

TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SOCIAL STUDIES AP / HONORS PROGRAM

HUMANITIES – SUMMER PROJECT

The purpose of this project is to:

- Measure your skills in analyzing source material and responding effectively in written form.

ALL of the materials are available on the course website:

<http://uhs.twpunionschools.org/subsites/jlaird/Humanities-SS391--SS392/index.html>

Your assignment is to:

- Fill in the attached form completely including all of the following:
- Analyze the definition of “Humanities”.
- View the THREE (3) videos.
- Read the TWO (2) essays.
- In journal form, answer the question that corresponds to each selection.

On the FIRST day of the new school year, you **MUST:**

- **Submit your completed response sheet.**
- **This will be counted as your first course assignment.**

FAILURE TO SUBMIT THIS ASSIGNMENT CONSTITUTES GROUNDS FOR REMOVAL FROM THE COURSE.

Should you have any questions or concerns, you may contact me at

jlaird@twpunionschools.org

NAME: _____

SS391 SUMMER ASSIGNMENT

1. What is the dictionary definition of the word “Humanities”?

2. Based on this definition, what do you expect to discover in a course on the Humanities?

Video #1 – “What is Humanities?”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t72HTrH_xX4

3. What is it about the various areas of the Humanities that make them so valuable to our species?

Whether in music or architecture, literature, painting, or sculpture, art opens our eyes, ears and feelings to something beyond ourselves, something we cannot experience without the artist's vision and the genius of his craft. The placing of Greek temples, like the Temple of Poseidon at Sunion, outlined against the piercing blue of the Aegean Sea, Poseidon's home; the majesty of Michelangelo's sculptured figures in stone; Shakespeare's command of language and knowledge of the human soul; the intricate order of Bach, the enchantment of Mozart; the purity of Chinese monochromatic pottery with its lovely names – celadon, oxblood, peach blossom, *clair de lune*, the exuberance of Tiepolo's ceilings where, without picture frames to limit movement, a whole world in exquisitely beautiful colors lives and moves in the sky; the prose and poetry of all the writers from Homer to Cervantes to Jane Austen and John Keats to Dostoyevsky and Chekhov – who made all these things? We – our species – did. The range is too vast and various to do justice to it in this space, but the random samples I have mentioned, and all the rest they suggest, are sufficient reason to honor mankind.

Barbara W. Tuchman,
“*Mankind's Better Moments*,” Autumn 1980

Reading #1 - Barbara W. Tuchman, “*Mankind's Better Moments*”
(see above)

4. What insights to the Humanities give us into human nature?

Video #2 – “The Hustler”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kx3BVozrbw>

5. What drives people to do things better than they have ever been done before?

A few years after I began teaching, it occurred to me that being a teacher – not being a student – provides the best education. “To teach is to learn twice,” wrote Joubert, in a simple sounding maxim that could have several different meanings. It could mean that one first learns when getting up the material one is about to teach and then tests and relearns it in the actual teaching. It could mean that being a teacher offers one a fine chance for a second draft on one’s inevitably inadequate initial education. It could mean that learning, like certain kinds of love, is better the second time around. It could mean that we are not ready for education, at any rate of the kind that leads on to wisdom, until we are sixty, or seventy. or beyond. I favor this last interpretation, for it accounts for the strange feeling that I have had every year of my adult life, which is that only twelve months ago I was really quite stupid.

– “ARISTIDES”
(EDITOR JOSEPH EPSTEIN),
“Student Evaluation,” Spring 1987

Reading #2 - Joseph Epstein, “*Student Evaluation*”

(see above)

6. Why is learning a never ending process for an individual?

Video #3 – “Past, Present, and Future”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f9AiPuIsqck>

7. Why does new knowledge force us to re-evaluate our relationship with the universe?