***Macbeth* Essay**

*Macbeth* is a complex and dynamic tragedy that not only reflects the dark aspects of human nature, but also the brilliance of one of the most influential authors of European history. In this essay, you will choose one of the prompts below to write a 700-900 word well-constructed and deeply analytical essay. The following components will be assessed:

* Thesis
* Evidence
* Analysis
* Organization
* Style and Conventions (including, but not limited to grammar, syntax, and diction)
* MLA, 8th Edition Format and Presentation

**Prompt Choices:** (Choose one prompt. Make sure you are staying “on prompt” as you analyze the text in your paper.)

1. Trace Shakespeare’s use of one of the following images (blood, sleep, hands, milk, birds, stars, or night) and explain the significance of that image.
2. Select one of the following topics and identify a related theme inherent in the text. Show *how* it is illustrated and developed through Shakespeare’s use of a dominant literary convention (imagery, metaphor, motif, irony, personification, symbolism, etc.)

* Power
* Ambition, Guilt, and Fear
* Deception
* War

1. Compare and contrast Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. To what extent do these characters change over the course of the play and what is a related theme?
2. To what extent does Macbeth’s duality between his internal and external persona cause his violent actions throughout the play?
3. How do characters’ fears emerge through dreams and visions during the play? What do these visions reveal about the characters? How does this motif relate to an overall theme?
4. Analyze the extent to which Macbeth can be characterized as a tragic hero.

\*Remember, half of this score will also be placed in the History/SS grade book’s Culminating Writing category. Half of the History Research Paper score will be placed in the English LA grade book’s Culminating Writing category.

\*\* Rubric is located on the back of this prompt sheet for your reference. **I highly recommend that you read through and reference this rubric to understand the elements for which you are being assessed.**