American Dream Synthesis Essay

From the time of its inception, the United States has been seen by many as a land of opportunity, a place of great potential. In his 1931 book *The Epic of America*, James Truslow Adams, an American writer and historian, defined the American Dream as “that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement...It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position.”

More than 80 years later, the concept of the “American Dream” is just as relevant, if not more so, than in Adams’s time. However, it seems more difficult now to pin down a realistically accurate definition of the term, not to mention the difficulty of actually achieving it.

After reading back through the six articles on the American Dream and studying the visuals, write a well-organized essay in which you, first, explain why achieving Adams’s definition of the American Dream might not be possible for most people and, therefore, is in need of redefining. Then, propose and defend a new definition of the American Dream.

In the body of your essay, you must cite at least six pieces of supporting evidence, including...

1) At least three quotes—set up with ample elaboration—from three of the articles in the American Dream source packet,
2) At least two specific examples—from two different chapters (and parts of the book)—from *The Great Gatsby*, and
3) At least one of the visuals.

Your essay must include a works cited page, which will list the sources (*The Great Gatsby*, the articles, the visual) that you cite in your essay. It must conform to MLA guidelines. This means you must also cite sources parenthetically within your essay. More on both of those expectations in future classes.

Your essay must follow MLA standard paper format. Check either my website or Purdue University’s Online Writing Lab website for specific expectations on format.

This essay should be roughly three pages in length (≈1000 words).

A turnitin.com submission of this essay is due by 11:59pm on Monday 6/2. No hard copy required.