***HAMLET* ARGUMENT ESSAY ASSIGNMENT: *WELCOME TO COLLEGE!!!***

In college, your assignments will probably sound something like this:

*In 3-187 pages [choose some random arbitrary #], discuss [or explain, or analyze, or compare, or some other big fancy word] this……..[some incredibly complicated idea].*

What they really mean is PROVE SOMETHING. Whether it is history class [What was the most significant cause of the Civil War? *Note the difference between this prompt and something like “Explain/List/Identify causes of the Civil War”!*], Science class [So and so’s theory is valid/invalid because… ], or even a math class [Explain why…was incorrect OR correct when postulating…], the main idea of your college papers will be to take a side AND PROVE IT! Here is your chance:

**-YOUR ASSIGNMENT: Choose SOMETHING DEBATABLE from *Hamlet* (we have discussed MANY THINGS!) and PROVE your side *using evidence from the text* (quotes) AND *using evidence from credible/expert literary critics*.**

A GOOD PAPER will consist of **3-5 pages** if typed/double-spaced and include AT LEAST 2 quotes per paragraph.

Your annotated bibliography should demonstrate evidence of familiarity to AT LEAST 5 SOURCES that were consulted as you refined/developed your thesis.

Your final essay should demonstrate support from AT LEAST THREE SOURCES to support your ideas. \*\*DON’T FORGET TO ADDRESS A COUNTERCLAIM!

Some possible ideas to get you started: [You may come up with an idea on your own as well!]

Think about Hamlet's relationship with Ophelia. Does he love her? Does he stop loving her? Did he ever love her? What evidence can you find in the play to support your opinion?

Fate vs. Free will: Did Hamlet choose this end through his actions (or inaction) or was it his destiny all along? What role did he play (or not) in his own destiny?

Is Hamlet crazy or pretending to be? Why? What motivations would he have for either? Did he really see the ghost the 2nd and 3rd times?

Discuss the importance of appearance and reality in Hamlet. Are things how they seem or not? Why/why not?

Is something rotten in the state of Denmark? If so, what precisely is it? Is anyone in particular responsible or is the rottenness simply a condition of life?

Is the ghost Reliable? Was it really Hamlet’s father? Was he telling the truth? Why/why not?

Is Gertrude in on it? Does she know Claudius killed King Hamlet? Why/Why not?

What role do women play in the play? Do they really matter?

Is Hamlet really just a great big coward? Is Hamlet truly brave? Why/why not?

Is Ophelia crazy or pretending to be? If crazy, why? If not, why is she pretending?

Did Ophelia commit suicide? If so, why? If not, how did she die? Accident? Something else?

Why does Hamlet delay action? Is it external obstacles or internal, psychological ones? Does he think too much? Too little? ‘Act’ too much? Too little?

What are Hamlet’s feelings toward his mother? Love? Hate? Oedipal?

Compare Laertes (or another character: Fortinbras/Horatio/etc.) with Hamlet. Is the reaction of either right or wrong? Who is a ‘stronger’ character? Why?

Some other topic of your creation THAT IS CLEARED WITH ME BEFORE BEGINNING!

**Assignment Guidelines**

**Introduction:**

1. Creative attention-getter
2. Mention author and title (Spelled correctly! Correct punctuation on title!)
3. Essential background on the literary work (if needed; as relating to your thesis)
4. Clear thesis statement WITH AUTHOR AND TITLE

**Body Paragraphs:**

1. Topic sentences
2. Concrete details that support thesis
3. Commentary/analysis/argument- idea thoroughly explored with all logical connections made for the reader.
4. **Quotations** from *Hamlet* that support argument
5. **Quotations/paraphrases from Outside sources that are used to refine/prove argument**
6. Concluding sentence
7. Proper lead-ins and **MLA citations** of ALL quotations

**Conclusion:**

1. Reflect on how your essay topic relates to the play as a whole and what significance it has to society
2. Ties main points to thesis
3. DOES NOT INTRODUCE NEW IDEAS

**Point of View:**

1. Third Person
2. No “YOU”

**Language:**

1. Active verbs
2. Present tense
3. Combine sentences effectively

**MLA Format:**

1. Creative and original title

2. Heading with proper MLA format

**Due Dates (are subject to change)**

Annotated Bibliography:

Essay First Draft:

Essay Final Draft:

**Grading Rubric**

# **Content Requirements**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ - Develop a **minimum** 3 page analysis essay that **does not exceed** 5 pages (5)

 *(-3 points AUTOMATICALLY if paper does not reach the very last line of 3rd page OR goes onto a 6th page)*

 (25) - Have an arguable thesis that asserts an original idea (5)

 - Cite concrete details and from the play in each body paragraph (5)

- Includes at least one quotation FROM THE PLAY and one quotation FROM A CREDIBLE SOURCE per idea to support idea/argument (5)

 - Have effective logical explanations as support for your thesis (5)

Comments:

# **Organization Requirements**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ - Introduce your topic by catching interest, giving a thorough overview and

 (20) your thesis in your introduction, also mentioning author and title of novel (5)

- Arrange main points in the most effective order, dividing paragraphs at main points (5)

- Conclude by tying main points back to thesis in general without restating, not introducing new information, but creatively restating your thesis, and having memorable ending (NOT a question) (5)

- Use transitions to connect ideas clearly (5)

Comments:

**Voice Requirements**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ - Write in a sincere and knowledgeable voice (should reflect you clearly

 (10) understood the play) (3)

- Your audience is people who have read *Hamlet* (2)

- Your purpose is to **analyze** and **prove** to your audience your thesis is valid (5)

Comments:

# **Word Choice Requirements**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ - Language must be sophisticated and formal, not simple and/or vague (3)

 (5) - Avoid weak or passive verbs: use active verbs (1)

- Avoid dead words such as: *thing, stuff, good, bad, great, it, like, very, many,* *really, a lot*, *there,* and *that (1)*

Comments:

# **Sentence Fluency Requirements**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ - Construct clear, complete sentences with variation in structure (3)

 (5) - Avoid short sentences that make writing choppy; combine sentences instead(1)

- Avoid weak sentence openings such as, “There is” or “It is” (1)

Comments:

# **Conventions Requirements**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ - Use the third person point of view. Eliminate all use of *you*. (2)

 (20) - **Blend and cite** quotations properly using your own words, preceded AND followed by explanatory sentences as your quote relates to a main point (6)

- Keep the verb tense consistently in *present tense* (2)

- Avoid errors in spelling, word usage, agreement, and punctuation (2)

- Avoid fragments and run-ons (2)

- Paper is typed, double spaced, using proper MLA format AND INCLUDES A PROPERLY FORMATTED WORKS CITED PAGE (6)

*-6 points AUTOMATICALLY DEDUCTED for improper font (12 point, Times New Roman), improper spacing (double spaced), or improper margins (1 inch)*

*-6 points AUTOMATICALLY DEDUCTED if missing a Works Cited Page and/or Works Cited Page includes any major errors. See these notes: Title is ‘Works Cited’ with no quotes, bold, underline, etc.; title is centered; sources are alphabetized; ALL sources used in text are on Works Cited Page; No extra sources are on Works Cited Page; Double Spaced; hanging indents; proper date format*

Comments:

**Responsibility**

 -All parts of assignment completed **ON TIME** and **TURNED IN WITH FINAL COPY**

 (15) (including this rubric!)

 -Annotated Bibliography: (5 points)

-Essay First Draft: (5 points)

-Essay Final Draft: (5 points)

Score and Comments: