

Some issues to consider in choosing a paper topic:

- the construction of gender roles
- images of the family, familial dynamics; relationships of parents to children.
- is there any rhetoric of economics? (not always related to money . . .)
- construction of sexuality/sexual desire? other kinds of desire?
- construction of consent: how do people agree to be ruled, governed, do they?
- depiction of power: who has it, what kind do they have, how do they exercise it? how do the powerful interact with the non-powerful?
- descriptions, constructions of material conditions of life . . . money, food, work? Any class divisions evident? how do these function?
- is anything going on with religion? how is it depicted? how might it be critiqued? does it function to discipline people? how or why?
- any images of birth/death? How do the death scenes work? Who dies and why?
- any sense of how transgression works in this text? Do people break the rules? If so, who does? What happens when they do?
- depictions of "foreigners" or "outsiders" in this work? How are those outsiders constructed?
- what are the images of marriage the text offers? How does marriage function here?

we could go on and on . . .

Some things to remember about these papers:

1. You may choose to write on some issue in *Measure for Measure*, *Othello*, or *King Lear*.
2. Choose **one** issue, problem or question to begin your analysis.
3. Analyze that problem from the perspective of at least two critical discourses.
4. Your paper will be an answer to the question you pose. You aren't going to find this answer in the play unless the question you ask isn't very interesting. So, ask difficult, interesting intriguing questions and think about how you would interpret the play to answer them.
5. The best kind of papers are those that take risks! An interesting argument is one that is debatable, demonstrable, not obvious, provisional, and smart, interesting.
6. The more you do close analysis of the language of the text, the more you will be able to argue for a convincing thesis. When you don't know what to think about an issue, always go for the language. Analyze the use of images, breaks in the text . . . **IMPORTANT:** This language analysis should relate to your thesis, in an effort to convince your reader, not just for its own sake . . .
7. You may want to team up with someone in the class for proofreading help . . . it's always good to get a second pair of eyes.