

Hamlet “Slow Reading” Portfolio

The goal of this assignment is to really slow down and process a segment of text – in this case a soliloquy or speech from *Hamlet*. Essentially, you’ll be reading the text in several different ways in order to build up to an argument, and you’ll be using a portfolio to “show your work.” By moving methodically through the text in a variety of steps and media, you’ll discover a greater nuance and detail than by simply reading it once or twice and sitting down to write.

First, you’ll select a speech from the following list:

- Laertes: Act I, scene 3 – lines 10-43 (“Think it no more... though none else near.”)
- Ghost: Act I, scene 5 – lines 42-91 (“Ay that incestuous... Remember me.”)
- Claudius: Act III, scene 3 – lines 36-72 (“Oh, my offense... All may be well.”)
- Hamlet: Act IV, scene 4 – lines 33-67 (“How all occasions... be nothing worth!”)

You’ll create a Pathbrite portfolio (titled “Hamlet Portfolio”), and create artifacts by working through each of the following steps. It’s important to do these in order, as they are designed to build on each other to help foster a richer understanding of the text.

1. Find a recording of a performance of the speech (on YouTube or the like)
 - a. Embed the link in your portfolio, and watch/listen to the performance
 - b. Take notes (either in the comment box or artifact description) on your experience of the performance.
 - i. how does the actor look? sound? what emotions is he conveying? What is your overall impression at the end of the speech?
2. Print out a copy of the speech (documents available in the wiki)
 - a. Annotate it by hand.
 - i. Look up any word that is unfamiliar and write the definition in the margin.
 - ii. Take notes about what you think is going on in each line.
 - iii. Write questions, comments, etc.
 - b. Scan your annotations and upload them to the portfolio.
3. Write a paraphrase of the speech following the guidelines in *Thinking Shakespeare*
 - a. First paraphrase it line by line – a very detailed paraphrase.
 - b. Then, identify the beats of the speech. What are the separate thoughts? Create a numbered list.
 - c. Then paraphrase the whole speech again in a few sentences – sum it up.
 - d. Upload your work to the Portfolio.
4. Record yourself reading/performing the speech (audio or video).
 - a. Upload the recording to the portfolio.
 - b. in the description box, write a few lines reflecting on the experience of recording yourself.
 - i. What emotions were you trying to convey? What did you find challenging? What came easily?
5. Write an analysis of the speech

- a. This should be a 400-500 word close reading of the passage (not counting the passage itself). You should write about the significance of the speech both on its own and in the context of the work as a whole. Think about what the speech itself says and means, then draw connections to broader issues and themes of the play. Avoid a long general introduction, as that would come off as mere space-filler in this type of short assignment. Begin with a claim or thesis stating what insight your reading will provide into the work as a whole, and then offer evidence from the passage to support your claim.
 - b. The analysis should be double-spaced; use appropriate paragraphing, grammar, and spelling; be free of egregious typos; be uploaded to the portfolio as a **Word document**.
6. Write a brief 200-300 word reflection on the process of creating this portfolio
 - a. How was this different from previous experiences writing close analyses of literature? What did you notice about yourself? Your learning? The speech itself?
 - b. This can be a Word document or a text file in Pathbrite itself – so long as it's legible and in the portfolio.

When complete, the portfolio should thus include 6 discrete artifacts, and they should be arranged in the order listed above.