**2003**

According to critic Northrop Frye, “Tragic Heroes are so much the highest points in their human landscape that they seem the inevitable conductors of the power about them, great trees more likely to be struck by lightning than a clump of grass. Conductors may, of course, be instruments as well as victims of the divine lightning.” Select a novel or play in which a **tragic figure functions as an instrument of the suffering of others.** Then write an essay in which you explain **how the suffering brought upon others by that figure contributes to the tragic vision of the work as a whole.**

* Introduction
  + Background on “King Lear”
  + Thesis: With deception and betrayal, Edmund brings about suffering upon others in order to establish a position of power.
* Body Paragraph 1
  + Edmund sets his father up against Edgar
    - Motive: he wants the title; resented being treated differently just because he’s a bastard; jealousy
    - Act 1 Scene 2 monologue
  + Fake letter that Edgar wants to kill Gloucester
  + Edmund tells Edgar to carry sword and be armed
  + Edmund tells Gloucester that Edgar tried to kill him and ran away
  + Gloucester sends men after Edgar
  + Edgar has to disguise himself as beggar
  + Gloucester falsely trusted Edmund and betrayed Edgar
* Body Paragraph 2
  + Edmund betrays Gloucester to Cornwall
    - Gloucester was helping Lear
  + Edmund gets the title of Earl of Gloucester
    - In a position of power while his father and Edgar are now outcasts/beggars
  + Gloucester gets his eyes gouged out
  + Gloucester tries to commit suicide
    - Edgar didn’t lead him to a cliff
  + Gloucester trusting the wrong son led to his own suffering
* Conclusion
  + Important to distinguish between sincere relationships (Edgar and Gloucester) and superficial relationships (Edmund and Gloucester)
  + Edmunds desire for power/control/acceptance drives his plot to usurp his father and betray his brother
  + Edmund’s causing suffering for others ultimately caught up to him and caused his demise
    - He is arrested for treason and challenged to battle with Edgar
    - Edgar wounds him and he dies as a result
    - Betrayal and deception has consequences on both the betrayed/deceived and traitor

**1982**

**In great literature, no scene of violence exists for its own sake. Choose a work of literary merit that confronts the reader or audience with a scene or scenes of violence. In a well-organized essay, explain how the scene or scenes contribute to the meaning of the complete work.**

Thematic Statement: In the absence of a balance of power, chaos or tragedy may ensue.

Events:

-Gloucester is blinded by Cornwall

-Edmund reveals his father as a traitor to Cornwall in order to gain more power

“Lest it see more, prevent it. Out, vile jelly! / Where is thy luster now?” “All dark and comfortless. Where is my son Edmund?...” “Out, treacherous villain! / Thou call’st on him that hates thee”

-Only after being blinded, Gloucester able to see how blind he had been to the true personalities of his sons.

“Oh, my follies! / Then Edgar was abused. / Kind gods, forgive me that and prosper him!”

-Cordelia dies

Dies in battle

Lear brings her body in, crying (Lear previously said he would never let his daughter see him cry)

“Her voice was ever soft, gentle, low, an excellent thing in woman”

-Regan and Goneril die

Goneril poisons Regan

Goneril stabs herself

Soldier comes in with a bloody knife to announce her death

“‘Tis hot, it smokes! It even came from the heart of--O she’s dead!”

-Cornwall dies at the hand of a servant who tries to stop him from blinding Gloucester

-An eye for an eye..

Lear dies

Monologues and just dies

“No, no no life? Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life, and thou [Cordelia] no breath at all?”

Prompt: One definition of madness is “mental delusion or the eccentric behavior arising from it.” But Emily Dickinson wrote: “Much madness is divinest Sense—/To a discerning Eye—” . . . Novelists and playwrights have often seen madness with a “discerning eye.” Select a novel or play in which a character’s apparent madness or irrational behavior plays an important role. Then write a well-organized essay in which you explain what this delusion or eccentric behavior consists of and how it might be judged reasonable. Explain the significance of the “madness to the work as a whole.

