

Instructions and Prompts for Journals

General Instructions: All journal entries must be a minimum of 250 words. You may, if you wish, include images, or references to sources but must acknowledge from where they came from/ who created them, etc. Bottom line: ***no copying and pasting without some researching of who is the original owner.***

The latest entry should go **at the very top of the document** so it is the very first thing the reader sees. Entries are due on the date and time indicated, when I will select a few as examples for the class to examine. Bottom line: ***I will not go searching for your journals, so post them in the correct place and on time, please.***

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Journal #1: Shakespeare's Life, Times, and Theater [TOC](#)

Pre-write: Write down a list of expectations you have about a film based on Shakespeare's life and plays.

Watch: *Shakespeare in Love*

Read: "Shakespeare's World" (1-7); "The Shakespearean Stage" (8-12).

Write: a journal entry that answers the following sets of questions in separate paragraphs.

How would you describe Shakespeare's writing process as shown in the film *Shakespeare in Love*? How is his writing influenced by the theater's budget, deadlines, the rivalry and collaboration among actors, his society's moral constraints, his view of women? In what way is Shakespeare's writing for hire? In what ways is it writing for art's sake?

How is the contrast between the life of the rich and poor in sixteenth century London conveyed in the film? Based on what you have read and watched, what is the social class of the actors? What are some privileges allowed to the actors due to the patronage of noblemen? (Note the names of the acting companies: "The Admiral's Men," "The Lord Chamberlain's Men.")

In what ways does the film show the secondary status of women? In what ways does it show that the Queen is

not a woman but a goddess?

As a 21st century citizen, what did you find interesting or exciting about the 16th century? What was scary or repulsive? What was just weird? How does the film compare with the list of expectations which you drew up before you watched it?

Journal #2: Writing on one of “Nine Shakespearean Sonnets” (except Sonnet 130)

[TOC](#)

Read the nine sonnets on pages 30-32 of the class packet. Choose one of them (except Sonnet 130) and **do some research on it** (you will be presenting on this sonnet briefly to us next class, so become as familiar as you can with it). Now write a journal entry that contains:

a) A digital image that you feel goes with the poem. ***Do not forget to acknowledge where the image comes from.***

b) Three paragraphs:

Paragraph 1: Explain what it is that appeals to you about the poem.

Paragraph 2: Explain your choice of image and how it “goes” with the poem.

Paragraph 3: Pretend you want to e-mail this poem to someone and explain: Who would you send it to? (A friend? A lover? A foe? A parent? A sibling? A colleague or co-worker? A famous person? The President of the United States? Someone you saw on the subway? Your ex?) What would you tell this person is the reason for sending her/him this poem?

Journal #3: Hamlet’s First Soliloquy [TOC](#)

Read [this handout](#). Then, go to the Shakespeare Workshop blog and watch the five versions of Hamlet's first soliloquy (“O that this too too solid flesh”) that I have posted. The clips are

1. from Tony Richardson's Hamlet (Nicol Williams as Hamlet)
2. from Franco Zeffirelli's Hamlet (Mel Gibson as Hamlet)
3. from Kenneth Branagh's Hamlet (Branagh as Hamlet)
4. from Yukio Ninagawa's Hamlet (Fujiwara Tatsuya as Hamlet)
5. Gregory Doran's (David Tennant as Hamlet)

As you watch, write down what adjectives best convey the mood(s) each actor is trying to show:

- Disgust
- Anger
- Frustration
- Heartbreak
- Disappointment
- Depression

- Grief
- Weariness
- Resignation
- Obsession
- Sarcasm
- Other moods that you see that I haven't thought of

Now, write a response that

1. briefly describes each performance using the adjectives above.
2. ranks the five versions of the soliloquy, explaining which version works for you best overall and why. Support your choice using specific examples of how the actor conveys the meaning of the speech by stressing words, changing the feeling in his voice, moving around the set, using face or hand expressions, etc.

Journal #4: The Closet Scene and Atwood's "Gertrude Talks Back" [TOC](#)

Read Canadian poet Margaret Atwood's dramatic monologue "Gertrude Talks Back" on the next page. As you read, write down to which of Hamlet's lines the different sections of the monologue are responding.

Now consider what patriarchal view of women Atwood highlights by giving voice to Gertrude. What does this attitude, both present in the Ghost's description of Gertrude in 1.5 and of Hamlet's nasty language in the closet scene, say about both Hamlets? More importantly, how does the end of the monologue disrupt our notions of heroes and villains, right and wrong, of possible motivations for murder?

