

CHICAGO
SHAKESPEARE
THEATER

Short Shakespeare!

HAMLET



TEACHER HANDBOOK 2026

INTRODUCTION

We are thrilled to invite you to delve into this classroom resource for *Hamlet*. This handbook grew out of a team effort of teachers past and present, Chicago Shakespeare Theater artists, educators, technicians, and scholars. It is designed to guide you through the play's rich text, offering drama-based teaching strategies, activities, and discussion prompts to help students engage with Shakespeare's work. Whether you're teaching this for the first time, or the 20th time, we hope this handbook will support you in creating an engaging, memorable learning experience.



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section 1

WORLD OF THE PLAY



DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The play takes place in and around the Danish royal palace at Elsinore.

THE ROYAL HOUSE OF DENMARK

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark

Claudius, King of Denmark and Hamlet's uncle

Gertrude, Queen of Denmark and Hamlet's mother

Ghost of King Hamlet, Hamlet's father

THE COURT OF DENMARK

Polonius, Counsellor to the king

Ophelia, his daughter

Laertes, his son

FORMER CLASSMATES OF HAMLET

Horatio, Hamlet's friend

Rosencrantz, sent for by Claudius

Guildenstern, sent for by Claudius

OTHER CHARACTERS

First Player, actor visiting Elsinore

Other Players, actors visiting Elsinore

Gravedigger

Characters, just like people, are rarely named by accident. Maybe someone you know is named after their grandparents. Perhaps they are named after a family friend or someone their parents admired. Just as parents choose names for their children, Shakespeare chose names for his characters to convey specific traits or insights to the audience. Below are some of the characters from *Hamlet*. What do you think their names suggest about their personality?

HAMLET is derived from the Norse folk tale character, Amleth. In the story, Amleth pretends to be mad after discovering his uncle murdered his father to take the throne just before marrying his mother. The tale of Amleth is likely the inspiration for Shakespeare's own *Hamlet*. It's also worth noting that Shakespeare's son was named Hamnet. Hamnet passed away at 11 years old in 1596. *Hamlet* was first published in 1603.

GERTRUDE means "spear of strength" and has been connected to many strong women in history, like Saint Gertrude the Great or author Gertrude Stein.

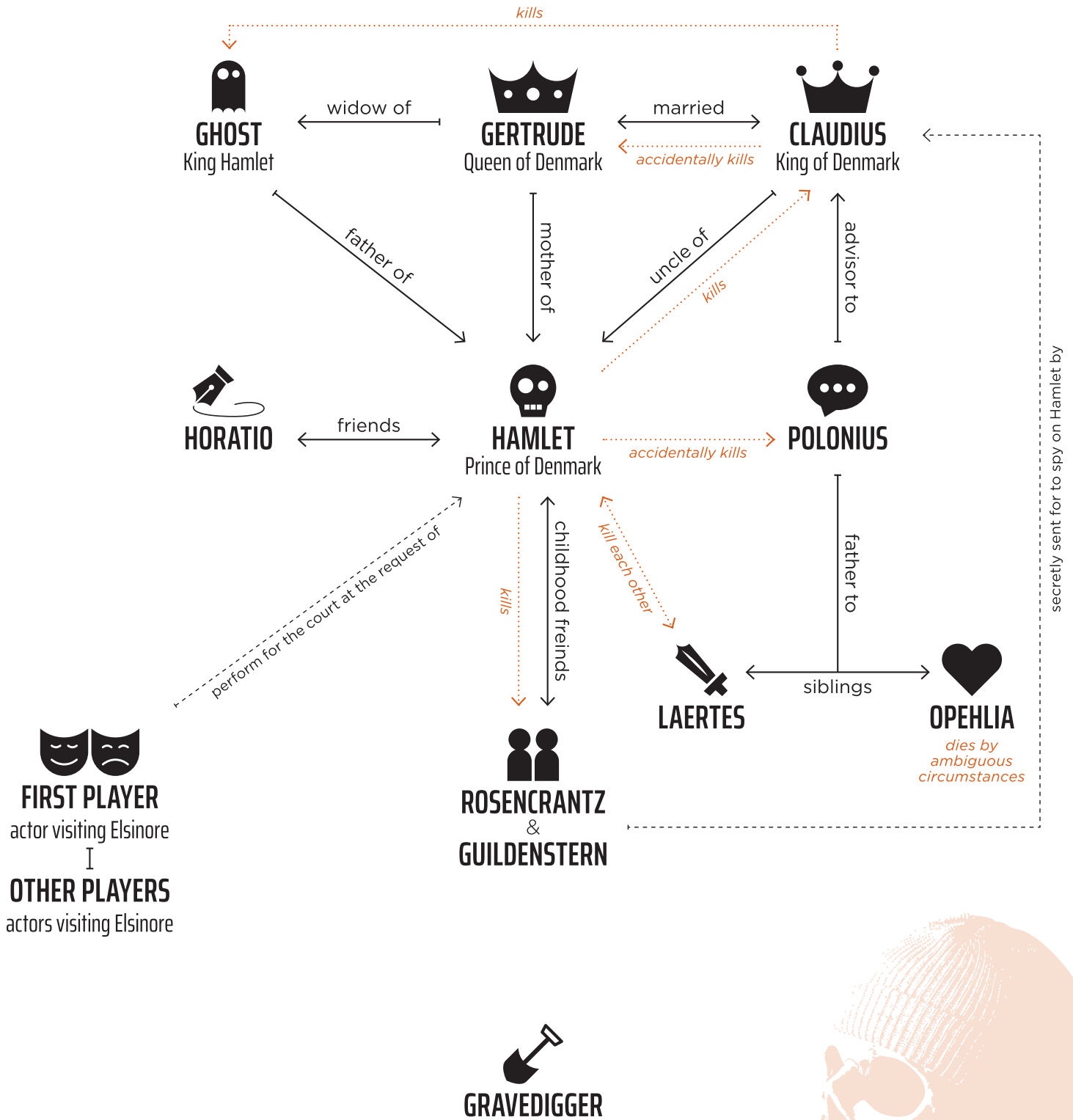
CLAUDIUS was the name of a Roman emperor who ruled from 41 C.E. to 54 C.E. He was known for being an unlikely ruler due to his physical limitations caused by childhood sickness.

POLONIUS stems from the Latin word polonus, which means "from Poland." The name is thought to reference the main character in Polish author Wawrzyniec Grzymała Goślicki's novel, *The Counsellor* (1568)—a senator well-known for his long discussions of economics, history, and art.

OPHELIA comes from the Ancient Greek word for "help" or "aid." While not widely used as a name for many years, it was rediscovered by Jacopo Sannazaro for a character in his poem "Arcadia" (1480). Spelled "Ofelia" in the poem, it was likely the inspiration behind Shakespeare's character.



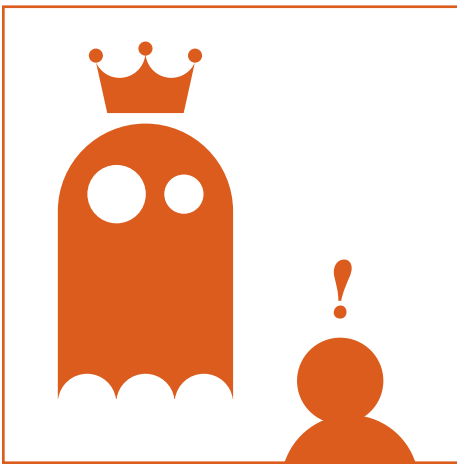
CHARACTER MAP



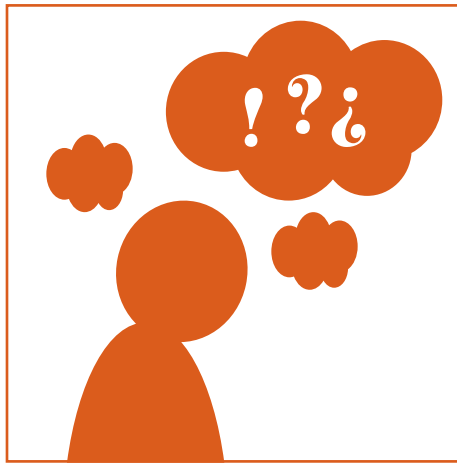
THE STORY

The Tragical History of Hamlet is one of the most famous and captivating revenge tragedies. Before the play begins, King Hamlet, the king of Denmark and Prince Hamlet's father, suspiciously dies. Within a month, his brother Claudius assumes the throne and marries his widow, Queen Gertrude. And so, the play begins.

Hamlet wears his grief like a cloak, while everyone else seems to have forgotten about the king's death. Meanwhile, his friend Horatio shares that he has witnessed a ghostly figure that looks just like the late King Hamlet. The Ghost of King Hamlet visits the prince and details his untimely death. The ghost claims Claudius murdered him and begs Hamlet to avenge his death. Hamlet contemplates the meaning of life and his ability to act on his father's wishes. Caught up in the politics of the royal court, deep sorrow, and his moral code, Hamlet faces a profound internal struggle, leading to irreparable consequences for himself and those around him.



Hamlet is visited by his father's ghost and vows to avenge his untimely death.



Hamlet struggles with internal conflict and palace politics run rampant.



Everyone dies.



ACT-BY-ACT SYNOPSIS

ACT 1

It's the middle of the night outside the royal palace, and the guards keeping watch are on edge. It's cold, a political invasion is looming, and the past two nights, a ghost has appeared. It appears again, this time in the presence of Prince Hamlet's friend Horatio, who confirms that it looks like Denmark's dead king, Old Hamlet. Horatio beckons the ghost to speak five times, but the Ghost refuses, the cock crows, and it disappears. Horatio believes this forebodes something ominous (much like the events before Caesar's death) and vows to return with Hamlet.

Inside the royal palace, the court is presided over by the new king: Hamlet's uncle, Claudius, who has recently married the queen, Gertrude, mother of Hamlet and widow of the dead king. Claudius criticizes Hamlet's outward mourning, deeming it "unmanly," and urges him to stay in Elsinore instead of returning to university. Hamlet obliges, but when everyone leaves, he curses his uncle, his mother, and their "incestuous" union.

Horatio visits Hamlet and shares the news of his father's ghostly appearance. The following evening, Hamlet stands watch with the guards and Horatio, and sees the ghost. The ghost takes Hamlet to a secluded area and unfolds a tale of his unnatural murder by his brother, Claudius. The ghost begs Hamlet to avenge his death, and Hamlet swears he will. When Marcellus and Horatio find Hamlet, he makes them take a vow of silence about what they've witnessed, and shares his plan to appear mad.

ACT 2

Polonius sends his servant to Paris, fearing his son will behave lewdly, to spy on Laertes. Ophelia, distraught, details Hamlet's strange behavior. Polonius believes this sudden madness is due to Ophelia rejecting his advances, which he shares with the king and queen. Claudius and Gertrude are worried about Hamlet's recent behavior as well, and bring his childhood friends, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, to Elsinore to spy on Hamlet. Although Gertrude is well aware of why Hamlet has taken on a new temperament, his father's death and the hasty nuptials, she agrees with Polonius' theory that Hamlet is madly in love with Ophelia. Polonius convinces Claudius and Gertrude to set a trap wherein they will secretly observe how Hamlet interacts with Ophelia.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have invited Hamlet's favorite players to entertain him at the palace. When Hamlet witnesses their rehearsal and the emotions the actors move through, he concocts a plan to have the players perform a scene that is just like the story the ghost revealed to him. Claudius' response to the play will confirm whether the ghost is his father or, the devil trying to damn him to hell.

ACT 3

With Claudius and Polonius hiding in the wings, Ophelia attempts to return Hamlet's love tokens. Infuriated, Hamlet rages about Ophelia's antics, insulting her and all women. This sudden change in temperament devastates Ophelia. It's clear to Claudius that neither love nor madness is the reason for his actions, and he determines that Hamlet must go to England immediately.

As the players perform *The Murder of Gonzago*, Hamlet urges Horatio to watch Claudius closely for any inkling of guilt. Just as Hamlet suspected, Claudius' temper flares as he witnesses the character Lucianus murder Gonzago in the same way Claudius has allegedly murdered the king. Claudius storms out of the room and Hamlet celebrates this small victory before being summoned to his mother's chamber.

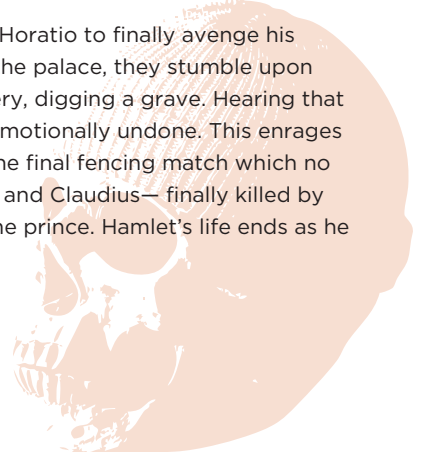
On his way to her chamber, Hamlet sees Claudius on his knees, praying in the chapel, vulnerable. With sword in hand, Hamlet is ready to enact revenge, but stops himself, worrying that killing Claudius while he's praying would send him to Heaven. He decides instead to wait and heads to his mother's chamber. Gertrude and Hamlet are in a heated discussion when he hears someone behind a curtain. Assuming it's Claudius, he strikes and kills Polonius. Hamlet is in an emotional spiral, railing against his mother when the Ghost appears and reminds him of his purpose. Hamlet warns Gertrude to refrain from sleeping in bed with Claudius and drags Polonius' dead body out of the room.

