

English 181.009
13 November 2013
Macbeth Analysis Activity

In 5 groups of 3-4 please analyze the assigned passage according to the following:

1. Explain what is happening in the passage you've been assigned, i.e. who's speaking to whom; how does it fit into the play as whole; what effect(s) does it have on the action in general; what emotional effects does it (or can/should it) have on the audience?
2. Explain any major rhetorical figures, hyperbole, images, tropes, narrative technique, and/or structural elements (i.e meter, rhyme), etc. that the text uses to convey meaning.
3. Pretend you have to direct a production of *Macbeth* as part of "environmental awareness week" at Emory. How would you stage the assigned passage and/or scene as a warning for audiences to change the kind of behavior that hurts the environment?

Group 1:

“Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men,
As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves are clept
All by the name of dogs. The valued file
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The housekeeper, the hunter, every one
According to the gift which bounteous nature
Hath in him closed; whereby he does receive
Particular addition from the bill
That writes them all alike. And so of men.” (3.1.92-101)

Group 2:

LADY MACBETH What, quite unmanned in folly?
MACBETH If I stand here, I saw him.
LADY MACBETH Fie, for shame!
MACBETH Blood hath been shed ere now, I'th'olden time,
 Ere humane statute purged the gentle weal;
 Ay, and since too, murders have been performed
 Too terrible for the ear. The time has been
 That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
 And there an end. But now they rise again,
 With twenty moral murders on their crowns,
 And push us from our stools. This is more strange
 Than such a murder is. (3.4.75-84)

Group 3:

“That will never be.
Who can impress the forest, bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements, good!
Rebellious dead, rise never till the wood
Of Birnam rise, and on’s high place Macbeth
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath
To time and mortal custom. Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing. Tell me, if your art
Can tell so much, shall Banquo’s issue ever
Reign in this kingdom?” (4.1.110-118)

Group 4:

“Wisdom—to leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion, and his titles in a place
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not,
He wants the natural touch, for the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear and nothing is the love;
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs all reason” (4.2.6-14)

Group 5:

“Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny. It hath been
Th’untimely emptying of the happy throne
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours. You may
Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty
And yet seem cold—the time you may so hoodwink.
We have willing dames enough. There cannot be
That vulture in you to devour so many
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,
Finding it so inclined.” (4.3.66-76)