

This midterm project is a comparative character analysis. You will choose similar characters from *Macbeth* and *King Lear*. You may choose either *The Taming of the Shrew* or *Julius Caesar* as your third text. This literary analysis allows you to explore the depth of three characters and compare similar Shakespearean characteristics. Your paper must encompass the entire texts, meaning quotes must be from the beginning, middle, and end of the plays. Every act must be represented.

Your character analysis must be Times New Roman 12 pt. font, double-spaced, written in present tense.

-Be sure each quote has a lead-in and an explanation and is cited correctly.

Paragraph 1: Introduce the characters in a general way explaining the connection.

Paragraph 2: Define the characters' roles in the story with proof.

- *Protagonist:*, The main character around whom most of the work revolves.
 - *anti-hero* possesses redeeming qualities but is flawed
 - *tragic hero* sad end brought upon self because of personal traits.
 - *romantic hero* the guy every woman wants and men want to be him
- *Antagonist:* The person who the protagonist is against. This is often a person, but could be a force of nature, set of circumstances, an animal, etc.
- *Major:* These are the main characters that aren't the pro/ant. They dominate the story.
- *Minor:* These are the characters who help tell the tale by letting major characters interact and reveal their personalities, situations, stories. They often give insightful details about the plot/subplot

Descriptions:

- *dynamic* learns and changes
- *static* continues ways without change even after experience(s)
- *round (3 dimensional)* This means the character has more than one facet to their personality.
- *flat (1 dimensional)* This is the character who is only viewed through one side.
- *stereotypical (stock)* This is the absent minded professor, the jolly fat person, the clueless blonde.

Paragraph 3: Foils

These are the people whose job is to contrast with any major character. This can happen in two ways. The foil can be the opposite of the major character, so the major's virtues and strengths are that much "brighter" in reflection. If not that role, then the foil can be

someone like the major character, with lighter versions of the major's virtues and strengths so that the major comes off as even stronger.

Describe the foil for each of your comparison characters. How do they interact with the character? How are the foils from the three plays similar? Must use at least one quote for each.

Paragraph 4: Personification

Every character symbolizes/personifies one of the seven deadly sins or sacraments. For example, Faustus is the personification of pride. Grendel personifies evil. Choose one sin or sacrament that the characters personify throughout the novels. You will need at least one quote as proof for each character. Be certain to transition smoothly.

Paragraph 5: Antithetical Quality

Every character, at some point, demonstrates an antithetical trait. Discuss an instance from each play in which the characters demonstrate a contrary quality. For example, if the main trait is avarice, show an example of generosity. Use at least one quote for each character.

Paragraph 6: Comparative Trait

Which personality trait did you initially consider when bringing together these characters for an analysis? The following site lists many characteristics:

<http://www.gurusoftware.com/GuruNet/Personal/Factors.htm>

Choose one and prove, using a quote for each character, that this trait is shared by all.

Paragraphs 7, 8: Author's insight

Shakespeare gives clues about characters' motivations and feelings through dialogue. Chose two of the following topics to examine for your three characters. Use smooth transitions.

- a. Literary Devices:** Similes, metaphors, alliterations, and other devices are used to accentuate a character's traits. In *Richard II*, Shakespeare writes, "The purest treasure mortal times afford is spotless reputation; that away, men are but gilded loam or painted clay." Find three devices used to describe each character from different acts in the plays, label the elements (metaphor in the example), and explain them. The devices should be the same or mean the same to prove the comparison. You must quote each device. Be certain to span the play!
- b. Descriptions:** Those words often give insight into a character's psychology and motivations. In *The Outsiders*, Pony Boy is described as an outsider and greaser, both of which have negative connotations. Quote descriptions about each character to prove the comparison.

- c. Items associated with the characters/kingdoms/homes/settings:** These may be representations of characters or traits or events, past and future. They are also used as foreshadowing techniques such as the use of birds in *Macbeth*. Use a quote for each character as proof.
- d. Read between the lines:** Often what a character does not say is as important as what he or she does say. Think of Ebenezer Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*. His nephew's happiness is noted and ridiculed by Scrooge showing his own loneliness and unhappiness with his life. State one example from each play in which a character's true motivations or feelings are obvious, yet unstated.
- e. Environmental/Societal issues:** Refrain from making modern judgments about the past; put the character's actions and thoughts in context. A female character living in England in the 1800s obviously could not make the choices that she could today, for both political and social reasons. Explain how your chosen characters are affected by the mores of the day. Use at least one quote per character.
- f. Major Conflict:** Prove which of the four major conflicts affects the characters most. Use at least one quote for each character.

Paragraph 9: Analyze these characters. Are they realistic? believable? likeable? stereotypical? Explain! Of whom does each character remind you in today's society/literary texts/popular culture? Explain.

Paragraph 10 : Conclusion

Do not simply restate your thesis and point sentences. Give a global perspective of the character.

Is there a famous quotation that fits your paper?

You might want to answer a question asked in the introduction.

You might end by generalizing from your character to the world at large.

Do not address the audience in an academic paper. Don't make an announcement.

Bad example: We have seen through this discussion...

Bad example: As I have shown, ...

Conclude your paragraph with a strong statement, not a weak reference. Your title should come from your clincher or at least the final paragraph. Do NOT tell me it's the concluding paragraph; it should be obvious.

POINT/PROOF/PURPOSE!

MLA : When you quote character dialogue, the citation is (Act.Scene.Lines).

Be certain to show the line endings!

Write any stage directions as they appear if in the middle of your quote.

Use quotation marks around the quote only, not the citation.

Use a colon if the quotation is formally introduced.

Use commas appropriately if a quote is integral..

Punctuate citations correctly.

In-text citation for a quote from a classic play:

After the quote, cite the act.scene.line numbers)

Example: (2.3.301-305) means Act 2, Scene 3, lines 301-305

Be certain to signal the end of a line as written by the author using backslashes (/).

Example: Othello reveals his murderous intent when he says, “Strumpet, I come! / Forth of my hear those charms, thine eyes, are blotted; / Thy bed, lust-stained, shall with lust’s blood be spotted” (5.1.34-36).

If the quote is four or more lines, you will set it off from the text by indenting it one inch, removing quotation marks, and bringing the punctuation inside the parenthetical citation.

If you need to quote dialogue between two characters, indent one inch from the left on a new line. Write the appropriate character’s name in all capital letters. Follow the name with a period, and then start the quotation. Indent all subsequent lines in that speech an additional quarter inch. When another character speaks, start a new line and follow the same directions.

Example:

1 SENATOR. Adieu, brave Moor; use Desdemona well.

BRABINTIO. Look to her, Moor, if thou has eyes to see:

She has deceived her father and may thee.

OTHELLO. My life upon her faith! (1.3.287-290)