has homework divided over five (5) days, watch the recorded lesson, and take a quiz weekly.

### Recorded Course Access

*This course is recorded and can be accessed at any time.*

#### Critical Thinking & Vocabulary: **Word Mastery Skill Building 5: Professional Level (HS WM-5)**

Join this powerful 12-week course that guides you through ultimate vocabulary and word mastery to gain smooth, upper-level reading, writing, and speaking! By taking a few moments each day, watching the recording for deeper learning, and taking the quiz, you'll learn some of the most important foundations in all of writing—including Greek and Latin roots, prefixes, homonyms, homophones, easily confused words (special word distinctions), sentence writing for comprehension, and more! This course is the fastest, easiest way to raise your word mastery, writing, and communication skills.

### Meet Your Instructor

*This recorded course is taught by Mrs. Aubrey Heki. Click on the link below to view the instructor's biography.*



**AUBREY HEKI, BA**



## Study Skills, Leadership, & Interpersonal Communication LIVE Courses 2025-2026

**Good writing is intertwined with good study and communication skills**, which is why the following courses are recommended for all high school students. Read through the following course descriptions, and see how the courses here will help your student to succeed in high school.

**In this section, you'll find specific course pages.** Courses are LIVE and recorded. LIVE Fall courses are marked with a blue bar at the top of the page, while Spring courses are marked with a gold bar. Each course description links directly to your sign-up page. Turn the page now to find your courses.

# Study Skills: How to be an Excellent Student

LIVE Course for 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grades

**LIVE for Fall Semester 2025**



## Course Details

**Suggested Credit:** One-third (1/3) of one semester credit. Add the credits of this four-week course to any six- or eight-week course for a full semester's credit.

**Total Classes: 4**

**Credit Suggestion:** Combine with *Leadership & Interpersonal Communication*, offered in the Spring.

**No Prerequisite**

**Course Materials** are provided; requires access to Word 2007 or newer version.

**Homework** is approximately two (2) hours/week.

## How to be an Excellent Student:

*Note Taking, Test Taking, and How to Get an A*

Get the skills to become strong, confident, and able to study for any high school level course with success! This course is a must-have for students who want to make learning and test taking the easiest (and most successful) that it can be. You'll learn the skills of active listening and active reading (what they are and how they work for you), note taking and annotation (for any "live" or online course or learning situation), critical reading skills for comprehension (to remember what you've read faster and with easier recall), test-taking skills (how to prepare for tests and what to do during tests), and more. You'll use these skills in high school, college, and beyond. Be prepared for the future and do well in your coursework today when you take this course! [Sign up for the Leadership & Interpersonal Communication course \(Spring semester\) along with this course to continue learning communications, writing, and excellent student skills that can put your student ahead.](#)

## Meet Your Instructor

Click on the link below to view the instructor's biography.



**Bonnie Donlon, BA**

## LIVE Course Time Offered

Click on the day and time below to register for the course.

**Fridays, 11:30 AM ET**

*This is a powerful, four-week "short course" offered in September. For exact course dates, click the day and time above.*

### LIVE for Spring Semester 2026



### Course Details

**Suggested Credit:** One-half (1/2) of a semester's credit for Communications or Life Skills. Add the credits of this 6-week course to any six- or eight-week course for a full semester's credit.

**Total Classes: 6**

**Credit Suggestion:** Combine with *How to be an Excellent Student*, offered in the Fall.

**No Prerequisite**

**Course Materials** are provided; requires access to Word 2007 or newer version.

**Homework** is approximately two (2) to four (4) hours/week.

### Leadership & Interpersonal Communication

"What is leadership and interpersonal communication, and what does it have to do with my future?" This essential course guides you through the foundational and critical leadership and communication skills that all students need to succeed, including managing yourself well with emotional intelligence, conflict management, body language, speaking skills, and more to become a person of positive influence. Special attention is given to integrating our faith into leadership and personal communication, as well as practical action steps for building healthy relationships and living our faith to positively influence others in our community and world. This course draws from university-level leadership and interpersonal communications, to guide each student into good personal leadership practices and communication that is easy to understand, practical, and fun. Join this course if you want to be confident and able to connect with others in a positive way – and have the skills to build success for your future!

