Paper 1

All humans make choices or decisions daily. Some are important; some are not so important. We choose what clothes to wear. We decide whether or not to do our homework. We choose certain people for friends. Sometimes the decisions we make change our lives.

Discuss an important decision you have made in your life. Explain the decision and how it affected you. Tell whether you would make the same decision again.

Format:
- Write on every other line
- Write on one side of the page (use the back for additions and revisions)
- Length: about 3-4 handwritten pages

Expectations:
- An introduction that states a clear thesis or main argument
- 2-4 body paragraphs that explain and develop your thesis with concrete, specific illustrations
- A brief conclusion
- You may use first person (I)
- Give your finished essay a title
ESSAY ONE: To Know or Not to Know?

PICK ONE PROMPT AND WRITE A FOUR-TO FIVE PARAGRAPH ESSAY IN RESPONSE.

- Write legibly in pen.
- Write on every other line in your notebook (to allow space for comments.)
- Your essay should have a clear, specific thesis (e.g., “X is true because of A, B, and C”) and well-developed body paragraphs that stay on topic (e.g., one for A, one for B, one for C).
- Your conclusion, while brief, should do more than just restate your thesis. Advance your argument in some way. (Implications for your current pursuit of a liberal arts education? Implications for your personal future? Implications for the future of our society?)
- DON’T STRESS: This essay is mainly for diagnostic purposes. If it ends up being your lowest grade, I will drop it from your final score in the class.

PROMPT ONE

The day you begin to suspect that all reality is an illusion, Laurence Fishburne shows up in your dorm room in his leather trench coat and Ray Bans and offers you the same choice he offered Keanu: the red pill or the blue pill?

The blue pill allows you to stay comfortably in your current illusion of reality (the world as you know it.)

The red pill awakens you to True Reality. (For the sake of this essay, you don’t yet know that True Reality is a ravaged world in which machines have enslaved our minds inside a computer simulation while they harvest our bodies inside giant power silos. Like Keanu, you just know that True Reality is something you have to be shown firsthand.)

Which pill do you take?

As evidence to support your decision, recount 2-3 examples from your own life of instances where finding out a hidden truth either helped or hindered your personal development. Or, you may focus on one such incident from your life and 2-3 of its consequences.

PROMPT TWO

“A well-rounded liberal arts education is essential to success in modern day America.”

Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

As evidence to support your argument, interpret 2-3 scenes from the video we watched of “Plato’s Allegory of the Cave”. What do these scenes tell us about the pros/cons of education?

Or, you may provide 2-3 examples from your own life to support your argument.

Or, you may combine scene interpretation from the video with personal evidence.