

Sample Literary Analysis Outline

Follow instructions on the Rules for Proper Outline Format handout to create yours.

Money and Finance in *Hamlet*

Thesis Statement: The multiple financial references in William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* echo Hamlet's continual question about man's worth by equating the value of one's reputation, capacity for love, and ultimate meaning with crass currency.

- I. On reputation (*not fleshed out in this example*)
- II. On love and relationships
 - A. Laertes' brotherly concern for Ophelia
 1. Gentle warning
 - a. Inequality of social status
 - i. Hamlet's "greatness" weighed (1.3.17)
 - ii. Ophelia's lower value (1.3.19)
 - b. Value of honor (1.3.23)
 - c. Treasure of her virginity (1.3.31)
 2. Loving tone
 - B. Polonius' chastisement of Ophelia
 1. Scoffing at Ophelia's naivete
 - a. Not "true pay" (1.3.106)
 - b. Not "sterling" (1.3.107)
 - c. His "tenders" puns (1.3.106-9)
 2. Giving her crass marketing and sales advice
 - a. To "tender yourself more dearly" (1.3.108)
 - b. To "set your entreatments at a higher rate" (1.3.122)
- III. On death and meaning (*not fleshed out in this example*)