Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

CLASS ASSIGNMENT: In-DEPTH Text analysis : *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, Martin Luther King Jr.

**Part 1 – PARTNER/GROUP Questions**

**Assignment**: Work with a partner to answer the following questions on Rhetoric and Style in Martin Luther King Jr.’s “Letter.” You will need to reference evidence from your text to answer each question – Divide and Conquer with your partner. You may answer in your composition book – please label the questions and write your partner’s name. You only need to include the questions you are working on, but be responsible for understanding all of the answers.

1. FIRST, List the other historical movements to which King compares the civil rights movement. THEN explain the purpose of including this information.
2. What is King’s tone in the opening paragraph? How might you make an argument for its being ironic?
3. How do King’s allusions to biblical figures and events appeal to both ethos and pathos?
4. Why does King go into such detail to explain the basic principles and process of the nonviolent protest movement?
5. In the periodic sentence in paragraph 14 (beginning with “But when you have seen…”), why does King arrange the “when” clauses in the order that he does? Try repositioning them and discuss the difference in effect.
6. Paragraph 16 exerts a strong appeal to logos. How can you express King’s arguments in a series of syllogisms?
7. What are the rhetorical strategies\* in paragraph 25? Try to identify at least four.
8. What are the chief rhetorical strategies\* in paragraph 31? Identify at least five.
9. Trace one of the following patterns of figurative language throughout King’s “Letter”: darkness and light, high and low, sickness and health. **(Last names beginning with A-F trace Darkness and Light, Last names beginning with G-M trace High and Low, Last names beginning with N-Z trace Sickness and Health) –** You may simply highlight any instances of this language – in a different color – on the text.
10. King uses various kinds of repetition – repetition of single words or phrases, of sentence structures, and of sounds. Focusing a a passage of one or more paragraphs’ length, discuss the effect of King’s use of repetition.
11. Considering the final three paragraphs as King’s conclusion, explain why or why not you believe it to be rhetorically effective.
12. Describe what King does in the two sentences that make up his second-to-last paragraph of his letter (*If I have said anything in this letter…).*

**\*NOTE: Although we have reviewed several RHETORICAL STRATEGIES in class, you also received a list of rhetorical terms to study over the summer – you may incorporate these in your answer.**

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Part II** – INDIVIDUAL ESSAY RESPONSE – Due Friday, October 4

Individual Simulated AP Essay Questions – **CHOOSE ONE** of the following FOUR essay questions to respond to – You will have time in class tomorrow to work on – final is due Friday.

1. **Rhetorical Analysis**. In paragraphs 13 and 14 Martin Luther King Jr. argues for the urgency of changing segregation laws. Write an essay analyzing the rhetorical strategies\* he uses to make his argument.
2. **Rhetorical Analysis**. In paragraphs 27 through 31, Martin Luther King Jr. considers the accusation that his nonviolent protest movement is “extreme.” Write an essay analyzing the rhetorical strategies\* he employs to respond to this claim.

\*NOTE: Although we have reviewed several RHETORICAL STRATEGIES in class, you also received a list of rhetorical terms to study over the summer – you may incorporate these in your answer. A Listing of Rhetorical Strategies is also on my site in the AP English Section.

1. **Argument.** Martin Luther King Jr. claims in his “Letter” that “it is an historical fact that privileged groups seldom give up their privileges voluntarily. Individuals may see the moral light and voluntarily give up their unjust posture, but…groups tend to be more immoral than individuals” (paragraph 12). Write an essay defending, challenging, or qualifying King’s claim. Support your position with evidence from your own experience, observation, or knowledge.
2. **Argument.** Martin Luther King Jr. made the following observation in his “Letter”: “Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection” (paragraph 23). Write an essay explaining why you agree or disagree with King’s statement. Use specific evidence from your own experience, observation, or reading to develop your position.

NAME:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Part III: FOR HOMEWORK, answer the following multiple choice questions – be ready to defend your answer. Due Tuesday, October 1

These multiple choice questions refer to paragraphs 17-22. You are encouraged to look up definitions and add them to your VOCABULARY section.

1. Paragraphs 17-18 contain all of the following EXCEPT
2. antithesis
3. rhetorical question
4. imperative sentence
5. metaphor
6. compound-complex sentence
7. What is the primary purpose of paragraph 19?
   1. to challenge a point made in the previous paragraph.
   2. to give an example of a difference between theory and practice
   3. to summarize the points made in the previous two paragraphs
   4. to introduce an idea that the author will refute in subsequent paragraphs
   5. to emphasize the author’s personal experience.
8. The following sentence from paragraph 20 is an example of which rhetorical device?: “I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust, and who willingly accepts the penalty of imprisonment in order to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the highest respect for the law.”

a. anaphora

b. personification

c. oxymoron

d. paradox

e. apostrophe

1. What is the purpose of sentences 2 and 3 in paragraph 20: “In no sense do I advocate evading or defying the law, as would the rapid segregationist. That would lead to anarchy”.?
   1. to emphasize an assumption of the author’s argument
   2. to signal a shift in tone
   3. to acknowledge and refute a counter-argument
   4. to provide a specific example of a point made in the previous paragraph
   5. to qualify the author’s thesis
2. Paragraph 21 appeals to which of the following?
3. Judeo-Christian beliefs
4. Racial Pride
5. Patriotism
   * 1. I only
     2. II only
     3. III only
     4. I and III only
     5. I, II, and III
6. Paragraph 22, on Nazi Germany, illustrates all of the following EXCEPT
   1. hyperbole
   2. an appeal to ethos
   3. concrete diction
   4. an appeal to pathos
   5. complex sentences
7. The author’s tone in paragraph 22 can best be described as
   1. ironic bitterness
   2. controlled anger
   3. grudging respect
   4. feigned sympathy
   5. detached cynicism
8. Taken as a whole, this passage utilizes which of the following organizational patterns?

I. definition

II. cause-and-effect

III. comparison and contrast

a. I only

b. I and II only

c. III only

d. I and III only

e. I, II, and III

1. The style of this passage as a whole is most accurately characterized as
   1. informal and descriptive
   2. complex and reasoned
   3. abstract and allusive
   4. objective and formal
   5. emotional and evocative