

Welcome To Senior Seminar!

Before we formally convene in the fall, let's get some practice in over the summer!

Overview: Welcome to Senior Seminar! For many this is the final English class before college, the military, the workforce, and everywhere else in between. Therefore, Senior Seminar is the course that aims to prepare students for what comes next. Unlike a standard English course focusing mostly on novels, poetry, short stories, and creative writing, Senior Seminar applies basic English skills to real-world applications. In this class you will be encouraged to push boundaries and explore beyond traditional conventions of the classroom. Thinking of modern issues, you will have the opportunity to interact with your learning and tailor certain elements to your own personal interests. Using English and literary conventions as background tools, we will construct a unique learning experience that readies you for the next step in your young adult life.

Task: Complete the projects below to complete the summer assignment. Once your assignment is complete, keep it in a folder or portfolio to hand in during the first week of school. **If you do not have Senior Seminar in the first half of the year, you must hand your work in to an English teacher you have *or* bring it directly to Ms. Marbot.** This work counts as your first grade in the course - so make sure you don't forget! **All projects are due on the same date - Friday, September 7th.** Even if you have this course second half, you must hand your work in by September 7th.

(You may type these if you would like!)

- 1) Choose a novel to read that has themes and/or messages that relate to our modern society. Some themes to consider (which we will discuss throughout this course): poverty, peer pressure, self identity & self discovery, perseverance, race, drugs & addictions, family, etc.). Once you finish reading the novel of your choosing, write an essay of approximately 500 words in which you discuss the novel, its message and themes, and the connections that can be made to society.
- 2) You must also write two poems (any style) in which you address a modern issue/theme of your choosing in a creative manner. Poetry is often an excellent form of expression, so be creative and blend your critical thinking with components of figurative language!

Some modern poems to look at for inspiration:

“Modern Society” by Neil Adams

Children know and see today
That life doesn't have to be this way.
They open their eyes and realize
It's not all hate it's not all lies.

But what you see is what you get.
All the sexism, hate and racism bet.
But just this way is not for the best -
They deserve better let's put it to the test.

All the gun and knife fights today,
When and why did it start this way?
Is the media part of the blame?
Or all the role models all the fame?

Jealousy is a deep but lonely word.
But in today's life it's all that's heard.
All the drugs in this world to stay,
Never to leave it's just this way.

But the world will go on and on
Never to realize that this is wrong.
But life is life gotta live with that -
And go on and on like society's rat.

“Problems” by Christian Brown

Society goes on about all of this drama
For fame money attention but don't aim to fix the problem
Using god as an excuse to get views on YouTube
What happened to this what happened to people?
Blind by a want that can never be satisfying
Like a monster that keeps you up all night crying
We all want bling gold or a house on the rocks
But is it your dream? Is it really what you want
People live in the past and talk about what they want in the future
Don't get me wrong wanting isn't bad but like nursing rhymes say
Be careful what you wish for
Sometimes I believe two year olds could run the world better than
adults
Look at the chaos look at the blood tears look at the results
Like that test you get as school that reads 62 percent
Like society is now 1999 and down the drain it went,
To another set of people another generation
Now I keep talking bout the negative sides
The murder stealing and lies
But darkness came first then light
There is or was a society that did it right
But I guess forever is a word that should be extinct
Because anything that has a heartbeat is on the brink,
Of ending or being finished
But this society doesn't have to die to be changed
Just need to have our eyes opened rearranged
But is society the problem for this hate game?
Is it you me the media who gets the blame
I use society because it puts the label on everyone
What they all do go or what they've done
This wasn't supposed to be some kind of lecture
Just an attempt to open the eyes of modern culture

“Fall” by Rudolph Rinaldi

Fall and
red yellowing
leaves in the trees

an old man sitting
on a bench
watches them
fall
and thinks of his youth

a youth
sitting on a bench
looking into his iPhone
simulates the falling
red yellowing leaves
and googles
the future
of trees

“Dust Bunnies” by Andrea Dietrich

Some places exist which folks need to clean,
like deep in a closet or under a bed.
Such spots get ignored because they're unseen.
Those in plain view get attention instead!

Some children exist we choose to ignore,
for they are not ours. They live out of sight.
Unwanted, unloved, and rarely cared for;
some rich, others poor - they share the same plight.

Their life is a darkness where they've been thrown.
They are gathering dust; no voice have they.
Their sorrows are only to God fully known -
these dust bunnies, growing more filthy each day.

They are the future, and in a short time
they will have become society's grime.