* In *The Writing of Fiction* (1925), novelist Edith Wharton states the following.

 At every stage in the progress of his tale the novelist must rely on what may be called

 the ***illuminating incident* to reveal and emphasize the inner meaning of each situation. Illuminating incidents are the magic casements of fiction, its vistas on**

 **infinity. Choose a novel or play that you have studied and write a well-organized essay in which you describe an “illuminating” episode or moment and explain how it functions as a “casement,” a window that opens onto the meaning of the work as a whole**

* One definition of madness is “mental delusion or the eccentric behavior arising from it”. But, Emily Dickenson wrote: “Much madness is divinest Sense/To a discerning eye”. **Select a novel or play in which a character’s apparent madness or irrational behavior plays an important role. Explain what this delusion or eccentric behavior consists of and how it might be judged reasonable. Explain the significance of the “madness” to the whole**.
* Choose a **character from a novel or play who responds in some significant way to justice or injustice. Then write a well-developed essay in which you analyze the character’s understanding of justice, the degree to which the character’s search for justice is successful**, and the significance of this search for the work as a whole.
* Choose a novel or play in which **cultural, physical, or geographical surroundings shape psychological or moral traits in a character**. Then write a well-organized essay in which you analyze how surroundings affect this character and illuminate the meaning of the work as a whole
* **Select a character that has deliberately sacrificed, surrendered, or forfeited something in a way that highlights that character’s values**. Then write a well-organized essay in which you analyze **how the** **particular sacrifice illuminates the character’s values** and provides a deeper understanding of the meaning of the work as a whole