Mr. Petersen
ENG 11 Summer Writing
DUE: Day after Labor Day

ENGLISH 11/Honors 11

<u>Summer Drop Out</u>

Introduction
Undoubtedly, some of the great questions of our day revolve around the fact we are increasingly being subjected to mass media and smart phone technologies of various kinds—social media, Netflix, 24/7 news, video games, wearables, GPS, and laptops in schools, are just some of the ways that our lives have become saturated with media. Community leaders, parents, teachers, and indeed, many students, have become suspicious of media technology's ubiquity and overbearing influence on our daily experiences. Perhaps the most drastic reaction to this contemporary problem is to "drop out"—that is, simply refuse, indefinitely, or for an allotted time, to interact with new media technology. This means that one goes on with her day without checking social media, watching Netflix, playing games on her phone, or wearing her Fitbit. The point is to experience life without having recourse to our familiar and dependable media technology.

Assignment
This summer you will be asked to "drop out" on two separate occasions. When you decide to drop out and for how long is up to you. *You should try to drop out for at least 72 hours, but it is recommended that you try for an entire week at some point*. Obviously, some of our daily requirements necessitate access to media technology—as part of your summer job, or to communicate with a family member, for instance—yet everyone ought to be able to sacrifice some kind of media technology they are accustomed to using. Each time you drop out you will record your experiences in a notebook. You should answer questions like:

- What did you give up?
- What are the hardest and easiest parts about "dropping out?"
- Do you go about your day differently without media technology? Do you think different thoughts? Do you have different experiences?
- What do you miss most about your interaction with media technology? Is there something that you simply could not give up? Why?

After or during your "dropping out," read the following two articles about the influence of new media technology:

Nicholas Carr, "Is Google Making us Stupid?"
https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/07/is-google-making-us-stupid/306868/
James Bowman, "Is Stupid Making us Google?"
http://www.thenewatlantis.com/publications/is-stupid-making-us-google

Before you return to school you will have "dropped out" twice, recorded your experiences in a notebook, read the two articles, and in a final reflection of 750-1,000 words, written about your overall experience.

In addition to addressing the above prompts, you should also explain why you agree or disagree that "dropping out" is a worthwhile activity for people. And you need to carefully consider one main point from each of the readings.

I will collect the 750-1,000 word reflection on the first day of classes, and we will discuss your experiences and the readings then. Good luck!