*Fences* and “The Ground on Which I Stand” Take Home Short Essays

**Requirements:**

You will write a minimum of three typed short essays submitted to Edmodo by Friday. Each essay should be a minimum of 200 words but it is really the QUALITY of your use of language and sentence variety that will set your writing apart from others. To self-score use the “Analytical Writing Rubric” in the “Writer’s Toolbox” to give you a holistic score on your writing. For instance, a “C” meets the minimum requirements and is formulaic whereas an “A” or a “B” is thoughtfully written around a thesis, non-formulaic and uses sentence variety to create flow and is free from errors that distract from meaning.

**MLA references**, for each short essay you must include:

* Direct quotes from *Fences* (pg.)
* A quote or reference to the film

\*\*\*These references should be documented on a separate “Works Cited” page.

**Essay Prompts:** Choose three of the following prompts. Write the question on top of your paper.

* How is the human condition explored in the lives of the characters?
* “All of us as an American people” is a value emphasized in both interviews with Wilson as well as stated in the video. Discuss how the struggles of ordinary black people could compare to your own cultural identity and struggles of whom you consider your people.
* Shakespeare is taught in almost every high school in the United States. Many other important playwrights exist that may better portray the human condition. How is August Wilson a “Shakespeare” in his own way? Should schools open up the canon to allow for other voices in the curriculum?
* Research the Black Arts Movement. What is Wilson’s place in this movement and how are the themes and ideals from this movement interwoven into *Fences*?
* How is Wilson a poet? Where are poetics displayed in *Fences*?
* Ma Rainey once said “the blues is something we use to make it through life”. How are the characters like an instrument Wilson uses to speak to the attitudes and ideals of people?
* How is Troy a character that is “deprived of his song”?
* Your choice- must not be a summary, develop your own thesis around a topic of interest inspired from the film.