Gertrude Talks Back

By Margaret Atwood

I always thought it was a mistake, calling you Hamlet. I mean, what kind of a name is that for a young boy? It was your father's idea. Nothing would do but that you had to be called after him. Selfish. The other kids at school used to tease the life out of you. The nicknames! And those terrible jokes about pork.

I wanted to call you George.

I am not wringing my hands. I'm drying my nails.

Darling, please stop fidgeting with my mirror. That'll be the third one you've broken.

Yes, I've seen those pictures, thank you very much. I know your father was handsomer than Claudius. Highbrow, aquiline nose and so on, looked great in uniform. But handsome isn't everything, especially in a man, and far be it from me to speak ill of the dead, but I think it's about time I pointed out to you that your Dad just wasn't a whole lot of fun. Noble, sure, I grant you. But Claudius, well, he likes a drink now and then. He appreciates a decent meal. He enjoys a laugh, know what I mean? You don't always have to be tiptoeing around because of some holier-than-thou principle or something.

By the way, darling, I wish you wouldn't call your stepdad the bloat king. He does have a slight weight-problem, and it hurts his feelings.

The rank sweat of a what? My bed is certainly not enseamed, whatever that might be! A nasty sty, indeed! Not that it's any of your business, but I change those sheets twice a week, which is more than you do, judging from that student slum pigpen in Wittenberg. I'll certainly never visit you there again without prior warning! I see that laundry of yours when you bring it home, and not often enough either, by a long shot! Only when you run out of black socks.

And let me tell you, everyone sweats at a time like that, as you'd find out very soon if you ever gave it a try. A real girlfriend would do you a heap of good. Not like that pasty-faced what's-her-name, all trussed up like a prize turkey in those touch-me-not corsets of hers. If you ask me, there's something off about that girl. Borderline. Any little shock could push her right over the edge. Go get yourself someone more down-to-earth. Have a nice roll in the hay. Then you can talk to me about nasty sties.

No, darling, I am not mad at you. But I must say you're an awful prig sometimes. Just like your Dad. The Flesh, he'd say. You'd think it was dog dirt. You can excuse that in a young person, they are always so intolerant, but in someone his age it was getting, well, very hard to live with, and that's the understatement of the year.

Some days I think it would have been better for both of us if you hadn't been an only child. But you realize who you have to thank for that. You have no idea what I used to put up with. And every time I felt like a little, you know, just to warm up my ageing bones, it was like I'd suggested murder.

Oh! You think what? You think Claudius murdered your Dad? Well, no wonder you've been so rude to him at the dinner table!

If I'd known that, I could have put you straight in no time flat.

It wasn't Claudius, darling.

