Welcome to the “Upper-class!” One of the biggest goals of your junior English class is to develop your literary analysis skills. It is equally important that you develop strong writing skills in order to advocate for yourself and your community in your post-secondary efforts. To that end, these texts have been selected because they balance advanced literary technique and real-world connections to literature. The activities are designed to help you develop those advanced literacy skills you will be expected to master your junior year.

**Texts to Read:**

1. *Blink! The Power of Thinking without Thinking.* Malcolm Gladwell (1100L):
   a. **Key Understanding:** Gladwell gives the reader many examples of how our intuitive judgment is developed by experience, training, and knowledge.

   OR

2. *12 Years a Slave.* Solomon Northup (1200L):
   a. **Key Understanding:** Solomon Northup’s 12 Years a Slave recounts the author’s life story as a free black man from the North who was kidnapped and sold into slavery in the pre-Civil War South

AND

   a. **Key Understanding:** These chapters will help students analyze how authors use violence, to make powerful and symbolic statements.

   NOTE: The companion texts chosen feature these characteristics at a sophisticated level, therefore these chapters have been provided as a scaffold for students.
Tasks to Complete:

**Blink! The Power of Thinking without Thinking**
For each of the six sections of the book, complete the following

1. A comprehensive summary (1 paragraph minimum)
2. A paraphrase of the central idea of each chapter. One sentence minimum.

Reflect on the central idea of each chapter. Write an argumentative essay and apply the text to a real-life decision-making moment in which a split-second decision making, instinct, or thin-slicing was used either positively or negatively. Rely on anecdotes and argue the pros and cons of your approach. Use the strongest, most compelling textual evidence to support your argument. (500-word minimum)

**12 Years a Slave**
Task: Identify three circumstances in the text with which you can connect, and explain the connection in about one paragraph for each. These can range from loss, sadness, fear, gender identity, hope, etc.

Choose one, on which to create a creative outlet to express your connection to the situation. Some ideas include, but are not limited to:

a. A well-crafted and organized essay (500 word minimum)

b. An engaging and professionally-developed digital presentation

c. A multimedia video and/or podcast

d. A tri-fold poster board

The total project should include relevant and sufficient textual evidence, an original and concise analysis of the evidence, and a compelling personal connection.