

## College Writing

## The Final Essay: *Macbeth*

Choose one of the following topics and write a 4-6 page essay addressing it, using the conventions of formal essay writing. You must include at least 1 quotation from each act of the play. **This essay will count as 50% of your final exam grade, so invest some time and energy into it!**

1. Determine the root cause of Macbeth's death and then illustrate, using evidence from the play, the impacts it had on Macbeth's decisions/actions/situation throughout the play and ultimately leading to his death. In your analysis, also answer this question: Is Macbeth a tragic hero?
2. Macbeth may be described as the story of a descent into evil by deliberate choice. The witches set the tone of the play in Act I: "Fair is foul, and foul is fair. /Hover through the fog and filthy air" (I.i.12-13). Images of night and darkness, death, and unnatural happenings fill the entire play. **Write an analysis Shakespeare's use of these images in reinforcing the theme(s) and meaning of the play as a whole.**
3. Choose one or two motifs and one theme from the lists below. Write an essay analyzing Shakespeare's use of these motifs to develop this theme ***and the meaning of the play as a whole.***

Motifs [Choose 1-2]: Nature/Animals; Light/Darkness; Children; Sleep; Visions

Themes [Choose 1]: Ambition, Kingship, Fate/Free Will, Appearance/Reality