Here are a few topics that you can use for your reading essay due in class on Thursday, 10/16, if you’d like. Please select your own if you’d prefer—that is generally the better course of action. The topics below are not written in a way that lines up with the structure of the essays I want. These statements are meant to get you thinking—simply answering the questions in order will not result in an adequate essay.

1. What is Searle’s Chinese Room Argument? What is the target and what conclusion is it meant to establish? Do you believe that it establishes its conclusion?

2. Reconstruct and evaluate Dennett’s argument that reflective thought requires language.

3. What is Stich’s argument for eliminativism about the mind? How is it related to Searle’s Chinese Room Argument? How might you argue against this view?

4. What are philosophical zombies and how might they be used to defend a dualist conception of qualia? Do you agree that they are possible and that, if so, their possibility establishes that dualism is true?

5. What is the challenge of causal relevance for non-reductive physicalism? How does it figure into an argument against that NRP? Do you buy this challenge, or can you respond on behalf of NRP?