Directions:

1. Read and annotate the following article.

2. Show evidence of a close reading. Mark the text with questions and comments.

3. Write a one-page reflection on your own sheet of paper. Don’t forget an MLA heading!

**Jeffco Students Plan to Protest History Proposal**

CBS Denver – September 23, 2014

Hundreds of students walked out of classrooms around suburban Denver on Tuesday in protest over a conservative-led school board proposal to focus history education on topics that promote citizenship, patriotism and respect for authority, providing a show of civil disobedience that the new standards would aim to downplay.

The youth protest in the state’s second-largest school district follows a sick-out from teachers that shut down two high schools in the politically and economically diverse area that has become a key political battleground.

Students from several Jefferson County schools walked out of class Tuesday morning in the second straight day of protests. Approximately 500 students walked out at Arvada West High School and 400 at Arvada High School.

Approximately 300 students walked out at Golden High School and about 200 students went to the school offices in connection with the protest, according to Golden High School senior Riley McConnell.

Student participants said their demonstration was organized by word of mouth and social media. Many waved American flags and carried signs, including messages that read “There is nothing more patriotic than protest.”

The school board proposal that triggered the walkout calls of instructional materials that present positive aspects of the nation and its heritage. It would establish a committee to regularly review texts and course plans, starting with Advanced Placement history, to make sure materials “promote citizenship, patriotism, essentials and benefits of the free-market system, respect for authority and respect for individual rights” and don’t “encourage or condone civil disorder, social strike or disregard of the law.”

“Students at my school plan to walk out of classes in protest of the Jeffco school board’s new proposed Advanced Placement U.S. History Curriculum Revision Committee which aims to teach students to become more ‘patriotic’ and less ‘rebellious’ by portraying the history of our country in a better light,” Arvada West High School senior Jack Shefrin said in a statement.

The proposal from Julie Williams, part of the board’s conservative majority, has not been voted on and was put on hold last week. She didn’t return a call from The Associated Press seeking comment Tuesday, but previously told Chalkbeat Colorado, a school news website, that she recognizes there are negative events that are part of U.S. history that need to be taught.

“There are things we may not be proud of as Americans,” she said. “But we shouldn’t be encouraging our kids to think that America is a bad place.”

“I don’t think my education should be censored. We should be able to know what happened in our past,” said Tori Leu, a 17-year-old student who protested at Ralston Valley High School in Arvada.

A student demonstrator, Tyrone G. Parks, a senior at Arvada High School, said Tuesday that the nation’s foundation was built on civil protest, “and everything that we’ve done is what allowed us to be at this point today. And if you take that from us, you take away everything that America was built off of.”

The proposal comes from an elected board with three conservative members who took office in November. The other two board members were elected in 2011 and oppose the new plan, which was drafted in response to a national framework for teaching history that supporters say encourages discussion and critical thinking. Detractors, however, fear it could put an outsize emphasis on the nation’s problems.

**Reflection Prompt:**

What do you think of this proposed change? Should U.S. History classes teach the negative aspects of our history along with the positive? Is this act of civil disobedience a smart move for these students? How might it be ironic?