Understand War and Peace. Length: 6-8 pages. Format: Please submit your paper as a Word doc (preferred), or PDF. Use Times New Roman font, size 12, 1-inch margins. Your paper should be double-spaced EXCEPT for block quotations (which should be single-spaced and indented ½ inch from the left margin). If you are using a web-based program to write your paper (e.g. Google docs), please double check the formatting before you submit. Don’t forget to spell-check! Your paper will be evaluated using the same rubrics as for Short Papers 1 and 2. You should build directly on the skills that you practiced in those papers, using your close readings of specific passages and specific scenes to explore a concrete argument about the novel as a whole. Remember to include: - Your name, the course name, and the date, plus a title for your paper. - A “Work(s) Cited” section, in correct MLA bibliography format. For a reminder, consult https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/, or the Powerpoint slides posted on the home page of our course site. - A statement of academic integrity, as follows: “I certify that this assignment represents my own work. I have not used any unauthorized or unacknowledged assistance or sources in completing it.” Without this statement, your work will not receive credit. - You are also encouraged to include an “Acknowledgements” section to indicate any consultations with a classmate (or tutor, parent, roommate, etc.), or any other informal resource that helped you write the paper. Here, as in all of your papers for your course, you are strongly discouraged from using any secondary sources. If you find that you have broken this rule, keep scrupulous records of any Internet searches or other research, and cite and/or acknowledge any sources that contribute to your final paper. Please do not undo your hard work this semester by including the uncited ideas, opinions, or words of others in your final paper Suggested Topics Choose ONE of these topics to guide your initial thinking about your paper. As you are beginning to think about your paper, remember: - All the following topics are starting-points. It’s your task to narrow them down so that you can arrive at a specific question you’d like to address, and eventually, the specific argument of your paper. - A 6-8-page paper may feel long – but it’s not as long as you think! A specific, focused topic is better than a broad and general one. You will need to use your space in the paper efficiently to make an argument that explores concrete passages and details from the text(s) you are discussing, and you almost certainly will need to write more than one draft to arrive at an argument that you can lay out in the space you have. - After reading your paper, a reader should be able to answer the question: what has your paper revealed that helps you and us understand War and Peace better? 1. Design your own topic related to Tolstoy’s War and Peace. Other works we have discussed in class (“Sevastopol in May,” What Is Art?, “Natasha, Pierre, and the Great Comet...,” various film or TV adaptations, etc.) could also be a focus of your paper, though your topic must be directly related to Tolstoy’s War and Peace in some way. You are welcome to draw on ideas that you’ve explored in a short paper and want to expand further; or on themes that have been raised in class or in reading questions. Note: If you plan to formulate your own topic, I recommend that you e-mail me about your ideas well before the April 22 deadline for your topic proposal and outline. This will give you the time to revise your topic if necessary. 2. Write a paper making a specific argument about the character you have been tracing through War and Peace (or a different character, if you prefer!). Your paper should both: - reflect on the character’s path and development through the novel. (Questions you should consider: What are your character’s defining characteristics and experiences? Does s/he change? If so, how?; if not, why not? Does the implied author’s attitude towards him or her, or the way(s) in which s/he is narrated, change? If so, how and why?) - reflect on the character’s function in the novel as a whole. (Questions you should consider: What themes, ideas, and realms of life, thought, and experience does this character bring into War and Peace? How does s/he work to forward the plot, or to anchor other elements of narrative structure? If s/he belongs to one of the novel’s families, how does s/he individually relate to the family’s function in the narrative? In a nutshell, why specifically is s/he important to the narrative and the world represented in this novel?) [A primary danger for this topic is plot summary! Make sure that you have a specific argument about how your character is narrated and why s/he is important to War and Peace.] 3. We have looked at War and Peace as a novel that thinks in families. Choose one family that you believe to be central to War and Peace and explain its basic functions in the novel’s narrative and thematic structure. Using specific episodes from the text, consider: to what kinds of settings does this family take us, and what kinds of scenes do its members bring into the novel? What do you see as the common thread(s) running through the characterization and trajectories of all the family’s members? Use your analysis to explain why you have chosen this family as central to War and Peace. (You could also choose to draw a significant comparison between two families, in terms of both function and narrative representation. The Rostovs and Bolkonskys, Rostovs and Kuragins, or Bolkonskys and Drubetskoys are all interesting cases.)