### Meet Your Instructor

Click on the link below to view the instructor's biography.



**Rebekah Sotillo**

### LIVE Course Time Offered

Click on the day and time below to register for the course.

#### Thursdays, 2:30 PM ET

This is a 6-week course offered in Jan. – Feb. For exact course dates, click on the day and time, above.



## High School Spelling

RECORDED Course  
2025-2026

**Spelling mastery gives your high school student the ability to write with confidence.** Many students struggle with spelling, which holds them back from writing with certainty, self-reliance, boldness, and *enjoyment*. And often, spelling instruction today is steeped in outdated methods that actually hinder a mastery of spelling. But your student doesn't have to struggle.

**In this section, you'll find information on the Spelling Bootcamp course,** a recorded "short course" that can show your student a new, successful way to approach spelling that can give your student new-found success. Using sound principles of speech and language pathology, a research-based phonemic approach, new critical thinking, and gamification that is (proven to increase memory, your high school student will learn how to think differently about spelling – making spelling easier and more enjoyable. Turn the page now to find your course.

# High School Spelling

RECORDED Course for 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grades

## Recorded Course – Access Any Time!

**If you finally want to make spelling easier and faster, then this course is for you.**

Learn new ways to simplify spelling, make remembering spelling uncomplicated, discover games that make spelling downright fun, and learn a whole new way of thinking about spelling that turns it into something you don't have to worry about.



### Course Details

#### **Suggested Credit:**

One-third (1/3) semester's credit for high school Language Arts; one-half (1/2) semester's credit if the parent does more with the student/the student repeats the "games."

#### **Total Classes: 4**

#### **No prerequisites**

**Course Materials:** All learning materials for the course are provided FREE by the instructor.

Students should be prepared with two (2) packs of 3x5 cards, a black marker, an 8 ½ x 11 notebook, and a highlighter.

**Homework** is approximately one hour of homework between classes.

Homework includes creating fun learning materials, playing spelling games, and practicing the ideas presented in the course.

#### **Spelling:**

### **High School Spelling Bootcamp**

Do you wish writing and reading was faster for you? Do you ever struggle with remembering how to spell a word, or is spelling simply a challenge?

If you want to find out what's going not only wrong but also just make spelling easier, join Erin M. Brown, MA, MFA, the Creator/Director of *True North Reading: The Complete Mastery Reading & Spelling Program* and the Aquinas Writing Advantage writing program, to get a new and powerful approach to spelling—with the top how-to skills and easy tips (based on research and a powerful, successful approach) that will make spelling *much* easier.

Revolutionize the way you "do" spelling, understand what's missing, and find out how to remember the spelling of words much faster.

***This course is available as a recorded course for the 2025-2026 school year.***

### Meet Your Instructor

Click on the link below to view the instructor's biography.



**Erin M. Brown, MA, MFA**  
AWA Senior Director



## We're so glad you're here!

If you have any questions about course registration, please reach out to [info@homeschoolconnections.com](mailto:info@homeschoolconnections.com) or call Homeschool Connections' "Main Office" at 888-372-4757.

If you have any questions about the AWA courses, feel free to reach out to us at any time:

**Erin M. Brown, Creator/Director:** [ebconroy@homeschoolconnections.com](mailto:ebconroy@homeschoolconnections.com)

**Aubrey Heki, Managing Director:** [aheki@homeschoolconnections.com](mailto:aheki@homeschoolconnections.com)

To read more about these courses and the Aquinas Writing Advantage program, visit <https://awa.homeschoolconnections.com>.

We hope to see you in the writing courses soon!

May God Bless You in your Homeschooling Journey,

Erin & Aubrey