World History Name:

Mr. Murray Date:

Your Enlightenment Block:

**Directions:** *We have been discussing the enlightenment, a period of time in Europe when thinkers questioned conventional wisdom of absolute rule and divine right of kings. This is an exercise to broaden your mind and stop and think about the past and the world around you today just like Enlightenment thinkers did more than 300 years ago. You are going to be required to stop and think about what you truly believe. Your answers must be thorough and specific. If you don’t understand a question, or if you don’t have an opinion on it, it is your responsibility to do some research and form an opinion.  I encourage you to talk to friends, family, watch the news and read the paper. I will not grade you down for your opinion; I want you to be honest. You must create a colorful title page with a creative title, maybe a “aha moment”. This assignment must be typed, spelling and grammar count, and is worth up to 100 assessment points.  You need to answer (25) of the (30) questions.*

1.If you had the opportunity to get a message across to a large group of people, what would it be?

2. What would you do differently in your life if you knew nobody would judge you?

3. What was the most important event in world history and why?

4.  If you could sit down and have lunch with any three people dead or alive, who would they be and why? What would you want to learn from them?

5. If you could transport yourself back in time, where would you go and why?

6. Why do we call some religions “mythologies” (ancient Greek, Norse, Egyptian, etc) and others religions? Is this fair? What does this show about how relevant certain ideas are as society progresses?

7.  People often talk about the growing gap between rich and poor.  However, today’s poor are much better off than most people were 100’s or 1000’s of years ago.  Does it matter that there’s an increasing gap between the rich and the poor if the standard of living for the poor keeps going up?

8. What is honor? What historical deed(s) should garner the highest honor?

9 Imagine there was a box that if you touched could give your positive emotion to everyone on the planet, yet if you touched this box you would take in all the negative emotion of all the people on the planet, would you touch the box? Why?

10. What is true strength?

11 Suppose there were an experience machine that would give you any experience you desired. Superduper neuropsychologists could stimulate your brain so that you would think and feel you were writing a great novel, or making a friend, or reading an interesting book. All the time you would be floating in a tank, with electrodes attached to your brain. Should you plug into this machine for life, preprogramming your life's desires?...Of course, while in the tank you won't know that you're there; you'll think it's all actually happening. Others can also plug in to have the experiences they want, so there's no need to stay unplugged to serve them. (Ignore problems such as who will service the machines if everyone plugs in.) Would you plug in?  Why?

12. Would you rather be insane in a functional society, or one of the people running a profoundly dysfunctional society?

13.Is open-mindedness really a virtue if truly destructive ideas are spreading in society?

14. Who are you? Names, nationalities, and virtually any other socially-defined attributes do not count. Deep down, who are you?

15. If you could change something in the past what would it be? What effect do you think that change would have on the way history progressed?

16.  Is there a line between insanity and creativity?

17. When it comes to the writing of history, what is the truth?

18. Is a “wrong” act okay if nobody ever knows about it?

19. If you were going to write a book, what would you call it and what would it be about?

20. If you could visit any country in the world, where would you go and why?

21. Is torture ever a good option? If no, why not? If yes, when?

22. Is Americanization becoming a problem in the world, or is it progress?

23. Is there a way to prevent war from happening, or is it inevitable?

24. What is the biggest issue facing our country today and why?

25. If you could throw any kind of party, what would it be like and what would it be for?

26. What should happen to a country that uses chemical weapons?

27. If you could choose anyone who would be your pick as your mentor, who would guide you through the rest of your life?

28. If you could witness an event in the past, present or future what would it be?

29. If you could learn to do anything, what would it be?

30. (Type on a separate page, turn letter in sealed and in an envelope with a forever stamp if you want it sent in five years)

Write a letter to yourself five years in the future. Talk about your hopes an aspirations, where you want to be in life, fun and exciting adventures you hope to partake in, ect.

Write a letter to your parents/guardians five years in the future. Talk about how much they have meant to you, how they have helped you on your journey, how much you admire them ect.