

## Quoting Shakespeare's Plays

1. Italicize play titles, as in, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

2. The parenthetical citation at the end of your quotations should refer to—

1<sup>st</sup> - The Act in *capital* Roman numerals

I – II – III – IV – V – VI – VII – VIII – IX – X

2<sup>nd</sup> - The scene in *lowercase* Roman numerals

i – ii – iii – iv – v – vi – vii – viii – ix – x

3<sup>rd</sup> - The line numbers in Arabic numerals.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10

*Example.* (I.ii.3-5) – In this citation, the quotation came from Act 1, Scene 2, lines 3 through 5.



3. The period should always come after your citation.

*Example.* After discussing the nature and possible verity of the prophecy with Banquo, Macbeth soliloquizes, wondering why he has been moved to thoughts of traitorous ambition: "If good, why do I yield to the that suggestion / who horrid image doth unfix my hair / and make my seated heart knock at my ribs" (I.iii.147-149).

4. When you quote from a Shakespearean play, divide lines with slashes ( / ), which is the same process as if you were quoting poetry.

*Example:* At the beginning of the play, Macbeth receives a prophecy from the weird sisters. His curiosity whetted, Macbeth urges the witches to stay and tell him more: "Stay, you imperfect speakers. Tell me more. / By Sinel's death I know I am Thane of Glamis. / But how of Cawdor" (I.iii.73-75).

5. If you are quoting more than three lines, you will need to indent your quotation by pressing tab twice before you start typing. The lines should be arranged as they appear in the text.

*Example:* Below is how the citation should look in the body of your paper —

Repressing thoughts of murder, Macbeth heads off to meet the king. However, in his aside to Banquo, it is clear that he is still seriously contemplating the prophecy:

My dull brain was wrought  
With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains  
Are registered where everyday I turn  
The lead to read them. Let us toward the King.  
*Aside to Banquo* Think upon what hath chanced,  
and at more time,  
The interim having weighed it, let us speak  
Our free hearts to each other.

(V.v.41-49)

His inability to separate himself from the prophecy, foreshadows Macbeth's inability to let fate take its course. At this point in the play, the mere notion of becoming king seems to seduce, even hypnotize Macbeth.

6. Include your quotations from the plays within your own sentences, and end your paragraphs with your own thoughts rather than a quotation. This is called embedding or integrating your quotes and it is one of the *most* important skills in analytical writing.

YOU TRY IT: Choose any quote from the play, so far, and cite it properly.