Response Essay #3

Ideas for Writing

1. Choose an historical/cultural theme, such as the Divine Right of Kings, the Gunpowder Plot, anti-Catholic Sentiments, and witchcraft, and analyze how you see this surface in Shakespeare’s work.
2. Analyze Macbeth’s soliloquy, “To be thus is nothing” (3.1.52).
3. Choose a scene and explain how you would stage this today.
4. Explain the ripple effect of Duncan’s murder. What were the intended and unintended consequences?
5. Choose a motif, a reoccurring theme or symbol, in the play and explain its significance.
6. How do the apparitions change the course of the play? What do they add to the tension, the plot, and the direction?
7. Consider Macduff. Is he negligent for leaving his family? How important is his role in the play?
8. One director showed Malcolm – at the end of the play – going to see the witches. Is the play cyclical? Are we doomed to repeat mistakes?
9. Consider Malcolm’s ideas of what makes a good king (4.3.134-151). Compare these ideas to one of the documents in kingship from Act II.
10. Reflect on your journey through the play. Have you changed your thinking about how best to study Shakespeare? What types of activities help you digest the language and appreciate the imagery? How adept do you feel now about tackling a play independently?