English 1A Spring 2012

**Book Club Progress Reports, Halfway Mark**

**Directions**: This assignment is intended to give you some direction as you read your book club books. The progress report is **due the first class after spring break.** Answers to the questions below must be typed. They must be handed in on time the day they are due to receive credit (20 points), and they must be in your own words.

Note: Each individual in the club is to write his/her own response to the book, though of course you can discuss them. I don’t want to see any overlap, especially on questions 3 and 4. This will require some texting/emailing among you, so keep in touch.

**Questions**:

1. Describe **one character** that you find interesting. Cite at least one particular passage and give page numbers where this character is described / discussed. What is interesting about this character? What does he or she add to the story? [Note: If your book is written as a memoir in the first person (I/me/my), then you can’t use the narrator for this question.]
2. All of the books contain an element of **ethnography** (writing about culture), and in some books it is the central task, to present the author’s discoveries about a particular cultural group, often by examining how that group relates with the dominant culture, and how the group is defined against the dominant culture. Discuss this element of your book. What group(s) are being examined? What have you learned about it (or them) so far? What is distinctive/interesting/surprising about this group, either for you, for the author, or both.
3. Find one **reflective passage** in your book that you think is particularly interesting, and tell me 1) where I can find it (page number, 1st and last line), and 2) What is interesting about it? Note: by “reflective” I mean a passage where the writer is neither telling a story nor describing something but is offering an interpretation of something, telling what he/she thinks something means.
4. Find another passage in your book (different from the one above) that you think would make a good **prompt for an in-class essay**. There has to be an argument at the heart of it, some statement that people could have different views about. 1) Tell me where I can find it (as described above), and why it seems interesting and meaty enough to be a prompt. 2) Tell me (in a sentence or two) what you think about it, what your view on the arguable claim would be.