

Hamlet – writing introductions.

Sample 1:

“We admire Hamlet as much for his weaknesses as for his strengths”

There is no doubt that Hamlet possesses many strengths which we admire – he is (1) noble, brave, intelligent, loyal and good. However as the play goes on his weaknesses emerge. He is slow to act as he tends to over think everything and he frequently lashes out against those who have betrayed him. Nonetheless we remain sympathetic towards him despite his (2) cruelty to Ophelia & Gertrude, (3) his murder of Polonius & his disrespect towards Laertes because in each case we understand that he is simply a flawed human being experiencing profound emotional distress. Thus for the majority of the play we admire Hamlet even though we are aware of his weaknesses. However, there are three occasions when we find it difficult to admire Hamlet – (4) in the prayer scene with Claudius; when he shows little remorse for killing Polonius; and when he sends Rosencrantz & Guildenstern to their deaths. At these moments his lack of compassion is shocking, and even though we understand him we can no longer admire him. Nonetheless he redeems himself (5) in the final scene and once again we admire him.

Paragraph 1 = noble, brave, intelligent, loyal, good.

Paragraph 2 = lashes out at Ophelia & Gertrude

Paragraph 3 = kills Polonius & lashes out against Laertes.

Paragraph 4 = prayer scene & kills Polonius & R & G

Paragraph 5 = final scene – redeemed.

Conclusion.

Sample 2:

“Hamlet delays his revenge because his mind is a constant battleground”

Hamlet is famous for his procrastination – he thinks but does not act. However, his delay in getting revenge is easily explained if we look at the many conflicts dominating his thoughts. (1) Firstly we see his desire to punish Claudius fighting with his determination to do the right thing. (2) Secondly we see his love for Ophelia & Gertrude battling with his deep disappointment that they have betrayed him. (3) Thirdly we see his deep suicidal despair conflicting with his sense that he must act, that he must get revenge. (4) Fourthly, his greatest opportunity to kill Claudius comes when Claudius is at prayer and this conflicts with his sense that Claudius should be properly punished. All of these factors contribute to his delay in getting revenge. However, (5) his accidental murder of Polonius at the end of Act 3 leads to a ‘delay’ which is beyond his control – he is sent away to England, Ophelia dies, Laertes returns. (6) By the end of the play he has reconciled his duty to get revenge with his desire to do the right thing by convincing himself that he is doing God’s work and this end to the conflict in his mind enables him to finally get revenge.

Paragraph 1 = punish C v’s do the right thing

Paragraph 2 = love v’s betrayal

Paragraph 3 = suicidal despair v’s duty to father

Paragraph 4 = opportunity v’s proper revenge

Paragraph 5 = accidental delay

Paragraph 6 = mind no longer a battleground = revenge.

Conclusion