Independent Concept-Based Collections and Commonplace Books

Part 2: Texts, Items and Analysis—Building the Collection

English Language and Composition is a college-level course that requires your critical thinking and writing skills, but because of the nature of the AP exam, not all college-level skills can be explored. Therefore, in order to prepare you for all the demands of a college course, you will complete a year long project of inquiry that involves independent reading, academic research, multi-draft writing, and presentation skills. This project will also give you the opportunity to investigate a topic of great personal interest in-depth.

Tasks to complete:

Inquiry Question: Craft an inquiry question that explores a universal human condition. Submit to teacher when complete. Be prepared to share this with your classmates and to revise it as needed throughout the year. DUE: ________________________________

Commonplace books: Using a Composition Book or Blue Book; create a concept-based Commonplace book. You will also create a “virtual Commonplace book” through a Google folder, Blendspace, Storify, or another app of your choice.

Using the paper or electronic Commonplace books (similar to ones we studied in class), record material you encounter related to the concept(s) or theme at the heart of your inquiry question. Entries can include material from outside of class, but will also include in-class material. All entries must have an annotation that includes commentary and a source citation in MLA format.

Outside of class material can include:
- images (cut out and glued in or copied from internet)
- quotes from texts, websites, TV shows, films, song lyrics, art, etc.
- information from other classes and/or previous learning (cite as best you can)
- physical items or objects (they should be photographed if they can fit reasonably inside)
- personal musings and other ideas you find relevant

Be sure to cite material using MLA format. **Expectation is one to two entries per week.** Teacher will conduct checks each grading period.

Independent Reading: You will have four reading units this school year for self-selected reading (SSR). For each unit, you will select a text based on genre and its connection to your inquiry question. Each text will become part of your archival collection around your concept or theme.

Each selected text must meet the following requirements:
- Must be “new to you” (cannot have read it before; previously read texts can go into Commonplace books as entries)
- Must be of literary merit or have teacher approval

1st six weeks—Create inquiry question and begin Commonplace book
2nd six weeks—Fiction
3rd six weeks—Drama
4th six weeks—Nonfiction
5th six weeks—Research
6th six weeks—Presentations
Example list of readings for a single concept-based inquiry question:

**Inquiry Question:** How do individuals respond after being disenfranchised from their societies?

- *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison (novel)
- *The Elephant Man* by Bernard Pomerance (drama)
- *Ceremony* by Leslie Marmon Silko (novel)
- *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison (novel)
- The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander (nonfiction)

Assessment of independent reading will occur through specific assignments throughout the year, such as analytical Reader Response Logs, timed writings in response to individual inquiry questions, and entries in your Commonplace books.