Essay 3: drama -- thematic analysis

Due:  
draft: 900-1200 words (3-4 typed pgs.), in class, Tue., Mar. 26  
-- print and bring 2 copies for peer review workshop  
-- for instructor feedback, submit to Blackboard by 6:30 pm on Tuesday (optional)*

final: 1200-1500 words (4-5 pgs.), by midnight, Mon., Apr. 1, on Blackboard*

*To submit, attach your file in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) or Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) format to the appropriate assignment link on our Blackboard site, under "Assignments."

Primary texts: Euripides, Medea or  
Samuel Beckett, What Where

For your third essay assignment, write on one of the examples of drama we have read and discussed in class. As with essay 2, the process for this assignment begins with peer feedback on your draft. This time, however, instructor feedback is optional and comes later only if you submit your draft on Blackboard. You’ll then revise your essay and submit the final version on Blackboard the following week.

Assignment. Write an analytical essay about your chosen text that focuses on theme. In your essay, articulate what you think is the major insight or idea about the human condition that the play presents and dramatizes on the stage. You might discuss how this theme is achieved in the play’s staging (setting), characterization, plot, language, or any other elements of the work that you find meaningful. Your thesis should express your interpretation of what the play is about, fundamentally, and your analysis should support that interpretation through detailed discussion of the text. Remember that a theme is not the same as a moral. A moral is usually a simple lesson found in literature for children that works to discipline and socialize young readers. A theme illuminates some aspect of mature life as it really is, recognizing that there may be no simple solution -- or no solution at all -- to life’s most serious problems.

Research. To inform your discussion, please consult these secondary texts, or critical studies, of our readings. Refer to the secondary text by quoting directly in your paper -- as often as you find useful -- and including it in a list of Works Cited at the end. As a first step into literary research, I would like you to only use these recommended texts. But if you use any others, you need to cite them, too. This includes Spark Notes, blogs, etc. (not recommended).


-- tip: find this source by searching "scodel" in the Author field of the WCC library online catalog and selecting Scodel, Ruth from the results. Then select this title from the list of books by Scodel.


-- I will provide selections from this book on Blackboard.
Format. Your paper should be formatted according to MLA style. This means double-spaced, 1-inch margins on all sides, a standard font (like 12-point Times New Roman), a four-line heading, a title, and your last name and the page number in the upper right corner of all pages.

Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exceeds Standards</th>
<th>Meets Standards</th>
<th>Approaches Standards</th>
<th>Does Not Meet Standards</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>articulates an insightful and persuasive thesis (argument)</td>
<td>articulates a focused thesis</td>
<td>attempts to articulate a thesis but has difficulty in maintaining focus</td>
<td>lacks a focused thesis</td>
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<tr>
<td>thoroughly supports the argument with relevant and ample evidence</td>
<td>supports the argument with relevant evidence</td>
<td>attempts to support the point of view but is lacking relevant evidence</td>
<td>makes little or no attempt to offer relevant supporting evidence from the text</td>
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<td>includes quotes that are carefully selected, provide extensive support for the writer’s position, and are smoothly integrated into the writer’s text</td>
<td>includes quotes that are appropriately selected and sufficient to provide adequate support for the writer’s position</td>
<td>quotes may be wholly absent, inappropriately chosen or insufficient to provide adequate support for the writer’s position</td>
<td>may use quotes but they show little or no comprehension of the text</td>
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<td>carefully organized, paragraph by paragraph, as a developing argument rather than a general paraphrase or summary of the text</td>
<td>meaningfully organized as an argument rather than as a general paraphrase or summary of the text</td>
<td>tends to be organized as a general paraphrase or summary of the text rather than as an argument</td>
<td>is, at best, organized as a general paraphrase or summary of the text rather than as an argument</td>
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<td>has a strong sense of a writer's voice and excellent command of grammar, with care in editing and only minor writing errors</td>
<td>has some sense of a writer's voice and good command of grammar, evidence of care in editing, with no more than one pattern of error</td>
<td>shows an attempt to establish a writer's voice; has one or more major patterns of grammatical error or lack of care in editing</td>
<td>one or more patterns of error frequently impede the reader's understanding of the writer's meaning</td>
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An A-range paper (135-150) will exceed standards in most areas. A B-range paper (120-134) will meet standards in all areas, and possibly exceed standards in some. A C-range paper (105-119) will meet standards in most areas. A D-range paper (90-104) will approach standards in all areas, or meet standards in some areas but not meet them in others. An F paper (<90) will not meet standards in most areas.

➢ Drafts of the required length and brought to class in hard copy (2 copies) on March 26 will earn 10 points. Late, short, or unprinted drafts will earn 0 points. Drafts never submitted will earn -10 points; late final drafts will also be marked down 10 points.