ESSAY # 2: THE NOVEL

Peer Edit/Rough Draft Due date is ___________________________(bring one typed copy of essay)

Final Draft Due Date is ______________________________

Choose one topic below to analyze Do Androids dream of Electric Sheep? It will be necessary to research relevant outside source material, which may be from both electronic and print sources. Incorporate the writing of others to help your own essay, but be sure to properly cite and document these sources. Finally, be sure to include relevant and meaningful textual analysis on the novel (use quotes!).

Topic # 1: The novel is set in a post-nuclear apocalyptic Earth. Most animal life has died, and now, since animals are so rare, they are tended carefully—but only as status symbols prized for their ability to confer an aura of success on their owners. How does this aspect of the novel comment on humanity's relationship to the environment? What does it say about how and why we value what we do? What might this say about American consumerism? About American values in general? How current are these ideas? Can you apply any outside theories or ideas on these issues raised in the novel?

Topic # 2: One important question is “what is it to be human?” What is Dick’s answer to this question? How are androids and humans contrasted in this novel, and to what purpose? Is his view of human nature inherently negative, positive, mixed, or ambiguous? The androids are designated as less than human, treated as objects that can be used and destroyed with no consideration of their existence as self-aware beings who are at least as intelligent as humans. Considering that the novel is to some extent satirical and that Dick is trying to make some points about real human behavior, what points could Dick be trying to make with the emphasis in the novel on human empathy? How much irony do you see?

Topic #3: What roles do religion and spirituality play in the novel? What are the significant attributes of Mercerism? What might Dick be satirizing? Please do not assume that everyone is a member of the same religion or is even religious. Do not assume that everyone shares your own belief system, whatever that is. Do NOT project your own ideas about religion into the novel or bring in references to stories and characters found in religious texts unless you can clearly support your theory that Dick was making allusions to these by showing strong evidence from the novel itself. Remember—this essay is about Dick's novel and how he uses it to advance themes. Focus on the novel.

SPECS (If your paper fails to meet any of the required specifications, I will not accept it.)
- Minimum of 4 double-spaced, STAPLED, proofread pages in Times New Roman 12 pt. font. MLA format
- Minimum of two outside sources (wikipedia, encyclopedias, Spark Notes and the like, and dictionaries are not appropriate sources). You will be graded on quality and use of your sources. Refer to the LAHC library databases for help (such as Literature Resource Center)
- Works Cited page (not part of the 4-page requirement).
- Submit final draft of essay to turnitin.com on due date