

Quoting from Shakespeare

When you write about a play written in verse, you will frequently need to quote from it. Below are some rules to follow whenever you quote the words, lines, or title of a play. Pay attention to the examples. Use these rules when writing your essay on the imagery in *Macbeth*.

RULE 1: Whenever you mention the title of the play, use italics on a computer or underline it in manuscript.

Shakespeare's *Macbeth* is an action-packed, psychological thriller that has not lost its impact in nearly four hundred years.

RULE 2: Whenever you quote a word or phrase that appears in the play, put quotation marks around it and **integrate** the quoted material within your own sentence

Lady Macbeth says that she fears that Macbeth's nature "is too full o' the milk of human kindness" (I, v, 12).

RULE 3: Whenever you quote a phrase that begins on one line but ends on the next, indicate where the first line stops by using a **slash mark**.

The description of how Macbeth "unseamed [Macdonwald] from the nave to the chaps, / And fixed his head upon [the] battlements" creates a particularly vivid visual image (I, ii, 22-23).

RULE 4: If a quotation runs to four or more typed lines, set it off from your text by beginning a new line, indenting ten spaces from the left margin, and typing it double-spaced, without adding quotation marks. The special way the lines are "set-off" from the rest of the paragraph substitutes for them.

Macbeth is presented as a man who

Like valor's minion carvèd out his passage

Till he faced the slave,

. . . unseamed him from the nave to the chaps,

And fixed his head upon our battlements (I, ii, 19-23).

RULE 5: When you wish to omit a word, phrase, sentence, or paragraph from a quoted passage, you must use an **ellipsis** to indicate the omission. Thus ellipsis is used only for omitted words in the middle, not at the beginning or the end. If you insert your own words, perhaps for clarification, you should use **brackets**. See the use of both of these in the examples for Rules 3 and 4.