FINAL ASSESSMENT

Hamlet

Analyze how Shakespeare develops a theme, drawing evidence from primary documents, including *Hamlet*, to reflect on how early modern cultural issues are relevant today.
These essays offer an exceptionally focused and persuasive analysis of how Shakespeare develops a theme, using apt and specific textual support from primary documents, including Hamlet. These essays explore the theme’s complexity to reflect on how early modern cultural issues are relevant today. Although not without flaws, these essays make a strong case for their interpretation and discuss the theme with significant insight and understanding. Generally, essays scored in the top range reveal sophisticated analysis of ideas and exceptional control of language, including highly proficient use of vocabulary and stylistic maturity in sentence structure. (TOP SCORES: 90%-100%)

These essays offer a reasonably focused and persuasive analysis of how Shakespeare develops a theme. Using apt, yet general, textual support from primary documents, including Hamlet, these essays explore the theme appropriately, but less thoroughly or precisely than those with top scores. Reflections on how early modern culture issues are relevant today may be articulated too generally and without adequate complexity or support. Essays of this caliber contain noticeable language errors, affecting clarity and control in writing but do not completely undermine the ability to express concrete ideas. These essays consistently demonstrate proficient use of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structure. (UPPER SCORES: 80%-89%)

Essays in this range offer minimal focus and persuasive analysis of how Shakespeare develops a theme. Using superficial or obvious textual support from primary documents, including Hamlet, these essays explore the theme by summarizing Shakespeare’s ideas or other cultural issues without sufficient reflection on how the early modern period has relevance today. Even though essays of this caliber address the prompt, they contain language errors that weaken the overall analysis, resulting in a thinly developed or weakly organized structure. Vocabulary and writing control is at a minimally effective level. (MIDDLE SCORES: 70%-79%)

Essays in the below average range offer little to no apparent focus or analysis of how Shakespeare develops a theme. Textual support from primary documents, including Hamlet, is sparse or nonexistent, or essays reveal major misconceptions about how the readings provide evidence for a developing theme. Using emerging vocabulary or simple sentence structure, essays of this caliber reveal unclear, unsubstantial reflections about how early modern issues are relevant today. The overall writing is emerging toward proficiency. (LOWER SCORES: 60%-69%)

Failing essays demonstrate little competency or effort in analyzing how Shakespeare develops a theme. Although some attempts to analyze or to reflect may be indicated, the writer’s view has little clarity and only slight, if any, textual evidence in its support. Generally these essays are unacceptably brief or ineffectively written. (LOWEST SCORES: 59% or less)
The Author’s Advice on how to tame a shrew.
If you perceive her to increase her language, be sure you give her not a word, good nor bad, but rather seeme to slight her, by doing some action or other, as singing, dancing, whistling, or clapping thy hands on thy sides; for this will make her vexe extremely, because you give her not word for word: And be sure you doe not offer to goe away, but walke still before her, or in her hearing; for if you doe thinke to avoyd her clamour by going abroad, you are deceived; for then you doe but give her breath, and so she will have a Bill os Revivall against you when you come in againe, and so by that meanes will have another fling at your Jacket...

A Juniper Lecture, With the description of all sorts of women, good, and bad: From the modest to the maddest, from the most Civil, to the scold Rampant, their praise and dispraise compendiously related. The Second Impression, with many new Additions. J O[kes] for W. Ley, 1639 (STC 23766)
1. A most Excellent Receipt against Melancholy; Comforts the Stomach, openeth the Liver, helps head-ache, breeds good blood takes away faint|ness of the Heart, Swoonings, expells Melancholy, prevents Madness, makes a man merry· and a cheerful countenance; and taken at night, takes away all Fancies and Melancholy Dreams.

John Davies’ *Hymns to Astraea* addresses Elizabeth as the goddess Flora…also identified with the lily and eglantine rose, and the frontispiece of Henry Lyte’s *Light of Britayne* depicts her encircled by such eglantine roses. Such imagery identified the queen with the Golden Age and eternal spring…The plays of Shakespeare also portray women as both flowers and gatherers of flowers…the queen collects flowers for some purpose, unlike Ophelia, who does it only for art – or for no reason at all. In the first quart of *Hamlet* Ophelia enters quite made, muttering, “Well God a mercy, I a bin gathering of floures,” flowers that she then bestows upon her audience, although it is not specified in any early text which goes to whom. This scene replaces the notion of women gathering flowers for physic with them “emblematic usages” (Goody qtd. in Bushnell 120). Ophelia has no real use for flowers, only a symbolic relationship with them.

The image of the flower “giver” gave way to the “flower woman” as she began to dominate gardening books in the late sixteenth century. Although men were associated with the science of propagation and grafting, women were often depicted in manuals as the workers. New flowers were streaming in from Europe, Africa, India, and the New World as men sought to develop new species for the queen and for England, often seen as their own Garden of Eden. (Bushnell 123)
...she was to prepare herself to die the 8\textsuperscript{th} of February next, she seemed not be in any terror, for aught that appeared by any her outward gesture or behavior, but rather with smiling cheer and pleasing countenance digested and accepted the said admonition of preparation to her unexpected execution, saying that her death should be welcome unto her, seeing Her Majesty was so resolved, and that soul were too too far unworthy the fruition of joys of heaven forever, whose body would not in this world be content to endure the stroke of the executioner for a moment. And that spoken, she wept bitterly and became silent...

...one of her servants, called Melvin...used these words unto her: “Ah, Madam, unhappy me: what man on earth was ever before the messenger of so important sorrow and heaviness as I shall be, when I repot that my good and gracious queen and mistress is beheaded in England?”...Whereupon the said queen, pouring forth her dying tears, thus answered him: “My good servant, cease to lament, for thou hast cause rather to joy than to mourn. For now shalt thou see Mary Stuart’s troubles receive their long-expected end and determination...I die a true woman to my religion...

During the disrobing of this queen, she never altered her countenance, but smiling said she never had such grooms before to make her unready, nor ever did put off her clothes before such company...Then with a smiling countenance she turned to her menservants, Melvin and the rest, crossed them, bade them fare well, and pray for her to the last...The queen kneeled down upon the cushion resolutely, and without any token of fear of death, said aloud in Latin the Psalm “In te, Domine, confido.” Then, groping for the block, she laid down her head, putting her chain over her back with both her hands, which, holding there still, had been cut off, had they not be espied....At last, while one of the executioners held her straitly with one of his hands, the other gave two strokes with an axe before he did cut off her head...

A foreign visitor wrote this account of what he saw at the first Beargarden as early as 1584:

There is a round building three storeys high, in which are kept about a hundred large English dogs, with separate wooden kennels for each of them. These dogs were made to fight singly with three bears, the second bear being larger than the first and the third larger than the second. After this a horse was brought in and chased by the dogs, and at last a bull, who defended himself bravely. The next was that a number of men and women came forward from a separate compartment, dancing, conversing and fighting with each other; also a man who threw some white bread among the crowd, that scrambled for it.
(Chambers [ESII] qtd. in Gurr 227)
Analyze how Shakespeare develops a theme, drawing evidence from primary documents, including *Hamlet*, to reflect on how early modern cultural issues are relevant today.
Assessment Checkpoint

✓ Develops clear, strong thesis
✓ Supports thesis with relevant, well-developed examples from primary documents, including *Hamlet*
✓ Critically analyses texts as evidenced by close reading
✓ Includes quotes from primary documents
✓ Maintains focus of topic and control of writing
✓ Uses literary present tense