AP Literature

Personal Narrative Essay: “The American Dream”

3-4 pages Due: Feb. 26

After reading several texts that address the idea of what it means to be an outsider in America, we have seen and discussed the concept of the “American Dream” and how it differs from person to person. In America, we have a dream or goal that is supported by a capitalistic society that encourages the individual to pursue his or her own path to success. However, the stark reality is that such success is more difficult to achieve than imagined and many people struggle or fail. Additionally, we focus so much on the individual in society, that we lack a single national identity. In this essay, you will explore these themes in the texts and in your own life. Choose two of the texts we’ve read this unit and compare them to your own life experience. How do the narrators describe his or her view of the American dream? What is the American dream to you? How are the narrators part of a small microcosm of society and therefore rejected by the larger American society? Have you ever experienced this yourself? You will cite the text/s directly, but are not required to do any outside research. You are encouraged to use personal anecdotes and to write in the first person, when referring to your own experience.