

AP Seminar 2021-2022 Summer Assignment

Maryville High School—Dr. Ferguson

Welcome to AP Seminar--“a foundational course that engages students in cross-curricular conversations that explore the complexities of academic and real-world topics and issues by analyzing divergent perspectives.” (College Board) What does this mean for you as a student? How is this different than other AP courses? The answer: a challenging, yet gratifying, year of critical thinking, analysis, research, and collaboration that will help you gain confidence in your own voice. You will look at other authors’ arguments through a variety of perspectives and then will examine real-world issues and develop and defend your own credible arguments, both individually and collaboratively.

For your summer reading assignment this year, you will be reading Think Like a Freak by Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner. “With their trademark blend of captivating storytelling and unconventional analysis, they take us inside their thought process and teach us all to think a bit more productively, more creatively, more rationally – to think, that is, like a freak.” (Harper Collins Publishers). **This book is available in pdf form, in paperback form, and on loan from Dr. Ferguson. (penny.ferguson@maryville-schools.org)**

Questions on *Think Like a Freak*: Answer in one Word Document

- Ch. 1—Why is it important to understand the role of specific incentives when trying to solve a problem?
- Ch. 2—Why do Levitt and Dubner want you to “put away your moral compass”?
- Ch. 3—Discuss the role that experimentation played in Kobi’s success.
- Ch. 4—Explain how thinking like a Freak is “like a bad dye job.”
- Ch. 5—The authors ask, “Why is it so important to have fun?” What would your answer be?
- Ch. 6—This chapter offers 3 reasons why incentive-based plans fail. What are they?
- Ch. 7—Why are most college applications complicated and difficult to complete?
- Ch. 8—Why might supporters of driverless cars be wise to point out the potential problems?
- Ch. 9—What is a “premortem”? How can it be used to make better informed decisions about quitting?

Your second assignment will be to watch the 2 Ted Talks listed below and analyze the presentations using the language of the AP Seminar Presentation Rubric. I am providing the CB scoring rubric for you to fill out for each Ted Talk. See back of this page.

1. David Epstein: Are Athletes Really Getting Faster, Better, Stronger?

https://www.ted.com/talks/david_epstein_are_athletes_really_getting_faster_better_stronger

2. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: The Danger of a Single Story

https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story

Individual Multimedia Presentation

		Performance Levels			Points (Max)
Row	Content Area/ Proficiency	Low	Medium	High	
1	Understand and Analyze Context	The presentation identifies a problem or issue but places the research question in a very limited context and offers little or no explanation of how it is connected to the stimulus materials. 2	The presentation makes general statements about the context of the research question, including how it is connected to the stimulus materials. 4	The presentation clearly explains the relevance of the research question (situates the perspective within a larger context) AND how it is connected to the stimulus materials. 6	6
2	Establish Argument	The presentation summarizes information instead of offering an argument. 2	The presentation connects evidence and claims. The argument is mostly clear and organized, but at times the reasoning may be faulty OR the reasoning may be logical but not well organized. 4	The presentation is logically organized, well-reasoned, and complex. It persuasively connects the evidence to claims to clearly and convincingly establish an argument. 6	6
3	Select and Use Evidence	The presentation incorporates evidence from a minimal range of perspectives OR information is provided but not used as evidence to support the argument. 2	The presentation incorporates evidence from various perspectives to develop and support the argument. 4	The presentation incorporates and synthesizes relevant evidence from various perspectives to develop and support the argument. 6	6
4	Establish Argument	The presentation offers information without offering specific resolutions, conclusions, and/or solutions OR they are unsubstantiated or oversimplified. 2	The presentation offers specific resolutions, conclusions, and/or solutions that at least partially address the research question. 4	The presentation offers detailed, plausible resolutions, conclusions and/or solutions, and considers the limitations and implications of any suggested solutions. 6	6
5	Engage Audience	The presentation's design does little to effectively convey the information. There is little evidence of purposeful selection or emphasis of information to suit audience, situation, medium, or purpose (e.g. too much of the essay is included on slides, too much for given time limit). 2	The presentation's design aligns with the information and selects and emphasizes key information. 4	The presentation's design aligns well with and effectively contextualizes the information. The presentation, including its selection and emphasis of information, is designed for audience, situation, medium, and/or purpose. 6	6
6	Engage Audience	The selection and execution of delivery or performance techniques (e.g., eye contact, vocal variety, movement, energy) severely limit the presentation's impact. 2	The selection of delivery or performance techniques (e.g., eye contact, vocal variety, movement, energy) OR execution of those techniques, supports communication of the argument. 4	A careful selection of delivery or performance techniques (e.g., eye contact, vocal variety, movement, energy), coupled with a dynamic execution of those techniques, strongly supports the communication of the argument. 6	6