

May, 2014

David Hood  
English 12AP Teacher  
Eastern Alamance High School  
4040 Mebane Rogers Road  
Mebane, NC 27302

Dear 2014/2015 English 12AP student:

I am glad that you have registered for English 12AP. The required summer reading for the course is: Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and Orwell's *1984*. You have plenty of time to complete this part of the summer work required for the course. I will give a detailed test on these two novels during the first week of the class. The score you earn on this test will count a significant portion of your grade for the first nine weeks.

In addition to the test, you are required to write a critical analysis on one of the two novels. A critical analysis of literature is not a book report; rather, it is an in-depth view of some aspect of a literary work such as the author's theme, style of writing, techniques of characterization, etc. You can find numerous good examples of literary essays posted on my pages as a part of the school website; look under *Writing by Students* in the bar on the left of my opening web page. This paper is due on the first day of class. It should be typed in a 12 point serif font such as Times New Roman. It should be double spaced with one inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right). The minimum length for the paper is 750 words, but most good papers are longer than this. Use the Modern Language Association's (MLA) format to document the paper. A minimum of two sources are required. The first is the primary source, the novel itself. The second is a critical source by an expert writing about the novel. Critical reading about the novel is a part of this assignment. This means that you must have a Works Cited page for the paper listing your sources and citations documenting the page numbers of quotes and ideas used.

The final part of your summer work is to illustrate two scenes from your reading (one from each novel). Buy a 22 X 28 inch poster board and cut it in two. This will give you two 14 X 22 inch poster boards which is the required size. Each illustration should contain the name of the work (*Tess* will do for Hardy's novel) and your original artwork. Drawings, paintings, collages, abstract representations, etc. are acceptable as long as they are creative and your own work. Your work will decorate the walls of the classroom.

Summer Assignments in brief:

1. Read *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *1984* and be prepared to take a detailed test on the material during the first week of school.
2. Write a critical analysis on one of the two novels following the format listed above.
3. Illustrate two scenes, one from each novel.

I will post a copy of this letter on my pages in the school website. At a later date closer to the start of school, I will also post a syllabus for the first unit of study. Remember, you can also find examples of literary essays there as well.

I hope you find the two novels selected for summer reading interesting. Both novels focus on the relationship of individuals to the societies in which they live. Orwell's *1984*, written in 1949, is a view of Britain as a totalitarian state. Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, written in 1891, is in part a critical commentary on Victorian England at the turn of the century. One novel has a male protagonist; the other, a female. *1984* looks forward to a horrible future which England historically avoided. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* forces the reader to look back at a social system which many see as being terribly repressive and hypocritical. The two novels were chosen because they complement each other in many ways.

Feel free to contact me at [dhood@mebtel.net](mailto:dhood@mebtel.net) if you have any questions or concerns.

Hope you have a great summer,

David Hood