



MILLER SCHOOL of ALBEMARLE

Summer Reading Assignment

Course: U.S. History and Government
Grade: 11th
Teacher: Mr. David Riddick
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Required Book: *The Making of the President 1960*, by Theodore White
(ISBN: 978-0061900600)

A Harper Perennial Political Classic, *The Making of the President 1960* is the groundbreaking national bestseller and Pulitzer Prize-winning account of the 1960 presidential campaign and the election of John F. Kennedy. With this narrative history of American politics in action, Theodore White revolutionized the way presidential campaigns are reported. *The Making of the President 1960* remains the most influential publication about the election of John F. Kennedy.

We will use this book in conjunction with our spring research project on **The Making of American Presidents**, which requires our students to research and write a 12-page formal research paper.

Summer Assignment:

(To be submitted via Google Drive on the first day of class.)

(Expect a Test on the Summer Reading Assignment.)

Reading Comprehension Questions:

Please answer each of the following questions, citing materials from your reading of the book.

1. Describe the weather across the USA on Election Day 1960. How does weather impact an election?
2. Describe the cycle of election results as they roll in on Election Night from East to South to Mid-West to Far West.
3. How does the time difference between Connecticut and California play into the Bandwagon Effect?
4. Describe the nomination strategies used by the various candidates for the Democratic Party nomination for President in 1960.
5. Both major American political parties are made up of what two wings?
6. Who was Richard M. Nixon? Who was Nelson Rockefeller?
7. What happened in the West Virginia Democratic Party Primary? Why was it so important?
8. Why did JFK choose Lyndon Johnson for Vice-President in 1960?
9. What was the "Missile Gap"?

(over)

10. Why is the Chicago Republican Party Convention Richard Nixon's finest moment in the campaign?
11. By the time the major Party's convention is over, what percentage of voters have already made up their minds on who to vote for in November?
12. What ethnic, geographic, and economic trends were apparent in the Census of 1959?
13. Why had the "Negro Vote" become so important by 1960?
14. What was the Electoral College strategy of each candidate?
15. What brought about the idea of a Televised Debate between the two major candidates?
16. How did Richard Nixon become ill?
17. Why did JFK "win" the debate? How did Nixon "lose" the debate? Was this a turning point in the campaign? Why?
18. What is the basis of the axiom that campaign do not start till after the World Series is over?
19. What three things contributed the most to JFK's victory?
20. What three things contribute the most to Nixon's defeat?