Essay Guidelines

Address the “little things” before the first round of peer editing (Some of these will be mentioned again):

* Heading (Upper left corner, single-spaced)

Your Name (Sean Leon)

Class (Leon 10H)

Date (08/15/17)

* Topic=Observation + Opinion
* Use present tense when discussing the novel
* Always analyze your evidence
* Use normal font **for your title** (No underlining, bold, etc)
* Be sure TITLE reflects the theme of the essay (for instance, 1984: Hierarchical Hegemony)
* Italicize all other titles
* Spell ALL proper nouns correctly!!!!!!!
* No contractions
* MLA Citations
* No 1st or 2nd person pronouns
* Pay attention to verb use. Only use “to be” and “to have” verbs when you have a rationale for using them. Otherwise, use active verbs. You should always circle all “to be” and “to have” verbs on your first draft. To Be (am, is, are, was, were)/To Have (has, have, had) verbs

General Formatting:

* Double-spaced; size 12 font; Times New Roman or similar
* **1 inch margins** on both left and right sides. Indentations– .5” or 1 tab space.
* Page numbers starting with page 2 (bottom right corner)
* Include Title, Author, and General Theme of work in first paragraph of essay…For Example—Jean Paul Sartre’s *Nausea*
* Follow MLA guidelines

Order of Arrangement:

* + Final Draft on top.
	+ 1st Draft—with significant corrections made + name and signature of reader

Avoid the Following:

* + Avoid Pronouns: I, it, you, me, we, us
	+ Avoid troublesome language. Do your best to avoid the following words: it, these, this, those, kind of, almost, seems, maybe, like, then, later, eventually, basically, constantly, so, many, a lot, things, due to the fact (or any variations of the fact that), in reality, very, really, forms of the verb “to be” and “to have”
	+ In the intro, nix all book-review commentary—i.e. “is fascinating, interesting…”
	+ Avoid meaningless sentences–i.e. “Authors rely heavily on symbolism.”
	+ Contractions
	+ While I am not suggesting that you avoid all modifiers, you certainly should be conscious of how you are using them. Yet, definitely avoid the likes of really, basically, very, excellent, terrible, etc.
	+ Avoid misspelling proper nouns!

Remember:

* + When writing about literature, write in the present tense.
	+ Active voice should be your default voice and only use passive when you are CHOOSING to use passive voice.
	+ Get comfortable writing in complex and compound sentences.
	+ Introductions and conclusions are factored into the grading of this essay.
	+ **Read your essay aloud and you will hear many diction and syntax issues.**

Keys to Good Writing:

* + Cohesion—Every sentence fits together; paragraphs flow smoothly.  Ensure that the entire discussion comes together as one unified discussion of your text and its context.
	+ Concision—Less is more.  Use fewer words to explain yourself.  Begin fusing sentences by merging ideas into tightly knit phrases.
	+ Precision—Accuracy.  Use words that accurately capture what you mean.  Don’t settle for words or expressions that come close.
	+ Coherence—Does your essay make sense? Are your ideas organized in a logical sequence? Do you prove your thesis? Do the parts contain the essence of the whole?