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Purpose of the Course:

(Copied from pre-written P&P statement. Purpose of the course does *not* change between assignments.)

English 1180 teaches students to connect their own ideas to ideas of knowledgeable experts. The “they say” of experts is incorporated into the “I say” of the writer to produce a richer “we say.” The course moves students away from high school writing where the emphasis is often on arbitrary forms such as the five-paragraph paper, rigid “rules” about paragraphs, and odd beliefs about “opinion.” The course offers a set of steps for writers to develop this “we say”: TEQ Sheets, Purpose & Problem Statement, and a Prospectus. These tools enable writers to think critically and develop a strong claim before they actually begin the paper.

In order to learn how to write academic/professional papers, we need to write about real topics with real “they says.” For this course, we will spend the entire term writing about class, education, and digital surveillance/privacy.

Purpose of the Assignment:

This assignment asks us to summarize the work of several writers in order to give us the opportunity to have our first experiences using tools, such as the “map metaphor” and the “they say/I say/we say” model. This is important to us because it finally gives us a break from the dishonest tools that were enforced in grade school, like the 5-paragraph paper. This assignment also asks that we reflect on what we were taught in grade school and separate truth from false tools used simply to help us do well on standardized tests.

Problem Statement:

First, I must say that several of these documents either answer each other’s questions, or are answered by common knowledge. One example of this is when they ask why upper classes get better treatment and more curriculum opportunities. The obvious answer to this is that they have more money to contribute to the funding of their schools so that they don’t need to enforce so heavily on knowledge for the standardized tests. Lower class schools can’t afford to do this because they rely heavily on the funding provided as a result of these tests.

It is clearly shown in all the sources have one thing in common—the fact that students are being taught useless information (such as the 5-paragraph paper) in place of true, useful information for tests that determine the *school’s* funding, with no concern for the students’ wellbeing. Is there a way to make standardized tests include more relevant knowledge? How can the SAT be criticized so much without any change being produced? Is there a way to circumvent the punishments of poor test scores? Is there

a way to teach students relevant knowledge in addition to the knowledge required to do well on the standardized tests?