

Graded Assignment

Romeo and Juliet Literary Essay

This document provides an overview of the tasks and a time line for completing this assignment.

Student Assignment Instructions

Respond to the following in the form of a literary essay. Your essay should consist of at least five paragraphs.

William Shakespeare incorporates a number of important themes into *Romeo and Juliet*. Some of the most prominent themes in the play address love's power, the power of fate, the danger of haste, and the collision of opposites. Shakespeare conveys his message about these themes through the words of the characters, the events of the plot, and the various motifs that recur in the work. Choose one of the central themes of *Romeo and Juliet* and trace it throughout the play, explaining not only what message Shakespeare conveys but how he manages to convey it.

Cite specific examples from the play in your response. Use the notes you take in the Student Guide and the questions you answer as you read and complete the lessons to help you formulate your response.

You will hand in your completed response upon completion of this unit.

Process

You should always use a process for your writing that includes planning and drafting. To complete this assignment, you will do the following:

- Review the assignment instructions and grading criteria thoroughly. The writing assignment you complete in this unit will be graded against a rubric that assesses the essay in a number of categories. These categories focus both on the essay's contents and its clarity.
 - Read the rubric on the last page of this document. Keep the criteria listed on the rubric in mind as you complete the writing assignment.
 - Remember to write in standard formal English and use the third person (no personal opinions) and the present tense.
- Complete a plan for your essay.
- Begin drafting your paper, using your plan as a guide.
- Review and revise your first draft. You should try to have another person read your work and give you feedback as part of your revision process.
- Write the final draft of your project. Be sure to follow these requirements and recommendations when completing your draft:

Open a new Microsoft Word document. Type your name, your teacher's name, your school name, and the date at the top of your document. To help your teacher know from whom the project came, save the file as:

HS_GEN4_S2_07_Romeo_and_Juliet_Literary_Essay_FirstInitial_LastName.doc

Example: HS_GEN4_S2_07_Romeo_and_Juliet_Literary_Essay_M_Smith.doc

Type your essay in the document you create.

Student Time Line

You will complete this project over the course of this unit.

Task	Start	Complete
Print and review assignment instructions.	Lesson 4	Lesson 4
Read and take notes on the play.	Lesson 1	Lesson 16
Begin drafting your essay.	Lesson 16	Lesson 16
Complete writing and begin revisions.	Lesson 17	Lesson 17
Submit final draft for a grade.	Lesson 18	Lesson 18

Grading/Point Values

Assignment Point Value: 100

Required Length

Pages: 3–5

Word Count: 900–1,500

At their discretion, teachers may deduct 10 percent of the total score for submissions that do not meet the length requirement.

Literary Essay Grading Rubric Essays will be evaluated on the basis of the rubric below.

Criterion	4	3	2	1
Purpose	The literary essay fulfills its purpose of analyzing a theme in <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> . This purpose is clearly articulated in a valid thesis statement.	The purpose of this literary essay is not entirely clear. The essay provides some analysis of a theme in <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> , but there are significant gaps that leave the reader questioning. The thesis may not be entirely clear, or it may not state the purpose of the essay.	The literary essay about <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> does not fulfill its purpose because it lacks significant analysis of a theme, or contains irrelevant information, or is mostly a summary of the play. The literary essay may have a thesis, but the thesis is not entirely clear, or it is not valid.	This essay is not a literary essay about <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> . It does not contain an analysis of a theme. The essay does not have a thesis.
Ideas and Content	The literary essay contains insightful analysis of a theme and examples of how Shakespeare conveys the theme through the words of the characters, the events of the plot, or the various motifs in the play. The writer explains the connections between the evidence and the thesis.	The literary essay contains examples and analysis, but some points remain unsupported, or the writer does not make a convincing connection between evidence presented and conclusions drawn. It may not fully explore or explain the way in which characters, plot, or motifs help convey the theme. The essay may present more summary than analysis.	The writer does not present clear examples and analysis of how the characters, plot, or motifs convey a theme. The writer does not use paraphrases, examples from the play, or quotations to support the analysis. The writer draws conclusions for which little or no evidence is offered, and the essay presents more summary than analysis.	The writer makes statements about the theme but does not present evidence from the play. There is a lack of paraphrases, examples, and quotations to support the analysis of how the theme is conveyed by characters, plot, or motifs. The essay fails to show any insight into the play.
Structure and Organization	The essay has a clear introduction, body, and conclusion. The essay presents a thesis in the introductory paragraph and ends with a concluding paragraph that summarizes the main points or restates the thesis. The body of the essay contains paragraphs that support the thesis. The essay consistently follows an organizational pattern such as order of importance. Transitions make meaningful connections between ideas and paragraphs.	The essay has an introduction, body, and conclusion, but not all parts are well developed. The essay presents a thesis, but it may not be in the introductory paragraph, or the essay may have a concluding paragraph that does not restate the thesis. The body of the essay may contain irrelevant or tangential content. The essay sometimes follows an appropriate organizational pattern, but not consistently. Transitions are occasionally used.	The essay may not have a clear introduction, body, or conclusion. The essay does not have a clear thesis that is identified in the introductory paragraph, or it may lack an introductory paragraph altogether. The conclusion, if present, does not restate the essay's thesis. The essay does not follow a clear organizational pattern, and the writer tends to jump around. Minimal transitions are used.	The essay does not have a clear introduction, body, or conclusion. The essay lacks a clear thesis and/or a clear conclusion. The structure of the literary essay is non-existent. The essay consists of only one long paragraph, or paragraph breaks seem random. There are no transitions between ideas.

Literary Essay Grading Rubric Essays will be evaluated on the basis of the rubric below.

Criterion	4	3	2	1
Language and Word Choice	The writer uses effective, compelling language to express key ideas. He or she considers purpose, audience, and tone in language and word choice. The essay uses present tense when referring to the play. It incorporates literary terms and contains no colloquialisms or slang expressions. The essay is written in the third-person point of view without first-person expressions of opinion, and it is written in a formal style.	The writer's language is occasionally compelling. The writer attempts to consider purpose, audience, and tone, but sometimes loses sight of one of these aspects and includes inappropriate wording. Few literary terms are used, and the writer sometimes incorporates slang or other informal language. The literary essay is not consistently objective, and third-person language sometimes lapses into first-person expressions of opinion.	The essay lacks compelling language. The writer does not consider purpose, audience, or tone and uses inappropriate language or wording. Literary terms are not used, and the language is informal. The literary essay is not objective or is not written in the third-person point of view. The writer includes many first-person expressions of opinion.	The essay's language is often inappropriate. The writer does not consider purpose, audience, or tone. The literary essay may contain personal opinions, comments, and exclamations. The essay contains informal language, including slang and other inappropriate expressions.
Sentences and Mechanics	Each sentence expresses a complete thought. Quotations within the essay contain the exact words from the play and are punctuated correctly. A citation for each quotation is included in parentheses. There are extremely few errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics, and those that exist do not impede understanding.	Most sentences contain complete thoughts. Quotations from the play include the correct words, but they are sometimes not punctuated correctly. A citation for most quotations is included. There are few errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics, and they rarely interfere with a reader's ability to understand.	Sentences do not all contain complete thoughts. There are several unintentional fragments and run-ons. Quotations do not contain all of the correct words or are not punctuated correctly. Citations are rarely or never used. There are errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that sometimes interfere with the reader's ability to understand.	Many sentences are incomplete, and it is difficult to recognize quotations from the play. There are no citations. Errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics make the essay difficult to understand.