

## 21L002 First Essay

You should begin to think about your first essay. This essay will have several parts, and also several stages. Please refer to the syllabus on the format for handing in your final draft.

1. In the first part (you can make this your introduction), identify an interesting question or hypothesis from one of the books we've read: *Ender's Game*, *The Prince*, *The War of Conquest*, with a brief explanation of where you find them. For example, thinking about the character Peter in *Ender's Game* could lead you to the question of whether a bad man can be a good leader. (Your introduction might get a little more information about how the question comes up in Card's novel).

2. In the second part (this will be the body of your essay), take this question or hypothesis to a second book from the reading, and see what results you get by posing the question or applying the hypothesis. What answers does *The Prince* give to our question of whether bad man can be good leaders? Don't be shy of discussing conflicting evidence in the text: your question is a heuristic tool, aimed at producing insights which may or may not boil down to a single answer. Do reread the text, rather than trusting your memory; to be persuasive, you will need to talk about specific moments in the text, but within a general sense of what the text is doing overall. Once you have written enough to have a sense of your argument, look over your text with the eye of a reader, and think about what questions a reader might have, what needs to be explained, on what points a reader might disagree and need additional convincing. To make this exercise work, put yourself in the position of the reader we all are most of the time: intelligent, familiar with the text, and reasonably well disposed to the writer and the subject, but rushed and easily distracted by other responsibilities and pleasures. Be clear, be concise, be persuasive, show a little flair.

3. In the third part (this will be your conclusion), sum up what you've learned about the second book: if there are contradictions, can they be resolved? If the answer is obvious, is it important or trivial? Should another question be asked in addition, or instead? If time and space permit, return now to the first book from the perspective of the second: what would Machiavelli say about Card's take on morals and leadership?

Your total writing for the class should add up to 20 pp. of final drafts; within these parameters, adjust the length of individual papers to your own taste. Please feel free to make appointments with the course tutor or me at any time it seems helpful to do so, over and above the meetings which are required.

### ***Dates:***

Phase 1: submit a draft to me, and schedule an appointment to discuss the draft with the course tutor. Draft due: a day, prior to Class #8, 5 pm.

Phase 2: Rewrite the paper, taking into account your conversation with the course tutor and comments you may also get from me by email or in class. Revision due: in Class #9.