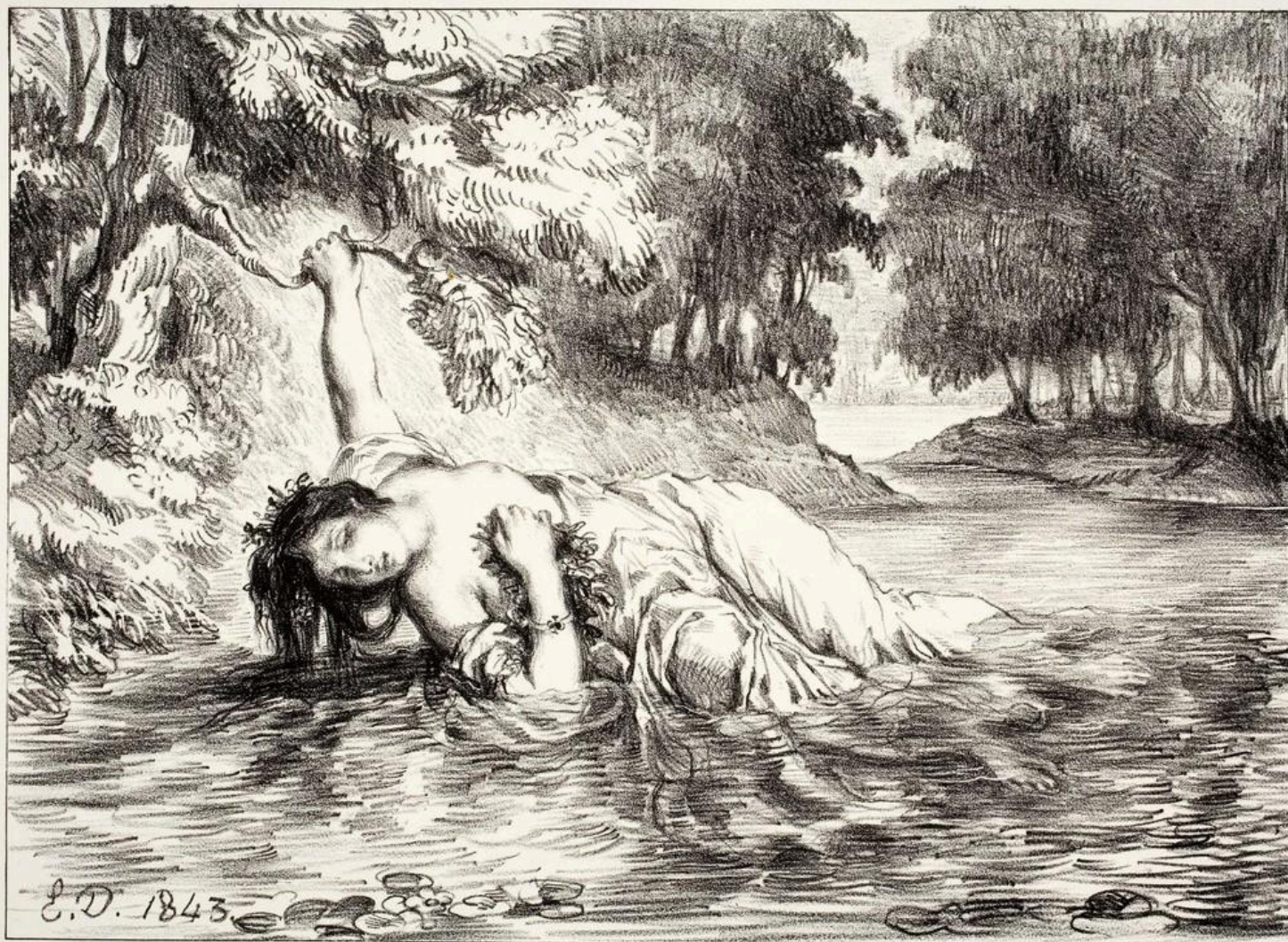
It was me.

Journal #5: Ophelia's Death [TOC](#)

Check the images detailing Ophelia's death. Choose one that depicts her death in the way you imagined it. If not, can you find another image on the web (any) that expresses what you imagined her death to be like?

Use the image to describe Ophelia's death. Here are a few words to get you started: romantic, peaceful, tragic, pathetic, painful, erotic, perverse, natural, unnatural, poetic, cold, necessary, unnecessary, inevitable, cruel...

Now consider the meaning behind Ophelia's death. Why must she die? Why must she die this specific way? In what way is her death and indictment on the men trying to control her (Polonius, Laertes, Hamlet, Claudius)? What does the story lose when it loses Ophelia?



..... Ses vêtements appesantis et trempés d'eau ont entraîné la pauvre malheureuse.

Luis de Villota.



La Mort
d'Ophélie
(1843) by
Eugène
Victor
Ferdinand
Delacroix



Ophelia (1852) by John Everett Millais





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Ophelia (1883) by Alexandre Cabanel

Journal #6: Othello in Black and White [TOC](#)

Technical Issues required I upload this question as a pdf, so you will have to access it [HERE](#).

Journal #7: Mourning the Women [TOC](#)

General Othello composes his own *in memoriam* at the end of the play, but what of Desdemona and Emilia? For this journal, I would like you to compose **two separate memorials**, one for each of these two women, each consisting of a) an epitaph, b) a song to be sung at the funeral, and c) an image for the mourners to take with them and remember each of the two women by. As always explain your choices (even if they seem kind of obvious to you).

Journal #8: Motiveless Malignity? [TOC](#)

1. Read the summary of the role of “Vice” on the English stage discussed on page 41 of your class packet (and maybe check this useful short article: http://stagingthehenriciancourt.brookes.ac.uk/research/the_vice_and_the_fool.html).
2. Read this incisive article by professor Kiernan Ryan: <https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/racism-misogyny-and-motiveless-malignity-in-othello>

Now write an entry where you explain how Shakespeare uses a version of the figure of Vice as either a way to support **OR** to question the patriarchal, racist culture to which Iago belongs. If, as Ryan argues, “Othello and Desdemona have made a mockery of the principles of social, sexual and racial hierarchy on which Iago’s very identity and sense of self-worth depend,” and Iago’s triumph over them is the triumph of Vice--what is the message being sent to us as an audience?

