

Age of Reason Essay

1. Write a general introductory paragraph about the Enlightenment/Age of Reason in America.
2. Choose any three of the following topics and write a paragraph on each, to form three middle paragraphs of your essay. Tie each in with your intro and make connections between each topic to transition smoothly from one paragraph to the next.
 - A. Agree, disagree, or a little of both, with any three of deCrevecoeur's observations about America. Also compare the American of his time to the U.S. today, as far as the observations you chose are concerned.
 - B. Recall Benjamin Franklin's List of Virtues. Explain which three of his thirteen you think would be advantageous to incorporate into your life, and why. Also come up with another virtue Franklin could have added to his list; name it, describe it, and give an example of it.
 - C. Recall Franklin's statement that "vicious actions are not hurtful because they are forbidden, but forbidden because they are hurtful, the nature of man alone considered." Do what Franklin wanted to do but never got around to by illustrating Franklin's thesis above through the use of a single issue. Focus on a view you see being held today by people in the U.S. (many people, not just a strange minority somewhere) who believe that something is wrong because "so-and-so says it's wrong," not because the so-called wrong thing actually hurts anyone. Use it to validate Franklin's claim.
 - D. Examine Deism as put forth by Thomas Paine in the light of your own religious beliefs.
 - E. Examine at least three concepts in the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights and highlight how they reflect Enlightenment values.
 - F. Recall Abigail Adams's letter to her husband and his response. Examine how far the country has come in terms of equality for any one of the various groups mentioned: women, workers, Native Americans, African Americans, or children.
3. Write a concluding paragraph focusing on why it is important to study the writings of the Enlightenment. Make connections with the topics you chose for your three middle paragraphs.

For all essays:

Your essay must contain MLA-style internal citations for all materials you reference, both print and via the internet, as well as a Works Cited page that corresponds to these citations.

Your paper must be in your Google Classroom folder for this class at all times. You may complete the essay **alone or with a partner, and you should work on it outside of class as well as during class time.** If working with a partner, the essay goes in one partner's folder and is shared with the other partner; let me know whose folder it is going to be in!