Your task, if you choose to accept it

(& I highly recommend that you do), is…

To craft an amazing, formal speech and essay on a controversial Africa-related topic of your choice!

You might be asking What? So here’s the deal…

1. Choose a topic. This can be anything Africa-related as long as it’s controversial (ie. likely to incite an argument or disagreement) and a valid argument can be made both in favor of and against it.
   1. Here’s an example: African blood diamonds. Are you for or against? Why or why not?
   2. You may work with a partner, each choosing a different side of the same controversial issue. You will each write your own essay and present your own speech but your speeches can be done back-to-back so the audience can hear both sides.
   3. **All topics need to be approved by Ms. D prior to beginning your research!**

2. Do the research. Utilize a variety of sources, from reputable websites to scholarly articles to actual, physical books from the library to put together a thesis about your topic (ie. blood diamonds are amazing and we should all support their use and trade by buying as many as possible). You must cite at least 5 sources in your paper/speech.

3. That’s right, I said a paper AND a speech.

**The Essay**

Your essay is a formal, thesis-driven paper and should be longer and more complex than the 5-paragraph variety. **You will be graded on the following for your essay**:

* Structure: Introductory paragraph; body paragraphs (each one should contain 1-2 major pieces of supporting evidence for your thesis); conclusion
* Length: 4-5 pages double spaced
* Correct in-text citations and bibliography (MLA format)
* Sources: Minimum 5 sources
* Content: Your thesis should be well-supported with research derived facts
* Correct grammar and spelling
* Organization: The ideas in your essay are well organized and build upon each other to create a cohesive argument

**The Speech**

Your speech will be adapted from your essay. However, you will not be reading your speech! Pull out the most important and compelling points from your essay and present them to us as a speech. I recommend creating a script (like we did for the how-to speeches) to help you organize your speaking points. **You will be graded on the following for your speech:**

* Content: Your position is well supported with research derived evidence and facts
* Citation: You cite the sources for your facts during the speech as well as in the bibliography
* Time: Speech lasts between 2-3 minutes
* Presentation: Good eye contact; adequate volume and speech rate; posture; enthusiasm; body language; speech is fluid (not stopping often to try and remember what you need to say next)
* Organization: The ideas in your speech are well organized and build upon each other to create a cohesive argument

Why? Well I am glad you asked that! Because being able to craft a well thought out and well supported argument is an important skill that will serve you well one day when you make an argument to your boss about why you deserve a promotion or pay raise; why a bank should loan you money to start your own business; or why your parents should think twice about grounding you.

When? You have the rest of the week to do research and begin writing your essay and speech. We will begin presentations the Tuesday before spring break (3/7)

Points Possible: 100 (50 points for the essay & 50 points for the speech)

Calendar

**Monday 2/27**: Computer Lab- Assignment hand out & discuss topics. Lesson on research and reputable online sources

**Tuesday 2/28**: Computer Lab- Research day

**Wednesday 3/1**: Computer Lab- Lesson on how to embed quotes, in-text citations, bibliography

**Thursday 3/2**: Computer Lab- Research and writing

**Friday 3/3**: Computer Lab- Writing

**Monday 3/6**: Computer Lab- Writing and speech rehearsal day

**Tuesday 3/7**: Essays due. Begin presentations

**Wednesday 3 /8**: Presentations

**Thursday**: Food day & final presentations