**English 9: Article-of-the-Week (AOW)**

“When I realized that in two different class periods I did not have a single ninth-grade student who could identify the vice president of the United States, I grasped how serious the lack of my students’ reading depth had become.” -Kelly Gallagher, *Readicide*

Research clearly shows that the best way to become a better reader and to learn to analyze texts is to… READ! No kidding. So we’re going to read widely – which means a variety of text, every week, on your own time. No complaining! You will have one article to read, annotate, and respond to each week.

**How it Works:**

Every week you will receive a printed Article of the Week. You are responsible for reading and interacting with the article on your own time, then having it completed to be stamped on the scheduled due date and collected after discussion. You will receive one of five grades:

* 20 for a job well done (full credit)
* 15 for an average job
* 10 for an incomplete job (at least 50% completed)
* 5 for incomplete work with several missing features (less than 50% completed)
* 0 for missing work
* This is an assignment that I will **NOT ACCEPT LATE!** Each AOW is a new opportunity to get full credit.
* **Step 1: Close Read:** Read with a pencil/highlighter in hand, and annotate the text. Suggestion: Read the article through first, then annotate the second time around. At a glance, your copy of the article should look heavily marked. Up close, your comments and questions should seem sincere and thoughtful. This is the look and sound of “active reading.”

**HOW TO ANNOTATE:**

* 1. Annotating *means* underlining or highlighting key words and phrases—anything that strikes you as surprising or important, or that raises questions or confusions.

**Use these symbols as you read:**

**(+) agree, (-) disagree, (\*) important, (!) surprising, (?) wondering**

* 1. Annotating *includes* writing your thoughts and reactions in the margins next to what you have highlighted or underlined. Random underlining or highlighting by itself is coloring, not close reading. Close reading is making connections, asking questions, inferring, expressing confusion, evaluating the article, and identifying main points.
  2. Highlight or circle words you do NOT know, then **look them up**! Write down the definition in the margin next to the word.
  3. Answer **ALL** comprehension questions in complete sentences located at the end of the article.
* **Step 2: Purpose and Audience, and Summary Statement:** Write a sentence containing the author’s purpose (P.I.E.= persuade, inform, or entertain) and intended audience, **THEN** use the template below to write a summary statement of the article’s main ideas and respond to them:

*The general argument made by author X in her/his work, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, is that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. More specifically, X argues that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. She/he writes, “ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.” In this passage, X is suggesting that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. In conclusion, X’s belief is that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. In my view, X is wrong/right, because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. More specifically, I believe that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. For example, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Although X might object that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I maintain that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Therefore, I conclude that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.*

* **Step 3: AOW Options List:** For some articles, I will pick a particular Option that I want you to take on. For other articles, you will be able to choose an Option from the list. Refer to your list for directions. Keep in mind that the Options are meant to open up a discussion, not restrict it. These are simply springboards to help you dive in deep.

# Article-of-the-Week Options

1. Choose three interesting quotes or passages from the article and write a 3-5 sentence reflection for *each* in which you explain their meaning and/or importance.
2. Write down five things you learned by reading this week’s article*.* Which of these five do you think is the *most important* to know? Explain.
3. After reading an interesting article, create a T-chart. On the left side, bullet the key points of the article. On the right side, list what the article does not say or leaves out.
4. An article may contain bias (an opinion or prejudice). If that is the case here, identify the bias and explain the “other side.”
5. Choose five of the following sentence starters and write a brief 2-3 sentence reflection for each:
   1. I noticed…
   2. I wonder why…
   3. I was reminded of…
   4. I think…
   5. I am surprised that…
   6. I’d like to know…
   7. I realized…
   8. If I were…
   9. The central issue(s) is (are)…
   10. I still don’t understand…
   11. Although it seems…
   12. What interested me most was…
   13. The author wants the reader to think…
   14. I can relate to this because…
   15. This idea/article is similar to...
6. In 3-5 sentences, explain *in your own words* the author’s point of view.
7. Free response. Respond to the article any way you see fit.
8. T-Chart—Pro/Cons to an issue. Then take a position and support it with at least three reasons from the text.
9. (1) Three important points/ideas in this article are… (2) because…
10. Sometimes an article is a call to action. If that is the case here, describe this call and then what specific actions you believe need to be taken, and by who.

**IMPORTANT REMINDERS!**

* Do ALL parts (Steps 1-3) and READ DIRECTIONS!
* You are responsible for completing the AOW on time and prepared to discuss in groups and class.
* **NO LATE AOWs ACCEPTED!**