Journal #9: Death, Love, and Patriarchy [TOC](#)

Choose one option to answer. For an online version of the play: <http://nfs.sparknotes.com/muchado/>

Option A. Men dominated Shakespeare’s society. Traditional assumptions of male superiority were widespread. A wife should submit to her husband. She was his legal property and was rarely expected to think for herself. Men drew on a variety of stereotypes about women as they attempted to explain, justify, and control the subordinate place of women in society:

- *Woman as whore or wife:* Women had just two functions. They were either prostitutes to be bought or wives to be owned.
- *Woman as goddess:* The courtly lover placed women on a pedestal. But is to worship a woman as a goddess to silence her as a human being?
- *Woman as adulterer:* Virginity and chastity were virtues and female adultery an unforgivable sin. An heiress proved unchaste was deprived of her inheritance.
- *Woman as shrew and scapegoat:* Women were often blamed by men for all the faults of the world. A woman who spoke up for herself was a “curst” shrew and needed taming.

Which of these stereotypes do Claudio, Don Pedro, Benedick, Leonato, and Antonio use when describing women in general? Which do they use when describing Hero? Which do they use when describing Beatrice? Which of these stereotypes does Beatrice resist? In what ways does she resist them? Which of these stereotypes, in particular, offends her, sparking her sharp tongue? What does it tell you about her character that she resists offensive stereotypes of women?

Support your answer by referring to some of the following passages or any others you find more useful

1. The exchange among Don Pedro, Leonato, and Benedick in 1.1. starting around line 80 (Don Pedro: “You embrace your charge too willingly....”)
2. The exchange between Claudio and Benedick, and the later exchange among Claudio, Benedick, and Don Pedro in 1.1 starting around line 125 (Claudio: “Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of Signior

Leonato?”)

3. The conversation between Don Pedro and Claudio in 1.1. starting around line 225 (Claudio: “My liege, your highness now may do me good....”)
4. The exchange among Leonato, Beatrice, and Antonio in 2.1 starting around line 15 (Leonato: “By my troth, niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue.”...)
5. Benedick’s description of Beatrice to Don Pedro in 2.1 starting around line 200 (“O, she misused me past the endurance of a block! ...”)
6. Claudio, Don Pedro, and Leonato’s vicious, unpleasant accusations of Hero in 4.1. starting around line 20 (Claudio: “Stand thee by, Friar....”)

Option B. When Benedick refuses to kill Claudio in 4.1, Beatrice wishes that *she* were a man so that she could challenge Claudio to single combat to revenge her cousin’s dishonor. How is her wish a sign that the men around her are acting “unmanly”? Is Beatrice correct in judging the actions of Claudio, Don Pedro, and Leonato during the wedding as “unmanly”? Is Benedick also being “unmanly” by refusing to challenge Claudio? In your opinion, would Beatrice make a better man than them at this point?

Support your answer by referring to some of the following passages or any others you find more useful

1. Claudio, Don Pedro, and Leonato’s vicious, unpleasant accusations of Hero in 4.1. starting around line 20 (Claudio: “Stand thee by, Friar....”)
2. Beatrice’s angry exchange with Benedick in 4.1. starting around line 295 (“You dare easier be friends with me than fight with mine enemy...”)
3. Beatrice’s view of Don Pedro, Count Claudio, and, by extension, Benedick in 4.1. starting around line 310 (“Princes and counties!...”)

Journal #10: First Impressions: Lady Macbeth [TOC](#)

Let’s see what we can figure out from her soliloquies:

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be	
What thou art promised: yet do I fear* thy nature;	doubt
It is too full o' the milk of human kindness	
To catch the nearest way*: thou wouldst be great;	most expedient
Art not without ambition, but without	
The illness* should attend it: what thou wouldst highly,	wickedness that
That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,	
And yet wouldst wrongly win: thou'ldst have, great Glamis,	
That which cries 'Thus thou must do, if thou have it;	
And that which rather thou dost fear to do	
Than wishest should be undone.' Hie* thee hither,	Hasten
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear;	
And chastise with the valour of my tongue	
All that impedes thee from the golden round*,	the crown
Which fate and metaphysical* aid doth seem	supernatural
To have thee crown'd withal*.	with
[...]	

