

# Honors 11 Government and Economics

## Mr. Wellek

### Summer Reading Evaluation

Each student is required to read one of the six titles indicated below for this course. Please read your selected title and answer all of the questions for that title. **This assignment is due on the first day of school, Wednesday, August 30, 2006** (even if you do not have this course until second semester!). **Please turn in your assignment to Mr. Wellek in Room 231.**

#### **John Locke – *Second Treatise On Civil Government***

##### **Questions to be answered fully using complete sentences:**

1. How does John Locke define political power? Did it exist in the state of nature?
2. What is the importance of Locke's concept of property for his political thought?
3. What is the basis of the inviolability of property?
4. How do political societies come into existence according to John Locke? What protection do subjects have against an unjust or tyrannical government?
5. How does Locke approach the question of slavery?
6. Compare and contrast John Locke's ideas of freedom and government with The Declaration of Independence written by Thomas Jefferson.

#### **Jean Jacques Rousseau – *The Social Contract***

##### **Questions to be answered fully using complete sentences:**

1. Why was Rousseau's approach to the idea of *The Social Contract* important in the development of the idea of nationalism?
2. Must this approach necessarily produce nationalism?
3. How does Rousseau solve the fundamental problem of forming an association which will defend, protect, and unite himself with all, yet may also still obey himself alone, and remain as free as before?

#### **Niccoló Machiavelli – *The Prince***

##### **Questions to be answered fully using complete sentences:**

1. Why shouldn't you, as a private citizen, be reading *The Prince*?
2. What is Machiavelli's opinion of mankind? Why is it fundamental to his system of politics?
3. What, in Machiavelli's view, determined whether a prince's action was good or bad?
4. What is Machiavelli's conception of the workings of the historical process?
5. In chapter 15, what does Machiavelli consider to be novel or original in his approach to politics?

## **Adam Smith – *Adam Smith: Selected Philosophical Writings***

### **Questions to be answered fully using complete sentences:**

1. Two phrases often associated with the economic ideas of Adam Smith are: “Laissez-faire,” and “The invisible hand.” In the context of Smith’s views, explain the meaning of each term.
2. Adam Smith regarded competition as a force that would benefit consumers. Explain this statement.
3. Explain the following excerpt – “Every individual is continually exerting himself to find out the most advantageous employment for whatever capital he can command. It is his own advantage, indeed, and not that of society, which he has in view. But the study of his own advantage naturally, or rather necessarily leads him to prefer that employment which is the most advantageous to the society.”
4. Why did Adam Smith regard self-interest as an important feature of his economic system?
5. Compare and contrast Adam Smith’s views on the subject of laissez-faire foreign trade with those of the mercantilists (supporters of mercantilism).

## **Thomas Malthus – *An Essay on the Principle of Population***

### **Questions to be answered fully using complete sentences:**

1. What did Malthus mean when he said that the output of food increased arithmetically, where as population grew geometrically? What was the significance of this conclusion?
2. What, in Malthus’ view, would finally reconcile the differences between population growth and food production?
3. What Malthus described in terms of food production and the birth rate, today’s economists would equate with real economic growth. What is economic growth?
4. What would have Malthus’ solution to problems created by insufficient economic growth?
5. Why was Malthus opposed to housing projects and other proposals to relieve the suffering of the poor?

## **John Maynard Keynes – *The End of Laissez-Faire and the Economic Consequences of Peace***

### **Questions to be answered fully using complete sentences:**

1. According to Keynes, how was it possible for poverty to exist in the midst of plenty?
2. Show how the experience of the Great Depression of the 1930’s reinforced Keynes theories while, at the same time, disproves Say’s laws that “supply creates its own demand”.
3. During the 1970’s the nation experienced a period of high inflation AND recession or, as economists called it, “stagflation.” How did this create a problem for those who subscribed to the ideas of J.M. Keynes?
4. Why does a federal deficit and a huge national debt make it difficult to apply Keynesian solutions to economic problems caused by unemployment and/or recession?