Honors Sophomore English Summer Assignment

Over the summer, please read 1984 by George Orwell and Brave New World by Aldous Huxley. You must closely read both books before school begins in the fall. You will need to check out the books from a local library or purchase them yourself. Both are widely available. These books come from a recommended reading list for the college bound put out by the King County Library Association. There will be a comprehension test on each book on September 2nd / 3rd, and success in our first unit will depend upon your understanding these novels.

Because it is important to understand the historical context in which each book was written, I have included a short webquest for you to complete alongside each novel. Select either book to read first, and follow the instructions on the webquest. In short, you will read a few sources online, then read the book, read an additional short piece written by the author, and finally type answers to a few questions. Then repeat these steps with the other book. These typed responses are due September 2nd / 3rd.

I look forward to working with you next year. If you have any questions or concerns, don’t hesitate to email me at levelh@issaquah.wednet.edu. Have a great summer!

Mr. Level

1984 Webquest

Eric Blair (a.k.a. George Orwell) spent his life writing stories that reflected the political climate of Europe preceding, during, and following World War II. After writing Animal Farm, a scathing critique of the Soviet Union, Orwell wrote his a warning of what the future may look like in his final book, 1984. In order to fully understand Orwell’s ideas and allusions, you need to have some background on some key historical figures and political systems.

SOURCES: (PRE-READ)
1. Josef Stalin -- http://www.history.com/topics/joseph-stalin
2. Adolf Hitler -- http://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/adolf-hitler
3. George Orwell -- http://www.biography.com/people/george-orwell-9429833 -- Pay close attention to when Orwell wrote this novel in relation to World War II.

SOURCES: (POST-READ)

QUESTIONS: (POST-READ) – Cite specifics from the sources (including 1984 if necessary). Answers should range between 100-150 words.

1. How are Josef Stalin and the Soviet Union reflected in 1984?
2. How are Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Germany reflected in 1984?
3. How was Orwell’s own life reflected in the novel?
4. Orwell wrote his letter five years before publishing 1984. What is his main point in the letter, and how did 1984 eventually support this point?
Aldous Huxley had an enormous knowledge of science, politics, and history, so when he created the dystopian *Brave New World*, he based much of the story and setting off of real scientific advancements of his day and real historical figures. If you know a bit about these allusions (references), you will be able to more fully appreciate the novel as well as the humor of the character names and other allusions.

**SOURCES:** (Read before the novel)
3. **Aldous Huxley** -- [http://somaweb.org/w/huxbio.html](http://somaweb.org/w/huxbio.html) Pay close attention to *when* Huxley wrote this novel in relation to World Wars I and II.
4. **Character Names in Brave New World**
   - The names in The World State are references to cultural and political icons of the early 20th century, or before. Most of the references are to business men, politicians, doctors, psychologists or writers. Most notably, Lenina (Lenin) and Fanny (Fanny Kaplan, who attempted to assassinate Lenin) are friends. Benito (Mussolini) Hoover (Herbert) is a combination of a totalitarian dictator and the president of the consumer driven economy of the United States. Bernard Marx likely refers to George Bernard Shaw (socialist playwright) and Karl Marx (father of Communism).

**SOURCES:** (Read after the novel)
5. **“On Silence”** – an essay by Aldous Huxley
   - [http://www.stayfreemagazine.org/archives/15/huxley.html](http://www.stayfreemagazine.org/archives/15/huxley.html)

**QUESTIONS:** (Respond after reading the novel) – Cite specifics from the sources (including *BNW* if necessary). Answers should range between 100-150 words.

1. Why is Henry Ford worshipped by the World State? How are his work and ideas reflected in the novel?
2. Why is Sigmund Freud also worshipped by the World State? How are his work and ideas reflected in the novel?
3. How was Huxley’s own life reflected in *Brave New World*?
4. What is Huxley’s main idea in “On Silence” and how does it relate to the novel?