ACT 4

The death of Polonius causes a collapse within the palace: Hamlet hides Polonius' corpse, Claudius hires Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to deliver Hamlet to England, and Ophelia is driven into madness after hearing of her father's death. Laertes returns from France with an angry mob on his side, desperate to know what has happened to his father. Desperate to get the heat off himself, Claudius presents Laertes with an opportunity for vengeance. He concocts a plan for Laertes to kill Hamlet during the duel. When Laertes hears the news of Ophelia's untimely death, his hunger for revenge is catapulted.

ACT 5

Hamlet returns to Elsinore with Horatio to finally avenge his father's death. On their way to the palace, they stumble upon two gravediggers in the cemetery, digging a grave. Hearing that it is Ophelia's grave, Hamlet is emotionally undone. This enrages Laertes and sets the stage for the final fencing match which no one survives. Gertrude, Laertes, and Claudius— finally killed by Hamlet— all die. So, too, does the prince. Hamlet's life ends as he begs Horatio to "tell my story."



section 2

WORLD OF THE PRODUCTION



CHAT WITH THE DIRECTOR

Director Edward Hall, photo by Liz Lauren



NORA CARROLL: Can you talk about your journey with Shakespeare and what it is about *Hamlet* that excites you?

EDWARD HALL: I was lucky. I got taken to Shakespeare when I was really small. I must have been five years old. It was *Macbeth*, and it scared the living daylights out of me. I can vividly remember Banquo's ghost coming out from underneath the table and the ghosts of the kings that the witches showed Macbeth. And then there was that sort of chunk in between where, [like most kids], you grow up, become a teenager, and the theater's a boring place you have to sit still in. And then suddenly it comes back to you. And Shakespeare became something for me.

His questions make him interesting as a writer. He throws questions over all our certainties. So anytime we feel we're certain about something, he introduces a character, or a voice, or an idea that might be the opposite of that. Through my years of directing him, the more I do, the less I know, the more I realize I've got a lot to learn. I feel that he's asking us constantly not to stand from a place of certainty, but to listen to each other. And I think about today how we're trying to move forward as a civilization and what theater's place can be in that. And that underneath it is to help us journey towards something better, not necessarily to get there or have the answer, but to have the openness to go on that journey. Shakespeare helps remind me that I shouldn't be certain about anything, but I should listen, I should question and try to understand more.

I have worked with young people for 25 years. My company, before I came to Chicago, used to tour one-hour Shakespeare plays all over the UK with six actors. Seeing young people's reactions to Shakespeare was really exciting because it helped me understand how they saw the world when we put these stories in front of them and kept me from sitting still in one place. So, it became the most exciting audience for me to put work in front of because it told me more about what I was doing than any other audience did. I've been lucky enough to work internationally a lot in my career, but I don't know Chicago. I'm not a native. I've got a lot of listening and understanding to do to work out how I can serve the cultural community here with this beautiful theater. And so to me, it started with youth. And so doing *Short Shakespeare! A Midsummer Night's Dream* (in 2024), and listening to how teenage Chicagoans reacted to that particular play was an eye-opener to me. What did they find funny? What did they find exciting? What did they find mysterious? And what were their sensibilities? I enjoyed it so much, I thought, I want to do it again next year.

Hamlet is really exciting to me. When I cut the text, I decided to take the political side of it away, and just make it a family drama. So it's about a mother, a son, a stepfather—it's domestic. If you're looking for common ground with an audience, the one thing they're always going to connect with is relationships and family.

Everyone either has that, or doesn't have that in their life, and it has an effect on them. And to me in its center, you've got a young man who is looking for agency, looking for identity, and wondering how to become his true

self in the face of the most terrible set of circumstances. Being a filmmaker as well, I see in a way in film but metaphor is not so necessary on the screen. The camera tends to go, "this is what it is." It doesn't have to mean anything. So you can go and watch a movie and it's like putting a piece of bubble gum in your mouth. You chew, it tastes great, you spit it out, and it's gone. You forget it. Theater's not like that. ►

"His questions make him interesting as a writer. He throws questions over all our certainties."



NORA CARROLL: You mentioned this kind of tension between characters that is necessary for the story. But then I wonder, how do you make sure that the ensemble is still working together and trusting each other, even though they have to play these characters that don't trust each other.

EDWARD HALL: Theater is storytelling and Shakespeare's not naturalistic. So, I try within my acting companies to create a bigger character within the play. And that character is identified by the company of players, just like the players in *Hamlet* that come and do *The Murder of Gonzago*. In 1995, I did my first Shakespeare production of *Othello*. Everything was in the right place. It was all properly organized and the audience enjoyed it. But I watched it and I felt really dissatisfied with the whole thing because everything I was trying to do on stage and solve seemed to be problems that had been given to me by the modern theater. And our expectation of staging, naturalism, all those sorts of things. So, the next one I did, I thought, I'm just going to throw all that out of the window. I'm going to make the actors play the music, do the scene

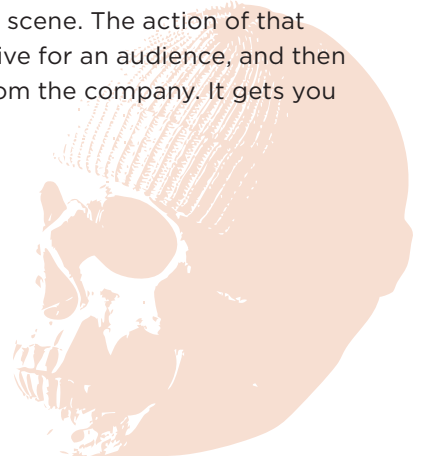
The theater asks us questions about meaning all the time. That's what the stage is really powerful at. In the movies, in my mind, if the character of *Hamlet* discovered that his stepfather had murdered his father, he'd just go out and kill him and it would be a revenge story. It'd be Liam Neeson getting revenge on the killer. And to me, the play *Hamlet's* is saying, yeah, but what if it really happened? What if you as an 18-year-old, a 16-year-old, were really faced with that problem? What if you really had the opportunity to kill the killer of your father and you were standing there, as he is praying? How would you pull the trigger? Would you? And it asks us to ask that question in a very deep philosophical sense.

The world of *Hamlet* is full of uncertainty and the atmosphere, I think, should be very edgy. You can't trust what anyone says. You look in people's eyes, they smile at you, and you don't know what's behind the smile. It was written in a moment when England was in great uncertainty. So, it reflected the mood of the moment. And whenever I direct a Shakespeare play, someone says to me, "It's really pertinent to now." And I think, well, yeah, it's uncertain now, but when has it not been? We have different degrees of it, but when has uncertainty not been a big part of our lives? And so to me, it's exciting to put that domestic drama in front of a group of young Chicago students and see how they responded to the questions that *Hamlet* is wrestling with: when do I act? Is it right or wrong to do what I feel emotionally driven to do? Why don't I trust myself with my mother, and yet I can't kill Claudius? You know, it's complicated, right? These are the things this young guy is wrestling with. I'm really excited to put those questions and problems in front of a young audience here and try and make it clear and sharp.

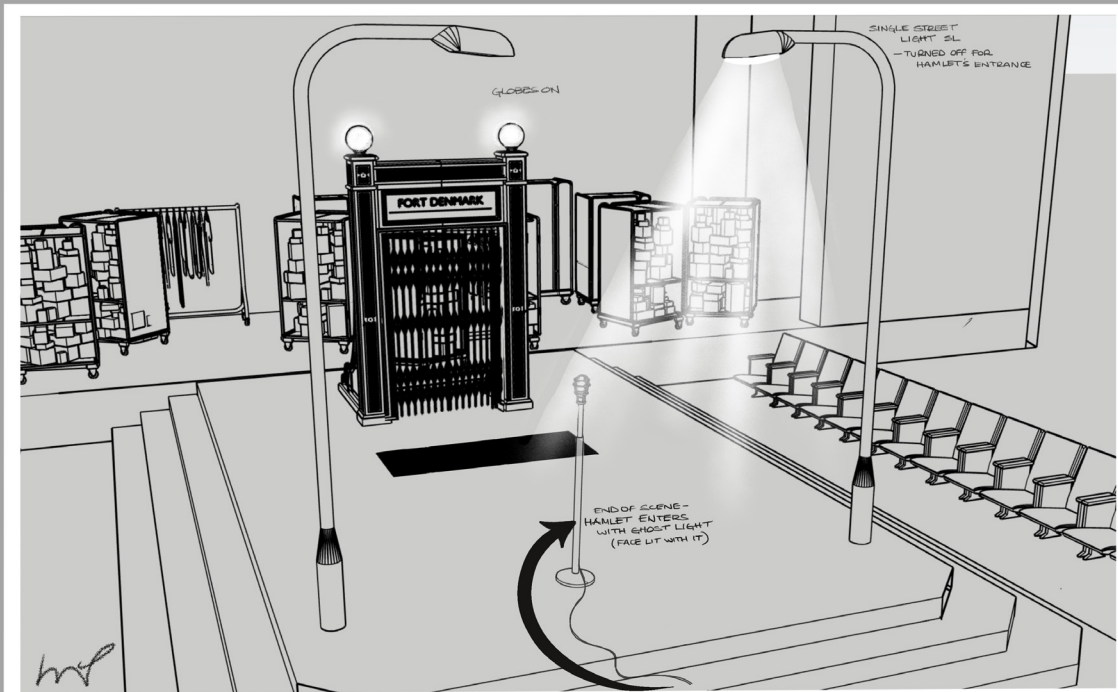
"Theater is storytelling and Shakespeare's not naturalistic. So, I try within my acting companies to create a bigger character within the play."

changes, and tell the story. I am going to give myself so much more freedom staging wise. You're going to see them put their clothes on in front of you, the characters they're going to become. It was really liberating. And so there became a deeper communal connection between the audience and the storytellers that right from the beginning said, "we're in a theater." None of this is real. I just carried on developing that as an idea. And out of that grew an idea of ensemble playmaking. I say to actors when they come in, you're going to be thinking, how am I going to play Clarence? But actually, your biggest problem is going to be so I hit the drum there, and then I've got to run across, and I've got to

move that, and then I do my scene. The action of that is really kinetic and connective for an audience, and then it doesn't disconnect you from the company. It gets you closer to the company. ■

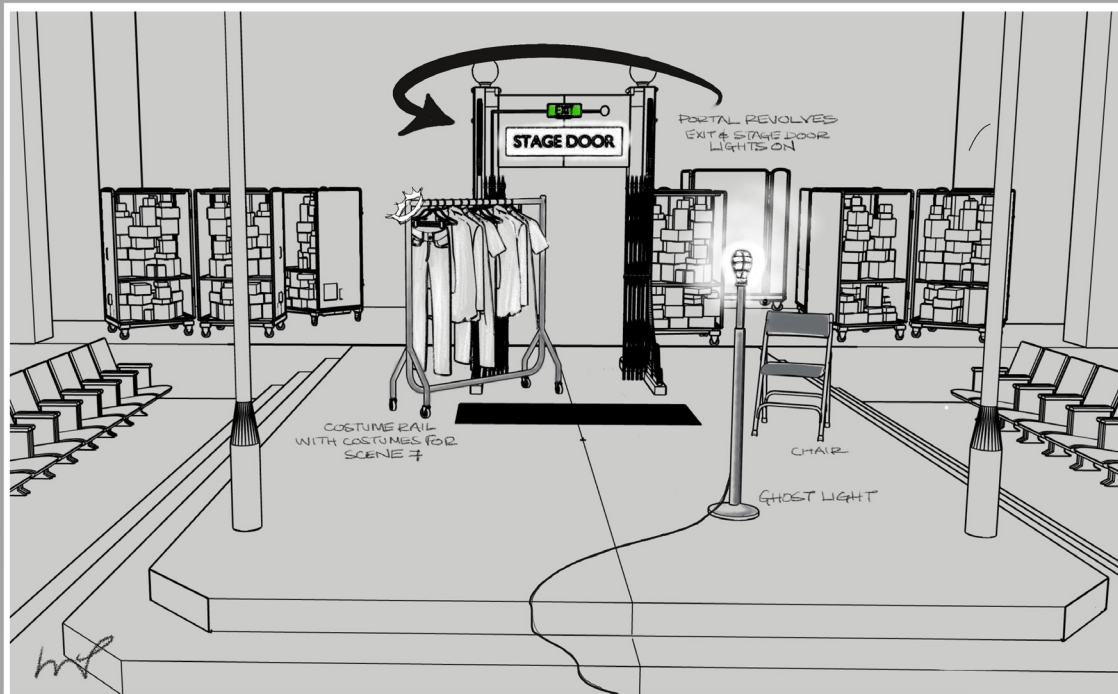


SET RENDERINGS



SCENE 4

HAMLET/CST



SCENE 5

HAMLET/CST

COSTUME RENDERINGS

HAMLET



WHITE T-SHIRT

ZIP UP
BLACK HOODIE
CROWN MOTIF
IN BLACK

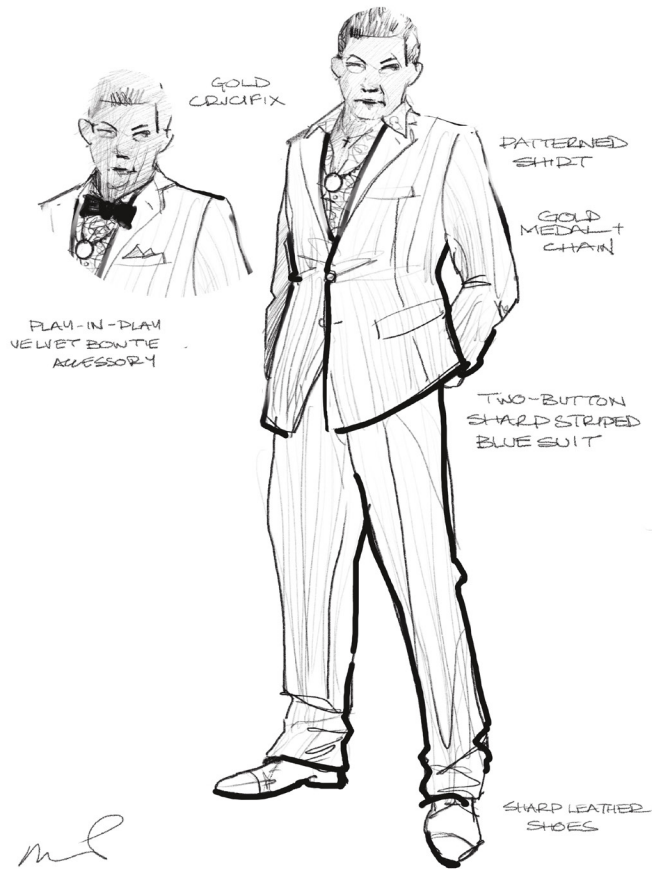
BLACK JEANS

TEARS IN
KNEES

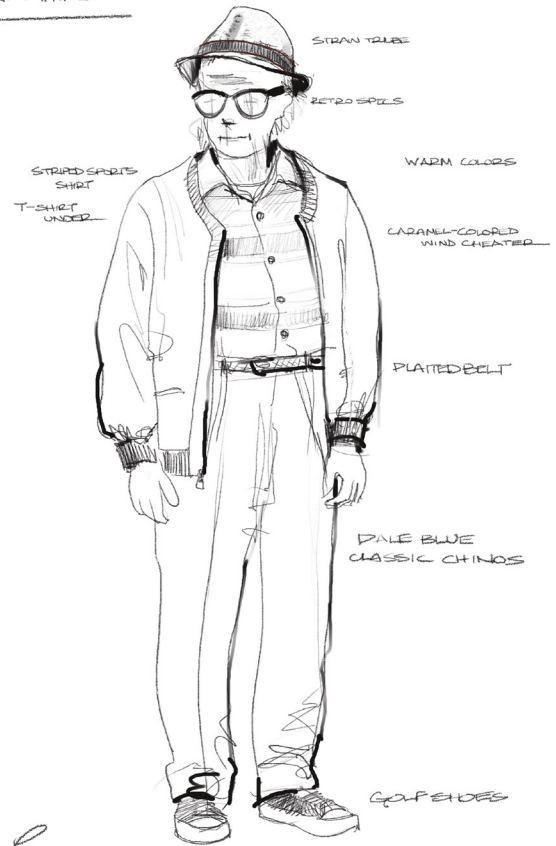
DARK GREY
TENNIS SHOES

Handwritten signature or mark.

CLAUDIUS



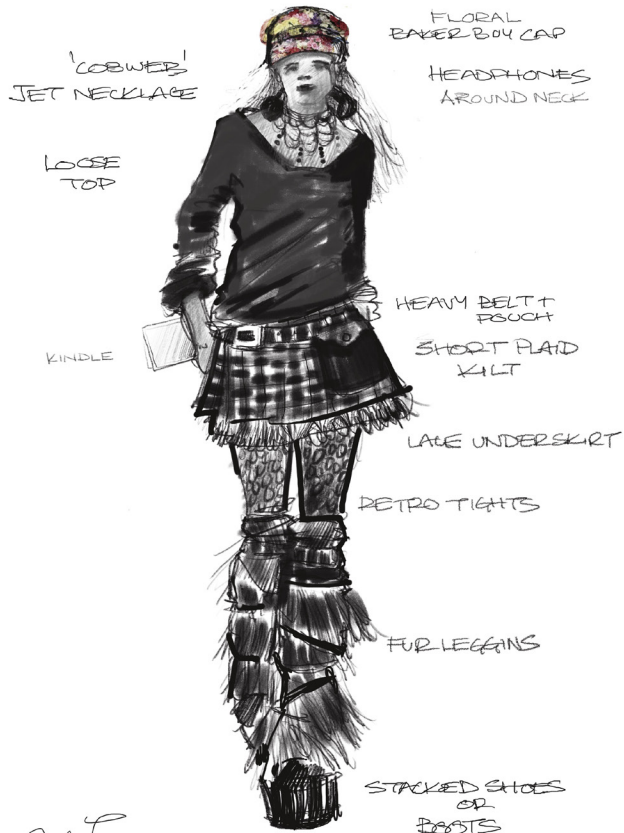
POLONIUS



GERTRUDE

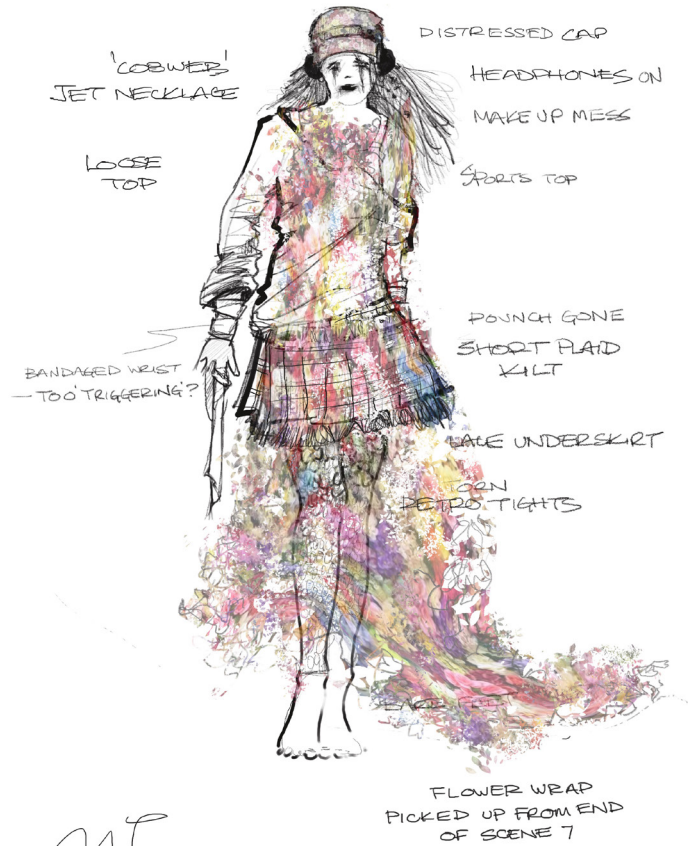


OPHELIA 1



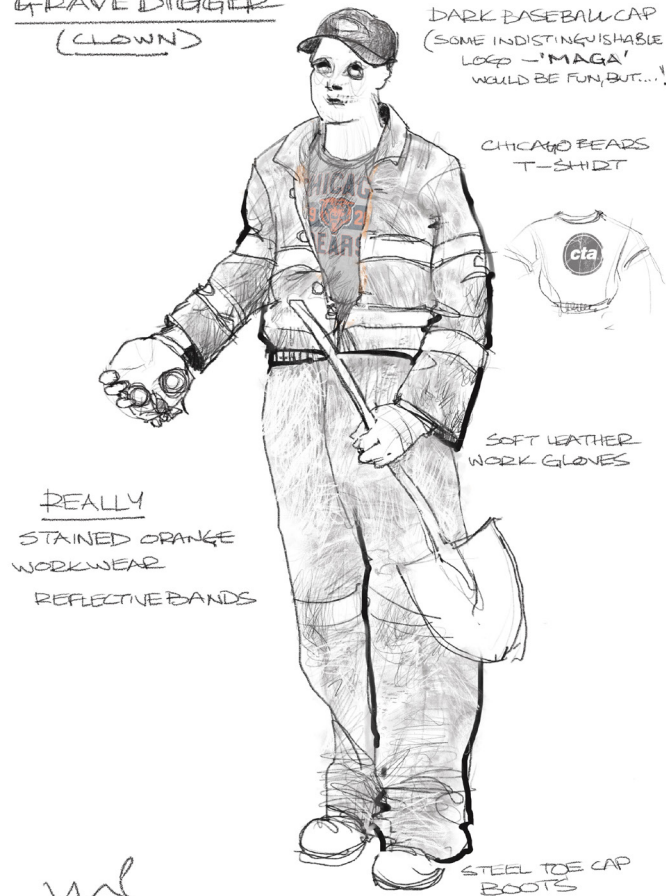
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OPHELIA 2



mf

GRAVEDIGGER (CLOWN)



mf

section 3
IN THE CLASSROOM



PRE-READING WRITING PROMPTS

One of the reasons Shakespeare's plays are still enjoyed is the thematic relevance to today's culture. It may seem far-fetched, but *Hamlet* dramatizes many situations that young people face today; grief, friendship, love, corruption, gender expectations, mental health, and morality. The prompts below offer students an opportunity to engage and connect with the themes before journeying into the text.

Invite your students to free-write about of the following situations:

- Have you ever experienced losing someone or something important to you? Describe how that made you feel. Who did you lean on for support? Or did you prefer isolation? How did you overcome the grief?
- Change can be uncomfortable. Have you ever felt overwhelmed by a large change in your life? Explain what that change made you feel and describe the ways you made it through.
- In what ways do friendships and family relationships influence your life? Do you think they have a lot of influence or none at all? Can you describe a time when you felt you made a decision to please your friends or family?
- Can you think of a moment when you were expected to behave in a certain way because you were of a certain gender? How did that make you feel? Did you agree with that expectation?
- Can you think of a scenario when one person or group manipulated a situation to their benefit? Did you feel it was fair of them to do so? What did you do to make the situation right? How far would you go to make it right?
- Hamlet is known for introspection and identity. Think about your own identity. What key factors shape who you are today? Are there specific life events that you carry with you every day?
- Do you think revenge is justified in certain situations? Reflect on a moment in your life when you felt like someone wronged you or someone you love. What actions did you think about taking? What was the outcome?
- Many cultures around the world believe in spirits or ghosts. How do you feel about the supernatural world? Write about your personal experiences and how your culture engages with the supernatural

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

W2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.



AS YOU READ THE PLAY

ACT 1

WRITE IT OUT: In Act 1, scene 1, the ghost appears before Marcellus, Barnardo, and Horatio. Horatio demands the ghost to speak five times. He doesn't, the cock crows, and then the ghost disappears. What does the cock crowing foreshadow? Where else have you seen this image appear? Describe how you might stage this moment to communicate your idea of the ghost and foreshadowing to the audience.

ACT IT OUT: Re-read the Ghost's tale in Act 1, scene 1. In a small group, create five frozen stage pictures that capture the Ghost's description of the events that led to his murder.

DISCUSSION QUESTION: Why doesn't Hamlet tell Marcellus and Horatio what he knows?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

R4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

R7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

SL1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

SL2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

ACT 2

ACT IT OUT: Re-read Ophelia's interaction with Polonius in Act 2, scene 1. In small groups, act out the scene with two people narrating and two people acting out Ophelia's description of her interaction with Hamlet.

GUIDING QUESTION: Why does Ophelia tell this story to Polonius?

SCRIPT ANALYSIS: Review Hamlet's soliloquy in Act 1 and the soliloquy in Act 2. What does the language reveal about his emotional state? How has his focus shifted? In pairs, highlight the words or phrases that capture his emotional shift.

DISCUSSION QUESTION: Why is Hamlet so excited to see the players?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

R1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

R3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

R7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

SL1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

SL2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

L3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

L5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

continued...



ACT 3

WRITE IT OUT: In your own words, paraphrase Claudius' soliloquy in Act 3, scene 3. Ensure you capture:

- Claudius' emotional state
- Claudius' beliefs about sin and salvation, heaven and hell
- The shifts in his thought processes

DISCUSSION QUESTION: Why can't Gertrude see the ghost? What do you think this reveals about her character or emotional state?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

R1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

W2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

W9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

L3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

ACT 4

WRITE IT OUT: In Act 4, scene 5, Ophelia sings multiple songs. What is Ophelia trying to express to Gertrude and Claudius? What do you think she would communicate if she were more stable?

DISCUSSION QUESTION: How does the soliloquy in Act 4, scene 4 reflect Hamlet's mental and emotional state? How does his language change after committing the act of murder?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

R1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

R2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

W1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

W9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

L3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

L5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

ACT 5

WRITE IT OUT: In Act 3, scene 1, Hamlet reflects on death and suicide. In Act 5, scene 1, the gravediggers go back and forth about Ophelia's death and whether she deserves a proper burial. Looking at these scenes, what do you think Shakespeare is trying to address about society, religion, and status?

DISCUSSION QUESTION: Why does Gertrude drink from the cup?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

R1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

R4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

W1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

W7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

W9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

IN A SNAP!

In A Snap! is a fun, summarizing activity where students play with Shakespeare's language and create clarifying gestures for each line. Students will create gestures to accompany their assigned lines, to clarify the meaning of the line. The final script will be read, with each student jumping in to add their line and gesture at their moment in the script.

Activity Time: 10-15 minutes

Supplies Needed:

- In A Snap! Narrator Script
- In a Snap! Lines Handout
- Lexicon or shakespeareswords.com

Learning Objectives:

- State key lines of the play
- Interpret the meaning of a line through physically activating the language
- Work collaboratively to explore varying interpretations of the text

INSTRUCTIONS

Teachers will print out the sheet of lines, with their numbers, and cut them into strips. Then, pass out the strips giving each student one line to work on.

Students will read their lines aloud a few times and may work with other students to discuss what questions they have about the lines. Students will use resources in the Further Reading section (pg. #) such as "Shakespeare's Words" to clarify any confusing words.

Then, students will decide how they want to physicalize their line to help bring its meaning alive for the class. Choices don't need to be literal, but they should help the class to better understand it as students play with the words' meaning or sounds.

To side coach students on embodying the language, suggest emphasizing a verb, juicy word, or imagery.

Students will practice saying their lines with gestures. When everyone is comfortable and ready, get the class to stand in a circle (in numerical order). As the story is read, the teacher will point to each student as their number comes up for them to read their line and perform their gesture.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How did this further your understanding of Shakespeare's language?
- What did each gesture clarify for you about the given lines?
- What gestures would you have used on each given line to further provide clarity?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

R1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

R4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

SL1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

SL2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

SL4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

L3 Apply knowledge of a language to understand how it functions in different contexts and make choices in regard to style to more fully comprehend when listening.

L4 Determine the meaning of unknown words



IN A SNAP!

NARRATOR SCRIPT

The events before the play are a bit complicated, but here's the short version: the king of Denmark, King Hamlet, dies suddenly, and his brother Claudius takes the throne and marries Gertrude, King Hamlet's widow. Scandal! So, *The Tragedy of Hamlet* starts out the way any good story starts: Knock, knock. **[1]** A ghost! And not just any ghost, but The Ghost of King Hamlet, Prince Hamlet's father.

Hamlet's not a fan of his new blended family and spends his days dressed in black, making snarky asides about his new stepdad. **[2A]** Meanwhile, Polonius, Claudius' Counselor, warns his daughter to stay away from the young prince. **[2B]**

The Ghost of King Hamlet reappears and lays it on pretty thick with Prince Hamlet: **[3]** Hamlet, shocked, says, **[4]** The Ghost commands: **[5]** and **[6]**. (That's what Mufasa said, right?) The son swears to avenge his father's murder, but would rather not. **[7]**

Back to that other family, Ophelia runs to her dad in tears: Hamlet's acting strange. OMG, thinks Polonius: **[8]** and he runs off to tell Claudius.

Claudius and Gertrude invite Hamlet's old school buds, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, to do some friendly spying to figure out what's up with him. Claudius and Polonius spy on Hamlet, too, overhearing maybe the most famous line in all of Shakespeare: **[9]**. Ophelia walks in, love letters and stuff in hand to return to Hamlet **[10]**. But Hamlet doesn't take it well, and tells Ophelia **[11]**.

When Hamlet hears about a troupe of traveling actors heading to Elsinore, inspiration strikes: **[12]**. It's about to get real. At Hamlet's instruction, they'll stage an old story with some brand-new lines, penned by the Prince: a king and queen in love, the king poisoned, his assassin marries the queen. Sound familiar? Claudius thinks so, too, and he's pretty upset, and wants Hamlet out of Denmark—NOW.

Claudius falls to his knees to repent. **[13]** Hamlet sneaks in, ready to kill, when he realizes: if he kills this guy praying, won't his soul go straight to heaven? Deciding it's better to confront his mother **[14]**, Hamlet heads for her bedroom—where Polonius is spying behind a curtain. Hamlet confronts Gertrude about her actions, Gertrude cries out for help, Polonius starts yelling—and blows his cover. Thinking it's Claudius, Hamlet plunges his sword in and kills...Polonius! Gertrude is distraught. **[15]** But Hamlet has something to say about that: **[16]**.

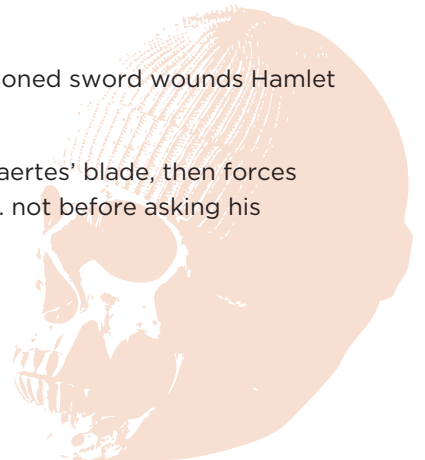
Gertrude runs off to tell Claudius what just happened and Claudius plans to send Hamlet packing—to England, with letters to the king, demanding Hamlet's death.

In the meantime, Laertes returns, sees his sister gone mad with grief over her father, and blames Claudius—who blames everything on Hamlet. Hearing of Hamlet's return from England, Laertes is ripe for revenge. The king arranges an "innocent" fencing match between Hamlet and Laertes. The catch: Laertes' sword will be dipped in poison—and, for good measure, Claudius will offer the prince a cup of wine, laced with more poison. At this very moment, Gertrude enters the scene with awful news: **[17]**. Bad timing.

It's time for the match. Gertrude drinks to her son as Claudius warns her **[18]**. Laertes' poisoned sword wounds Hamlet—moments before Hamlet grabs it and fatally wounds Laertes.

The Queen falls **[19]**. Laertes shares Claudius' plan **[20]**, and Hamlet stabs Claudius with Laertes' blade, then forces the poisoned drink down his throat **[21]**. Karma, man. Hamlet's time has arrived, too, BUT... not before asking his friend Horatio, **[22]**.

And, as they say, **[23]**.



IN A SNAP!

LINES



1: Who's there?

2A: A little more than kin, and less than kind.

2B: Do not believe his vows Ophelia, for they are brokers...

3: The serpent that did sting thy father's life now wears his crown.

4: O villain, villain, smiling, damnèd villain!

5: If thou didst ever thy dear father love...

6: Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

7: The Time is out of joint O cursed spite, / That ever I was born to set it right!

8: This is the very ecstasy of love.

9: To be, or not to be, that is the question.

10: My Lord, I have remembrances of yours/That I have longed long to re-deliver.

11: I loved you not.



IN A SNAP!

LINES *(continued)*



12: The play's the thing / Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

13: Oh my offense is rank, it smells to heaven.

14: I will speak daggers to her, but use none.

15: O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

16: Almost as bad, good mother, / As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

17: Your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

18: It is the poison'd cup: it is too late.

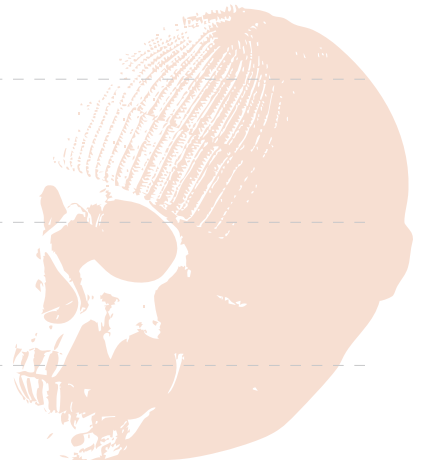
19: The drink, the drink! I am poison'd.

20: The king, the king's to blame.

21: Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damnèd Dane.

22: In this harsh world, draw thy breath in pain to tell my story.

23: The rest is silence.



EXPLORING LANGUAGE

Hamlet is packed with juicy language. In this activity, students will explore small bits of text and gain confidence in identifying text clues. Rather than focusing on a specific character, the task here is to focus on the language and the different literary devices Shakespeare employs to make the text more active.

Activity Time: 50 minutes

Learning Objectives:

- Identify literary devices including repetition, antithesis, imagery
- Articulate how language choices can enhance performance
- Perform small bits of text

DEFINITIONS

- **Repetition** can occur through the repeating of the same first letter of a sequence of words (alliteration), or the repeating of the same vowel sounds in a sequence (assonance)
- **Antitheses** places two contrasting ideas next to each other
- **Imagery** evokes a reader or audience members' sense of smell, taste, sight, touch, or hearing

INSTRUCTIONS

Facilitate a short discussion about language and the various ways that Shakespeare uses literary devices to make meaningful moments on stage.

Standing up, distribute a line of text to each student.

Instruct students to speak their line aloud a couple of times to begin to understand the rhythm.

Now that they have the rhythm, ask students to identify 1-2 literary devices in the line. Ask for a couple of volunteers to read their line and share what those devices are.

With that in mind, students will move around the room speaking their line aloud with particular attention to the literary device. For example, if a student had the line below, they might emphasize the underlined words to highlight alliteration and antithesis.

- Almost as bad, good mother, / As kill a king and marry with his brother.

Prompt students to make bold choices, use hand gestures, and move their bodies in the space.

When it's clear they have a sense of what they're saying, have them find three different people to direct their line to. When they have reached the third person, they will switch lines with someone in the room and repeat the process of discovering the rhythm, identifying the literary devices, and embodying the language.

Now, regroup in a circle and have each student deliver their line to one of their peers.

After each student has delivered the line, lead a small group discussion:

- What do you think about the character who is speaking your line?
- How does this way of speaking differ from our everyday way of speaking?
- When listening to someone deliver a line, what stood out to you?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

R1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

R4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.



EXPLORING LANGUAGE

LINES



How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

O that this too too solid flesh would melt, / Thaw and resolve itself into a dew.

'Tis an unweeded garden / That grows to seed.

Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven.

With vile and loathsome crust, / All over my smooth body.

These are but wild and whirling words.

These words like daggers enter in my ears.

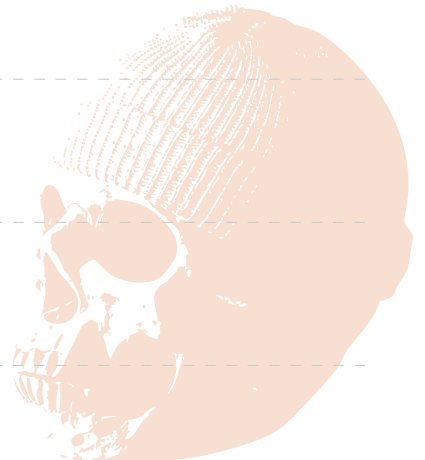
Stay! Speak, speak, I charge thee speak!

To be, or not to be, that is the question.

I must be cruel only to be kind.

A little less than kin and more than kind.

Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice.



EXPLORING LANGUAGE

LINES *(continued)*



Leave wringing of your hands. Peace! Sit you down / And let me wring your heart

My words fly up, my thoughts remain below. / Words without thoughts never to heaven go.

Oh Gertrude, Gertrude, / When sorrows come, they come not single spies, / but in battalions.

Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting / That would not let me sleep.

Thou know'st 'tis common, all that lives must die, / Passing through nature to eternity.

Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

The serpent that did sting thy father's life / Now wears his crown.

O most pernicious woman! / O villain, villain, smiling damned villain!

I loved Ophelia; forty thousand brothers / Could not with all their quantity of love / Make up my sum.



section 4

DEEPER ANALYSIS & EMBODIMENT



STAGE DIRECTIONS Act 1, scene 1

In a contemporary rehearsal process, actors rehearse 5 or 6 days a week over the course of 4-6 weeks. During Shakespeare's time, actors usually had about 24 hours to learn and rehearse their lines. Because of this truncated process, Shakespeare captured language that would assist the actors in immediately delivering the action in the text. In this activity, students will practice identifying embedded stage directions and begin to rehearse just like actors at Chicago Shakespeare Theater!

Activity Time: 45 minutes

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the role of stage directions in a play
- Learn the difference between embedded and explicit stage directions
- Analyze how stage directions impact character development

INSTRUCTIONS

Begin with a brief discussion about stage directions.

Guage students' prior knowledge by asking:

- What are stage directions?
- What purpose do they serve in a play, movie, or story?
- Share examples of stage directions you've seen or read before.

As a full group, read through stage directions of a contemporary play. We've provided Act 1, scene 1 of *A Raisin in the Sun* on the next page. Discussion questions:

- What time of day is it? What month?
- What do we know about these characters before they even speak?
- What do we think this play is about?

Highlight that Lorraine Hansberry's writing would be considered explicit stage directions. They are notes for the actor/director/designer that the audience will not hear.

As a full group, read the first 15 lines of Act 1, scene 1 of *Hamlet* provided on page 30. Discussion questions:

- What time of day is it? What month/season?
- What do we know about these characters based on the dialogue?
- What lighting/costuming choices can we glean?
- How are the stage directions in this text different from *A Raisin in the Sun*?

Define embedded stage directions if not covered in the discussion. During Shakespeare's time, there were no directors. The playwright was directing the action within the dialogue.

As a group, identify the first 3 embedded stage directions.

- **Who's there?**
 - Indicates they're entering from different directions
 - Could also indicate the character is on edge
- **Tis now struck twelve...**
 - Indicates it's late at night. They're likely carrying torches.

- **'tis bitter cold....**

- Indicates they're outside and it's cold. Their costumes should signify fall or winter.

Divide students into groups and have them read the rest of the scene. Each group should identify all of the embedded stage directions they come across.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How did the stage directions change your understanding of the scene or character relationships?
- Which embedded stage directions did you find most interesting?
- Are you more drawn to explicit stage directions or embedded stage directions? Why?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

R1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text

R9 Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

SL1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

SL2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally

EXTENSION EXERCISE

After groups have excavated their stage directions, have them stage a shortened version of the scene using what they now know about embedded stage directions. As they stage their moment, they should consider emotions conveyed by facial expressions, character dynamics (who's closer to whom), physicality, and who enters when.

A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry

Act 1, scene 1

(Time: the early 1950's.)

(Place: Chicago Southside.)

(At rise: it is morning dark in the living room. **TRAVIS** snores, asleep on the make down bed at center, **WALTER** is in his and **RUTH**'s bedroom at right. An alarm clock sounds in the bedroom. **RUTH** rises from bed, shuts off alarm; raises the window shade, closes window; shivers; puts on robe, slippers; grabs **TRAVIS**' shirt, towel, toothbrush, glass and clock. She opens the door to living room, crosses to sofa, shakes **TRAVIS**, places his towel and shirt on back of sofa, clock and glass on buffet upstage right. She crosses to kitchen, raises the shade, closes window, washes face. She calls to **TRAVIS** in a slightly muffled voice between yawns: Ad-lib: "Wake up, **TRAVIS**!" "Come on now, boy!" He pulls pillow over his head.)

(**RUTH** is about thirty. We can see that she was a pretty girl, but now it is apparent that life has been little she expected and disappointment has begun to hang in her face. In a few years, before thirty-five even, she will be known among her people as a "settled woman." This does not mean she lacks spirit or strength. She is a woman in the middle, torn between the needs and dreams of others, and she subordinates herself because, caring deeply about theirs, she chooses to; but underneath is a fire that will erupt as needs be. For her this is no ordinary morning and, once or twice in the course of it, we should clearly see—as weakness engulfs her and she catches herself in the effort to hide it—that something is wrong. Yet even as she confronts the momentous decision that cannot be put off, she is driven by the necessity to get son and husband up and fed and out within half an hour; the best she can do is to steel herself, plunge ahead and get through it. She crosses to her son and sits him up, still asleep, crosses to center. He flops back. She gets milk and newspaper from hall, crosses back to give **TRAVIS** a good, final, rousing shake.)



Hamlet Act 1, scene 1

BARNARDO
Who's there?

FRANCISCO
Nay, answer me. Stand and unfold yourself.

BARNARDO
Long live the King!

FRANCISCO
Barnardo?

BARNARDO
He.

5

FRANCISCO
You come most carefully upon your hour.

BARNARDO
'Tis now struck twelve. Get thee to bed, Francisco.

FRANCISCO
For this relief much thanks. 'Tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

BARNARDO
Have you had quiet guard?

10

FRANCISCO
Not a mouse stirring.

BARNARDO
Well, good night.
If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Enter Horatio and Marcellus.

FRANCISCO
I think I hear them.—Stand ho! Who is there?

15

HORATIO
Friends to this ground.

MARCELLUS
And liegemen to the Dane.

FRANCISCO
Give you good night.

MARCELLUS
O farewell, honest soldier. Who hath relieved you?

FRANCISCO
Barnardo hath my place. Give you good night.

20

Francisco exits.

MARCELLUS
Holla, Barnardo.

BARNARDO
Say, what, is Horatio there?

HORATIO
A piece of him.

BARNARDO
Welcome, Horatio.—Welcome, good Marcellus.

HORATIO
What, has this thing appeared again tonight?

25

BARNARDO
I have seen nothing.

MARCELLUS
Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy
And will not let belief take hold of him
Touching this dreaded sight twice seen of us.
Therefore I have entreated him along
With us to watch the minutes of this night,
That, if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes and speak to it.

30

HORATIO
Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

BARNARDO
Sit down awhile,
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we have two nights seen.

35

HORATIO
Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Barnardo speak of this.

BARNARDO
Last night of all,
When yond same star that's westward from the pole
Had made his course t' illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one—

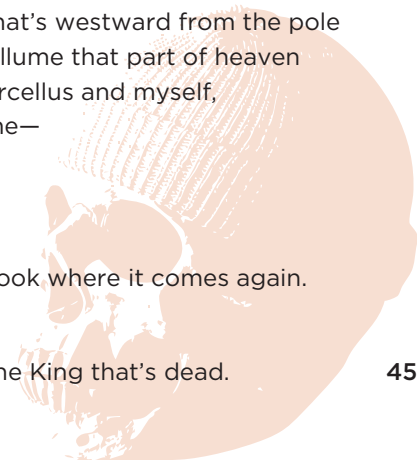
40

Enter Ghost.

MARCELLUS
Peace, break thee off! Look where it comes again.

BARNARDO
In the same figure like the King that's dead.

45



MARCELLUS, to Horatio
Thou art a scholar. Speak to it, Horatio.

BARNARDO
Looks he not like the King? Mark it, Horatio.

HORATIO
Most like. It harrows me with fear and wonder.

BARNARDO
It would be spoke to.

MARCELLUS
Speak to it, Horatio. 50

HORATIO
What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? By heaven, I charge thee,
speak.

MARCELLUS
It is offended. 55

BARNARDO
See, it stalks away.

HORATIO
Stay! speak! speak! I charge thee, speak!

Ghost exits.

MARCELLUS
'Tis gone and will not answer.

BARNARDO
How now, Horatio, you tremble and look pale.
Is not this something more than fantasy? 60
What think you on 't?



EMBEDDED STAGE DIRECTIONS

INSTRUCTIONS:

As a group, read the rest of the scene. Select lines from the scene that indicate an embedded stage direction.
Fill out each row for each line:

example

CHARACTER <i>Write the name of the character speaking</i>	LINE OF TEXT <i>Write the line from the scene</i>	TYPE OF STAGE DIRECTION <i>Describe the physical action or design element required to fulfill the stage direction (vocal quality, movement, lighting, sound, etc)</i>	SIGNIFICANCE TO THE SCENE <i>Explain why this line is important</i>
Macbeth in Act 1, scene 3 of <i>Macbeth</i>	"Stay, you imperfect speakers. Tell me more."	<p>Physical Action: This line indicates the witches have started to walk away from Macbeth.</p> <p>Note for the Actor: This line describes the Witches as "imperfect speakers," meaning they don't talk like any of the other characters.</p> <p>Emotional Tone: Macbeth could have a sense of urgency</p>	This line is significant because it indicates an emotional shift in the scene. Macbeth is now asking to hear more from the Witches.

HAMLET & GENDER Act 1 scene 3

Hamlet presents various beliefs about gender roles in society, but these insights can be obscured by the heightened language. This activity encourages students to analyze the text more deeply and to consider the social context of the characters. Focusing on Polonius' advice to Laertes and Ophelia, students will compare and contrast their experiences and the expectations placed upon them.

Activity Time: 90-minutes or two class periods

Learning Objectives:

- Analyze the portrayal of gender roles in *Hamlet*, identifying how characters reflect societal expectations of their time.
- Develop critical thinking skills by forming and supporting their interpretations with textual evidence.
- Compare character perspectives.

INSTRUCTIONS

PART I: ANALYSIS OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS TIMELINE

In small groups, analyze the timeline of women's rights in the UK and US. Each group will use a marker to highlight points in history that are significant, intriguing, or pivotal to women's rights.

Discuss some of the key themes from the timeline:

- Which events or legal milestones reflect the ongoing fight for gender equity? Which events mark disruptive change for women?
- Reflect on events or people that might be missing from the timeline. Are there influential voices that have been overlooked? Who would you include in your timeline?
- How have expectations around women's roles in the family, workplace, and community changed over time? What factors have contributed to that change?

PART II: EXPLORING GENDER ROLES IN *HAMLET*

Watch a clip of CST's 2019 production of *Hamlet*, Act 1, scene 3. youtu.be/q4WEeGBkMAQ

- Students should read along while watching the scene to enhance their understanding.

Lead a full group discussion to analyze what the scene reveals about gender roles of the time period.

- Does Ophelia conform to those norms? Or does she challenge them?
- How do you think Ophelia's social class as a noble woman impacts how she is expected to behave? How would this change if she were of a lower class?

In small groups, students will complete the worksheet on page 37. Ensure that each student contributes to the discussion and analysis.

When each group has completed the worksheet, they will craft a short monologue or scene for Ophelia that reflects the insights previously discussed. Each group will rehearse the monologue before presenting it to the full class, sharing their interpretation of Ophelia.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How do the events highlighted resonate with your personal experiences or people that you know?
- What insights or perspectives from the group discussions stood out to you? Did any of your peers challenge your perspective?
- How did creating a monologue help you to better understand Ophelia?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

R3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

R7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.*

W3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

W7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

SL2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

SL4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.



WOMEN'S RIGHTS TIMELINE

Below you'll find an abridged timeline that covers roughly 470 years of women's history in the US and the UK. Read through the timeline with your small group and highlight moments in history that feel significant, intriguing, or pivotal to women's rights. Are there key moments in history that are missing? Discuss with your group.

1553	Mary I (a.k.a. Mary Tudor or "Bloody Mary") becomes the first queen to rule England.
1637	Amye Everard Ball becomes the first woman to gain a patent, which gave Ball credit for her "Mrs. Ball's Tincture Of Saffron and Essence Of Roses"—a medicinal substance to be used for preserving plant matter.
1660	King Charles II gives women the right to act on English stages. That same year, Margaret Hughes became the first female actor in England by portraying Desdemona in <i>Othello</i> .
1765	Gearing up for revolution, the American Colonies' laws are based on English Common Law and femme coverture—the legal concept that women are "covered" under the law by their husbands. For women, this means husbands and wives are not separated in the law, with men being the primary representative of their household. Ultimately, this means unmarried women are under the jurisdiction of their fathers, while married women are under their husband's. However, widows are allowed to own property and remain unmarried, giving female property owners the ability to vote should they meet the property ownership requirement.
1776	Abigail Adams writes to her husband John Adams, a delegate in the Continental Congress, asking him to consider women in the new era of America. In it, she states, "...in the new Code of Laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would Remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors."
1777	The American Colonies begin establishing state constitutions, many exclusively defining voters as male.
1782	Deborah Sampson takes on a male disguise (named Robert Shurtliff) to enlist in the Continental Army. She was discovered some time later, but was given an honorary discharge from the Army for her service.
1797	New Jersey passes a statewide Act which rewrites election laws to include "he or she" and lowers the property requirement.
1807	New Jersey amends its state constitution to identify voters as free, white, male, tax-paying citizens.
1831	In the UK, the Representation of the People Act 1832 specifically identified voters as male. Prior to this, women who met the property requirements could vote, even though it was rare.
1839	Mississippi becomes the first US State to give women the right to own or rent property, but requires husband permission to do so.
1847	The Factory Act of 1847 in the UK establishes labor laws for women and children between the ages of 13-18 years old.
1848	Elizabeth Cady Stanton delivers the Declaration of Sentiments at the Seneca Falls Convention in New York. Modeled after the Declaration of Independence, she states "all men and women" should be created equal. There, nearly 300 women and men sign the declaration, beginning the long journey of establishing federal suffrage for women.
1855	In <i>Missouri v. Celia</i> , it is declared that slaves, specifically Black women, are considered property and do not have a right to defend against a master's act of violence or rape.
1866	The 14th Amendment is passed by the US Congress, and later ratified in 1868. This amendment marks the first time the US Constitution specifically establishes US citizens and voters as male.
1868	The University of London is the first university in Britain to allow women to attend their institution. While women could take many of the same classes and subjects as men, women were still not awarded degrees to signify their graduation or expertise.
1869	A law permitting women's suffrage is passed in the territory of Wyoming.

1870	Wyoming allows for the first sexually integrated jury to serve its court in Cheyenne. Victoria Woodhull is the first woman to run for US President. In the UK, the Married Women's Property Act 1870 allows for married women to legally own their earned money, independent investments, inheritances, and property.
1875	Through <i>Minor v. Happersett</i> , the US Supreme Court declares women to be within a "special category of nonvoting citizens," which means that states can stop women from voting.
1879	Belva Lockwood is the first woman permitted by Congress to try a case in the Supreme Court.
1880	The 1880 Education Act in the UK makes schooling mandatory for both boys and girls between 5-10 years of age.
1882	The Married Women's Property Act 1882 allows married women in the UK to own property without aid or presence of their husbands.
1890	As Wyoming is established as an official state, it becomes the first to include women's suffrage in its state constitution.
1894	The Local Government Act of 1894 gives property-owning women in the UK the right to vote in local elections, become Poor Law Guardians, and serve on School Boards.
1916	Montana-native Jeanette Rankin is elected to be the first woman member of the US House of representatives.
1917	Britain establishes the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, commanded by Controller Alexandra Chalmers Watson. It is later renamed The Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps (QMAAC) and disbanded in 1920.
1918	The UK passes the Representation of the People Act of 1918, which grants the right to vote to women over 30 years old who meet the property qualification.
1919	The Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act of 1919 in the UK gets rid of a previous restriction on women serving as lawyers, judges, or magistrates.
1920	The 19th Amendment to the US Constitution is officially ratified, establishing that votes cannot be denied on the basis of sex.
1922	Florence Ellinwood Allen becomes the first woman elected to a state supreme court (Ohio).
1928	Genevieve Rose Cline becomes the first woman to be a federal judge in the US. The Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Act of 1928 gives everyone the right to vote, despite gender or property ownership.
1933	Frances Perkins is selected to be the first female Cabinet member and Secretary of Labor by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.
1941	The National Service Act of 1941 in the UK makes it legal for women to serve in the military.
1958	In the UK, the Life Peerages Act allows women to serve in the House of Lords for the first time. Baroness Swanbourough, Lady Reading, and Baroness Barbara Wooton are the first.
1963	The Equal Pay Act is passed by US Congress, meaning equitable wages for the same jobs regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex.
1964	Title VII of the Civil Rights Act is passed, which states employers cannot discriminate based on race, color, religion, national origin, or sex.
1970	In the UK, the Equal Pay Act 1970 establishes equitable pay between men and women for the same work.
1971	The US Supreme Court eliminates a state law giving preference to men as administrators of wills, marking the first law to be declared unconstitutional for discriminating on the basis of sex.
1973	In the <i>Roe v. Wade</i> court case, the Supreme Court decides that through the privacy guaranteed in the 14th Amendment, women have the right to terminate an early pregnancy.

1974	The Equal Credit Opportunity Act (ECOA) is passed in the US, making it illegal for credit lenders to discriminate based on sex, marital status, race, religion, or national origin.
1975	Through <i>Taylor v. Louisiana</i> , the Supreme Court denies states the right to exclude women from juries.
1978	The Pregnancy Discrimination Act bans discrimination against pregnant women in the workplace.
1981	The Supreme Court overturns state laws that establish husbands as "head and master" through <i>Kirchberg v. Feenstra</i> , meaning married couples now jointly own their properties. Sandra Day O'Connor is the first woman on the Supreme Court. The US Supreme Court rules that excluding women from the military draft is unconstitutional.
1982	US court case <i>Mississippi University for Women v. Hogan</i> establishes that public schools cannot exclude students on the basis of sex.
1993	Ruth Bader Ginsburg is nominated by President Bill Clinton and becomes the second woman appointed to the Supreme Court.
1997	The Supreme Court rules that college athletics programs must involve semi-equal numbers of men and women to qualify for federal support.
2005	Condoleezza Rice becomes the first black female Secretary of State.
2007	Nancy Pelosi becomes the first female Speaker of the House.
2009	Sonia Sotomayor becomes the first Hispanic American and the third woman to serve on the US Supreme Court.
2013	The Supreme Court overturns the ban on women in the military serving in combat positions. In the UK, the Succession to the Crown Act 2013 ends preferential succession to males in the royal family.
2016	Hilary Clinton becomes the first female presidential candidate for a major political party. UK receptionist Nicola Thorp begins an online petition to make it illegal for workplaces to require women to wear high heels at work after she was dismissed for wearing flats. After gaining over 150,000 signatures, the petition inspired Parliament to require non-discriminating workplace dress codes.
2017	Catherine Cortez Masto becomes the first Latina senator.
2018	The First Step Act becomes a law, which required prisons to provide feminine hygiene products to female prisoners for free. California is the first state in America to require women be included on companies' boards of directors.
2021	Kamala Harris is sworn in as Vice President of the United States and becomes not only the first woman, but also the first person of African American and South Asian descent to have that position.
2022	In <i>Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization</i> , the Supreme Court overrules rulings and precedents set by <i>Roe v. Wade</i> and <i>Planned Parenthood v. Casey</i> , which trigger many states to place anti-abortion laws. President Joseph Biden signs an executive order calling for expanded access to contraceptives and for defense for women charged with having abortions.
2023	The most women ever recorded are elected to Congress, with 128 in the House and 25 in the Senate.

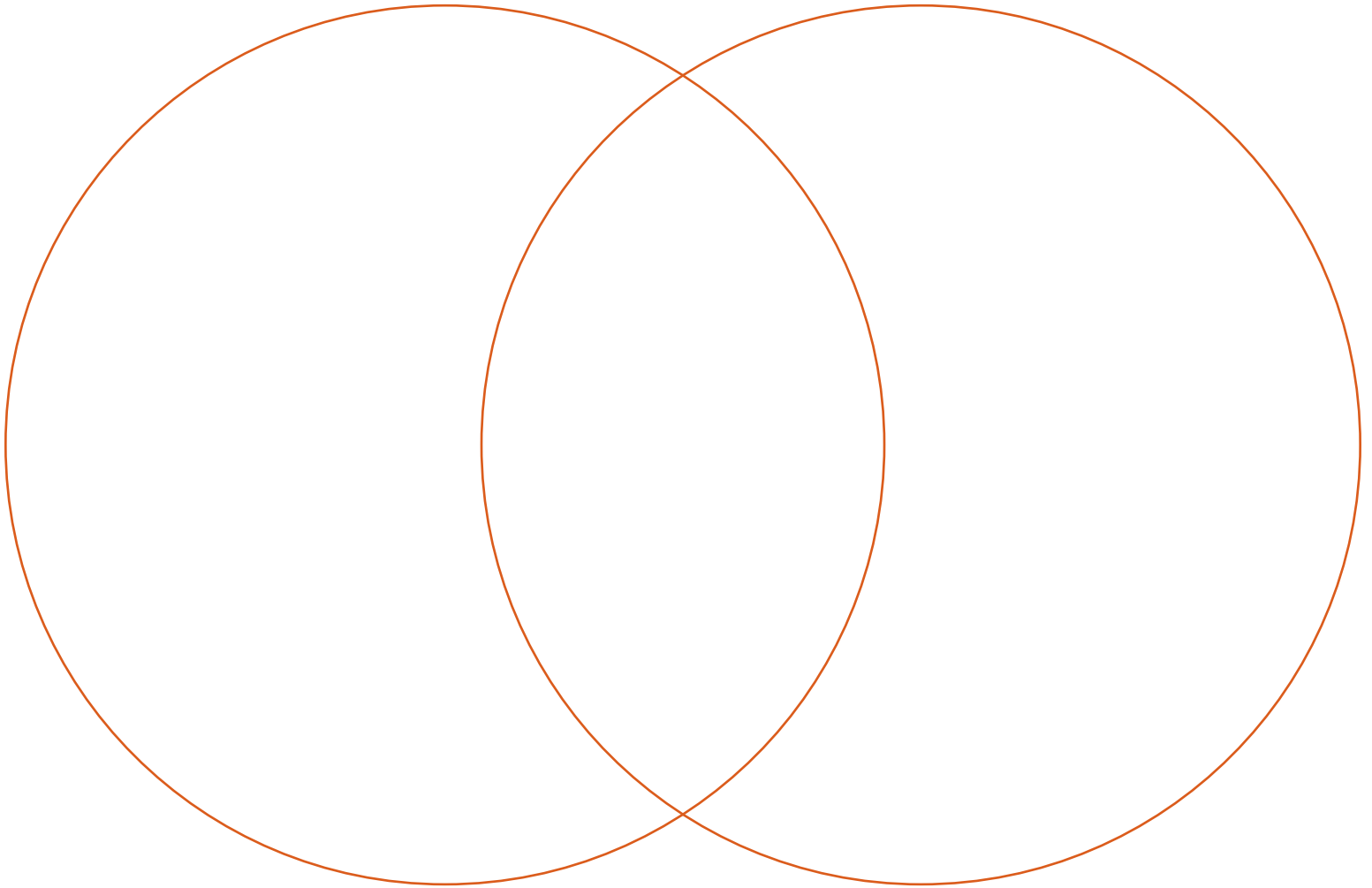


POLONIUS' ADVICE

Identify the advice that Polonius shares with his children by filling in the Venn Diagram with lines from the play. In the space below the diagram, explain in your own words what his advice means.

Advice to Laertes

Advice to Ophelia



OPHELIA'S RESPONSE

Consider Act 1, scene 3 of *Hamlet* and the previous discussions about the role of women in society. Select one of the following writing prompts to craft Ophelia's response:

- Write a soliloquy where Ophelia defies the expectations of her father and her brother. What pieces of advice strike a nerve for Ophelia? What will she do about it?
- Write a monologue where Ophelia defends her feelings about Hamlet. How does she describe the internal struggle between love and duty to her family? What does she think about the expectations that are placed on her?
- Write soliloquy in which Ophelia asserts her beliefs about women in society. What are her personal aspirations? What would she do if there were no limits placed upon her?



HAMLET'S EMOTIONAL JOURNEY

Act 2, scene 2

Hamlet was the first play in which Shakespeare truly dug into the psychology of a character. One of the reasons *Hamlet* is such a dynamic play for actors, audiences, and students to wrestle with is the complexity of the characters' humanity, which can be experienced through the soliloquies. In this exercise, students will develop an understanding of Hamlet's internal journey through a deep exploration of one of his soliloquies. Students should be familiar with Act 2, scene 2.

Activity Time: 50 minutes

Learning Objectives:

- Decode Shakespeare's lyrical language.
- Identify emotions expressed by Hamlet.

INSTRUCTIONS

Start class with a quick recap of Act 2, scene 2 through a class discussion, focusing on the action that begins when Rosencrantz and Guildenstern greet Hamlet.

- What significance do the players have in this scene?
- When does Hamlet get the idea to include the players in his trap for the King?
- How does Hamlet's emotional state change throughout the scene?

Briefly discuss the function of a soliloquy and how it shows the audience a deeper perspective of the character's psychology. Explain how adjectives and imagery contribute to the emotional depth of a character.

As a full group, take turns reading the soliloquy and check for understanding.

Divide students into small groups and assign a different section of the soliloquy to each group.

With their small section, students will:

- Highlight the adjectives Hamlet uses to describe himself
- Underline imagery
- Put a star next to the adjectives Hamlet uses to describe Claudius

Guide students through the identification process and probe for discussion with the following prompts:

- How does this word impact your understanding of Hamlet's emotional/mental state?
- What words or phrases create a strong visual image?

Next, students will categorize their section of text with three different emotions that best describe Hamlet's emotional state and create a stage picture based on the three different emotions.

- Depending on your students, a demonstration may be necessary.

While one person reads the section aloud, the other students will present the stage pictures.

Each group should present their tableau. Discuss as a full group the choices students made, and how it led to a better understanding of the character and the language.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

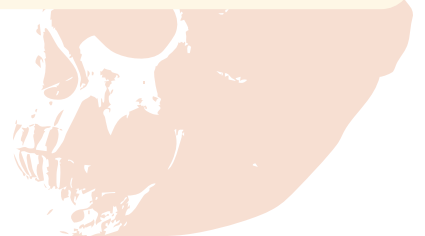
- What new understandings did you gain through this exercise?
- Does the language in the soliloquy create tension for the audience? Or sympathy for the character they are witnessing?
- Is Hamlet justified in using the players for the trap? What does this reveal about his character?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

R4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

R7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.*

SL1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.



Hamlet Act 2, scene 2

HAMLET

Ay, so, good-bye to you.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern exit.

Now I am alone.

O, what a **rogue** and peasant slave am I!

vagabond, beggar

Is it not monstrous that this player here,

But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,

Could force his soul so to his own **conceit**

imagination

That from her working all his **visage wanned**,

face, countenance

Tears in his eyes, distraction in his **aspect**,

expression

A broken voice, and his whole function suiting

With forms to his conceit—and all for nothing!

For Hecuba!

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,

That he should weep for her? What would he do

Had he the motive and the cue for passion

That I have? He would drown the stage with tears

And **cleave** the general ear with horrid speech,

stick, adhere

Make mad the guilty and appall the free,

Confound the ignorant and **amaze** indeed

Destroy, overthrow, ruin

confuse

The very **faculties** of eyes and ears. Yet I,

function capability

A dull and **muddy-mettled** rascal, peak

sluggish, dull-spirited

Like **John-a-dreams**, unpregnant of my cause,

dreamer, idle muser

And can say nothing—no, not for a king

Upon whose property and most dear life

A damned defeat was made. Am I a coward?



Who calls me “villain”? breaks my **pate** across?

head

Plucks off my beard and blows it in my face?

Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the **lie i' th' throat**

to tell an outrageous or foul lie

As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?

Ha! '**Swounds**, I should take it! For it cannot be

faint, swoon

But I am **pigeon-livered** and lack gall

timid, cowardly

To make oppression bitter, or ere this

I should have **fatted** all the region **kites**

made fat

bird of prey

With this slave's **offal**. Bloody, **bawdy** villain!

waste, refuse

filthy, obscene

Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!

O vengeance!

Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,

That I, the son of a dear father murdered,

Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,

Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words

And fall a-cursing like a very **drab**,

harlot, slut, whore

A stallion! **Fie** upon 't! **Foh!**

used to express disgust or outrage

About, my brains!—Hum, I have heard

That guilty creatures sitting at a play

Have, by the very cunning of the scene,

Been struck so to the soul that presently

They have proclaimed their **malefactions**;

evil-doing, criminal act

For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak

With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players

Play something like the murder of my father



Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick. If he do **blench**,
flinch, shrink
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be a devil, and the devil hath power
T' assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps,
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds
More relative than this. The play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the **conscience** of the King.
inner voice, inmost thought
He exits.



SILENT MOVIE Act 3, scene 2

In this activity, students will perform the action of a given scene using just their facial expressions, physicality, and perhaps a few props. The silent movie should precede a culminating performance project, allowing students to experience the character's journey without the weight of the language. This activity will also give the teacher insight into the parts of the story where students are confused. Students should be familiar with Act 3 of *Hamlet*.

Activity Time: Two 50-minute sessions

Learning Objectives

- Analyze themes, character choices, and plot points.
- Engage in a collaborative discussion with peers.
- Identify and articulate how specific lines or moments in the text inform physical choices.

INSTRUCTIONS

Begin with a physical warm-up that focuses on embodying a character or a pivotal moment in the story.

- Here are instructions for Space Walk:
[youtube.com/watch?v=sEukRgJLOdo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sEukRgJLOdo)
- Here are instructions for Parts of a Whole:
chicagoshakes.com/app/uploads/2024/05/TSD_Parts_of_a_Whole.pdf

Lead a brief discussion about Act 3, scene 2 prompting students to recall details about the characters involved, main events, and any significant changing dynamics between characters. For example, when we last saw Ophelia in Act 3, scene 1, Hamlet was berating her. However, in this scene, he is more affectionate.

Divide the class into groups of 4-5 students. Each group will be responsible for one section of the scene.

While in small groups, students will read their scene aloud and agree on the most significant moments.

When they have agreed on the most significant moments, they will create a simple storyboard to track their silent movie.

After creating the storyboard, students will stage a silent movie. Their silent movie should include:

- **Staging of key moments** (for example, if there's a moment where Polonius is hidden behind a curtain, that action should be staged.)
- **Body Language** (Are there moments when a character is nervous? How can that be expressed in the body? Wringing hands, pacing, etc.)
- **Facial Expressions** (Overexaggerate facial expressions so it's clear when a character is upset, joyful, angry, confused, etc.)
- **Sound Effects or a Score** (In silent films, the mood is usually determined by either the sound effects or the music underneath the action. This is an opportunity for students to further interpret what's happening in the scene.)

Students should have at least 20 minutes to rehearse prior to their performance.

Each group will perform their silent movie in chronological order.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How did your understanding of a specific character change as a result of this assignment?
- Were there any moments where your classmates surprised you during their performance?
- How did the music or sound effects impact your understanding of the scene?
- If you had more time, what would you change about the scene?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

SL1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

SL2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

SL3 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

R2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

R7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.



STORYBOARD

MOMENT 1

Line(s):

Emotions Conveyed:

Staging Needs:

MOMENT 2

Line(s):

Emotions Conveyed:

Staging Needs:

MOMENT 3

Line(s):

Emotions Conveyed:

Staging Needs:

MOMENT 4

Line(s):

Emotions Conveyed:

Staging Needs:

MOMENT 5

Line(s):

Emotions Conveyed:

Staging Needs:

MOMENT 6

Line(s):

Emotions Conveyed:

Staging Needs:



Hamlet Act 3, scene 2

Group 1

Danish march. A flourish. Enter KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and others

CLAUDIUS

How fares our cousin Hamlet?

HAMLET

Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's dish: I eat the air, promise-crammed: you cannot feed capons so.

CLAUDIUS

I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

HAMLET

No, nor mine now.

My lord, you played once i' the university, you say?

POLONIUS

That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

HAMLET

What did you enact?

POLONIUS

I did enact Julius Caesar: I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

HAMLET

It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. Be the players ready?

ROSENCRANTZ

Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

GERTRUDE

Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

HAMLET

No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

POLONIUS

O, ho! do you mark that?

HAMLET

Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

Lying down at OPHELIA's feet

OPHELIA

No, my lord.

HAMLET

I mean, my head upon your lap?

OPHELIA

Ay, my lord.



HAMLET

Do you think I meant country matters?

OPHELIA

I think nothing, my lord.

HAMLET

That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs.

OPHELIA

What is, my lord?

HAMLET

Nothing.

OPHELIA

You are merry, my lord.

HAMLET

Who, I?

OPHELIA

Ay, my lord.

HAMLET

O God, your only jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

OPHELIA

Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

HAMLET

So long? Nay then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet?



Hamlet Act 3, scene 2

Group 2

Enter PROLOGUE

PROLOGUE

For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.

EXIT PROLOGUE

HAMLET

Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

OPHELIA

'Tis brief, my lord.

HAMLET

As woman's love.

Enter two PLAYERS, KING AND QUEEN

PLAYER KING

Full thirty times hath Phoebus' cart gone round
Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orbed ground,
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

PLAYER QUEEN

So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done!
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer and from your former state,
That I distrust you. .

PLAYER KING

'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;
My operant powers their functions leave to do:
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, beloved; and haply one as kind
For husband shalt thou--

PLAYER QUEEN

O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast:
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second but who kill'd the first.

HAMLET

That's wormwood!

PLAYER QUEEN

A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.



PLAYER KING

O think thou wilt no second husband wed;
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.

PLAYER QUEEN

Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

HAMLET

If she should break it now!

PLAYER KING

Sweet, leave me here awhile;
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep.
Sleeps

PLAYER QUEEN

Sleep rock thy brain,
And never come mischance between us twain!

HAMLET

Madam, how like you this play?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

The lady protests too much, methinks.

HAMLET

O, but she'll keep her word.

KING CLAUDIUS

Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in 't?

HAMLET

No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest; no offence i' the world.

KING CLAUDIUS

What do you call the play?

HAMLET

The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife, Baptista: you shall see anon; 'tis a knavish piece of work: but what o' that? your majesty and we that have free souls, it touches us not.

Enter LUCIANUS

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

LUCIANUS

Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.
Pours the poison into the sleeper's ears

HAMLET

He poisons him i' the garden for's estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and writ in choice Italian: you shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.



OPHELIA
The king rises.

QUEEN GERTRUDE
How fares my lord?

LORD POLONIUS
Give o'er the play.

KING CLAUDIUS
Give me some light: away!

ALL
Lights, lights, lights!



Hamlet Act 3, scene 2

Group 3

HAMLET

O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

HORATIO

Very well, my lord.

HAMLET

Upon the talk of the poisoning?

HORATIO

I did very well note him.

HAMLET

Ah, ha! Come, some music! come, the recorders!

Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

GUILDENSTERN

Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

HAMLET

Sir, a whole history.

GUILDENSTERN

The king, sir,--

HAMLET

Ay, sir, what of him?

GUILDENSTERN

Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.

HAMLET

With drink, sir?

GUILDENSTERN

No, my lord, rather with choler.

HAMLET

Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

GUILDENSTERN

Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame and start not so wildly from my affair.

HAMLET

I am tame, sir: pronounce.

GUILDENSTERN

The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

HAMLET

You are welcome.



GUILDENSTERN

Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

HAMLET

Sir, I cannot.

GUILDENSTERN

What, my lord?

HAMLET

Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased: but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter: my mother, you say,—

ROSENCRANTZ

Then thus she says; your behavior hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

HAMLET

O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

ROSENCRANTZ

She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

HAMLET

We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

ROSENCRANTZ

My lord, you once did love me.

HAMLET

So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.

ROSENCRANTZ

Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? You do, surely, bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

HAMLET

Sir, I lack advancement.

ROSENCRANTZ

How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

Re-enter Players with recorders

HAMLET

O, the recorders! let me see one. Will you play upon this pipe?

GUILDENSTERN

My lord, I cannot.

HAMLET

I pray you.

GUILDENSTERN

Believe me, I cannot.

HAMLET

I do beseech you.



GUILDENSTERN

I know no touch of it, my lord.

HAMLET

'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

GUILDENSTERN

But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

HAMLET

Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me.



STORYTELLING THROUGH SOUND

Act 3, scene 3 & Act 5, scene 2

Sound plays a crucial role in storytelling for the stage and screen. Sound can help create an atmosphere, evoke emotions, and add another layer of depth to character development. In this activity, students will experience the multi-layered role of sound by creating sound cues. Students will analyze how sound can build tension, create levity, or support a transition from one beat to the next.

Activity Time: Two class periods

Learning Objectives:

- Develop an understanding of the different functions of sound.
- Analyze a script through the lens of sound and emotional arc.
- Create a short performance that considers mood, atmosphere, and character development.

INSTRUCTIONS

PART 1:

Select up to four different types of sound/music for students to experience.

- Ethereal Fairy Sound:
[youtube.com/watch?v=syp6Lsd8HOo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=syp6Lsd8HOo)
- Suspenseful Sound:
[youtube.com/watch?v=Pgbs1EQLV7w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pgbs1EQLV7w)
- Hero's Journey Sound:
[youtube.com/watch?v=VPCjq8IJfvc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPCjq8IJfvc)
- Moody Rain Sound:
[youtube.com/watch?v=l1_Nvzdbewl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1_Nvzdbewl)

Distribute notecards to each student to write on.

Play each sound for at least 1 minute. While students are listening to the sound, prompt them to write down the following:

- What words describe the emotional quality of this sound?
- For what kind of character would this be the theme?
- Where in a character's journey would this sound make sense?

Invite students to trade notecards with their neighbor and try to guess which notecard belongs to each sound.

Debrief as a full group:

- Were you surprised by any of the descriptions? Did you and your neighbor have a similar response for any of the sounds? What does this say about storytelling?

Emphasize how different sounds can conjure up different emotions for people based on personal experience, culture, etc.

Now that students have an understanding of how to describe sound, you'll begin to weave in Shakespeare's language.

Ask for a student volunteer to read Hamlet's soliloquy in Act 3, scene 3. Before jumping in, give a brief reminder of what's happening in the soliloquy.

For the first read, the student volunteer will read aloud without any music. After they finish the read through, ask the rest of the class:

- How would you describe the vocal quality?
- How would you describe the choice in pacing?
- What did the mood of the piece feel like?

Have the volunteer read again, this time with one of the previously played sound selections. After this read through, ask the rest of the class:

- How did the sound impact your experience of the soliloquy?
- Is there anything you would change? Volume? When the sound begins?

This time, select another student to read through the soliloquy, and let the other students choose which sound will accompany the reading.

- Ask the class if the new music changed their understanding of the piece at all. Which music do you prefer? Why?

Thank the volunteers and hold a brief discussion about their experiences.

- How does the music influence the pacing of the words?
- What was your emotional experience of the three different readings?
- If this were an actual production, where would you place the sound/music in the soliloquy? When Hamlet enters? When he raises his sword?
- Were there any sound effects that could've been used?

STORYTELLING THROUGH SOUND

Act 3, scene 3 & Act 5, scene 2 (*continued*)

INSTRUCTIONS

PART 2:

Facilitate a short discussion in which you define the different types of sound noted in the handout. Note, there are several other categories of sound, but for the purposes of this activity the categories we'll be dealing with are:

- Specific cues built into the story, for example the sound of a crow.
- Ambience to establish the atmosphere, for example the sound of wind blowing could indicate an outdoor scene.
- Underscore to amplify a mood or tone.

Divide the class into small groups and distribute Act 5, scene 2 of *Hamlet* (begin at the flourish/entrance of Claudius around line 240). While in small groups, students will read the scene aloud and note all of the sound cues indicated within the text.

After establishing what sound cues need to be present, students will then select music/sounds to establish the atmosphere and amplify the mood of the scene. Each group will turn in one marked up script with all sound cues.

Students will take time to rehearse their scenes with sound and then present them to the full group.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What conversations did your group have when selecting different sounds? What mood were you hoping to capture?
- How has your understanding of a certain character changed?
- How did sound impact the performance for you as a performer? As an audience member?

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

L3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

SL2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

SL5 Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

R4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choice shape meaning or tone.

R7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.



Hamlet Act 3, scene 3

HAMLET

Now might I do it pat, now he is praying;
And now I'll do't. And so he goes to heaven;
And so am I revenged. That would be scann'd:
A villain kills my father; and for that, (80)
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.
O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread;
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
And how his audit stands who knows save heaven?
But in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him. And am I then revenged,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No!
Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent:
When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed;
At game, a-swearing, or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't;
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And that his soul may be as damn'd and black
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays:
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days.



Hamlet Act 5, scene 2 (edited)

Enter Trumpets, Drums, and Officers with cushions, KING, QUEEN, OSRIC, and all the state, foils, daggers, flagons of wine, and LAERTES.

KING

If Hamlet give the first or second hit
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire.
“Now the King drinks to Hamlet.” Come, begin.
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Trumpets play.

HAMLET

Come on, sir.

LAERTES

Come, my lord.

They play.

HAMLET

One.

LAERTES

No.

HAMLET

Judgment!

OSRIC

A hit, a very palpable hit.

LAERTES

Well, again.

KING

Stay, give me drink.—Hamlet, this pearl is thine.
Here's to thy health.

*He drinks and then drops the pearl in the cup.
Drum, trumpets, and shot.*

Give him the cup.

HAMLET

I'll play this bout first. Set it by awhile.
Come. They play. Another hit. What say you?

LAERTES

A touch, a touch. I do confess 't.

KING

Our son shall win.

QUEEN

He's fat and scant of breath.—
Here, Hamlet, take my napkin; rub thy brows.
The Queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.



She lifts the cup.

HAMLET
Good madam.

KING
Gertrude, do not drink.

QUEEN
I will, my lord; I pray you pardon me.

She drinks.

KING, aside
It is the poisoned cup. It is too late.

HAMLET
I dare not drink yet, madam—by and by.

QUEEN
Come, let me wipe thy face.

LAERTES, to Claudius
My lord, I'll hit him now.

KING
I do not think 't.

HAMLET
Come, for the third, Laertes. You do but dally.
I pray you pass with your best violence.
I am afeard you make a wanton of me.

LAERTES
Say you so? Come on. Play.

OSRIC
Nothing neither way.

LAERTES
Have at you now!

Laertes wounds Hamlet. Then in scuffling they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.

KING
Part them. They are incensed.

HAMLET
Nay, come again.

The Queen falls.

OSRIC
Look to the Queen there, ho!

HORATIO
They bleed on both sides.—How is it, my lord?

OSRIC
How is 't, Laertes?



LAERTES

Why as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric.

He falls.

I am justly killed with mine own treachery.

HAMLET

How does the Queen?

KING

She swoons to see them bleed.

QUEEN

No, no, the drink, the drink! O, my dear Hamlet!

The drink, the drink! I am poisoned.

She dies.



CHOICES IN ACTION

In *Hamlet*, action is a central theme, with characters constantly navigating the delicate balance between personal desires, the well-being of others, and moral dilemmas. Each decision carries weight and contributes to the unfolding tragedy of the play. In this activity, students delve into the actions of a major character and reimagine some of their pivotal choices. By exploring the motivations behind these choices, whether they stem from a desire for revenge, a quest for justice, or purely selfish impulses, students will gain a rich understanding of the moral complexities that define *Hamlet*. This exercise encourages critical thinking and analysis, allowing students to connect the dots between individual actions and their broader implications within the fabric of the story.

