Your assignment is to read *Hardball: How Politics Is Played, Told By One Who Knows The Game* by Chris Matthews. You must purchase the book on your own or borrow it from the public library if the library has a copy. Used copies can be purchased at amazon.com for about $1 and of course these you can write in.

As the title implies, Chris Matthews knows the workings of government very well from his time as a speechwriter for President Jimmy Carter in the 1970s and as a top aide to Speaker of the House of Representatives Tip O’Neill in the 1980s. Since 1987, Matthews has worked both as a print and television journalist, an author, and as a political talking head and pundit. This book is a fun read as Matthews illustrates his points to make the workings of government easy to understand. Each chapter has a theme and you are required to answer each of the questions below in a typed paragraph, one paragraph per chapter/question. Most of the topics covered in this book correspond to the themes we will study in this course, so read carefully and critically. I recommend that you read a chapter, write your paragraph, and then move on to the next chapter.

**Requirements**

You must answer all fifteen questions (14 chapter questions plus a summary) and each one must be its own paragraph. All paragraphs must be typed using size 12, Times New Roman font, MLA format, and printed on both sides of the paper if possible. I will collect this assignment on the first day of school and I can be reached at jeff-bell@scusd.edu if you have questions.

**Questions**

**Chapter 1** What is retail politics and why is it important? What skills and characteristics does a politician need to be successful in retail politics? How did it help make Johnson a master retail politician? What are the limitations of retail politics?

**Chapter 2** What does the phrase “all politics is local” mean? Give examples from the chapter. How does this principle impact the way our government functions and laws are crafted? How does it impact the loyalty of party members to the position of the party on policy issues?

**Chapter 3** Discuss, explain, and analyze the main principle examined in this chapter. How did Carter and Perot use this principle? Is there a downside to using the strategy? Explain.

**Chapter 4** Based on the chapter, discuss why it is unusual for politicians to switch political parties. Use examples. Explain the reference to a Christmas card and how it relates to politics.

**Chapter 5** Identify, explain, and analyze the thesis of this chapter. Compare the techniques Presidents Reagan and Carter used to “keep your enemies in front of you.”
Chapter 6  Identify, explain, and analyze the thesis of this chapter. Relate the ideas in the chapter to what you have learned so far about political parties and the relationship between the president and members of Congress (MOC).

Chapter 7  Identify, explain, and analyze the thesis of this chapter. What is the risk of not responding quickly to political attacks? Use examples from the book to explain each of the attack defenses identified by Matthews.

Chapter 8  Identify and explain each of the different ways in which silence can be used for political gain and provide examples. Are there political risks to this strategy? Explain.

Chapter 9  Explain and analyze the main principle discussed in this chapter and give examples from the text to support your writing. What aspects of human nature does it exploit? Are there situations in which this strategy can’t be used? Explain.

Chapter 10  Explain the “hang a lantern on your problem” principle. Why does it work? Cite two examples from the text to support your writing. Are there situations where it would not work? Explain.

Chapter 11  What are the two steps to effective spin? How did Nixon use these two steps to put his critics on the defensive in his famous “Checkers” speech? Is spin ethical? Can spin backfire? Explain.

Chapter 12  Discuss why politicians can’t trust the press. Do politicians need the press? Why or why not? How should a politician go about feeding the press without it backfiring? What do the principles discussed in this chapter say about freedom of the press in America?

Chapter 13  Summarize and give examples of three of the following principles:
1. Play your strengths
2. Low-balling
3. Sandbagging
4. Passing the Buck
5. Inchon Landing

Chapter 14  Explain and analyze the political lesson Matthews highlights in this chapter. Are there limits to how or how often this principle can be used? Explain.

Summary  Does this book appear biased in terms of favoring or attacking one political party over another? Use evidence to support your answer.