Dear parents and students,

Our American Studies team, Kirsten Cossano (Woldendorp) and Megan Santos, would like to notify you that we have begun the process which will culminate in your student’s *The Great Gatsby* literary analysis essay. Traditionally, students place a high priority on this assignment, as it is goes in the Culminating category of both the English and history gradebooks. The percentage allocated to this assignment seems like a significant portion of the students’ grades, but the greatest impact is really only when students fail to complete a portion of the assignment or otherwise receive a zero.

This assignment is a literary analysis, on a topic of their choosing relating to *The Great Gatsby* and the 1920s. We have many steps along the way to assist them in the writing process, including lessons around evidence and analysis, outlines and a rough draft, in addition to being available before and after school and on Wednesday late starts. We would prefer to meet with students during the Wednesday late starts, as that is the best way to get individual attention for a sustained period of time.

Attached to this document is the assignment sheet and due dates along with a pacing calendar so that the students can keep up with due dates and work on this assignment in smaller chunks to make it a smoother process.

One more thing that we would like to address is the issue of plagiarism. We went through a stretch where student plagiarism was occurring at far too frequent of a rate, and we feel that the best way to eliminate this is to address it head on and remind parents and students alike of the risks and details of plagiarism.

The most common forms of plagiarism are students who copy and paste or paraphrase from a source (website/journal/book, etc.) and do not cite that source. Sometimes students believe that they can copy and paste items, and then change every 3rd (or 2nd or 4th) word to make it appear to be original work. This is still plagiarism. As a general guideline, whenever a student uses someone else’s work and does not give them credit, it is plagiarism, whether it is a sentence or an entire online essay. We tell them that if they are trying to hide it, it’s probably because somewhere they know it is not what they are supposed to be doing. We have also had instances where students share information via email and try to modify their peer’s work and that, too is plagiarism.

The penalty for plagiarism, as stated in the student handbook, is as follows

* Standard Consequence for 1st violation is: failing grade for the assignment/ test/project, possible short-term suspension, parent contact
* Standard Consequence for 2nd violation ranges from: failing grade for the assignment/test/project, loss of credit for the entire course if the violation is within the same course and within the same grading period as the first violation, loss of credit with a failing grade and possible withdrawal from the course, including a reduction and possible rearrangement of the student’s academic schedule, possible short-term suspension, parent contact

*\*Please note – if the course is a graduation requirement, the student will need to take responsibility to make up the course requirement on their own, i.e. summer school, correspondence course, etc. as approved by the student’s school counselor.*

* Standard Consequence for 3rd violation and subsequent violations of integrity/honesty policy, regardless of the class or grading period, is: Withdrawal from class with failing grade, including a reduction and possible rearrangement of the student’s academic schedule, Possible short-term suspension, Parent contact

*\*Please note – if the course is a graduation requirement, the student will need to take responsibility to make up the course requirement on their own, i.e. summer school, correspondence course, etc. as approved by the student’s school counselor.*

* Non-Standard Consequences for violation of academic integrity/honesty, as determined by administrative investigation, may include: Successful completion of Academic Integrity Tutorial, Re-do of assignment/test/project without opportunity for grade/credit, Short-term suspension (in-house or out-side of school), Placement with a different teacher/course

We have gone over plagiarism in class, multiple times, but we feel that your assistance in addressing this issue is necessary to the success of all of our students. Here is a guide to different forms of plagiarism (courtesy of plagiarism.com), which we would like you to review with your student prior to this project.

Each of the 10 most common types of plagiarism are defined below. The types are ranked in order of severity of intent

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| infographic_spectrum_ctrlc.jpg **#1. Clone**  Submitting another’s work, word-for-word, as one’s own | infographic_spectrum_hybrid.jpg  **#6. Hybrid**  Combines perfectly cited sources with copied passages without citation | infographic_spectrum_ctrlc.jpg  **#2. CTRL-C**  Contains significant portions of text from a single source without alterations | infographic_spectrum_mashup.jpg  **#7. Mashup**  Mixes copied material from multiple sources | infographic_spectrum_find_replace.jpg  **#3. Find - Replace**  Changing key words and phrases but retaining the essential content of the source |
| infographic_spectrum_404.jpg  **#8. 404 Error**  Includes citations to non-existent or inaccurate information about sources | infographic_spectrum_remix.jpg  **#4. Remix**  Paraphrases from multiple sources, made to fit together | infographic_spectrum_aggregrator.jpg  **#9. Aggregator**  Includes proper citation to sources but the paper contains almost no original work | infographic_spectrum_recycle.jpg  **#5. Recycle**  Borrows generously from the writer’s previous work without citation | infographic_spectrum_retweet.jpg  **#10. Re-tweet**  Includes proper citation, but relies too closely on the text’s original wording and/or structure |

In addition to being ranked by severity, each type is also accompanied by an example to illustrate how each type appears within the context of a paper.