Thematic Statement: Unchecked hubris can destroy close family relationships

Specific Textual References:

* King Lear sending out Cordelia/Kent
* King Lear’s daughter discussing who he loves more
* Leaving Goneril’s house after he is ignored
* Lear’s meeting with Edgar
* Kent’s tripping and insulting of Oswald
* “Dead march” to end the novel
* Edmund’s death
* Lear walking in with Cordelia

Quotes:

* “Here I disclaim all my parental care… And as a stranger to my heart and me Hold thee from this for ever.” - King Lear 1.1
* “Let it be so: yet have I left a daughter, Who, I am sure, is king and comfortable.”
* “Thou whoreson zed! Thou unnecessary letter! … His countenance likes me not.” - Kent 2.2
* “Let me have a surgeon; I am cut to the brains.”-Lear 4.5
* “The king is in high rage.” - Gloucester 2.4

Lear’s madness takes over the play...

Intro: Conflict ignites with the announcement of the division of the kingdom. Lear’s short temper is revealed when Cordelia, his youngest daughter, refuses to express her love for him. This infuriates Lear...

Paragraph I: Lear’s anger gets the best of him

Paragraph II:

Conclusion:

Characters to use:

Lear

Goneril

Cordelia

Regan

Gloucester

Edgar

Edmund

Oswald

Albany

Cornwall

King of France

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1990** | Choose a novel or play that depicts a conflict between a parent (or a parent figure) and a son or daughter. Write an essay in which you analyze the sources of the conflict and explain how the conflict contributes to the meaning of the work. |

* Introduction
  + MOWAH
    - A family can often be corrupted by the need and desire for power.
  + Regan and Goneril vs Lear
    - Both fight for power- lie, deceit about their love for Lear
      * Foils to Cordelia - Honesty
      * Cornwall agrees while Albany disagrees
      * This conflict parallels with Gloucester and Edmund to emphasize the MOWAW
  + **Diamond Character = FOOL**
    - Honest with the king, tells him of his mistakes
* Body Paragraph - Sources of the Conflict
  + Act 1, Scene 1
    - Goneril and Regan lie/hyperbolize their love for their father
      * Goneril: “Beyond all manner of so much I love you”
      * Regan: “Myself an enemy to all other joys”
      * Both deceit their father (they corrupt themselves) in order to gain power… opportunity for power leads to corruption
    - Lear gives simple request of 100 knights, daughters desire to strip him of power leads to failure of simple request
      * Lear - “With reservation of an hundred knights… this coronet (small crown) between you.”
        + Lear gives away kingdom, splits it between Goneril and Regan, yet they still do not follow this
        + Goneril strips away 50 knights while Lear lives with her.
        + Regan says “to bring but five-and- twenty”
      * Lock Kent in the stocks
        + Extremely disrespectful to do such an act to a King’s messenger
  + Foils to Cordelia
    - Honest, tells king she loves him as much as a daughter should love her father
    - This honesty shows no corruption which leads to no power
      * Opposite from goneril and Regan
* Body Paragraph # 2- Conflict contributes to meaning of the work
  + Act 1 scene 4
    - Goneril uses her newfound power to try to limit the King’s abilities.
    - Now that the king has passed his power to her, the king is useless to Goneril so she doesn't have to put any trust in him.
    - “Safer than trust too far. Let me still take away the harms I fear, Not fear still to be taken, I know his heart.”
    - Her desire to keep the power she has lead her to cast out her father.
  + Act 2 scene 4
    - Regan decides to try to teach Lear a lesson by locking him out of the house they are staying in.
    - “O sir, to wilful men, The injuries that they themselves procure Must be their schoolmasters. Shut up your doors.”
    - It seems that the role of parent and child have switched as Reagan is trying to teach Lear a lesson. The parent in their relationship is just the one that holds the power, so when Lear gives power to Reagan, she can parent him.
  + Goneril tries to prove to everyone her father’s failing health to discredit him. Act Iv scene I
* Act III scene IV- goneril and regan confuse lear. When he picks up on goneril being nasty to him, he says fine I’ll just go stay with my beloved daughter Reagan and she's like like lol not quite sir...then proceed to tell him he doesn’t need more followers at all because no one cares. ~insight~ just because they’ve sung his praises in the past he completely misses that they are being malicious. Too wrapped up in pretty words to see the truth. Daughters driven by power.

2011

Choose a character from a novel or play who responds in some significant way to justice or injustice. Then write a well developed essay in which you analyze the character’s understanding of justice, the degree to which the character’s search for justice is successful, and the significance of this search for the work as a whole.

