



June, 2009

Dear Humanities Junior,

We congratulate you on completing your second year and look forward to teaching and learning with you next year. Our hope is that you spend the summer relaxing, visiting friends and relatives, and, of course, reading. Your junior year teachers have designed several assignments that will prepare you for the challenge of AP World History, AP Art History, and AP English Language and Composition in the fall.

### **I. Read Jared Diamond's *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies***

This work offers a sustained argument that relies on evidence from many different historical societies. In *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, Diamond attempts to answer the question of why certain human societies thrive and dominate others. Set aside sufficient time to read and understand Diamond's argument so that you may consider and, at times, challenge, its method, reasoning, and evidence. This text will serve you well as an introduction to the study of both early civilizations and argumentation.

Please complete the following based on your reading of the text (see attached rubrics).

#### **A. "A Counter-example Society"**

Create and describe an early civilization or community whose existence would serve to discount Diamond's theory in at least two significant ways. After imagining a society that cannot be accounted for by his ideas, **compose a script** that a museum curator, tour guide, or archeologist would use to explain the means by which members of the society lived, worked, interacted with each other and the environment, and fed themselves (250-300 words). You will also **create three artifacts** from your society to accompany and form part of the subject matter of your script. For each object you will explain how the work provides evidence of the way of life of the early society.

#### **B. "Re: Re: Diamond Manuscript"**

Imagine that the Diamond text you have read is actually a manuscript that you have recommended for publication. Your publisher emails you the following message:

*Re: Diamond Manuscript*

*Junior,*

*Received your email about the Diamond text. We are willing to publish, but must condense it so AP World History students will be more likely to read it over the summer. Part Two is just too long. Let me know which chapter of Part Two absolutely cannot be cut and we will make decisions accordingly. Thanks.*

Compose an email response to your "publisher" in which you select one chapter from Part Two and explain why it is crucial to the main argument of the text (app. 200 words).

### **II. "Siddhartha: Illustration of a Thought"**

Read *Siddhartha*, by Herman Hesse (Kohn translation), and reflect on the main character's struggle to learn wisdom from experience. Then, select and explain one of the "thoughts" that Siddhartha communicates to Govinda at the conclusion of the novel and illustrate its meaning with reference to

his experiences throughout the novel and at least one relevant personal experience (app. 200 words). Please place the quotation of his thought at the top of the paper.

### **III. Read *The Elements of Style*, by Strunk and White**

Make sure you have a copy as a reference for the entire year. Allow “Sergeant Strunk” to inspire within in you a passion for clear, concise, and precise writing. Expect a quiz on the principles covered in this work during the first week of school.

### **IV. “How to improve your SAT Verbal Score”**

Keep a vocabulary journal of all unfamiliar words in your summer reading and write down definitions for each (at least 30 new words). Make this practice a habit for the rest of your academic career. Good readers are in the habit of predicting what unfamiliar words mean based on context clues and then checking their predictions by looking up words in a good dictionary. Many studies have also found a high correlation between vocabulary knowledge and SAT-Verbal scores. The following 11 words from Siddhartha must be on the list: Atman, Brahman, Brahmin, Buddha, Karma, Maya, Nirvana, Om, Sansara, Samana, Veda. Of course, it would be most helpful for you to look up these words before reading the novel.

Sincerely,

Ms. Thorne, Mr. Shannon, and Mr. McKenna

*Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man.*  
-- Francis Bacon, *Of Studies*

**HUMANITIES GRADE 11 SUMMER READING CHECKLIST**  
**Due Day 2 of School**

**Reading assignments**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Read Jared Diamond's *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*,
- \_\_\_\_\_ Read Herman Hesse's *Siddhartha*.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Read Stunk and White's *Elements of Style*.

**Writing/Creative assignments**

\_\_\_\_\_ Create a society that would be a counter-example of Diamond's theory and compose a script that a museum curator, tour guide, or archeologist would use to explain the means by which members of the society lived, worked, interacted with each other and the environment, and fed themselves. Three artifacts must accompany and form part of the basis for the script.

\_\_\_/40 points

\_\_\_\_\_ "Re: Re: Diamond Manuscript" Compose an email response to your "publisher" in which you select one chapter from Part Two of the Diamond text you read and explain why it is crucial to the main argument of the text.

\_\_\_/20 points

\_\_\_\_\_ Select and explain one of the "thoughts" that Siddhartha communicates to Govinda at the conclusion of the novel and illustrate its meaning with reference to his experiences throughout the novel.

\_\_\_/30 points

\_\_\_\_\_ Complete vocabulary journal with 30 words, including the 11 from *Siddhartha*.

