Week 1 discussion hour material

This homework includes one essay about yourself and this course and a “free reading assignment”.

1. Essay assignment:
   Regarding the essay, the usual rules apply: After you finish writing your essay leave it aside and read it again the next day. Edit your own work. Ask one of your classmates to read your essay and comment on it. Make sure that you are turning in an internally consistent, nicely flowing essay with absolutely no typos or grammatical mistakes. You have enough time to perfect the language of your essay, be serious about it.

   Write a one-page essay (typed only, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 Font, normal margins) which tells me why you decided to continue your education in the university instead of working, what your definition of a university is, what you think ‘economics’ is about and what use you think to get out of learning economics. Your response to any of these questions should NOT be ‘I have to take this class’, or ‘my parents wanted me to do so’ or any answer along these lines. I want you to think of why you are here and what you hope to get out of this class (and not a grade you wish to get, I am looking for CONTENT discussions). In the same essay you should also discuss what you are giving up in order for your university education – what is the second best alternative to studying in the university? Your goal is to start attaching a value to your university education.

2. Read an article from any “The Economist” issue. You are supposed to read the English “the Economist” and not the Turkish version. Otherwise you will get no credit for your assignment. During the first week’s discussion hour each student will be asked to tell their classmates the topic of the article they have read and provide a two minute brief discussion of the main ideas in the article. The essay can be on any of the articles in the Economist, not necessarily on an economic topic. Remember that finding a topic to read is half of the work. The aim of this exercise is to encourage you to think critically about world matters and to help you articulate analytical thinking. You don’t yet have enough economics in your tool kit but later in the semester you will be asked to write essays using the new concepts that you will have learned.

NOTE: Please refer to Bilwrite for assistance in the English of your assignment. The Economist is available in hard copy in almost all the bookstores and large newspaper stands. However, if you wish not to purchase a hard copy you can also use the online Bilkent library resources. Here are the steps:
1. Click http://library.bilkent.edu.tr/ and choose “Electronics Journals Database”.
2. On this new page type “The Economist” and find the journal. There will be multiple journals that pop up with the words “the” and “economist” in it – pick the one where both words are used together and there are no other words in the title: “The Economist”.
3. There you can choose the “MasterFILE Premier 1990 to present” database to cruise through the virtual pages of any issue of the Economist, starting from 1990.
Enjoy!