

REVISED AP Language Summer 2008 Reading Assignment

Texts (read the first three, and then choose one):

- *1984* by George Orwell
- *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley
- *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood
- And choose one of the following
 - *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro
 - *Uglies* by Scott Westerfeld
 - *Animal Farm* by George Orwell
 - *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare

**Previous generations of students have enjoyed these books, and I hope that you will also. These books may speak to our times . . . even the two written fifty or more years ago. They will make for engaging discussion.

Accountability Check

We will have a test over these books during the first week of the semester. The test will show two quotations from each book. You will be asked to select one of the quotations and to write a paragraph or two to explain how the quote demonstrates a key idea that is developed in the book. You will also have several quotations to identify to prove your careful reading.

Summer Writing **REVISED EXPLANATION OF TOPIC BELOW**

Each of these books portrays a struggle between individual and human rights. Which rights do you think are most important? Write an essay in which you argue for why these rights should be most important. Use examples from each of the books to prove your point.

Your essay should be at least 500 words and should be neatly typed. It must be entirely your original work to receive credit. Please document any evidence by identifying the author and page number in parentheses after your quote or paraphrase.

Due: August 14, 2008

Benefits of the Essay:

- serves as the basis for a research project that you will complete in the first two weeks of the semester
- provides you with feedback on your writing before the first graded paper
- earns you your first A on an essay in this class!

Questions? See Dr. Cassell in room 321 before school is out, or email her at ccassell@csdecatour.net.

REVISED TOPIC WITH GREATER EXPLANATION

Boy, I *really* didn't phrase that the way I meant to. No wonder several of you are confused, and I am so sorry! Here's hoping that a restful summer has me back on track....

Let me try again.

Each of the books sets up a divide between the needs of the individual and of society. The nature of society is to require some conformity. The nature of the individual requires her/him not to conform completely (hence the word *individual*). Our books show different fictional societies that offer some level of human rights (to life sustenance, absence of abuse, etc.) and other levels of individual's rights (to choice, free will, free thought, etc.).

For example, in *Brave New World*, the citizens have all their physical needs met, and, to an extent, their emotional needs are satisfied via soma and indoctrination. John Savage, however, shows that the need to be an individual--for him at least--is stronger than his desire for comfort or his wish to avoid persecution. For him, the right to individualism is more valuable than the right to humane treatment. *1984* is an example of a book in which neither individual nor human rights seem to exist... or do they? Winston has a good try at exploring his individuality. Perhaps, then, the right to individuality is something that the individual must claim--the corporation/society may not give it.

In the books, deviation from society's expectations result in severe consequence--or at least we think the deviants will be punished even if we do not see them rebel. The severity of the consequence demonstrates a world in which the individual does not have a right to exist--so, maybe by removing the consequence society does allow right to individualism.

To write your essay, you might consider to what extent the society of each book is humane to its citizens and to what extent individualism is desirable.

Topic Question: Which is the greater need: to be (live, think, do) an individual or to be humanely treated?

Use the examples of your four books to evaluate whether one's need to be an individual or one's need for humane treatment dominates. You likely will find that

you use some examples to support your belief and other examples to demonstrate what you do not believe is true.

Next time I won't try to fit it all onto one page....