\_\_\_/10 points

**Rubric for *Siddhartha* Illustration Essay**  
**250-300 words**

**“A” Papers**

Demonstrate an excellent understanding of the novel’s themes, characters, and conflicts  
Precisely define the nuances of meaning of the selected “thought” of Siddhartha  
Skillfully illustrate the means by which Siddhartha comes to this particular conclusion  
Thoughtfully select and integrate relevant examples (quotations) into the illustration of the thought  
Organize the illustration into effective paragraphs  
Use language precisely and concisely (see Strunk and White on style)  
Contain no errors in usage or mechanics

**“B” Papers**

Demonstrate a sound understanding of the novel’s themes, characters, and conflicts  
Clearly define the meaning of the selected “thought” of Siddhartha  
Fully illustrate the means by which Siddhartha comes to this particular conclusion  
Integrate relevant examples (quotations) into the illustration of the thought  
Organize the illustration into meaningful paragraphs  
Use language precisely (see Strunk and White on style)  
Contain few errors in usage or mechanics

**“C” Papers**

Demonstrate an adequate understanding of the novel’s themes, characters, and conflicts  
Define the meaning of the selected “thought” of Siddhartha  
Illustrate the means by which Siddhartha comes to this particular conclusion  
Integrate examples (quotations) into the illustration of the thought  
Organize the illustration into several paragraphs  
Contain few errors in usage or mechanics that interfere with meaning

**“D” Papers**

Demonstrate some understanding of the novel’s themes, characters, and conflicts  
Partially define meaning of the selected “thought” of Siddhartha  
Attempt to illustrate the means by which Siddhartha comes to this particular conclusion  
Include examples (quotations), but lack sufficient support  
Attempt to organize the response  
Fail to meet minimum standard for length (200 words)  
Contain errors in usage or mechanics that interfere with meaning

**“E” Papers**

Fail to demonstrate an understanding of the novel or the “thought” of Siddhartha

**Rubric for “Re: Re: Diamond Manuscript”  
Email to the Publisher  
185-215 words**

“A” Papers

Demonstrate an excellent understanding of the complexities of the text’s underlying argument  
Clearly identify the crucial chapter of the text  
Provide and skillfully explain thoughtful reasoning to support the selection of the chapter (at least two major reasons)  
Use language in a way that is precise, concise, and appropriate to a business email  
Contain no errors in usage or mechanics

“B” Papers

Demonstrate a sound understanding of the complexities of the text’s underlying argument  
Clearly identify the crucial chapter of the text  
Provide and explain thoughtful reasoning to support the selection of the chapter (at least two major reasons)  
Use language in a way that is precise and appropriate to a business email  
Contain few errors in usage or mechanics

“C” Papers

Demonstrate some understanding of the text’s underlying argument  
Identify the crucial chapter of the text  
Provide some reasons to support the selection of the chapter (at least two major reasons)  
Use language in a way that is clear  
Contain few errors in usage or mechanics that interfere with expression

“D” Papers

Attempt to express the text’s underlying argument  
Identify the crucial chapter of the text  
Fail to support the selection of the chapter (at least two major reasons)  
Contain many errors in usage or mechanics that interfere with expression

“E” Papers

Fail to demonstrate an understanding of the text’s underlying argument

**Rubric for “A Counter-example Society”  
Script (200-300 words) & Three Artifacts**

“A” Projects

Create a fully imagined society and surrounding environment  
Clearly explain the way of life in the created society and how the artifacts reveal it  
Skillfully demonstrate how the existence of the society casts doubt on Diamond’s central argument (in at least 2 important ways)  
Illustrate how the society would have developed within a particular environment  
Use language in a way that is precise, concise, and appropriate to an explanatory script  
Provide three relevant artifacts with strong craftsmanship

“B” Projects

Create a society and surrounding environment  
Explain the way of life in the created society and how the artifacts reveal it  
Demonstrate how the existence of the society casts doubt on Diamond’s central argument (in at least 2 important ways)  
Indicate how the society would have developed within a particular environment  
Use language in a way that is precise and appropriate to an explanatory script  
Provide three relevant artifacts with sufficient craftsmanship

“C” Projects

Create a society and surrounding environment  
Attempt to explain the way of life in the created society and how the artifacts reveal it  
Attempt to demonstrate how the existence of the society casts doubt on Diamond’s central argument, but may misunderstand aspects of the argument  
Fail to indicate how the society would have developed within a particular environment  
Use language in a way that is clear  
Provide three relevant artifacts

“D” Projects

Create a society and surrounding environment  
Attempt to explain the way of life in the created society and how the artifacts reveal it  
Refers to how the existence of the society casts doubt on Diamond’s central argument, but may misunderstand aspects of the argument or fail to illustrate the society  
Fail to indicate how the society would have developed within a particular environment  
Use language in a way that is generally clear  
Provide two artifacts

“E” Projects

Fail to create an adequate counter-example society