

AP Seminar
Summer Reading Information
2023

Dear Rising Junior,

Welcome to AP Seminar! We are excited that you have chosen to go on this journey of research and self-discovery. This year, we will explore several pieces of British literature while also working on team and independent research projects. Because AP Seminar satisfies an English requirement at Assumption High School, your coursework will include lessons in vocabulary and grammar with an emphasis on how to use these skills for research and argumentation. Finally, public speaking skills are an important component of the AP Seminar curriculum.

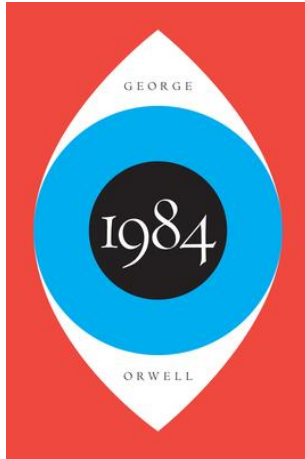
For your summer reading project, we have selected two books which we think you will enjoy. Moreover, these texts provide an excellent introduction to many of the themes and skills which we will discuss in AP Sem. You need to read both books and complete the attached activities over the summer. On the first day of class, you will turn in a complete draft of your response. If any questions arise over the summer, do not hesitate to contact your teacher by email.

AP Seminar emphasizes teamwork and student-directed research. The course is all about discovery-learning, and your ideas are as important as any that your teacher presents. Therefore, your preparation for class is essential in ensuring our success as a group. Have a wonderful summer and come back well-rested and prepared to begin your junior year!

Sincerely,

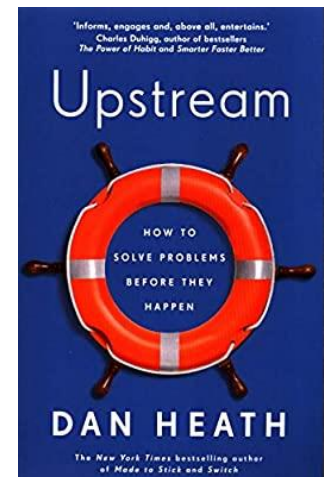
Ms. Murphy and Dr. Wieland

The Books:



From *Goodreads*: Newspeak, Doublethink, Big Brother, the Thought Police - the language of 1984 has passed into the English language as a symbol of the horrors of totalitarianism. George Orwell's story of Winston Smith's fight against the all-pervading Party has become a classic, not the least because of its intellectual coherence. First published in 1949, it retains as much relevance today as it had then.

From *Goodreads*: So often in life, we get stuck in a cycle of response. We put out fires. We deal with emergencies. We stay downstream, handling one problem after another, but we never make our way upstream to fix the systems that caused the problems ... [This book] probes the psychological forces that push us downstream--including 'problem blindness,' which can leave us oblivious to serious problems in our midst. And Heath introduces us to the thinkers who have overcome these obstacles and scored ... victories by switching to an upstream mindset.



The Assignment:

1. **Read.** Begin by reading both *1984* by George Orwell and *Upstream* by Dan Heath.
2. **Connect.** Next, identify a contemporary issue or problem which relates to *1984* (some examples might include censorship, totalitarianism, war, etc.).
3. **Explain.** Write a paragraph about how the issue presents itself in *1984*, citing from the book (you should use at least two specific events or direct quotes from the book in your evidence).
4. **Research.** Find two articles from reputable newspapers or periodicals (this would include publications such as *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, etc.) which discuss the issue. Make a copy of each article for your own records. Be aware that some newspapers have paywalls which are only activated after you've visited the page several times, so printing or downloading a copy is an important step.
5. **Synthesize.** Write a paragraph about how this issue is seen in the world today which cites from both articles (you should use at least one specific fact or direct quote from each article in your paragraph).
6. **Extend.** Write a third paragraph which begins with a topic sentence and then explains what an "upstream solution" is, according to Dan Heath. Next, explain or describe one example of an upstream solution which could be used to address the problem you identified. This could come from one of your articles. It could be something which you have heard of in the past, or it could be your own idea.
7. **Cite.** Use MLA format to create a works cited page. You should have four entries (one for each of the summer reading books and one for each of your two articles). If you are unsure about how to format your citations, please consult the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL).
8. **Craft.** Do not number your paragraphs. Treat this as one, cohesive essay rather than a series of questions and answers. The thesis of your essay (the last sentence in the first paragraph) should indicate that the issue you have identified is a problem which needs to be solved with an upstream solution. Look for ways to transition between and within paragraphs. The sentence at the end of each paragraph should lead into the next and/or bring things full circle.

Additional Information:

A draft of your three-paragraph essay with works cited page will be due on the first full day of class. The draft is worth 30 points in the minor category. We will conduct a peer review before revising and submitting a final draft. The final draft will be worth 30 points in the major category. The rough draft will be checked for completion. The expectation is that you will include all recommended sources and sections, and points will be deducted if you do not.

This essay may seem very general in nature. That's by design. Right now, your teacher needs to get a feel for how you write and research, and we want you to process through the summer reading some on your own. Your subsequent papers in this class will be much more specific; it is okay if this one is not! There is no specific length for this essay, but three good paragraphs double-spaced should come out to somewhere around two pages. That is a very rough estimate, and a little more or a little less is perfectly fine.

The final draft will be graded according to the criteria below.

Connection: The connection to *1984* is clear and meaningful.

Support: The essay uses sufficient, well-selected evidence from the sources.

Credibility: The articles come from reputable newspapers or periodicals and pass a simple fact check.

Style: Evidence is introduced and explained. There are no abrupt shifts in topic.

Transitions are present at the sentence and paragraph level. An academic voice is used (no second person).

Mechanics: The paper is free from distracting errors in spelling and grammar.

Citations: Citations are complete and correct in MLA style.

In addition to the essay, there will be a Socratic discussion over summer reading and a quiz over each book.