**ARGUING THE TEENAGE MYSTIQUE**

**AP LANGUAGE & COMPOSITION**

**Summer Reading Assignment**

**SYNOPSES**

***Thank You For Arguing*** covers the core rhetorical teachings of Aristotle and Cicero, but Heinrichs does it entirely using modern examples, drawing on political, marketing, workplace, and cultural references, as well as his own family arguments. One paragraph discusses Socrates; the next discusses Sherlock Holmes. The balance between formal lessons and practical examples makes the book highly valuable and applicable to everyday speaking and writing.

Among other things, you will learn:

* A deep understanding of ethos, pathos, and logos
* Many figures of speech
* How to recognize strong and weak logical arguments
* How to recognize (and use, or defend against) persuasive techniques
* How to construct a persuasive language in speaking and writing

***The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager***

In this groundbreaking work, Thomas Hine examines the American teenager as a social invention shaped by the needs of the twentieth century. With intelligence, insight, imagination, and humor, he traces the culture of youth in America – from the spirituals trials of young Puritans and the vision quests of Native Americans to the media-blitzed consumerism of contemporary thirteen- to nineteen-year-olds. The resulting study is a glorious appreciation of youth that challenges us to confront our stereotypes, rethink our expectations, and consider anew the lives of those individuals who are our blessing, our bane, and our future.

**RATIONALE**

AP Language and Composition centralizes the study of the analytical reading and both spoken and written application of rhetorical language. What is rhetorical language you might ask? Good question! And one that we will continue to address throughout the course of this upcoming year! Often times, people tend to view rhetoric simply as a writer or speaker’s ability to persuade their audience. But, rhetoric is this and so much more. It is a power over language that - if one possesses - can allow that writer or speaker to win over an intended audience in almost any situation. The purpose of this summer reading assignment is to introduce some fundamental rhetorical terms in a fun way: *Thank You For Arguing*. Also, the assignment aims to spark your critical reading and thinking skills with a mesmerizing and relatable text: *The Rise and Fall of the* *American Teenager.*

**ASSIGNMENT**

1. Read Jay Heinrichs’, *Thank You For Arguing,* **FIRST**. Heinrichs’ text enlightens the novice rhetorician about the strategies and techniques involved when creating and sustaining an argument. This is your copy – I expect to see book annotations, highlighting, etc. when you return in the fall. We will refer to this text throughout the year.

2. Read Thomas Hine’s, *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager*, **SECOND**. As you read, pay close attention to rhetorical strategies (introduced by Heinrichs) that Hine uses to delicately bring light historical information and controversial issues regarding the teenager as a social invention. Once again, this copy is yours, and you are expected to highlight and annotate in the margins.

3. **THIRD**: Read each of the following prompts carefully – each offers multiple questions for extended response. Generate 3/4 - page to 1- page responses for each. All responses must be typed, MLA format (see below). Your responses should include both a reflection of the reading, and personal insight that develops the responses further. This means that you are expected to include quotes from the text in some of your answers.

**QUESTIONS**

1. To know where we are going, we must know where we’ve come from. According to Hine, what can we learn from the history of adolescence that can inform our understanding of it today? Compare and contrast youth of 100 years ago with youth today. How did youth culture evolve? Give some examples of youth culture present in your everyday life. How much of youth culture is determined by or situated in schools? . Discuss some of the positive and negative effects that youth culture can have for students? In way ways has technology influenced the teenager as a social invention?

2. Many young people have different feelings after reading the book. In the beginning of the first chapter discuss how Hines characterizes different attitudes toward teenagers as a social category. However, many young people interpret it as an attack upon themselves. The category “teenager” is so pervasive that people often cannot see themselves outside of it. Write about ways in which you as a teenager individually conform and do not conform to what the expectations of a teenager should be.

3. Share two different cultural examples from the text about a teen’s rite of passage. How would you redesign the second decade of your own lives to benefit yourselves as individuals, as well as the society as a whole? As we gain the power to literally redesign our bodies, and come up with tools to augment our intellects and enhance our ability to access people and information, how would you redesign the teenager? Propose a new rite of passage that would clearly and unambiguously signal a person's metamorphosis from one stage of life to another.

4. One of the chief themes of the book is that young people has often been happy when they are economically productive; however, such productivity leads many teens the desire to be accepted as adults. Questions for response: In today’s economy, to what degree are you financially responsible? Consider your own economic impact--how much money are you making? How much are you spending? What impact does your fiscal responsibility have on your behavior? To what extent has your economic activity prepared you for adult life?

5. A key component of the rhetorical triangle is the authorial voice. Hines often writes with an objective tone, not meaning for every statement in his book to literally be true, or even in his own opinion – he is posing as the voice of society at large. Read the book through a rhetorical lens, and cite two quotes: one of Hine’s quotes you agree with and one quote that you disagree with. Justify your responses.

**REQUIRMENTS**

* Must be typed
* MLA format
* 1”inch margins
* 12 point font
* Times New Roman
* Double-spaced
* Include a title
* Heading in upper left hand corner
* Running header (Last name, page #) in upper right hand corner of each page

\*See Reavis’ Writer’s Handbook if you have additional questions

**ASSESSMENT**

* There will be 100 point exam over *Thank You For Arguing* the first week of the fall semester. Heinrichs introduces an overwhelming amount of rhetorical vocabulary throughout the text. Read and absorb this information. But, do you need to know all of them for the exam? No. However, you should study and know the main vocabulary central to each chapter focus.
* The Teenage Mystique written responses will be 50 points per response (250 total) and will count as the first formal grade you will receive towards your Writer’s Portfolio. AP Language & Composition is a writing intensified course. Your written responses will give your teacher, Ms. Jensen, a clearer glimpse into who each of you are as a writer. You don’t want your first impression to be a bad one! So, please put forth your best effort on this assignment! ☺

Should you have any questions or concerns about the AP Summer Reading Assignment, feel free to e-mail Ms. Jensen at [jjensen@d220.org](mailto:jjensen@d220.org) over the summer.