

Themes presented through imagery and symbolism

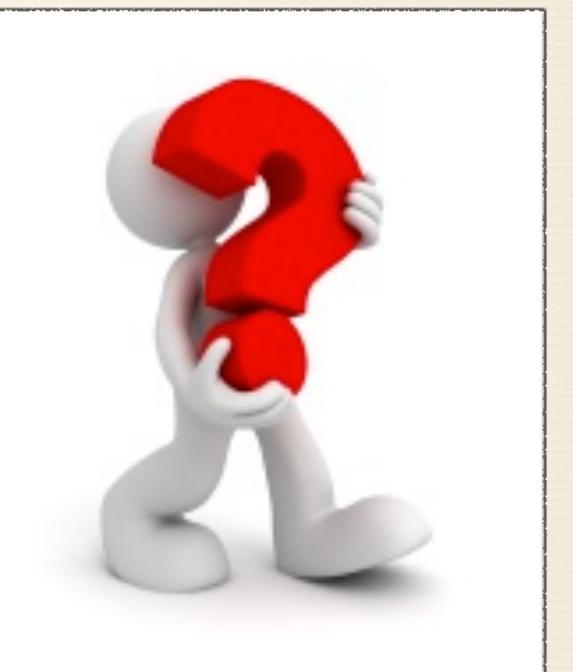
The Question

* "The themes evident in King Lear are skilfully presented through a series of dramatic symbols and images." Discuss this view, supporting your answer with suitable reference to at least two of the themes y in the text.



Approaching the Question

- Note the words 'at least two of the themes'. You could confine yourself to two, but it would be better to aim for three or even four.
- However, you should be careful not to give each theme too brief a treatment in your essay.



Organising Your Essay

* There are two obvious ways to approach this essay.

 Go through various themes and say how imagery and symbolism help to present them to the audience

 Go through various aspects of imagery animal, diabolical, disease etc. - and say what themes are shown by each of these.

Sample Plan

- While either approach is perfectly fine, I will opt for the second option (imagery and symbolism to the fore) when planning this essay.
- You should be aiming to write around twelve paragraphs in total. This is a rough guide! Make your own judgement call based on timing and the number of points you wish to include.



Natural Imagery

Highlights the connection between man and nature

 When characters behave in an unnatural way, disharmony and disaster inevitably follow

 Lear behaves in an unnatural and foolish way when he divides his kingdom between Goneril and Regan and banishes his loyal and loving daughter Goneril, Regan and Edmund behave in an unnatural way towards their fathers

 Focus on the storm scene as it shows just how strong is the connection between man and nature

The importance of the natural order is shown at the end of the play in that all of those who flouted the natural order of things are dead

 Because of their actions, innocent characters are dead or close to death too.

* Albany and Edgar are left to restore the natural order

Animal Imagery

Highlights the theme of human nature

* Also highlights theme of evil

 If we are ruled by animal instincts we lose our basic humanity and we will be subject to / cause dreadful pain and suffering

Sight and Blindness

Highlights theme of judgement

Clothing and Disguise

Power and corruption

* Appearance and reality