

## Summer Reading 2009: AP Humanities III

**Book:** *The Thirteen American Arguments: Enduring Debates That Define and Inspire Our Country* by Howard Fineman (ISBN-13: 978-0812976359)

As Fineman outlines throughout *The Thirteen American Arguments*, most of our debate on how to shape our country has revolved around a few issues unique to America. Throughout the year, we will read and discuss each of these 13 arguments from both a contemporary and historical perspective. You will need to acquire your own copy of the book that you will continue to work with beyond this summer. Copies are available for any student who would like to borrow rather than buy.

### Assignment:

- Read the Introduction and first 3 chapters: “Who Is a Person?”, “Who is an American?”, and “The Role of Faith.”
- Take notes in a format of your choosing (Cornell Notes, journal, Post-Its, etc.).
  - What you could take notes on:
    - Main Ideas
    - Issues Raised
    - Examples used to illustrate
    - Personal Reflections
  - In addition, consider the following questions:
    - How does history shape our contemporary view of an issue?
    - Why does Fineman feel that “our disputes are not a burden, but a blessing”?
    - Does our continued discussion of issues strengthen our country?
- After each chapter, consider your position on the issue(s) presented. You may include this in your notes.
- Fineman uses a wide variety of examples and events to illustrate how each argument has been discussed. It is likely that some of the examples and events may be unfamiliar to you. If you come across an example or event that you do not understand, you need to search for the information so that you will have a better understanding of how the example/event fits into the point Fineman is making.
- When you return to school in August, you need to be prepared to discuss your reading. In addition, after we have discussed your reading, you will write an essay examining the last question listed above.
- Keep the book. We will read the rest of it over the year.

As well as read *The Thirteen American Arguments*, there are a few additional things you can do to help you prepare for AP Humanities III. These are **by no means required**, but each of them will help you be successful next year.

- Read newspapers, magazines, and/or online news. We spend a lot of time discussing current events, and your ability to be up to date will help you in both our class discussions and in your writing.
- Read for enjoyment. It doesn’t matter what you read, just read. There is a proven link between reading and writing. Plus, it will give you something to do while you are by the pool or avoiding the oppressive heat.
- Relax. Rest. Be young.

Enjoy your summer, and we look forward to working with you next year.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact us over the summer.

Sean Hood  
AP English III  
[hoodsg@lisd.net](mailto:hoodsg@lisd.net)

Ziggy Craig  
AP US History  
[craigz@lisd.net](mailto:craigz@lisd.net)

Ranz Nelson  
AP English III  
[nelson@lisd.net](mailto:nelson@lisd.net)