The raven* himself is hoarse	a bird of ill omen
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan	
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits	
That tend on mortal thoughts*, unsex me here,	attend deadly thoughts
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full	
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;	
Stop up the access and passage to remorse*,	pity
That no compunctious visitings of nature	
Shake my fell* purpose, nor keep peace* between	cruel / intervene
The effect and it!* Come to my woman's breasts,	my purpose and its accomplishment
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,	
Wherever in your sightless substances	
You wait on* nature's mischief! Come, thick night,	assist
And pall thee in the dunnest* smoke of hell,	envelop yourself in the darkest
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,	
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,	
To cry "Hold, hold!"	

In *Shakespeare's Soliloquies* (London: Routledge, 1990), critic Wolfgang Clemen reads the two soliloquies which introduce us to Lady Macbeth in 1.5 thus:

In her first twelve lines Lady Macbeth speaks only of her husband, and then follows with a description of the influence that she herself intends to exert on him. Significantly, the "spirits" that she proposes to pour into his ear are to inspire him with courage to do not good but evil. She closes her speech with the vision of Macbeth crowned with the "golden round," leading us to understand that her ambition is that of her husband's. She also seems to understand that will and ambition alone will not suffice, but that "fate and metaphysical aid" *seem* to point the way to the crown.

Her soliloquy is interrupted by the arrival of a messenger bringing news of the approach of the King and Macbeth. Lady Macbeth then has a second soliloquy, which leads in a quite different direction; for only now does Lady Macbeth turn her attention resolutely towards herself. In this second soliloquy there is world full of demonic inner action. It begins and ends with the evocation of atmosphere, conjuring up the fatal sombre-ness and terror of the night with animal cries and shrieks of fear.

What we experience in this second soliloquy is a deliberate act of dedication to evil, but evil can only take full possession of Lady Macbeth after her human nature, her femininity, has been driven out of her. This is the common purpose of the three challenges all beginning with "Come"; they enable us to see that the inner transformation which Lady Macbeth has resolved to undergo cannot take place without the assistance of diabolical spirits. For the Elizabethan audience these proclamations were not mere rhetoric, but an actual conjuration of the infernal powers with whom Lady Macbeth is proposing to conclude a pact. Pity and remorse must be eliminated so that Lady Macbeth may perpetrate evil with unchecked cruelty.

The night too is summoned as an accomplice in the crime that must be covered up and hidden from sight. The occurrence of the word "hell" confirms Lady Macbeth's awareness of the pact which she has concluded with the infernal powers, the "murd'ring ministers." Yet "heaven" appears in the same sentence, and it is heaven rather than a human being that in Lady Macbeth's imagination discovers the murder, for it is from heaven that the cry "Hold, hold!" rings out, bringing the soliloquy to a close on a note of fear. With the visualization of the weapon ("my keen knife") these lines anticipate not only the deed, but also the fear of the murder being discovered and the murderer apprehended. (141-148)

Based on Clemen's close reading, compare and contrast Lady Macbeth's **character** and her **relationship with her husband** to that of the other Shakespearean wife we have read about during this semester, Desdemona.

Journal 11: Lady Macbeth's Sleepwalking Scene [TOC](#)

Read Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking scene in 5.1. Afterwards, watch the three versions of the scene provided below. As you watch, write down what adjectives best convey the mood(s) the actor is trying to show

- fear
- desperation
- guilt
- anger
- anguish
- depression
- grief
- weariness
- resignation
- panic
- confusion
- obsession
- other moods I have not thought of

Write a brief description of each performance. Then explain which version works best for you and why. Support your choice by using specific examples of how the actor conveys the meaning of the speech by stressing words, changing the feeling in her voice, moving around, using face or hand expressions, etc.

Here are three versions: https://youtu.be/VS_Z4zBDItw?t=54s

Journal 12: Reflection [TOC](#)

Write a letter to the future students of this class. Tell them about the kind of work we have done, what was interesting and/or fun, and what was boring and/or hard. Tell them what role the teacher played in the class (with examples) and what role you played in the class (with examples). Also make some recommendations: What are some things that the future students should know so they can succeed in the class?