ESSAY 2: AGE OF REASON/REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD INSTRUCTIONS

Choose ONE of the following topics and write a polished essay of about 750 words (3-4 double spaced typed

pages). The essay requires not less than 2 secondary sources in addition to your primary sources (the literature you

are analyzing). Before writing your essay, reread your notes and assigned textbook reading(s) just to refresh your

memory. Also, it might be useful to reread a composition textbook to remind yourself of the guidelines on how to

write a clearly-defined thesis statement, well-developed paragraph(s), and an essay using the MLA or APA or

Turabian parenthetical method of documentation for your quotations and any secondary sources you cite. To let your

instructor know which style of documentation you are using, write MLA, APA, or Turabian in the title of your essay as

follows: Title – Citation style (e.g., “Christians and the Study of American Literature – APA”).

Your 2 secondary sources should be academic, peer-reviewed sources, such as articles from scholarly journals and

books. Websites, such as Lit Charts, Spark Notes, Shmoop, and so on are not academic sources. Dictionaries,

encyclopedias, and other professors’ notes are likely accurate, but they are not academic research. You can cite our

textbook in your paper, but it will not count toward your 2 secondary sources. If you have trouble finding scholarly

secondary sources, you can access the library’s English Research Guide here.

Develop a clear thesis that is grounded in the literature and specifies the titles of the literary works. Remember that

while it is acceptable to include some biographical and historical information for context, your focus should be on

analyzing the literature.

NOTE: To receive an excellent grade, a student must demonstrate a reasonable competence in organizing an essay

on a set topic; developing ideas logically and systematically; supporting these ideas with the necessary evidence,

quotations or examples; organizing a paragraph; documenting essays (using MLA, APA, or Turabian) style; spelling

the commoner words of the English language correctly; punctuating correctly; and writing grammatical sentences,

avoiding such common mistakes as comma splices, run-on sentences, sentence fragments, faulty agreements,

faulty references, shifts in person, number, or tense.

1. Choose any ONE of the works/authors of the Age of Reason/Revolutionary period studied in this course and write

a literary analysis of the chosen work. The focus of the essay should be three-fold: to discuss the theme of the

author/work, the major characteristics of the period that are evident in the work, and major narrative devices the

author uses to communicate his or her message. Your essay must have a clearly-defined thesis statement, welldeveloped paragraph(s), and fitting conclusion. In your thesis, assert how the author uses narrative devices to

convey the theme of the work and how the theme or narrative devices demonstrate major characteristics of the

period. Include direct quotes from the primary sources for analysis and support.