

## AP UNITED STATES HISTORY SUMMER ASSIGNMENT, 2009-2010

*First report due:*

*Monday, September 7, 2009*

*Second report & reading quizzes:*

*Friday, September 11, 2009*

You will read each of the 2 books listed below and view each of the 5 movies specified on page 2.

1. For one book and one movie, you will submit a 2-3 page report.
2. You will take an objective question test on both books and all 5 movies (\*September 11<sup>th</sup>\*).

### **I. General Guidelines for Reports**

1. Length: 2-3 pages typed; double-spaced for each report (*You will not get full credit if it is handwritten*).
2. Cover Page: Include the following data:
  - Name, class, and date.
  - For books: Title, author, publisher, date published. Date and place of publication. (*Original date of publication must be included*)
  - For movies: Title, author, director, production company (“Touchstone”, “Miramax”, etc.), date.
3. Assignment Value: Each report will be counted as two full exams - 400 points total. Please note that since these reports are being written in English, I will expect standard and correct grammar, punctuation, etc.. Presentation does count.
  - a. The reading quizzes will count for another full test (200 points)

### **II. Format of the Report**

1. Present a brief summary of the book/movie. (½ page)
2. Explain how the book/movie reflected the period of history in which it takes place—for example, what did you learn about transportation, dress, social manners and rules, food, education, economic opportunities, prejudice, etc. (½ - 1 page)
3. Imagine you are a MINOR character in the book/movie, reacting to the major character, or person, in the book/movie. How did you feel about the major character person, and why? (½ page) Do **NOT** write from the perspective of a generic minor character; pick a minor character who actually appears in the book or film and discuss the main character as that minor character sees him or her. In other words, try to “get inside the head” of a specific minor character as you describe a main character. FIRST PERSON is not required, but **STRONGLY SUGGESTED** – it’s much easier.
4. Describe a critical decision made in the book/movie, and the circumstances in which it was made. What would you have advised the person to do, and how would it have changed the outcome of the story/person’s life? (½ page)
5. Present your evaluation of the book/movie, citing specific details and reasons for your evaluation. (½ - 1 page)

### **III. Rationale - Why These Particular Works**

The following books were selected as important works of American fiction that are rarely read in English class. Similarly, the films we have chosen are classic pieces of American culture that few young people have seen. These may or may not be “the best” or “the most important” books and films in American history and literature, but they are works which instruct and inform— works which no literate, educated American should miss. All 7 works will be referred to specifically in class at various times during the year. (Several other “significant” works have been or will be covered in English class.)

**Books – one novel, one play. Read both.**

- Mark Twain *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court (1889)*
- Jerome Lawrence & Robert Edwin Lee *Inherit the Wind (1955)*

**Movies – Watch all 5 films.**

*(Available @ Peninsula Library, Blockbuster, Hollywood, or through me during Summer School; PPL actually plans a screening of each film at some point during the summer.)*

- "Gone with the Wind" (1939: Clark Gable, Vivian Leigh, et. al)
- "A Tree Grows In Brooklyn" (1945: PeggyAnn Garner, James Dunn, et. al)
- "It's a Wonderful Life" (1946: James Stewart, Donna Reed, et. al)
- "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" (1939: James Stewart, Jean Arthur, et. al)
- "The Best Years of Our Lives" (1946: Frederic March, Myrna Loy, et. al)

**Enjoy your summer!!** *(Really, these are wonderful, interesting works.)*

Regards,

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