**Macbeth Act Prompts**

Choose one of the following prompts for each act. Type a one-ish page, double-spaced formal response analyzing Macbeth. Submit to turnitin.com by 7:20am the day it listed as due:  
ACT One Due = Act Two Due = Act Three Due = Act Four Due =

**Minimum Requirements:**

* + Thesis statement
  + Use quotes from Macbeth as evidence to support your thesis statement (Response to the prompt)
  + Use a boring 12pt. font (TNR or Georgia)
  + Cite act, scene, and line number after each quote
    - EX: (I. ii. 64-67)
  + DO NOT Include a paper heading. Only put: Act #, Prompt #
  + Include a creative title

**Scoring Rubric:**

Exceeds or Meets Standard Approaching Standard Needs Improvement

15-12 points 11-9 points 8 points or below

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Compelling topic/thesis sentence * Resonant quotations fluently integrated as evidence * Perfect citation format * Creative, complex analysis connects evidence to thesis * Satisfying resolution * Scintillating word choice and editing | * Simple topic/thesis sentence * Relevant quotations used as evidence * Inconsistent citation format * Simple analysis connects evidence to thesis * Serviceable conclusion sentence * Clear word choice and editing | * Confusing topic/thesis sentence * Factual inaccuracies * Inappropriate evidence presented * Pervasive citation errors * Summary serves as analysis * Conclusion is lacking * Grammar, fluency, and punctuation issues confuse the reader * Format Issues |

**ACT ONE**

1. “Fair is Foul *and* Foul is Fair” (I, i, 10) – Explain the layers of meaning inherent within the line, how it relates to Shakespeare’s use of the witches in the play, and finally explore the significance of a few examples of things not being what they seem to be during act I.
2. In Act 1, scene 3**,** describe what character foils are being set up here, and how Shakespeare uses meaning-packed language to do so.
3. In all of Act 1, how is the theme of deception OR war developed and used to further and mirror the conflicts developed in the play’s exposition?

**ACT TWO**

1. How are gender roles portrayed thus far in the play, and how do they relate to the ideas of gender roles prevalent in the Renaissance? Use both primary sources and the play as sources evidence to support your thesis.
2. Compare and contrast Macbeth and Lady Macbeth - Show how Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are similar in character and what sets them apart.
3. In Act 2, scenes 1-3,both Banquo’s and Macbeth’s fears surface in their unconscious – through dreams and visions. What do the characters’ visions reveal about them? Consider how character’s minds (internal states) determine our realities.

**ACT THREE**

1. Compare and contrast the mothers and the role of motherhood in *Romeo and Juliet* and *Macbeth*.
2. Compare and contrast Macbeth’s internal and external persona. How does this inherent duality cause his violent actions throughout the play thus far?
3. Select a theme or symbol you would like to illustrate from this act and analyze it’s significance to the play thus far.

**ACT FOUR**

1. Compare and contrast Lady Macbeth and Lady Macduff.
2. Characterize Macbeth’s relationship with the witches; how does it develop over the course of the play? Evaluate the function of both major interactions and the power balance in the relationship.
3. According to Shakespeare in a quote from *Hamlet*, the purpose of theater is “to hold as ‘twere a mirror up to nature: to show virtue her feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure.” How does Shakespeare, in *Macbeth*, do this for his own time?
4. Analyze how the definition of “manliness” has changed throughout the play – look especially toward Macbeth vs. Malcom/Macduff.
5. If you have another brilliant topic idea, email me to get it approved before you write.

**Final Essay Topics (can be altered or changed – this is a rough estimate)**

1. Trace Shakespeare’s use of one of the following images (blood, sleep, hands, milk, birds, stars, or night) and explain the significance of that image.
2. In part, *Macbeth* is a meditation upon gender roles.  How does Shakespeare have Lady Macbeth and Macbeth define masculinity and femininity? How and why do these definitions shift over the course of the play?

1. How do the witches, Lady Macbeth, and/or Lady Macduff emulate or disprove typical Renaissance ideals of femininity? You will need to use cited historical sources in addition to the play as evidence.
2. Analyze the significance of the paradox “Fair is foul and foul is fair …” in the play.
3. Select one of the following themes and show how it is illustrated and developed through Shakespeare’s use of a dominant literary convention (imagery, metaphor, motif, irony, personification, symbolism, etc.)
   1. Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely
   2. The destructive effects of ambition, guilt and fear
   3. Appearances can be deceiving
   4. The tragic hero