

The Critical Lens: Sophocles & Shakespeare

Your Task:

Write a critical essay in which you discuss Sophocles' Oedipus the King (c. 430 B.C.E.) and William Shakespeare's Macbeth (1606) from the particular perspective of the statement that is provided for you in your Critical Lens. In your essay, provide a valid interpretation of the statement; agree with, disagree with, or qualify the statement as you have interpreted it; and support your opinion using specific references to appropriate literary elements from the two works.

Critical Lenses (choose one):

- "Circumstances are beyond the control of man; but his conduct is in his own power."
– Benjamin Disraeli, from Contarini Fleming (1832)
- "...fear is simply the consequence of every lie."
–Fyodor Dostoevsky, from The Brothers Karamazov (1880)
- "The bravest of individuals is the one who obeys his or her conscience."
–J. F. Clark (adapted)

Be sure to

- Provide a valid interpretation of the critical lens that clearly establishes the criteria for analysis
- Indicate whether you agree **or** disagree with the statement as you have interpreted it
- Use the criteria suggested by the critical lens to analyze the works
- Eschew plot summary. Instead, use specific references to appropriate literary elements (for example: theme, characterization, setting, point of view) to develop your analysis
- Organize your ideas in a unified and coherent manner
- Specify the title and author of the literature
- Follow the conventions of standard written English

Use standard MLA format. The essay must be double-spaced, with one-inch margins all around. Use a 12-point, Times New Roman font. All papers must have an appropriate and creative title. Length guideline: 3-5 pages. No coversheets. Final drafts must be uploaded at turnitin.com.