

Paper #2 Characterization

Length 4-5 pages. See me if you cannot manage more than 1,200 words. Draft workshop Thurs. Feb. 13 Due Tues. Feb. 18

All papers must use MLA in-text citations and have a works cited page. Use Act, Scene and line numbers, rather than page numbers for quotations from the play.

On Thurs. there will be a peer-response draft workshop with a checklist of items that should be covered.

Describe one character from *The Tempest*. Outline that character's motives, weaknesses, and behavior. What issues would you consider if you were casting that character in your own production of the play?

Go over your lecture notes and play annotations; consider why your chosen character is of interest to you. You want to pose questions about that character that will lead the reader to greater psychological insights and a new way of viewing that character. Assume the reader is familiar with the play, but do give short quotations to support your analysis. Do not give a lengthy plot summary. You may want to respond to comments made by Coleridge, Kemble or Dryden (in the Norton edition of *The Tempest*) about characters in *The Tempest*. Notice there are literary criticism articles in the Norton.

The following questions may be helpful in developing your paper:

1. Does the character change? Is the character capable of change? Round or flat?
2. Is the character sympathetic? Why or why not?
3. Does the character represent a particular emotion or attitude toward a subject?
4. Is the character a hero? A monster? A combination of the two?
5. Is the character aware of his or her own motivations?
6. How does the character respond to other characters?
7. How important is this character to the play or story? Would the play or story be the same without this character?

From such questions, develop a working thesis. The issues raised should not be easily answerable. (You do not need to respond to all the questions.) For example, this is **not** a thesis: "The three different categories I will talk about are Prospero's motives, weaknesses, and behavior." While such a statement potentially organizes a paper, it will be a pretty boring paper. Some modification can, however, make it a thesis: "While initially monstrous, Prospero moves past his anger during the process of the play to reach a point where he can forgive." Such a thesis promises more interest—and will be easier to write.

Now look for supporting dialogue from the play or story that supports your thesis. Avoid overly long quotations and be sure you discuss the context and situation for that dialogue *before* giving the quotation. I will give some guidance in lecture on how to use slash marks when citing poetic quotations.