***“Writing to Evaluate” Essay***

Using the graphic organizer on the other side of this handout, you will compose a multi-paragraph essay based on one piece of literature from this unit.

Using the ten pieces of text support as well as the author’s thoughts, opinions, and feelings, you will explain why the piece you chose is the most valuable of the four. Take the 14-16 pieces of evidence and support and organize them into cohesive paragraphs.

Paragraph one will serve as an introduction to your essay. It will include the title of the piece, the author, and some background/historical information. It will also include a brief explanation of why you think it is the most valuable from the unit.

Paragraph two will be the first chunk of information you highlight. Perhaps you found a few pieces of support that were very visual or strong in imagery. You would put these together in one paragraph because a paragraph is simply a group of sentences focused on one topic.

Paragraph three will be the next chunk of information you highlight. If the previous paragraph focused on imagery, perhaps this paragraph could focus on historic significance. Each piece is an eyewitness account of a facet of America’s origins. The relevance of each is different and should be discussed.

Paragraph four will be the final chunk of information you highlight. Again, using quotes and direct support from the text, you are solidifying why you think the piece you chose is the most valuable. If paragraph two focused on imagery and paragraph three focused on history, maybe paragraph four could focus on emotional impact, either on the author or the reader.

Paragraph five is the culmination, or the wrap-up, of your essay. In this paragraph, you will briefly restate the significance of the piece you chose and reinforce why you find this to be of historical and literary value.

Please do not simply string a few quotes together and call it a paragraph. There should be thoughtfully-written sentences that flow from one to the next. Paragraphs are not scary or mysterious or instruments of torture. They are simply groups of sentences, the first of which is clearly indented. This grammatical feature is like a traffic sign that alerts the reader that there is a new topic being discussed in the essay. Grammar, like the humble paragraph, is your friend.