

Option for Major Essay #2: Analysis of the Movie *Doubt* with a Second Text of Your Choice

As an alternative to the standard assignment for Major Essay #2, you may choose to write about the movie *Doubt*. Under this option, one of your 2 required primary texts would be the movie *Doubt*; the second primary text would be your choice: it could be another movie, a TV show or series, a short story, novel, book, play, blog post, magazine/newspaper article, or even an advertisement.

You can get a pdf of the *Doubt* screenplay at <http://millarprescott.com/screenplays/doubt.pdf>. Please download a copy for your use, since you will be expected to quote from the play in your paper. You are not required to print it, but it would be in your best interest if you can, so that you can mark it up, bring it to class easily, etc. Alternatively, a number of copies of the screenplay are available downstairs in [The Campus Store](#) if you would like to purchase a bound copy.

For class discussion and analysis, you will be assigned one of the topics below to watch for and take notes on when viewing the movie. **If you decide to write about the film in Major Essay #2, you will not be required to write your paper on the topic you are assigned to watch for during the movie. It's simply impossible for one individual to view a movie and notice everything, and so I want each person in the class to watch for one assigned element. In class discussion later, we'll bring all the elements together, and you can choose what you'd like to write about for your essay.** I would like for everyone to be able to write a short comment to a blog post about your assigned topic later this week.

We may view short excerpts of the film in class during the week of Feb 22-26. However, I expect you to see the movie in its entirety when it is shown on February 22 or 23rd, free of charge to all English 112 students.

As you watch the movie and look for instances that relate to your topic, be as specific as possible. Don't make broad generalizations, but take notes about what happens relative to your assigned topic in each scene.

1. **Power**—who has it in each scene? How do they use it? How do others react to it?
2. **The role of windows**—when and in what contexts do they appear? Who opens/shuts them, and when, and why? Who is standing near them when, and what is happening at that time?
3. **Interaction of men with other men**—how do they interact?
4. **Interaction of women with men**— what is it like? Is it consistent or does it change?
5. **Interaction of women with other women**—how do they interact?
6. **Interaction of Sister James (Amy Adams) with children**— what is it like? Is it consistent or does it change?
7. **Interaction of Sister Aloysius (Meryl Streep) with children**—what is it like? Is it consistent or does it change?
8. **Interaction of Father Flynn with children**— what is it like? Is it consistent or does it change?
9. **Interaction of children with other children**—what is it like? What social rules seem to control it?
10. **Modern things versus traditional things**—when does this tension occur? What kinds of things are involved? Who seems on the side of modern, and who is on the side of tradition, and why?
11. **The idea of certainty versus doubt**—who feels doubt, and when? Who seems certain, and when? What questions do people ask each other about doubt and certainty?
12. **Indoors versus outdoors**—what kinds of scenes happen indoors? What kinds of scenes happen outdoors? What kinds of indoors rooms are pictured?

13. **The things people hold in their hands**—who is holding what, and when? How do they hold things? Notice when they change how they hold objects. What is happening in the scene when a person changes how he/she holds an object?
14. **Light and darkness**—(window blinds, lamps, light bulbs, daytime, nighttime, etc.)—what is happening in the scenes when light and darkness play a role?
15. **The role of stairs**—when do they appear? Who is on them and when? Are the people on them going up or down?
16. **Race**—when is race mentioned, and by whom? When does race appear to be an issue (whether mentioned in dialogue or not)?
17. **Isolation**—who is isolated (physically, emotionally, spiritually, socially) in the movie? In what scenes is isolation apparent? How do the characters react to their own isolation? To others' isolation?
18. **Interruptions**—(either physical, as in a conversation being interrupted by another person walking in, or a phone ringing; or verbal, as in one person interrupting another with words). When do they happen? How do they happen? Who interrupts whom? Are there any patterns to the interruptions?
19. **Repetition**—of locations, of words or sentences, of questions, of physical positions. When do you notice them? Who does them?
20. **Animals**—(either actual ones or verbal references to them)—when and where do they appear? What is going on in the scenes when they appear? What are the animals doing? How do the humans react to them?
21. **Weather**—when is it noticeable? What kind of weather occurs, and when? What is happening in the scenes when noticeable weather occurs?
22. **Sermons**—Father Flynn preaches three sermons in the movie, but he mentions preparing sermons several other times. What do you notice about them? How do others react to them? When do they occur in the movie?
23. **Love**—who talks about love (or caring, or concern), and when, and about whom? In what scenes do these references occur?