Analytical Essay: Critically Examining the American Dream Purpose: For this essay block you will enter into a complex topic analytically, breaking down the intricate and multifaceted subject into smaller parts in order to gain a clearer understanding of it. Understanding is the ultimate goal of the analytical essay, and so they are an excellent way of honing your critical thinking skills. You will present your analysis to your readers after careful consideration of various arguments about our topic, and the narrowing your focus to a particular facet. Therefore you will be practicing/strengthening your skills in active reading, synthesis, logical reasoning, and analytical thinking. Overview: This essay topic is best introduced with a quote, from the man who first coined the term “American Dream, ” James Truslow Adams: The American Dream is that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement.... It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position. Although the actual term itself was first used by Adams in his 1931 book The Epic of America, the ideals that fuel this dream have always been an integral part of the framework of the United States and part of the basic building blocks for our national identity of “freedom and opportunity.” However, this term is also an evolving idea that reflects the current cultures and generations that make up the American populace. It tells us much about our ideological underpinnings, our socioeconomic health, and our cultural and social value systems and structures. Task: For this essay, we will be examining “The American Dream” on a personal, societal, socio- economical, historical, and / or ideological level. Even more particularly, we will be examining what it means to achieve such a dream at a time when cultures and identities are clashing, and when people are becoming ever more aware of the struggles faced by the non-wealthy, non-white classes. To write this essay, we will need to examine the rhetoric surrounding this charged term, and that means asking questions such as: · What is the American Dream? Has it evolved? · What does it take to achieve this dream? Is it more achievable for some than others? · Is the American Dream dwindling? Do we still have the same opportunities that we have always had? · What determines one’s success in achieving the dream? · What are the key aspects of the American Dream today and where did they come from? · Who decides them? Who should decide them? You are responsible for choosing your focus. The questions above are to get you thinking; feel free to explore an angle or aspect of your own choosing. You will need to narrow down (think age, socioeconomic status, gender, race, geographical region, etc.) and dig deep! Steps: 1. Read the sources for block 3. 2. Narrow your focus by thinking about what interests you most about the American Dream. Try completing a pre-essay writing brainstorm technique such as an outline or a free-write. 3. Determine the sources you will use. Reread the ones assigned that you will use from the assigned readings, and/or seek our sources on your own (See the source section and minimum requirements section). 4. Re-read the questions above, and attempt to answer some of them. Let these answers guide you toward a focus for your essay that breaks down the elements of the American Dream that are most compelling to you. Use your resources to help you. 5. Now write your essay. There should be a good balance of evidence AND analysis from you. Remember to synthesize. Review lectures from the block for help. 6. Make sure you give yourself time to revise, proofread, and edit. Don’t forget to take a look at the Lecture on MLA on Canvas if you need it. Sources: Three readings from the essay block are mandatory to use in the essay (whichever three you wish), the rest are optional, but you can use more if you wish (and the essay requires five sources total, so if you do not wish to do your own research, choose five from this list. · The American Dream, Quantified at Last · Inequality is Killing the American Dream · Deporting the American Dream · Retirement Dread is Replacing the American Dream · Can There Be A Less Materialistic American Dream · Can We Save the American Dream? · Competing Visions of the American Dream are Driving Democrats and Republicans Apart · The American Dream After Covid-19 · The New American Dream (Ted Talk) Minimum Requirements (Your Criteria for Success): · MLA Format · Five sources minimum. Three of your sources must come from the class readings and then can either use at least two more of mine OR two you find on your own. you want to use more, of your own or mine, that’s great. · 5 pages (full – that means to the bottom) of writing are required. · A Works Cited page that provides citations for ALL sources used (mine as well as the ones you find). This needs to be properly formatted using MLA.