

FAIRFIELD LUDLOWE HIGH SCHOOL

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Dr. Vanessa Reale, Headmaster

Fairfield, Connecticut, June 2011

Dear future Ludlowe AP Modern European History student,

The school year is passing quickly and summer looms ahead of us. We are looking forward to sharing next year with you as we study Europe's rich and diverse history from 1450-2011. This class is certainly challenging, but also fascinating. It promises to be a great year!

In preparation for this experience, we would like you to read two books. These are available in libraries and bookstores. In addition, there are several copies of each book available in the library when you check out your books today! You should write your responses in single spaced, size 12, Times New Roman font, indicating your interaction with the subject material. You are asked to submit your notes on Manchester and your 'All Quiet' paper to www.turnitin.com by **Friday September 2, 2011 by 11:59 pm.**

Book #1 is **All Quiet on the Western Front** by Erich Maria Remarque. This journal paints a powerful picture of the realities of World War I. In your response you should discuss whether you believe this book was written as a pro-war or anti-war novel. Are there any changes in the attitudes towards war and patriotism as the book progresses? For this assignment please write a powerful thesis paragraph and then bullet FIVE supporting arguments (using specific examples from the text for substantiation). Your notes and thoughts on this book will be crucial later in the year as we discuss how World War I changed the face of Modern European History.

Book #2 is **A World Lit only by Fire: The Medieval World and the Renaissance – Portrait of an Age.** Manchester describes the medieval worldview as “shackled in ignorance, disciplined by fear, and sheathed in superstition.” What evidence does he give to support that perspective? Do you agree with his analysis? Be specific in your notes on which historical characters Manchester utilizes to confirm his thesis. On Friday, September 2, 2011, you will be asked to write an in class essay based on your notes. You will have 40 minutes to write the essay –we are interested in seeing your synthetic/analytical abilities and your capacity for writing succinctly and persuasively within a timed writing experience. **Take this opportunity to display your academic sophistication.**

Your reading notes on Manchester's books should be **no more** than 4 pages single spaced. These notes will be assessed for clarity, accessibility, comprehensiveness and, also for discernment in the identification of key principles. They will be due with your written essay at the end of class on Friday. These notes should include:

1. The Crisis' of the Middle Ages
2. The importance of the Church in the period of early Modern European History
3. The pivotal characters of this time period
4. Your response to Manchester's thesis that the medieval worldview was “shackled in ignorance, disciplined by fear, and sheathed in superstition.”

We look forward to seeing you in class next year. Have a great summer!

Sincerely,

Carol Samuelson and Colleen Sousa (Fairfield Ludlowe High School)