CHARACTER AND THEME  Writing Prompt Ideas for Henry IV, Part 1

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

What theme, or lesson, is demonstrated through the character of Hal in Henry IV, Part 1? Use details from the play/performance to support your point.

What theme, or lesson, is demonstrated through the character of Falstaff in Henry IV, Part 1? Use details from the play/performance to support your point.

What theme, or lesson, is demonstrated through the character of Hotspur in Henry IV, Part 1? Use details from the play/performance to support your point.

Does the character Hal in Henry IV, Part 1 develop, over the course of the play? Is this character dynamic, or static? Use details from the play/performance to support your point.

Compare and contrast the characters Hal and Hotspur in Henry IV, Part 1. Choose one key similarity and one key difference in these two characters, and use this textual evidence to support a thesis, or lesson, conveyed through this play.

In what ways is the character Hotspur in Henry IV, Part 1, both honorable and dishonorable? Develop a thesis that defines the lesson that we learn by studying this character in this play.

Is the character Falstaff entertaining in the text of Henry IV, Part 1? in the play as presented by the American Shakespeare Center? Why or why not, for each? And should we be amused by Falstaff? Tie to a key theme of this play.

What role or roles does Hotspur’s uncle, Worcester, play in Henry IV, Part 1? How does Worcester’s presence affect our understanding of either King Henry or Hal or Hotspur? Use specific textual evidence from at least two scenes to support your point.

How does the American Shakespeare Center’s depiction of ONE of the play’s characters differ from the depiction presented by your classmates? What is important or significant about the difference? How does it change an audience’s interpretation of a key theme (message, lesson) of this play?
GENRE Writing Prompt Ideas for Shakespeare’s *Henry IV, Part 1*

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3** Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6** Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9** Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

What is the difference between a play and an historical document, in the ways in which they present ideas and information? Consider the genres of both in formulating your response. Include at least three key differences, and provide examples from *Henry IV, Part 1*, the synopsis of the play, and/or the excerpt from Holinshed’s *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*.

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6** Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

What is a soliloquy? How does a soliloquy help us to understand the motivations of a character in a play? Choose one character and one soliloquy from *Henry IV, Part 1* and use evidence from that soliloquy to answer this question. How does the soliloquy help to clarify a key theme of the play, as well?

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5** Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

Choose one of the scenes in which you performed. What purpose does that scene serve in *Henry IV, Part 1* as a whole? You may want to focus on one character: what is revealed about this character in this scene that contributes to our understanding of that character and of a key theme (lesson, message) of the work as a whole? Or you may want to focus on one event: how does the event contribute to the plot as a whole and to the presentation of a key theme (lesson, message) of the work as a whole? Use specific textual evidence to support your points.

**This prompt is specific to the 9-10 Reading Standards:**

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
- **Read the synopsis of Henry IV, Part 1**, and then study the play. What one element from the play that is not included in the synopsis should be included therein, and why? Why is the element that is omitted important, for a reader’s or audience’s understanding of a key theme of the work as a whole?