Reflective Writing 2 Option: Revisionaries Texas Board of Education and Textbook Massacre

The Texas Textbook Massacre Showdown Assignment Objective and Purpose: Use your voice. I have provided the platform and safe environment for students to participate in personalized, value added, political experience, whereby critical examination of current political issues and topics, result in structured and scholarly academic exchange and debate between peers. Helpful Resources and Useful Links NPR article, Revisionaries Tells Story of Texas Textbook Battle (Links to an external site.)PBS official website for Reivisionaries Independent Film (Links to an external site.)Texas Education Agency Official Government Website for State Board of Education (SBOE) (Links to an external site.)SBOE membership Card Collectors Pack (Links to an external site.)Texas State Board of Education Official Government Facebook Page (Links to an external site.)Texas Monthly Article: The Revisionaries Explores the SBOE (Links to an external site.)Video Synopsis: Topic and Background Information About the Film and Filmaker Obtained from PBS official website: http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/revisionaries/In Austin, Texas, 15 people influence what is taught to the next generation of American children. Once every decade, the highly politicized Texas State Board of Education rewrites the teaching and textbook standards for its nearly five million schoolchildren. And when it comes to textbooks, what happens in Texas affects the nation as a whole. Texas is one of the nation's largest textbook markets because it is one of the few where the state decides what books schools can buy rather than leaving it up to local districts, which means publishers that get their books approved can count on millions of dollars in sales. Further, publishers craft their standard textbooks based on the requirements of the biggest buyers. As a result, the Texas board has the power to shape the textbooks that children around the country read for years to come. Don McLeroy, a dentist, Sunday school teacher, and avowed young-earth creationist, leads the Religious Right charge. After briefly serving on his local school board, McLeroy was elected to the Texas State Board of Education and later appointed chairman. During his time on the board, McLeroy has overseen the adoption of new science and history curriculum standards, drawing national attention and placing Texas on the front line of the so-called “culture wars.” In his last term, McLeroy, aided by Cynthia Dunbar, an attorney from Houston and professor of Law at Jerry Falwell’s Liberty University, finds himself not only fighting to change what Americans are taught, but also fighting to retain his seat on the board. Challenged by Kathy Miller, president of the Texas Freedom Network, and Ron Wet Herington, an anthropology professor from Southern Methodist University in Texas, McLeroy faces his toughest term yet. The Revisionaries shines a spotlight on the key players affecting U.S. high school textbooks, with characters representing a wide array of personalities and desires. Some see the board as a stepping-stone to future political success. Others see it as their ordained quest to preserve the teachings of the Bible. Still others see it as their duty to ensure that their children, who are in the public schools, have access to the best possible education that will prepare them to compete for jobs in the global marketplace. In all of this, one thing is assured, these board members are in the right place at the right time. They have the opportunity to affect a generation of Americans.