UNIT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Grade 11, Unit 1

Guiding Questions:

- What has been the historical vision of the American Dream?
- What should the American Dream be? (What should we as individuals and as a nation aspire to?)
- How would women, former slaves, and other disenfranchised groups living during the time these documents were written respond to them?

Overview:

This first unit of the year is important for many reasons. Not only is it a chance to get to know your classmates and teacher, it’s when you’ll get used to the routines of this classroom and become adept at using all the tools of your tablet. You’ll also dig into the work of the year, completing your first major presentation and writing assignment.

This year, you’ll learn and practice three kinds of writing.

1. **Argument**: In this kind of writing, you use evidence and logic to try to convince an audience of your opinion.
2. **Narrative**: In this kind of writing, you tell a story—either fiction or nonfiction. You create or describe characters and use literary techniques to bring your story to life for your reader.
3. **Informational Text and Writing**: This is where you conduct research, learn about different topics, and explain your knowledge to your readers.

In this unit, you’ll first participate in an American Dream Convention, acting as a particular historical figure arguing for his or her vision of the American Dream, and then you will write an argument laying out and defending your personal view of what the American Dream should be. To prepare for this argument, you will complete several steps:

1. Study historical visions of the American Dream, closely reading the founding documents of America.
2. Analyze one historical figure’s views in depth, and present as that character at an American Dream Convention, arguing for his or her unique perception of the American Dream.
3. Analyze the arguments you have heard, using the aspects that resonated most with you to craft your argument.

4. Write your own argument describing and defending your vision of what the American Dream should be.

5. Finally, get ready to publish your arguments by critiquing each other’s work and revising based on the feedback of your peers.