

CULMINATING ESSAY:
CAPITALISM & THE PURSUIT OF WEALTH
A Literary Study of the Origins and Effects of the Capitalist Mindset

“Some people dream of success, while others wake up at work hard at it.”
— Winston Churchill



THE PROMPT

Since our country's conception, unique to the American identity and spirit has been the notion that with hard work comes success, and in particular, that success has monetary value. Over the course of this unit, we've examined the literary origins of American's ideas about success, and we've studied literary works in which we've seen the effects that this mindset and the consequent pursuit of wealth can have on individuals, families, and societies and communities at large. Now it's time to articulate your findings about the effects that this capitalist pursuit of wealth has on us as human beings.

In a well-developed essay of 7-10 pages, you should offer your position on the following question based on the literature that we've studied: ***How does the capitalist pursuit of success and wealth impact those who have internalized this mindset?***

In order to answer this question thoroughly and effectively, you'll want to first summarize for your reader what constitutes the spirit of capitalism and where these ideas originated. Then, to demonstrate how the capitalist pursuit of wealth affects those that internalize the mindset, you'll want to analyze characters from at least two of the texts that we've studied (this can include Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, David Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross*, Gabriel Garcia Marquez's "Innocent Eréndira," or John Steinbeck's "The Pearl"). Your analysis should include a discussion of both how the characters have internalized the capitalist mindset, and the consequences that follow. To conclude, you should evaluate the spirit of capitalism: Given the impact that it seems to have on people, what should we do? Should we throw out this ideology? If so, what might be the alternative?

ESSAY REQUIREMENTS

Your essay should adhere to the following guidelines:

- ✓ 7 page *minimum* length
- ✓ 12 pt. font, Times New Roman, double-spaced
- ✓ Proper MLA formatting and citations
- ✓ Final draft submitted to Turnitin.com — *no exceptions!*

ESSAY SCHEDULE

****NOTE:** *This schedule is tentative, and so is subject to change.* **

Be sure to check daily HW in class or on Mrs. Pariser's websites for any and all updates!

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
March 6 Essay Intro & Brainstorming <u>HW:</u> Draft your thesis statement. Bring written out to class tomorrow.	7 Essay prep day: <i>Thesis workshop</i> <u>HW:</u> Revise your thesis statement. Bring revised draft to class tomorrow on half sheet of paper.	8 Essay prep day: <i>Outlining</i> <u>HW:</u> Work on your essay outline. You should have at least a basic skeleton outline by tomorrow. Bring this to class.	9 Essay prep day: <i>Outlining / Selecting Evidence</i> <u>HW:</u> 1. Vocab. Quiz tomorrow 2. Work on fleshing out the details of your outline. 3. Select specific pieces of textual evidence for your essay. Bring completed SMM's for each quote.	10 Essay prep day: <i>Outlining / Analyzing Evidence</i> <u>HW:</u> 1. Bring completed, detailed outline to class on Monday. 2. First draft (everything but the conclusion) will be due Wednesday for round 1 of revisions.
13 Conclusion Prep <u>HW:</u> Work on drafting your essay. Completed first draft must be done by Wednesday for round 1 of revisions.	14 Conclusion Prep <u>HW:</u> Completed draft (including conclusion) must be done by tomorrow. Bring typed and printed for round 1 of peer revisions.	15 Writing Workshop: Revision Day 1 <u>HW:</u> Revise your essay based on today's feedback.	16 Writing Workshop: Revision Day 2 <u>HW:</u> Revise your essay based on today's feedback.	17 Writing Workshop: Revision Day 3 <u>HW:</u> Make any final revisions to your essay. Essay is due SUNDAY NIGHT by 11:59pm on Turnitin.com.