

**SHAKESPEARE FINAL EXAM:** The purpose of this course is to focus on the plays as artistic constructions composed of elements that cohere to explore a complex of dense ideas: How do quotes demonstrate character qualities central to issues explored in the play as a whole? How are scenes sequenced in ways that help explore these issues? How are symbols/imagery used to convey ideas? How do figures of speech further emphasize character qualities and issues important in the play. When you study, think in these terms about the plays.

**Multiple Choice, Matching, and Blanks** (Bracketed terms will not be on the test.)

Terms: blank verse, iambic pentameter, trochaic tetrameter, [sonnet], quarto, bad quarto, folio, First Folio, comedy, tragedy, history play, Roman play, [romance], 3 unities, stage machiavel (and white mac.), Miles Gloriosus, professional fool, foreshadowing, protagonist, soliloquy, simile, metaphor, [oxymoron, malapropism], Senecan drama, medieval Vice, psychomachia, equivocation, dramatic irony. Be able to apply the terms (i.e., identify an example of a professional fool or a medieval vice figure).

Two sections of quotes: one on identifying the play, the other on identifying the character speaking. Review the identifying attitudes or characteristics of each character below. How does that character relate to major ideas explored in the play? How do the character's priorities or values relate to the protagonist's? What is that character's role— why is the character in the play? Does the character speak in prose or verse? **Characters: Richard III; Macbeth, Lady Macbeth; Hal, Hotspur, Falstaff; Viola, Feste, Orsino, Olivia, Sir Andrew Aguecheek, Malvolio; Brutus, Julius Caesar, Cassius, Antony; Hamlet, Polonius, Ophelia, Claudius, Laertes.**

Multiple choice questions (or perhaps blanks) might concern the following:

Chronology: early plays, middle plays, late plays. Genre: an example of a tragedy, a history play, a comedy, a Roman play, [a romance]. [Typical and atypical forms of these genres].

Examples of foreshadowing, of professional fools, of a stage machiavel, of paired lines or scenes.

Examples of plays that make use of varied verse forms and of very stylized, ritualized exchanges between characters; plays in which insanity or the supernatural is important

Examples of quotes containing a figure of speech or trope (like metaphor or dramatic irony).

Factual questions—concerning something thematically important in a play (for example, “has Macbeth thought of killing Duncan before the witches say anything to him?” Or “what scene in the tavern pairs with the one where Hal has an interview with his father— and how?”

**Short-Answer Questions** (there will be 2 or 3— #1 and one or two more)

1. Explain 1) the **context** (who is talking to whom; also then intention/purpose of the speaker) and 2) the **significance** with regard to an **issue or question** the play explores. Begin with a concept or question explored in the play; then explain how connotations and metaphors within the quote pertain to complexities concerning this concept. (See the Midterm Study sheet for a sample of a short answer.)
2. The opening scene in a Shakespearean play often sets up themes that will be significant in the overall work. It might provide a visual “picture” of a mental situation or an abstract condition. In some way, it might “summarize” a relationship important in the whole play. Explain how the opening of a play functions in this manner. Support generalizations with details that provide evidence.
3. Scene sequencing is one of Shakespeare's strengths as a dramatist: sometimes, the sequence produces irony, giving insight into important themes or issues; other times, a scene comes up later that piers with and comments on an earlier scene. I'll give a pair or sequence and ask you to explain how the two together communicate complexities concerning some issue. I might also ask how material in a subplot pertains to issues explored in the main plot.
4. Explain how something visual (*e.g.*, a costume or stage prop or stage action) functions symbolically in its play. Or explain how a linguistic feature (*e.g.* oxymoron) functions to illuminate issues explored in the play. (I'll give you a couple to choose from.)