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AP Question # 3

The quote "Ignorance is bliss" has great connection with the last line in the book of Ecclesiastes from the Bible, "...increase in knowledge is increase in sorrow." This can be seen in the world around through the maturation of children the comparison between man and other animals, and through literature. These comparisons and conformations allow one to see the sorrowful side of knowledge.

Throughout life, people mature and gain knowledge through experiences and observations. A child knowing very little seems to have a nonchalant care free existence. But as that child ages and matures, one can see his character almost fall from its happy state to a more solemn and observant state of mind. Wisdom and maturity bring a mind into the light of the "real world" and its cruel ways of survival. It is even obvious in the lives of two people that while they may be the same age, have not quite gotten to the same maturity level. One may realize more wrong in the world, while the other only sees his life or the tiny world around himself. Therefore, to survive one must learn and accept these ways of life that in itself brings a feeling of hopelessness and perhaps even isolation.

Also, a comparison between humans and other animals can be seen as verification for the sorrow brought by knowledge. Dogs, for example, are considered much less intelligent than humans. Dogs also seem happier in their simple world of eating drinking

and playing. It is very obvious in this comparison that while man may almost feel sorrow for a dog's lack of knowledge, the dog himself does not even know his ignorance and cannot feel the sorrow the man feels for him for he has no reason to have grief. While a man may see a dog as inferior and naïve, it is his naivety that keeps him safe from the harshness of reality.

Literature, such as *The Giver*, Allows one to see the viewpoint of a boy maturing in the course of a book giving the reader a more definite picture of both the ignorance and maturation of characters in the book. The main character is struck with the reality of death, lies, hormones, and many other realizations that required him to mature much more quickly than one would normally expect and could almost not handle it. The happiness he had had before he becomes the next "Giver" disappears when he is subjected to the realities of his world, such as the "releasing" of individuals in the community. He is forced to cope with the different ideas he must accept with his new schooling and is pushed into an almost depression with his different realizations.

"What you don't know can't hurt you" is a more modern way of explaining that last line in the book of Ecclesiastes and has been a proven statement in today's world. Literature, experiences and observations of the surrounding society support these ideas and allow one to see that "ignorance is bliss." Society has created itself to be better seen when it is not fully seen in one's eyes and can be fitted and shaped to fit one's own expectations rather than the realities of life.