Edmund responds in a significant way to perceived injustice. Edmund understands justice to be a concept that should be based in retribution and retaliation, otherwise true justice cannot be achieved. Edmund’s search for justice is not successful because while being so wrapped up in vengeance against others, his misunderstanding of justice blinds him from seeing love and affection from others. When you misunderstand justice, it causes you to be blind to love or affection shown by others.

1. Edmund misunderstands justice because he is angry about being treated like an illegitimate child, even though he believes he was born with the same qualities and talents as Edgar. Edmund is constantly belittled for being illegitimate. His own father used to be ashamed to acknowledge him during his child.

Quote: Edmund had to grow up fatherless: “I have so often blushed to acknowledge him.” (says Gloucester).

Quote: “Wherefore ‘base,’ when my dimensions are as well compact, my mind as generous, and my shape as true as honest madam’s issue”. He uses repetition and alliteration with “base, baseness, bastardy, base, base” to emphasize how tired he has become of being called all of these. Overuse of the same word is both exhausting to hear and read.

1. Edmund feels the need to overcompensate for the way he has been treated, which is why he employs retaliation as a tool for justice. Edmund goes so far as to fake a letter to get Edgar banished. In this letter, Edmund pretends that Edgar is plotting to kill Gloucester. After all, he wants Edgar to be hated like Gloucester hated him at first. He also goes after Goneril and Regan because he believes he is entitled to have both, and more. He schemes to get Edgar banished so Edmund can have the kingdom to himself because in this society, wealth is associated with power, which is associated with respect.
2. Edmund is not successful because he overestimated himself and because he believed in retribution, he forget that pursuing retribution leads to a harmful cycle of retaliation. Thus, his misunderstanding of justice lead to his own death because Edgar ends up wanting to get back at Edmund, which is what causes Edmund’s death.

Quote: “This sword, this arm, and my best spirits are bent to prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak, thou liest.” Edgar specifically pulls out his sword to prove that Edmund is a traitor.

1. Edmund is also not successful because his misunderstanding blinds him from seeing love or affection from people that really matter; instead, he’s on a path for a greedy pursuit of power.

Quote: Gloucester cares for him because he says even though Edmund is illegitimate, “the whoreson must be acknowledged” and gloucester says Edgar is “no dearer in [his] account” than Edmund, which shows Gloucester loves and respects Edmund equally. However, Edmund will not stop at simply gaining respect from Gloucester. If Edmund had been satisfied with getting love from Gloucester, he would have stopped. But, he over exaggerates the perceived injustice in his mind, which causes him to be so extreme about trying to get power.

2008  
In a literary work, a minor character, often known as a foil, possesses traits that emphasize, by contrast or comparison, the distinctive characteristics and qualities of the main character. For example, the ideas or behavior of the minor character might be used to highlight the weaknesses or strengths of the main character. Choose a novel or play in which a minor character serves as a foil to a main character. Then write an essay in which you analyze how the relation between the minor character and the major character illuminates the meaning of the work.

1. Introduction
   1. Thesis: *King Lear*, by William Shakespeare, contrasts King Lear with Gloucester which exemplifies the differences in their character and the differences in how these two individuals treat those around them in response to their environment.
   2. MOWAW: justice?

II. Body paragraph one: king lear

* 1. Topic sentence:
  2. Detail one: believed his devious daughters regan and goneril to take care of his kingdom rather than the one daughter that tried to help him
     1. Quote: “here i disclaim all my parental care, propinquity, and property of blood, as a stranger to my heart and me hold thee from this forever.”
     2. Quote: “
  3. Detail two: need for power and to be above others
     1. Asked for daughters to confess love before he gave them pieces of his kingdom
     2. Quote: “which of you shall we say doth love us most, that we our largest bounty may extend where nature doth with merit challenge?” (lear, act 1 scene 1)
  4. Detail three: blinded by corruption/power which drives him mad

1. Body paragraph two: gloucester
   1. Topic sentence: In many instances, gloucester's thoughts, actions and beliefs resemble king lears.
   2. Detail one: believed his devious son; edmund
      1. Quote: “ not in this land shall her remain uncaught; and found dispatch...bringing the murderous coward to the stake; he that conceals him, death.” (lear, act 2 scene 1)
   3. Detail two: loyalty, familial love
   4. Detail three: physically blind
      1. quote: “the dark and vicious place where thee he got cost him his eyes”
2. Conclusion