

Its our actions that
show us who we
really are j.k rowling
(critical lens)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Literary Essay While literature explores a countless array of concerns, it's clear there are a number of elements of human existence that are repeatedly demonstrated in literary works. One of these elements is the nature of self and human motivation. Within this spectrum of understanding famed author of the Harry Potter novels J. K. Rowling once stated that " it's our actions who show us who we really are". When one examines a number of prominent works of literature they see that this theme emerges again and again. This essay considers how literature proves this statement in two seminal works - William Shakespeare's Hamlet, and William Shakespeare's Hamlet represents one of the seminal texts in Western literature. The play follows, in large part, the physical and psychological actions of Prince Hamlet as he feigns madness and deliberates killing the King and his step-father. Perhaps more than in any work of literature the notion of actions are implemented as a primary element of determining who the character really is. One of the major quotes of the play is made by Hamlet when he states, " The play's the thing/ Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king" (Act 2, scene ii). Here Shakespeare is implementing foreshadowing to demonstrate the true nature of Hamlet's character as hesitant and contemplative. Indeed, Hamlet's action in not killing the King becomes a major theme throughout the play and demonstrates significant characterization. Throughout many instances and examples Shakespeare demonstrates that rather than being a decisive individual Hamlet is contemplative and existential. This contemplation is implemented in a number of monologues and soliloquys in explaining intimate and detailed aspects of Hamlet's character. Ultimately, through theme, characterization, and foreshadowing, Shakespeare demonstrates that Hamlet's actions in refraining from killing the King reveal

<https://assignbuster.com/its-our-actions-that-show-us-who-we-really-are-jk-rowling-critical-lens/>

a significant amount about who he really is. Another powerful example in literature that demonstrates the prominence of human actions determining who one truly is occurs in Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*. This novel is one of Hemingway's later works and it demonstrates a powerful consideration of one man's life as told through an arduous fishing venture he takes. While largely metaphor, the main thematic thrust of the novel is the importance of action in demonstrating human character. One such means of Hemingway illustrating this theme is through the almost romanticization of the old man's struggle in existence. Hemingway writes, "I could just drift, he thought, and sleep and put a bight of line around my toe to wake me. But today is eighty-five days and I should fish the day well. Just then, watching his lines, he saw one..." (Hemingway 56). Here Hemingway is advancing the thematic struggle and perseverance of the old man as he fights through strife to catch a fish. While outwardly simple, the overarching tone demonstrates the core importance of action (catching the fish) in characterizing humanity. Ultimately, Hemingway uses theme, tone, and characterization in demonstrating this overriding importance of action. In conclusion, this essay has considered William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, in demonstrating the importance of action in determining human character. Through the implementation of a number of literary techniques these authors have demonstrated the significant importance of action in regards to human action. Ultimately, it's clear that this tendency is a major element of Western literature. References Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. New York: Templeton. Hemingway, Ernest. (1995) *The Old Man and the Sea*. New York: Scribner.