**English 11**

**Essay Assignment – The Crisis and Declaration of Independence (100pts.)**

You are the Senior Intelligence Officer on a starship from the planet Voldar. Your ship has been sent to a solar system in which the third planet from the sun, called “Earth” by its inhabitants, is in the year 2016 (5243 by your planet’s calendar). Your mission is to evaluate this planet and help determine whether Voldar should contact the inhabitants. For now, you and the crew of your ship are undetected by the earthlings. Specifically, you must evaluate the values of this planet.

You have determined that the country known as the United States of America appears to be the dominant power on this planet. Its inhabitants claim that it is “the greatest country,” not only in the present time, but of all earth time. Your sensors have searched archives and found two documents that were written at the time of the founding of this country: “The Crisis” by Thomas Paine, and “The Declaration of Independence” written primarily by a man named Thomas Jefferson, a relatively quiet, shy man, but edited by others including a group of people called the “founding fathers.” Your sensors have also identified and scanned an ancient document by a man named Aristotle, which outlines three ways to persuade: ethos, logos, and pathos.

Importantly, the Voldarians are an advanced civilization, valuing the art of civilized persuasion with principles surprisingly similar to Aristotle’s. Voldarians value logic, much like the Vulcans, but they also value genuine emotion. Voldarians also value individual freedom, equality among all races and genders (Voldarians have more than two genders), and building consensus among all people, very similar to this earth idea of democracy.

*You have several questions to consider regarding these documents. Choose one question to cover in your initial report:*

1. *What values does the “Declaration of Independence” document represent and are these values compatible with Voldar’s? You may point out shortcomings in the actual life of the earthlings from the United States. In other words, have the people lived up to the ideals of the document? Are there inherent contradictions in the document?*
2. *For either “The Declaration of Independence” or “The Crisis”, how well does the document use the techniques of persuasion including audience, purpose, ethos, logos, pathos? You must describe how these techniques are used and evaluate their effectiveness.*

Your commanding officer back on Voldar requires the following for your report (he has high standards but believes you are capable of achieving them):

* 2-3 pages typed, double spaced
* Formal academic essay format (see reverse side for details)
* No use of the word “I”. This is an objective document, not your personal opinion. In the background section, you may refer to “our ship”, “our scanners”, etc.
* Standard academic language, proper spelling and punctuation. (Your commander is fair but has been known to exile those who obviously haven’t proofread their reports to the dilithium crystal mines of Rigel 12.)

Format for Voldarian Intelligence Report

1. Introduction
   1. Provide a brief background regarding the earth document you are analyzing.
   2. State a clear thesis with general ideas of why it is true (prongs). Be sure that you have answered the question/prompt.
2. Support
   1. At least three paragraphs of specific evidence from the text (document) using quotes.
   2. Elaboration regarding how the evidence supports your thesis.
3. Conclusion
   1. Restate your thesis in a fresh way.
   2. Provide a “next step” action: should we contact the inhabitants (of the United States) immediately, return in the future, leave intelligence officers on the planet to continue monitoring, etc.?

**Due Dates:**

* **Typed draft due next Thursday, Sept. 29.** It will be graded by your commanding officer and reviewed by your fellow intelligence officers.
* **Final report due Thursday October 6.**