English II—Grade 12 Dougherty
Klausur #2, first semester

Write a complete, well-developed essay about only one of the following topics.

1. In 1942, the critic Alfred Kazin made the following paradoxical remark about American Modernism: "the greatest single fact about our modern American writing is our writers' absorption in every last detail of their [modern] world together with their deep and subtle alienation from it." Discuss the ways in which at least two of the following writers evince this paradox—between simultaneous absorption in and alienation from the modern world—in their writing: Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Richard Wright, Charles Fuller, Langston Hughes. Consider not only writers' themes but also their styles. You may need to develop a definition of the salient features of modernistic writing before you point out similarities and differences between individual writers.

2. The Great Depression; the suffrage movement; mafia warfare; The New Deal; industrial slums; the rise of the ghetto and racial violence; the Ku Klux Klan; the ostensible decay of the family, sexual codes, and conventional morality; Freudianism; Communism—all were phenomena of the modern period to which writers were responding, either implicitly or explicitly. Discuss how at least two of the following writers chose to deal with certain crises of the day, what they proposed as alternatives to accepted standards, and how they illustrated these themes and concerns in their works: Richard Wright, Langston Hughes, Charles Fuller, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner.