



II. Senecan Elements & Richard III (Considered the most Senecan of his plays)

SENECAN ELEMENT	RICHARD III
The five-act structure with choral interludes	Composed of 5 acts, no interlude
Retention of the unities of Time (12-24 hours), Place (action unfolds at one location) and Action (cause-effect relationship).	Not retained
Chorus	Choric Ode 1.3. 258-9 4.4.1-2
Didactic (moral) purpose.	
Each character is dominated by one passion (love, revenge, ambition) which brings about their downfall. Example: <i>Medea</i>	
Senecan Rhetoric is a language of self-creation, the means by which characters bring themselves into being and power.	Richard's characteristic is parody: he is the mocking manipulator of ex, sting identities, the concerned brother, smitten lover, simple fellow, sage counsellor, reluctant public servant, good uncle, anointed king.
Use of rhetoric: elaborate rhetorical speeches debate instead of conversation Use of prologue, soliloquy, self-address, aside, witty language, stichomythia	
	Self-address: I.i.41 "Dive, thoughts, down to my soul"
	Aside
	Witty Language
	Stichomythia: I.iii Between the Duke of

	Gloucester and Lady Ann
Use of stock characters: ghost, nurse, servant, messenger, tyrant and chorus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ghosts: The Ghosts that appear at Bosworth Eve • Use of Messenger to relate off-stage action. E.g. 4.4. Richard receives post messages; Ratcliffe reports on Richmond's growing strength and Richard immediately dispatches Catesby to the Duke of Norfolk and Ratcliffe to Salisbury, Stanley enters with another message, 3 other messages follow telling of the strenght of the enemy.
Fascination with violence on the stage. Filled with deeds of horror (murder of people and children, torture, dismemberment).	
A general concern with passion, vengeance, hereditary curses and the theme of revenge (revenge tragedies), madness (deranged hero seeking vengeance), ghosts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hereditary Curse (Margaret's Curses) • Margaret's Curses-who was cursed by Richard's father.
Includes passages on the instability of fortune, power of time, dangers of wealth, benefits of poverty, the advantages of the country over the city, the problems of kingship, the habits of tyrants.	