**It’s All About Culture- Unit Directions**

**Purpose**

You are about to embark on a voyage through group/self-directed learning. Choice novels give you the opportunity to blaze out on your own (with some supervision of course) and decide the pace and focus of your group’s reading and discussions. Choice novel units incorporate individual work, group discussions, a group presentation, and an in-class individual essay.

The goal is to give you an opportunity to read a book of your choice and use the skills that you’ve acquired throughout your schooling to grapple with making meaning from the text.

**The Basics**

The novel unit encompasses four grades:

1. An **individual** **homework/reading/annotations** (formative)

2. The **group presentation** grade (summative)

3. The **individual in-class AP essay** (summative).

4. **Group and Individual conversations** that chronicles in class discussions (formative)

**The Homework:**

You must have your own novel for this unit. I expect to see comments that cover but not limited to all literary elements (not just the plot), authorial voice, theme/culture, and characterization.

Each time your group is supposed to meet, I must physically see and check off your annotations. At the end of the unit, I will average these checks into a formative grade for the entire unit.

**The Group Procedure**

Each group will receive a file folder for their novel. It will hold ideas for group discussions, the rubric for the final presentation, group logs, and other pertinent information.

During the first group meeting, you must collectively decide a reading schedule to which all members agree. You are also to decide on your first focus and make a notation in your folder. Your annotations should match but are not limited to your focus.

The remaining group sessions will be devoted to discussions and presentation planning. During this time, ALL members are expected to participate equally. Discuss what questions you have about the reading, ideas you find interesting and thematic, quotations you found stimulating, connections you found to other works, and, naturally, the basic literary elements such as plot, tone, character, setting, authorial voice, and literary devices with their purpose.

**The Final Creative Presentation**

The presentation will last from 10 minutes and should be an interesting, unique, creative synthesis of your novel. You must include a basic and brief plot (two minutes at most). The presentation must incorporate cultural driven themes, deeper meaning, characterization and development, symbols and images, style, setting, authorial voice, and other pertinent details.

You will likely need to use a **variety of presentation modes** in order to incorporate these required elements. To liven up your presentation (**DO NOT LECTURE US!**), you may want to share a scene through any one of the following methods: dramatization, video, acting, radio drama, movie clips, Reader’s Theater, talk shows, panel discussions, social issues commentary. No matter what modes you choose, the performance should flow smoothly. Be sure your group practices the presentation using note cards and other appropriate methods to ensure an organized and well-timed delivery. Remember that the screen is for us, not for you to refer to.

A Final Presentation Rubric is enclosed in the group folder so that all members will know the grading criteria from the start. Be sure to look at it **before** your group organizes the presentation.

The group will **gain** presentation points for:

1. members adopting a persona, using accents and appropriate mannerisms. BECOME the characters, author, etc.
2. *smooth, creative* incorporation of the setting, style, narrator, etc.
3. Incorporating honors level analysis
4. appropriate costumes and props.
5. having an interested audience who is engaged in the presentation.
6. being so exciting that others want to read your book.

The group will **lose** presentation points for:

1. lecturing us, separating the “deeper meaning” part of the presentation from the “creative” part. DO NOT just “tell” us information.
2. only having a few members contribute to the “deeper meaning” portion; ALL members need to contribute somehow in a significant way and prove that all members both read and analyzed the text.
3. turning it into a “project” instead of a “presentation.” It’s not a “show and tell” activity.
4. boring your audience.
5. Audience members will lose points if they have their head on their desk, complete homework, or have their phone out.