Activity Time: Two 50-minute sessions

Learning Objectives

- Analyze character choices throughout the text.
- Identify key plot points.
- Cultivate empathy by exploring internal conflicts of characters in the play.

INSTRUCTIONS

Begin by discussing the key themes of action and choice within the play. Prompt students with a choice that one of the main characters made.

- Ex. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern decide to snoop on Hamlet, why did they make that choice? Personal gain? The greater good? Concern for Hamlet? What other options did they have?

Divide the class into groups of 3-5 students. Each group should select a main character to focus on.

Each group member should participate in filling out the worksheet, discussing each action along the way, and brainstorming alternatives.

When the groups have completed their worksheet, they will share their findings with the class.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Try to imagine choices that would lead to a happy ending. What would need to happen differently? What characters would need to make other choices?
- How did this activity impact your understanding of the character you focused on?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

SL1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

R3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.



CHOICES IN ACTION

INSTRUCTIONS:

In small groups, select a major character who makes decisions that impact the events of the play. Use the space below to track that character's actions, create an alternative course of action for them, and explain what impact that will make.

example	CHARACTER NAME & SCENE	ACTION TAKEN & REASON	ALTERNATIVE ACTION TAKEN	IMPACT
	Ophelia Act 3, scene 1	Ophelia decides to go along with her father's plan and returns Hamlet's love letters/remembrances. Ophelia made this decision because of her role in society.	Instead of returning his letters, Ophelia tells Hamlet how she really feels about him.	Ophelia and Hamlet become allies in exposing Claudius.



section 5

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



FURTHER READING & EDUCATION

Folger Library Educational Resources

folger.edu/explore/shakespeares-works/hamlet

The Internet Shakespeare Editions

internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/m/index.html

This website has transcriptions and high-quality facsimiles of Shakespeare's folios and quartos, categorized by play with links to any articles written about the play that can be found on the website.

Open Source Shakespeare Concordance

opensourceshakespeare.com/concordance

Use this concordance to view all the uses of a word or word form in all of Shakespeare's works or in one play.

Shakespeare's Words Glossary and Language Companion

shakespeareswords.com

Created by David and Ben Crystal, this site is a free online companion to the bestselling glossary and language companion, Shakespeare's Words.

Why should you read *Hamlet*?—Iseult Gillespie—TED-Ed

youtu.be/snF2XGXyow0

Hamlet—Audio book

youtube.com/watch?v=wmrytolcb6g

Murder Most Foul: Hamlet through the Ages Oxford by David Bevington

Oxford University Press, 2011

This book is an account of Hamlet from its sources in Scandinavian epic lore to the way it was performed and understood in its own day, and then how the play has fared down to the present including performances on stage, television, and film.

Hamlet in Purgatory by Stephen Greenblatt

Princeton University Press, 2001

This book explores the beliefs around death and Purgatory, which radically changed just decades before Shakespeare wrote Hamlet.

The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500–1800 by Lawrence Stone

Harper & Rows, 1992

This abridged version of Stone's magnum opus presents his treatise about the evolution of the family in England from the impersonal, economically tied group to the smaller, affectively tied nuclear family.

Black Shakespeare: Reading and Misreading Race by Ian Smith

Cambridge University Press, 2025

Through a broad study, Smith highlights how Shakespeare's texts have been manipulated or interpreted to omit the presence of race.

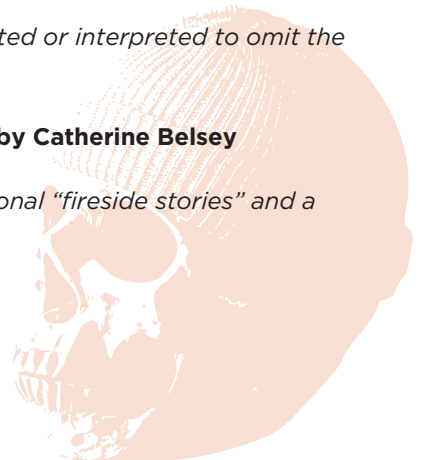
"Shakespeare's Sad Tale for Winter: Hamlet and the Tradition of Fireside Ghost Stories" by Catherine Belsey

Shakespeare Quarterly 61, 2010

This essay delves into the literary function of the "Ghost" as both an homage to traditional "fireside stories" and a purgatorial representation of young Hamlet's fated mortality.

Royal Shakespeare Company's Dates and Sources for Hamlet

rsc.org.uk/hamlet/about-the-play/dates-and-sources



“Hamlet and Amleth, Princes of Denmark: Shakespeare and Saxo Grammaticus as historians and kingly actions in the Hamlet/Amleth narrative” by Megan Arnott (2015)

The Hilltop Review Vol. 8: Iss. 1, Article 6.

scholarworks.wmich.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1158&context=hilltopreview

Shakespeare played a decisive role in creating a Middle Ages for the generations that came after him. The two tetralogies, which include Richard II, Henry IV Part 1 and Part 2, Henry V, Henry VI Part 1-3 and Richard III, comprise the body of work that is commonly studied for medievalisms, and in these plays Shakespeare's interpretation of the past demonstrates nation building, 'Englishness,' and a concern about the nature of power. A different kind of engagement with the medieval past is occurring in Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, though Hamlet is no less concerned with nations and power. Set in a contemporary Danish court, the play draws on the medieval Scandinavian tradition of Amleth, a version of which was recorded in the thirteenth century, in Books III and IV of Saxo Grammaticus's Gesta Danorum (The Deeds of the Danes). Both Hamlet and the tetralogies are manipulating medieval material, but the tetralogies fictionalize an English past in a way that makes readers reflect on historical events. Hamlet, unlike the tetralogies, is removed from its original medieval setting, stepping away from a representation of the past. The general change of time, from a tale of the past to a tale of the imprecise present, allows the universality of the emotional components of the play to be augmented by a real, yet universal Denmark. Consequently, the ideas about kingship put forth in the play are not specific to Denmark, but can be applied to all kings, and all nations, or at least to power structures familiar to English Elizabethan audiences. When Saxo Grammaticus's Gesta Danorum and Shakespeare's Hamlet, Prince of Denmark are juxtaposed, the reader is drawn to what it means to be king or to hold power. The national and political aspects of the play are highlighted, because the actions in the original medieval tale are an expression of kingship. Hamlet, Prince of Denmark is a medieval tale without the medieval, but which shares the medieval's interest in family politics.

“The Relationship between Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy and Shakespeare's Hamlet and Titus Andronicus” by Yacoubou Alou (2017)

International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention Vol. 6: Iss 5, pp. 52-57

[ijhssi.org/papers/v6\(5\)/version-I/H0605015257.pdf](http://ijhssi.org/papers/v6(5)/version-I/H0605015257.pdf)

“A New Etymology for Hamlet? The Names Amlethus, Amlodi and Admlithi” by L. A. Collinson (2011)

researchgate.net/publication/261971449_'A_New_Etymology_for_Hamlet_The_Names_Amlethus_Amlodi_and_Admlithi

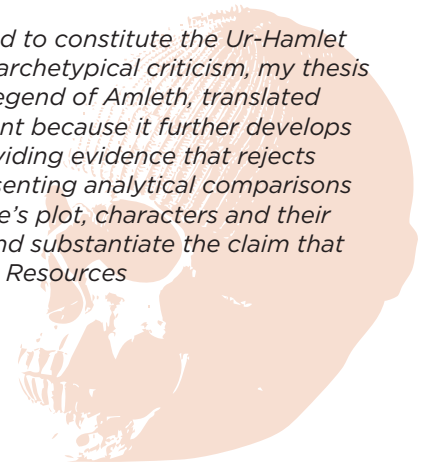
The Hamlet-name may have been associated with players several centuries earlier than has hitherto been thought. It is well-known that Hamlet is related to Amlethus, found in Gesta Danorum, by Saxo Grammaticus. However, the etymologies of both Amlethus and the linked Icelandic name, Amlodi, have remained unclear. One possibility, explored in this article, is that these derive from the player-name, Admlithi, found in the Irish tale, Togail Bruidne Da Derga. Admlithi could have been transmitted to Saxo either as a player-name, or as a nautical noa-term (perhaps denoting a dangerous sea whirlpool, such as Coire Brecáin), or both; and it may have carried some small hint of its meaning with it on its journey into Gesta Danorum and beyond.

The Root of the Recycled: A Comparative Analysis of Shakespeare's "Hamlet" and the Mythological "Ur-Hamlet" by Isabel M. Sanchez (2012)

Florida International University graduate thesis

digitalcommons.fiu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1896&context=etd

The purpose of my thesis was to explore the problem surrounding the sources believed to constitute the Ur-Hamlet from which Shakespeare derived Hamlet. By utilization of close reading, analysis, and archetypal criticism, my thesis confirms Shakespeare's usage of the "Hero as Fool" archetype present in the Danish legend of Amleth, translated by Saxo Grammaticus and Francois Belleforest, as the Ur-Hamlet. My study is significant because it further develops the notion that the earlier legend served as the originary source for Hamlet, while providing evidence that rejects the validity of other sources of the Ur-Hamlet. The evidence was corroborated by presenting analytical comparisons of the framework both works share. Focusing on the archetypal origins of Shakespeare's plot, characters and their actions revealed a more complex understanding of the play. These findings indicate and substantiate the claim that the Ur-Hamlet can be no other source but the Danish legend of Amleth. Mental Health Resources



MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

“How to Talk about Mental Health.”

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Apr. 2023

samhsa.gov/mental-health/what-is-mental-health/how-to-talk

Collins, Adair. “Addressing Student Mental Health: Strategies for Teachers.”

American Youth Policy Forum, 10 Nov. 2022

aypf.org/blog/addressing-student-mental-health-strategies-for-teachers

Green, Jennifer Greif et al. “Teacher and School Characteristics Associated with the Identification and Referral of Adolescent Depression and Oppositional Defiant Disorders by U.S. Teachers.”

School mental health vol. 14,3 (2022): 498-513.

doi: [10.1007/s12310-021-09491-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-021-09491-1)

“Warning Signs and Symptoms.”

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), 18 Nov. 2024

nami.org/about-mental-illness/warning-signs-and-symptoms

“Professional Learning Community: Trauma Responsive Educational Practices.”

TREP Project

trepeducator.org/plc

“Mental Health Resources.”

Chicago Public Schools

cps.edu/services-and-supports/health-and-wellness/mental-health/#a_mental-health-resources

“Mental Illness in Children: Know the Signs.”

Mayo Clinic, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, 27 Jan. 2024

mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/mental-illness-in-children/art-20046577

SPANISH TRANSLATION

Hamlet Spanish Translation (Project Gutenberg)—Website

gutenberg.org/cache/epub/56454/pg56454-images.html

Hamlet Spanish Translation (Duke University)—Website

people.duke.edu/~garci/cybertexts/SHAKESPEARE-WILLIAM/HAMLET/TRANSLATE/HAMLET-01.HTM

Hamlet Spanish Translation by L. Fernandez Moratin—PDF

suneo.mx/literatura/subidas/William%20Shakespeare%20Hamlet.pdf

Hamlet Estudio One Movie

youtu.be/RoGQcRe8Pjs?si=ujWSrxcb2fifaN-s



PRODUCTIONS

Richard Burton's Hamlet—*Lunt-Fontanne Theater (1964)*

youtube.com/watch?v=vABGEzB7T9M

Hamlet Adapted Audiovisual Production—*New York Shakespeare Festival (1990)*

youtube.com/watch?v=FPYXtUwi_Bk

Hamlet Production—*Bob Jones University (2020)*

youtube.com/watch?v=Oq5HKX1vicM

Hamlet Production—*National Theatre (2010)*

nationaltheatre.org.uk/learn-explore/schools/national-theatre-collection/

Hamlet Production—*Unbound Theatre (2022)*

youtube.com/watch?v=txGlpXOFFhk

HAMLET IN FILM

Hamlet at Elsinore (1964)—*Full Movie Available to watch on YouTube*

youtube.com/watch?v=BmjFgYdvcGI

Hamlet (1964)—*Full Movie Available to watch on YouTube*

youtube.com/watch?v=OzN1isLYc_A

The Fifteen Minute Hamlet (1995)—*Available to stream on Amazon Prime and Apple TV*

amazon.com/Fifteen-Minute-Hamlet-Angie-Phillips/dp/B017OMGU9G

Hamlet (1996)—*Available to stream on Tubi, Amazon Prime, and Apple TV*

Trailer: youtu.be/05zTajDCXLc?si=ViAnFXSVyBi9oN8

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead (1990)—*Available to stream on Tubi, Amazon Prime, and Apple TV*

Trailer: youtu.be/LBfFYvdfL90?si=ynL_LRmZfNly2rxs

Ophelia (2018)—*Available to stream on Tubi, Amazon Prime, and Apple TV*

Trailer: youtu.be/pM1SxDySB8o?si=bArXzCeu8vYUuo9G

Grand Theft Hamlet (2024)—*Available to stream on Amazon Prime*

Trailer: youtu.be/KjLa69vkY1Y?si=gwrp8zS68T4sOMvq

HAMLET IN MUSIC

Hamlet: Music & Speeches—*Royal Shakespeare Company*

open.spotify.com/album/Of9CZPFgHHoozS63FS5qa3?si=qeZBqwbqQNOXouvyNysdbg

Tchaikovsky's "Hamlet Overture-Fantasia, Op. 67" (1888)

youtu.be/bwXnJTcirUA?si=T3L1XsoYMX26p6DO

Franz Liszt's "Hamlet" (1858)

youtu.be/PrzliUaQO8w?si=nbVszE37aYJlCmcu



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