

Structuring your response...

The question: you will get a very short extract from the play with your question. The question itself will ask you to focus on a key character or theme from the play, with your essay beginning by focussing on the passage, and then widening out to the play as a whole. Whatever question crops up, your answer must include:

- Some discussion of the passage
- Reference to context
- Analysis of language / structure / form
- References to dramatic effects

Introduction

Your first sentence should state the point in the play that the extract comes from (it comes before / after which other key events? Your next sentence should say why the passage is important in terms of its connection to the theme or character. Your third sentence should comment on an important aspect of **CONTEXT** with the passage and its link to theme / character.

Section 2: THE BUILD-UP

Your next section should focus on how the character / theme in the question is developed up to the point of the extract. You should be able to pick out the key moments, and use quotations from these moments to back up your ideas. There may be opportunities to write about **IMAGERY** and **DRAMATIC EFFECTS** with these moments as well.

Section 3 : EXTRACT FOCUS

You should then lead into a detailed focus on the extract. This gives you the chance to refer to details of **LANGUAGE** and key **IMAGERY**, making sure that you relate back all the time to the main focus (character or theme) of the question.

Section 4 : THE AFTERMATH

From the extract, go on to explain how the theme or character is developed from that point onwards. Again, focus on specific moments in the play and work in references to **LANGUAGE** and **DRAMATIC EFFECTS**

Section 5 : CONCLUSION

State why the central theme / character is so important / fascinating for the audience, perhaps with a **CONTEXT**-related comment about why a Jacobean audience might respond differently.

CONTEXT

- *Monarchy in Shakespeare's time- Divine Right of Kings, Elizabeth I & James VI/I, how the next Monarch was decided (succession)*
- *Uniting of Scotland & England- issues with invasion/rebellion*
- *Common views on religion & witchcraft/ superstition- & James VI/I interest in witchcraft*
- *How Shakespeare's plays would have been cast/staged/performed*
 - *Role of women*
- *What the real King Duncan was like*
 - *The Gunpowder Plot*
- *The historic Macbeth's 17 year reign*
 - *The Divine Order*

EVALUATIVE WORDS

Powerful / dramatic / exciting / harrowing / moving / chilling / gripping / fascinating / climactic, etc.

DRAMATIC EFFECTS

- *Entrances and exits*
- *Pauses and interruptions*
- *Noises off (knocking, owl, etc)*
- *Charing lines of dialogue*
- *Fast-paced dialogue*
- *Soliloquys and asides*
- *Visual spectacles -(witches / ghosts)*
- *Dramatic irony*
- *Placing of private / public scenes*
- *Amount of speech in dialogue*

LANGUAGE / VERSE

- *Prose or verse*
- *Imagery (recurrent / semantic fields)*
- *Parts of speech*
- *Hyperbole*
- *Euphemism*
- *Assonance / alliteration / onomatopoeia / sibilance*
- *Caesura / enjambment*
- *Use of rhyme*
- *Pentameter / tetrameter / blank verse*
- *Repetition*