

AP Language & Composition
"Community" Academic Essay

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Date _____

For the past few weeks we have talked about community—how it is defined, what its boundaries are, how its members balance their individual concerns with the values of the community, the difference between a healthy and a dysfunctional community, the influence of social media on community, and the necessity of civil disobedience in facilitating change in a community.

To write your essay, use **one** of the classroom texts as a "springboard" for your own argument about community. Using the principles and methods of *They Say/I Say*, summarize **one** of the arguments in the springboard text, supporting it with evidence from that text (this is the "they say" portion of the essay). It is not necessary to summarize the entire essay, only the argument that you are reacting to. Then, take a position on that argument (agree with, adding a fresh perspective; extend; qualify; challenge) which you will support with other classroom texts (written and visual), texts that you find yourself, narratives produced by the class in our discussions, and/or personal observations or experience (this is the "I Say" portion of the essay).

Remember that the "springboard" text is the catalyst for your argument, and that your argument, which drives the essay, should add something new to the academic conversation about the subject.

Make certain that your introduction includes an engaging lead, establishes context, mentions the title and author of the springboard text and states its argument. Your thesis should establish your position on that argument.

Use the "they say/i say" paradigm for the body of your essay. Summarize the argument, providing the author's reasoning and evidence (which is properly cited according to MLA format). Then introduce your "take" on the argument, developed with your reasoning and evidence (also properly cited). When you include quotes, do so appropriately (only the most compelling lines; introduced with rhetorically accurate verbs—NO "HIT AND RUN" OR DROPPED QUOTES!), and that you work toward an understanding of what is at stake when we talk about community—in whichever context you are looking at.

Classroom texts to consider:

King, Reverend Martin Luther. "Letter from Birmingham Jail"
Moyers, Bill. "Pass the Bread"
Sanders, Scott Russell, "The Common Life"
Sherman, Alexie. "Facebook Sonnet"
Thoreau, Henry David. "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience"

Additional Texts (from *The Language of Composition*):