**Poetry and Music as Social Commentary**

What role do poetry and music play in the world? Do they have the power to comment on and even bring about change? Do they have lasting power?

The goal of this assessment is to demonstrate your understanding of poetry as social commentary by dramatizing and presenting a poem, orally and written, and connecting it with a song. You will be working in groups for this oral/written assignment.

**Part 1**:

Select a poem, at least 14 lines long, that deals with a social issue; this does not have to be an issue we have discussed in class. To recite your poem, you may decide to do all choral readings or intersperse these with individual voices. Each person in the group must have something to do or say.

Think about what the poem is trying to convey and bring that meaning/interpretation out to the class by nuances of tone and voice. Recreate the images as you read. You must memorize the poem and you must use something visual to enrich the presentation: video montage, prezi, powerpoint, imovie, poster, acting, painting, etc. The goal of your visual is to visually display the images in the poem.

Either before you begin your presentation or right after it, a member of the group should talk about the poem and explain why you chose to present it in the way that you did. In addition, explicate the poem to the class and highlight examples of three literary elements that are evident in the poem. How do they reinforce the intention of the poet? Presentations should be between 5-10 minutes. You must have your poem on a flash drive so that it can be posted from the projector for your classmates to see.

**Part 2:**

Find a song that deals with the same issue. How does the musician present the issue? When is the song from (period in history?) Similarities between the song and the poem? Differences? Does the issue still have relevance in our society/world today? Explain. (Suggested artists: Bob Dylan, Neil Young, Rage Against the Machine, Green Day, Marvin Gaye, Bruce Springsteen, Ben Harper, Jack Johnson, U2, Sinead O’Connor, Public Enemy, etc.)

During your presentation, you will also play your song for the class. In your presentation, you will explain how your song connects to the poem you’ve chosen and how the song reinforces the ideas presented in the poem. You should make direct references to lines in the song as you are presenting.

**Part 3:**

2-3 page written explication of the poem. Be sure to examine the theme of the poem and whether the poet is successful at commenting on that theme. In your explication, you should choose 3-4 portions of the poem that specifically help to bring out the overall meaning (theme) of the poem.

Choose Groups (no more than four people) by:

Days to work in the library:

Presentation day(s):

*If one person in your group is absent on the day you are to present, the group must have a back-up plan in place.*