The summer reading assignment for AP Language is *The Road to Character* by David Brooks. The notes at Amazon.com state, “...in *The Road to Character*, [Brooks] focuses on the deeper values that should inform our lives. Responding to what he calls the culture of the Big Me, which emphasizes external success, Brooks challenges us, and himself, to rebalance the scales between our ‘résumé virtues’—achieving wealth, fame, and status—and our ‘eulogy virtues,’ those that exist at the core of our being: kindness, bravery, honesty, or faithfulness, focusing on what kind of relationships we have formed.”

You will need to purchase your own copy of the book and complete the following tasks before we return to school. Unless otherwise noted, your responses should be typed:

1) **VALUES:** *The Road to Character* explores the personal values of several amazing historical figures. Brooks focuses particularly on personal values that have changed in the last half century. After reading the book, **identify three of these shifting values and write a comparison paragraph about each.** Each paragraph should explain the value as he has identified it in a character study, as well identifying the differences in that value as it is manifested in the world today. Please write no more than 200 words for each value.

2) **CAUSES:** *The Road to Character* is a thorough causal analysis, deep with qualitative and even some quantitative research that identifies the causal factors have led to a shift from “Adam II” values to “Adam I” values (you will understand that when you start reading!). After reading the book, **create a list of ten causes that are responsible for this shift** (these do not have to be complete sentences).

3) **DICTION:** David Brooks’ prose is impressive. He shifts flawlessly between objective, journalistic observation and eloquent, rich, and even moving narration. Perhaps most impressive is his diction – his ability to use the right word at the right time to say exactly what he means to say. **While you read, please highlight or underline vocabulary words that are at the edge of or beyond your knowledge** (Note: Do not stop reading to look up or define these words unless you are confused. For now, just mark them. I will be checking your books when we return, and we will be working with this vocabulary throughout the year).

I will be setting up a MyBigCampus page for our class with a discussion thread on *The Road to Character* so that you can ask questions about this assignment or merely share observations about the book. I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I did.

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