

**A sample essay paragraph, using ideas directly from The Quotation Bank®**

***How does Shakespeare depict Lady Macbeth?***

Lady Macbeth is depicted as subverting the traditional role of women in many ways throughout the play. Producing and caring for children was one of the main roles for a woman in Shakespeare’s time; Lady Macbeth states she would cruelly reject, even destroy, her child in the pursuit for power, violently asserting, “I would, while it was smiling in my face,/Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums,/And dashed the brains out.” Lady Macbeth’s ability to feel no guilt is highlighted by the fact she believes she could kill her child even if it were “smiling in my face”, with “smiling” also stressing her willingness to destroy something innocent and joyful. Her ruthless nature is accentuated by the speed with which she is willing to act – the words “plucked” and “dashed” both suggest swift, clinical movements. Furthermore, the use of the phrase “dashed the brains out” foreshadows the horrors acted upon children later in the play. She is again depicted as rejecting her traditional womanly role as a mother.

**A sample essay paragraph, using ideas directly from your chosen quotation.**

**Act**

**Quotation:**

**Interpretation:**

**Techniques:**

**Analysis:**

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**Use in essays on…**

**Act One Scene Seven:**

**LADY MACBETH: “I would, while it was smiling in my face,/Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums,/And dashed the brains out.”**

**Interpretation**: Producing and caring for children was a main role for women – Lady Macbeth states she would cruelly reject, even destroy, her child in the pursuit for power.

**Techniques:** Imagery; Language.

**Analysis:**

* Lady Macbeth’s ability to feel no guilt is highlighted by the fact she believes she could kill her child even if it were “smiling in my face”, also showing her willingness to destroy something innocent.
* Her ruthless nature is accentuated by the speed with which she is willing to act – the words “plucked” and “dashed” both suggest swift, clinical movements.
* The use of the phrase “dashed the brains out” foreshadows the horrors acted upon children later in the play. She is again rejecting her traditional womanly role as a mother.

**Use in essays on…**Gender; Lady Macbeth; Violence; Morality.

**Teacher notes:**

This activity is designed to be used in class or set as a homework, to help pupils develop their AO1 and AO2 skills.

The resource is designed so that it can be revisited multiple times, or used by pupils independently, to develop a bank of revision flashcards over time.

One example quotation is provided, taken from The Quotation Bank®: Macbeth. The ‘perfect paragraph’ models how pupils can use the structured analysis developed in box 1 to create an examination-style paragraph.

When using this resource with your pupils you may wish to give pupils two copies of the handout, so you can model the analysis with the whole class, using a quotation you have chosen, before they work independently.

*Differentiated use of the resource:*

You may wish to give pupils a list of quotations to analyse, particularly where you feel pupils would benefit from more structure and support. The template is provided as a Word document so you can type directly into the document to provide more scaffolding and support if you feel your pupils would benefit from this.

You may wish to give pupils a theme, list of themes or techniques, and ask them to find relevant quotations from the text before analysing them. This is an activity that could work well in groups.

To stretch pupils, and with your most able pupils, you may ask them to select the quotations that they feel are most relevant and useful to revise.

Pupil-focused instructions are provided below if you wish to use this resource for homework or independent learning.

**The Quotation Bank Flashcards and perfect paragraphs!**

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| **A01** | Read, understand and respond to texts. Students should be able to:* Maintain a critical style and develop an ***informed personal response***
* Use textual references, ***including quotations***, to support and illustrate ***interpretations***.
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| **A02** | Analyse the ***Language, Form and Structure*** used by a writer to ***create meanings and effects***, using ***relevant subject terminology*** where appropriate.  |

This activity allows you to show off all your analytical and interpretative skills!

1. Choose a quotation from the text
2. Use the headings in the blank quotation box to help you analyse and interpret the quotation
* Interpretation – Give your own personal response to the quotation. What does it suggest about a key theme or idea? What message is it conveying to the audience or reader? You may want to include a brief contextual comment here if you like.
* Technique – What literary techniques are present in the quotation? This is just a list of techniques – you don’t need to analyse them at this point.
* Analysis – Break down the quotation into smaller parts and analyse the effect of language, form or structure. Aim for three different analytical points, covering three different techniques.
* Use in essays on…. – Which possible exam questions or themes might this quotation be useful for?
1. Once you have analysed the quotation in detail, use the points you have made to write a ‘perfect paragraph’. Set yourself an exam style question, and remember the following:
* Make sure the first sentence answers the question and gives a clear interpretation – try to use the terms in the question in your answer.
* Use all your analysis from the quotation box above, in full sentences, to develop your answer.
* Try to use appropriate connectives to give the paragraph a clear structure.
* In your final sentence it is really useful to go back and explicitly address the question again, using the terms from the question to show you are focussed on the question set.
1. You can cut out the quotation analysis box and keep it as a revision flashcard for your final exams.