

SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT

By _____ you will turn in a compare and contrast essay over four distinct genres of historical writing. You have already read *Devil in the White City* and *The American Revolution*. You will now read the packet from *Adventure Tales* and Chapters 1-3 from *Pageant*. Below are four distinctly different genres of writing:

1. *Devil in the White City* is “historical fiction”. At its best, it takes entirely factual events, and then fleshes them out by inferring emotional and motivational characteristics to the people involved.
2. *The American Revolution* is an example of “narrative history”. As the name implies, it uses a story-telling format to inform the reader of historical events.
3. *Adventure Tales* is a new form of historical writing based on the psychological theory that readers learn better by incorporating information which connects with both the left and right hemispheres of the brain. It is graphical, textual, and humorous. We will call it “cartoon history”.
4. *American Pageant* is an example of “survey history”. In a relatively short framework, it covers a broad sweep of history while focusing on factual data in an analytical format. Survey history utilizes a thematic format in order to explain both the “what” and “why” of history.

Your job is to write a traditional social studies essay in which you compare and contrast these four genres. You will be graded on both content and analysis. Choose specific quotes from each of the genres that best support your conclusions. In a social studies essay you must have a strong thesis statement that **BOTH** argues a specific hypothesis, and creates categories that will enable you to prove your hypothesis. In your conclusion, explain which genre best meets your learning style, while maintaining the 3rd person. Use Chicago or Turabian citation.¹

As with all social studies essays follow these rules

- never use first or second person
- back up all opinions with factual data
- make a strong, clear thesis sentence with provable categories
- cite quotations, and **any use of an author’s ideas**
- include outside sources on your topic. Ex: research brain theory in order to discuss “cartoon history” intelligently.
- avoid:
 - hyperbole, **absolutely**
 - slang, you **knuckleheads**
 - metaphors, analogies, and similes **like the plague**
 - 1st or 2nd person, or **I** will mark **you** down
 - passive voice, or **problems will occur**. Passive voice is any *form of "to be" + past participle = passive voice*²
 - excessive use of weak “to be” verbs: was, were, has, had, will. Instead of, “The boy was bitten by the dog.” It should read, “The dog bit the boy”.

¹ University of California Berkeley Library, <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/guides/chicago-turabianstyle.pdf>

² The Writing Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/passivevoice.html>