

## Reading Assignment Questions

Course: Health and Information Technology (HIT)  
Falcon High School

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### *Assignment 1: Francis Fukuyama – **Our Posthuman Future***

#### Analyze

1. Explain the reasons why Fukuyama begins and frames his essay with the two novels *1984* and *Brave New World*.
2. Why does Fukuyama consider biotechnology unique from other powerful and potentially hazardous or destructive technologies?
3. List and briefly summarize the three scenarios that Fukuyama believes may unfold as a result of new technologies.
4. Why does Fukuyama differentiate between biotechnology and other sectors of the economy with regard to government regulations?

### *Assignment 2: Daniel Callahan and Sherwin B. Nuland – **The Quagmire: How American Medicine is Destroying Itself***

#### Analyze

1. Who was René DuBos? Why do Callahan and Nuland begin their essay with a reference to him and his book?
2. What three key assumptions do the authors argue have been underlying the current, widely held belief that all disease can be conquered?
3. In your own words, briefly explain James Fries's concept of "compression of morbidity."
4. How does Crimmins and Beltran-Sanchez's study relate to Fries's concept?
5. What, according to the authors, have the "main achievements today" in medical technology accomplished?
6. Why is the projected 2020 population of the American population over 65 of particular concern for the authors?
7. Explain the reason mentioned in the essay to support the authors' preposition that "scientific progress" is "not and endlessly affordable venture."

*Assignment 3: Eric Topol – **How Technology is Transforming Healthcare***

**Analyze**

1. Why, according to Topol, is medicine “about to go through its biggest shakeup in history”?
2. What is Watson? How does Topol envision Watson being used in healthcare?
3. List the Types of technologies that Topol believes will be a part of the technological convergence that will profoundly affect medicine.

*Assignment 4: Atul Gawande – **Slow Ideas***

**Analyze**

1. What is anesthesia? What are antiseptics?
2. Explain the reason why Gawande believes anesthesia was adopted so slowly.
3. Gawande points to several important ideas that have been stalled by their invisibility. List them.
4. What is the Better Birth Project?
5. Why is cholera dubbed ‘the blue death’?
6. Describe Nalin and Cash’s Dhaka experiment. Why is this important to Gawande’s argument?
7. What is BRAC? What is significant about the BRAC project Gawande describes the context of the overall argument he is making in the essay?

*Assignment 5: Francisco Seijo – **When Worlds Collide***

**Analyze**

1. The title of Seijo’s article has multiple references. Explain what these are?
2. According to Seijo, what is Erle Ellis’s central argument in “The Planet of NO Return”?
3. What is Sijo’s response to Ellis? Why does he respond in the way he does?
4. Explain why Seijo proposes that the film *When Worlds Collide* may be a “prescient metaphor for the crossroads at which humanity stands today.