

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. 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.