

Cornelia Connelly School

Summer Reading and Assignment

ENGLISH IV and AP ENGLISH

Texts: *1984* by George Orwell
Brave New World by Aldous Huxley
“Harrison Bergeron” by Kurt Vonnegut

Brave New World and Brave New World Revisited by Aldous Huxley (AP only)
We by Eugene Zamyatin (AP only)

English IV students must read *1984* and *Brave New World*, as well as the short story “Harrison Bergeron” (which may be found online at <http://instruct.westvalley.edu/lafave/hb.html>, at http://cjgrads.org/legal/harrison_bergeron.htm, or just type in “Harrison Bergeron” and look for a site that gives you the text of the story; it may also be found in Kurt Vonnegut’s *Welcome to the Monkey House*, New York: Doubleday/Bantam, 1988).

AP English students must read the above works, as well as Huxley’s *Brave New World Revisited* and *We* by Eugene Zamyatin.

ENGLISH IV

Journal

Read each of the works carefully; take notes to help you remember what is going on, especially if you do some of the reading early in the summer. Keep track of the characters and what you think of them, jot down your thoughts about what is going on, and record any quotations that strike you as important. Spend some time reflecting about the works—how do they make you feel? What troubles you about them? What connections do you see with today’s society? Such reflections will help you in class discussions when the semester begins, with essays that you will be writing about the works, and with a number of exams. Don’t assume that you will remember the details of the books by the time school starts—write them down to make life easier for you. Also, as you read, **be sure to record any vocabulary you encounter for which you do not know the meaning; use a good dictionary to learn the meanings and the pronunciation of the words (printed dictionaries are usually more complete than on-line ones, especially for syllabication, pronunciation, and connotation, but if you search carefully, you should be able to find a good on-line source).**

Note: Anti-utopian (or “dystopian”) novels often have vocabulary of their own. Watch for such vocabulary and be sure to record words as you come across them. Check in the back of the novel for an explanation of each word or try to ascertain from context precisely what the words mean. (For such terms, you will obviously not have to concern yourself with syllabication or pronunciation in order to make the words your own, but you must know what they mean to understand the novels.)

All students should be prepared for an exam on the first day of class on specific details of the works assigned. Some of the vocabulary from the novels will appear on the test, so be sure to look up meanings of words you don’t know.

Reading Questions

To help you in understanding the works—and in participating in class discussions during the first week of class—please answer the following questions. Be sure to spend time thinking about the questions before you answer them; trust your own opinions and avoid using outside sources. **Your** thoughts matter—I don't want to read what someone else has already written. Your answers should be typed and are due on the first day of class.

1. What is the state of U.S. society as described in the first paragraph of “Harrison Bergeron”? How has “equality” been achieved?
2. When the framers of the Declaration of Independence stated that “all men are created equal,” what do you think they meant? What does the statement mean to you?
3. What is the one thing that Winston and Julia tell O'Brien they refuse to do?
4. Why must everyone in *Brave New World* consume?
5. Are there any elements of the society in any of these dystopian works apparent in modern times? Explain.
6. Could the totalitarian control of everyday life occur in real life? Why or why not?

College Application Preparation

We will be spending a great deal of time during the first quarter writing college essays, and you will be working with Mrs. Anderson to complete your applications to college. As part of your preparation for those activities, one of your summer assignments is to choose **three** colleges to which you might consider applying:

- the first should be your “dream college,” the one you would most like to attend if everything goes your way;
- the second should be a college that you would really like to attend and to which you know you have a very good chance of being accepted;
- the third should be your “back-up” college, one that you would not mind attending and that has a good program for you if you are not able to attend your 1st and 2nd choices.

For each of your three choices, you must research the college and the program to which you would like to apply. Print out some basic information on each college and the program that most interests you. If the admissions application for 2008 is available, print it and all of the necessary supporting materials as well. After you have done your research, for each of your choices write a 1-paragraph to 1-page explanation of why that college and that program is a good match for you (i.e., why is this your dream college? What does this particular program have to offer you, especially in terms of your career expectations?).

