Week 1:

Activity 1: Read “The Lowest Animal” by Mark Twain on pages 373-378.

As you read, be aware that this is a SATIRE. Satire is a literary form that ridicules the shortcomings of people and institutions in an attempt to bring about change. When a writer like Mark Twain uses satire, his overall purpose is to change or improve something in society. There are four elements to be aware of when reading satire. The author uses humor to create amusement; exaggeration to overstate purposely to draw attention to the issue to make a point; absurdity to create an extreme seeming situation; and irony where we state the opposite of what is really meant. Make note of these aspects of these elements as you are reading.

Activity 2: On page 380, answer questions 1, 2, 3, and 8.

Activity 3: Read the Language and Style: Anaphora and Parallelism Handout (You will use this for Activity 5). Write on the Handout, identifying the differences in the Anaphora style than the typical way to your teachers have taught you.

Activity 4: Write your own Satire, brainstorm and idea charts

- Brainstorm ideas, or Research ideas, about current issues/problem that you feel strongly about (or could feel strongly about).
- Once you have identified the idea, create an idea chart that allows you to create a list of ideas around the following points:
  - Description of the issue/problem
  - A real solution
  - Impossible, exaggerated or absurd solutions

Activity 5: Locate a satire to read. These can be found in magazines, other textbooks, story collections, or on the Internet. Identify which one you find, and document it at the bottom of your brainstorm page.

Activity 6: Begin writing your Satire. Do the best you can!

First begin with describing your issue/problem. Remember that you will use the four elements from Activity 1. The description of the problem should be extensive, describe the issue, how it relates to society, and why society should be concerned. Use the Anaphora handout, remember to consider the sentence length to create smooth versus short and choppy to create unease or importance.

Second, provide you fake solution, the impossible exaggerated or absurd solution. You should focus on one, but you can do two. Remember to use the four elements that were covered in Activity 1.

Finally, admit that you are being satirical, and provide a real solution. At this point in your writing you will shift to a more serious tone. Do not use humor, exaggeration, absurdity or irony.

All students should do additional reading. Find a book, series of magazines, etc. to read. Students should keep a reading journal. See attached Journal sheet.
Language and Style: Anaphora and Parallelism

In “The Lowest Animal, Mark Twain uses a particular type of repetition known as anaphora, the repetition of a word or words at the beginning of successive lines, clauses, or sentences. This literary device is particularly effective in poetry, but it also has a place in argumentative prose. Consider this example from two sentences in lines 83–85.

Man is the Animal that Laughs. No Man is the Animal that Blushes.

Not only does Twain repeat the words that begin the sentences, the sentences share a parallel construction, meaning that they use similar grammatical structures to express ideas that are related or equal in value. By using these literary devices, Twain emphasizes his central ideas and creates a rhythm that strengthens the rhetorical effect.

Here are other examples of anaphora that Twain uses in his essay. These appear at the beginning of successive paragraphs, beginning in line 120.

Man is the only animal that Man is the only Patriot. Man is the Religious Animal. Man is the Reasoning Animal.

By repeating the words Man is at the beginning of each paragraph and making the sentences parallel each other, Twain builds a cumulative list of the aspects of human conduct that he wants to satirize. Clearly, Twain’s use of anaphora is deliberate. In his hands it has an artistic effect and he successfully uses it to hammer home the point he wants to make, which is that humans are not the highest animals (though they may believe otherwise).

Young writers are usually told to avoid repetition. They are encouraged to vary sentence length, sentence beginnings, and even sentence structure to build interest. All of this is good advice for the most part. However, skilled writers know when to use repetition to make a point. Twain's use of anaphora is an excellent example of knowing when to break the rules.