For full study details and the full list of examples, please [download a copy of the white paper](http://pages.turnitin.com/plagiarism_spectrum.html).

(plagiarism.org)

Plagiarism is much more of an issue in the new era of online information and digital data, in ease and prevalence. Many times it is the result of students just trying to take an easier route, or save some time. In class, we have explained that turning in an inadequate product and receiving a low grade is significantly more productive than turning in a plagiarized work and receiving a zero, which is the most basic and consistent consequence. Additionally, we are available for students who have difficulty with research or writing to avoid the situation where they feel that some form of plagiarism is their only hope. One thing that we do not see much of is plagiarism out of negligence or lack of understanding what plagiarism is and is not. If your student is worried about accidentally plagiarizing, we tell them, when in doubt… cite it. On rare occasions, students plagiarize so that they have *something* to turn in and are rushed with other classwork, outside activities, or family obligations. In cases like these we rely on communication so that we can work with the students to receive the best possible product and most authentic work.

Please print out the last page of this document (you can save trees just reading the rest of it electronically, if you would like) and sign it with your student.

***The Great Gatsby Essay Calendar***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Goals** | **Monday 12/3** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** |
| Start deciding your topic  **Due:** Nothing |  | Introduce assignment |  |  |  |
|  | *Decide on topic* | *Decide on topic* | *Decide on topic* | Work on thesis |
| **Goals** | **Monday 12/10** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** |
| Create a working thesis  Work on outline  **Due Sunday 12/16:**  Outline submitted on turnitin.com by 10pm |  |  | Outline work time | Outline work time |  |
| Work on outline BTS 1 evidence and analysis | Work on outline BTS 2 evidence and analysis | Work on outline BTS 3 evidence and analysis | Write introduction with refined thesis | Refine and submit outline |
| **Goals** | **Monday 12/17** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** |
| Start converting outline to rough draft  **Due:** have a great break and do no work! |  |  | Work time for rough draft |  |  |
| Create BTS 1 for rough draft Create BTS 2 for rough draft | Create BTS 3 for rough draft  Write conclusion | Make sure you have all the in-text citations and a Works Cited Page |  |  |
| **Goals** | **Monday 1/1** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** |
| Finalize rough draft  **Due Tuesday 1/2:** Rough draft submitted on turnitin.com by 10pm and printed |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Submit rough draft |  |  |  |
| **Goals** | **Monday 12/17** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** |
| Start converting outline to rough draft  **Due by 1/7:** Final essay submitted on turnintin.com by 10pm |  |  | Work time for rough draft |  | Peer editing |
| Write introduction with refined thesis | Create BTS 1 for rough draft | Create BTS 2 for rough draft |  |  |

**American Studies *The Great Gatsby* Literary Analysis Essay**

**Purpose & Prompt:** The purpose of this assignment is to write a literary analysis essay about F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*. This paper will not just be an a book report, you must analyze your topic using quotes from the novel and your own analysis.

**Assignment Components:**

* A working thesis and revised thesis
* An outline that reflect progression of research and idea development
* 1500-1800 words MLA formatted literary analysis essay

~ Includes in-text citations & Works Cited page (not included in page count)

~ Double spaced/12. Times Font/1” margins/ headers with page numbers

* Peer editing

~ 2 completed on your paper

~ 2 you complete on other papers

**The following skills will be assessed:**

* Thesis development and proving that thesis
* Correctly formatted paper that clearly defines/supports literary analysis
* Quote integration and citation
* Completed Peer Edits

***Schedule of Due Dates***

**Date: Due:**

**Tuesday, December 4th** Introduce essay and pick topics

Signature Sheet

**Wednesday, December 12th**  Outline work time

**Thursday, December 13th**  Outline work time

**Sunday, December 16th** Outline submitted on turnitin.com

**Wednesday, December 19th** Rough draft work time

**Tuesday, January 2nd**  Rough draft submitted to turnitin.com

**Friday, January 4th** Peer edit rough drafts

**Monday, January 7th**  **Final draft of paper including:**

Submission to Turnitin.com

Works Cited page & Citations

I acknowledge that I have read the *The Great Gatsby* letter, reviewed the due dates for essay and the plagiarism reminder.

Student Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date

Student Name (Printed)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date

Parent Name (Printed)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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This is a very valuable project, as students prepare for college, in regards to research skills, content knowledge and writing skills and we thank you in advance for your support.

Kirsten (Cossano) Woldendorp

Megan Santos