

Thoughts on the essay

Use of primary and secondary sources

- Sensitive and imaginative close analysis of the primary literature.
- Interesting and unusual connection made with clinical source. Demonstrates enthusiasm.
- Secondary texts might more usefully have included references to drama and performance theory. Use of *The Spectator* is good, raising relevant questions that could be applied to either Beckett or Shakespeare.
- Closer and more detailed analysis of fewer materials might have been more effective, although the purpose of this first year essay could be more of an exploration of a range of texts and ideas that would be narrowed down for exam purposes later. Structure of argument may have been a secondary concern at this stage
- Is this essay about Shakespeare's faces or the faceless characters in Beckett's plays?
- This student could have referred to Shakespeare criticism to develop points more effectively

Voice and authority

- Use of phrases such as 'could almost be' and 'seems to imply' impact negatively on the authority of the student's voice.
- The bias towards primary texts and the resulting lack of engagement with criticism also impacts negatively on the student's opportunity to write with authority

Feedback to student

- The focus of the essay was too broad. A clarifying sentence in the title may have helped the writer to focus the main argument more effectively
- This student's adventurous ideas should be encouraged. Perhaps this is the type of essay a student should have the chance to re-work, taking account of feedback as academics in their field are given the chance to do.
- The reader should be able to draw from the introduction what the argument is going to be
- Students are motivated by positive feedback every now and then, especially given the number of essays they submit over the year. The positive points of this essay should therefore be emphasised.