PROMPT:

A critic has said that one important measure of a superior work of literature is its ability to produce in the reader a healthy confusion of pleasure and disquietude. Select a literary work that produces this “healthy confusion.” Write an essay in which you explain the sources of the “pleasure and disquietude” experienced by the readers of the work. Please use paraphrased evidence to support your argument. Avoid summary.

Sample intro:

Discomfort in the midst of levity can uncover the lack of control people have over their own lives. In Tom Stoppard’s *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead*, the title characters engage in games and witty banter while also confronting disturbing philosophical questions; through this mixture of pleasure and disquietude, they force the reader to also contemplate being trapped in a cycle from which they will never escape.