To help you write the college essays that require you to discuss yourself and your achievements (something that students usually find difficult), you will also do preliminary work on your “brag sheet” as part of your summer assignment. This will help you not only complete your college applications and write your college essays, but it will also enable you to assist whomever you ask to write letters of recommendation for you. This is your opportunity to “market” yourself in the best possible way; you can let your recommenders know what you would most like your colleges to know about you. Spend some time reflecting about yourself and your high school career and answer the following questions (be sure to take this seriously and spend sufficient time considering what you want others—especially college admissions officers—to know about you):

1. What type of student are you? What academic settings and assignments do you most enjoy? What subjects interest you the most?
2. How have you challenged yourself in high school? Is your academic record an accurate measure of your ability and potential? If not, what do you consider the best measure of your potential success in college work?

3. Are there any outside circumstances (in your recent experience or background) that have interfered with your academic performance? Have there been fluctuations in your academic record? How would you explain them?
4. In each of the following areas, list the activities in which you have participated in each year of high school. Be as specific as possible, including positions you have held, awards you have won, recognition you have earned, and the number of hours per week and weeks per year you have devoted to each:
 - a. Arts (literary, studio art, drama—including Class Plays—dance, both in and out of school:
 - b. Music (school, private instruction and performance, organizations, recitals, contests):
 - c. Athletics (on- and off-campus, JV & Varsity letters, team sports, private instruction):
 - d. Other activities (JSA, Mock Trial, Yearbook, Close-up, Kairos)

Note: For #4, please answer each question by year, so that you have a diagram of your four years of activities. You may put your answers in chart form or use bullet points, as long as you divide each answer by grade level and make your answers clear and complete.

5. Have you held a job during your four years of high school? Where did you work? What was your specific job? How many hours per week were you employed? What were the dates of your employment?
6. What kind of volunteer work or community service have you done during your four years of high school? (Be sure to include activities both on and off campus, and those with your church or off-campus clubs.)
7. What would you most like a prospective college to know about you? Is there anything that might not show up in the application or that people in general do not know about you that you think they should?

All work should be typed and neatly presented.

Put all of the materials in a folder or a binder separate from your other English work (be sure that everything is attached in some way so that nothing gets lost), preferably with dividers to separate each of your three college choices and your “brag sheet” materials. I will collect your college folders on the first day of class.

If you have questions, feel free to e-mail me at bsteeber@connellyhs.org or celticdreamers@sbcglobal.net during the summer.

AP ENGLISH

Reader’s Response Journal

Read each of the works carefully; take notes in a journal that you will keep all year for just this purpose. Jot down some of your thoughts each time you finish reading--try to anticipate what you think will happen, ask yourself questions about what is happening, make comparisons between the works you are reading or between characters, record significant quotations, ask yourself questions, note significant vocabulary, or record your reactions and reflections. Be honest with yourself and the works you are reading—how do they make you feel? What troubles you about them? What connections do you see with today’s society? Such reflections will help you in class discussions when the semester begins, with essays that you will be writing about the works, and with a number of exams. Don’t assume that you will remember the details of the books by the time school starts—write them down to make life easier for you. Also, as you read, **be sure to record any vocabulary you encounter for which you do not know the meaning; use a good dictionary to learn the meanings and the pronunciation of the words (printed dictionaries are usually more complete than on-line ones, especially for syllabication, pronunciation, and connotation, but if you search carefully, you should be able to find a good on-line source).**

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Your thoughts matter—I don’t want to read what someone else has already written. Include your answers in your reader’s response journal.

1. What are the implications of the opening sentence of “Harrison Bergeron”: “The year was 2081, and everyone was finally equal”? What has happened? What does the elimination of advantages, differences, and competition suggest concerning the nature of changes that have taken place?
2. Is there a hero in *1984*? Does anyone succeed in changing anything in a positive way?
3. How is the society in *We* like the society in *1984*? How is it different?
4. Is the society in *Brave New World* really so bad? Is happiness the worst possible goal for humanity?
5. Who is the hero in *Brave New World*? Explain. Whom or what does he or she change? Who is the main character? How are they different (or are they?)? Explain.
6. In *Brave New World Revisited*, Huxley writes about economic censorship, with the elite of Big Business / Big Government controlling the press. Has such censorship been diluted by the rise of the Internet? On the other hand, in what ways can the Internet pose new threats to our freedom?
7. What elements of human life do authoritarian regimes most have to control? Why?
8. Why are the authorities in the societies depicted in these works never entirely successful in achieving total control? What works against them?
9. Could such extreme totalitarian control of everyday life occur in real life? Why or why not?
10. What is the primary purpose of dystopian (or anti-utopian) literature? How do the authors of such literature achieve their aims?

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