

Hamlet
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Also included are two cd-roms. One contains this Unit Plan and the other contains an .avi file of the Simpson's Hamlet.

Rationale for Teaching Hamlet

The works of Shakespeare have long been a staple in English classroom. However, more recently many of his works have been attacked in favor of newer works, under the pretense that Shakespeare is an old, dead white male and his works cannot possibly have any relevance to the students in a modern age classroom. Kim Beston, a professor at the University of Haverford counters this sentiment by stating:

It's very interesting that in this moment when people claim that Shakespeare is dead, there seems to be a huge demand for Shakespeare in the popular culture. Just look at the number of films that have been made. Shakespeare is quite a consumable good right now.

And so while on the surface Shakespeare's works may appear to be stale and unrelated to popular culture, the fact that they continue to be snapped up by the public when made accessible through mediums other than the original plays suggests that these "arcane" pieces of literature still have something to say to high school students.

In the play Hamlet, there are several levels on which a student may psychologically identify with the characters portrayed. One such way is through Hamlet's inability to be decisive about a course of action, and though he realizes this inability himself, he still feels helpless to overcome this inability. Many students in the high school age range have to cope with inner struggles comparable to those of Hamlet's, whether they are dealing with social or economic struggles, or perhaps even struggles within their own families. Regardless, many students may feel that they, like Hamlet, are helpless to change their situations because they may lack the ability to make decisions and see them through to their ends.

The question of "true friendship" also arises in Hamlet, through the respective representations of Horatio as versus Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Horatio is shown throughout the play to be a true and close friend that Hamlet can rely upon and confide in, whereas Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are merely paper thin cut-outs representing what friends should be only on the surface. In actuality, they are only making the show of being Hamlet's friend to further their own agendas. In the social turmoil that

inevitably surrounds a teenager's life, it is easy to see the parallel between the two types of friends in Hamlet and in the types of friends that students deal with on a daily basis. The type of "friend" that will simply use another person to gain a rung on the social ladder is still a very real presence in the social structure of a teenager, and did not die out in Shakespeare's time. In contrast, there is also the somewhat reassuring image of Horatio, the friend who remains loyal through to Hamlet's death.

The character Hamlet also goes through a series of identity crises, wherein he explores his role as a family member, friend and lover. As a son, he is torn between avenging his father's murder thereby crushing his mother, or remaining complacent and appeasing his mother but betraying his murdered father. Again, the connection between Hamlet's struggles and the confusion of identity for students can clearly be seen, for while teenagers probably do not have to deal with the disgruntled ghosts of their fathers, they most likely have felt pressure coming from their guardians to perform expected duties which sometimes conflict with other roles. His respective identities as a friend and lover are also called into question when they are pitted against his crumbling character as a family member, and ultimately they are forced to take a back seat to the duties he feels compelled to perform as a "good son" to his father. As high school students are themselves grappling with their multiple identities as learners, growing adults, friends and wards of their guardians (among many possible others), they are afforded the opportunity to identify and empathize with a giant literary character that is being brought down to their own level of understanding through his similar struggles of self-perception.

The work of Hamlet is of course also of high literary significance, not only because "The Bard" wrote it, but also because of the many literary devices that it employs from which students can learn. Some of these devices are - the concept of what a tragedy is in relation to other types of plays (historical and comical), what blank verse is, and the usage of soliloquies and asides. Also important because of the rudimentary nature is Shakespeare's employment of tone, irony and also metaphors and similes. A working knowledge of these basic devices is absolutely essential if students are to be expected to be successful lifelong readers.

As previously stated, the works of Shakespeare have been used often in ways other than on the stage, the most common of which being on the movie screen. It was no Shakespeare's intention for his plays to merely be read and then left alone - he meant for them to be acted and watched. Since it is not always practical or feasible to take classrooms on fieldtrips to see a play acted out, it then becomes necessary to bring the action of the play to the students in whatever form possible. It is for this reason that many teachers have turned to the movie adaptations of Hamlet as a means to bring the plays alive for their students, since after all, the movies are using the original play (at least loosely) as a text from which to operate.

In the adaptation by Franco Zeffirelli, Mel Gibson is a face that is sure to grab the attention of students. While the movie does not strictly follow the script of the play, it does offer several interesting interpretations of key scenes, such as the one wherein Hamlet cries aloud that he needs to set down in his tables "That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain". He then proceeds to hack away at the castle parapets with his sword in a fit of fury, rather than actually writing anything down as dictated by the script. Zeffirelli also gives viewers scenes that are not included in the play, the most noteworthy of which is Hamlet's voyage to England, his betrayal on the ship of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and their subsequent deaths. These clips add wonderful new dimensions to the play that is not otherwise afforded to students through a regular reading of the play.

In the version given to audiences by director Kenneth Branagh, we are shown a quite different Hamlet, for while the two movies are operating from the same original script, the actors and directors work with that script in very different ways. While Zeffirelli kept his interpretation fairly low key and to the point, Branagh's production has often been labeled as an "over the top", "lavish" showing of the play, as evidenced by the fact that it runs over three hours long, operated on a gigantic budget, and employs several notable names from Hollywood, such as Billy Crystal, Jack Lemmon, Kate Winslet, and Robin Williams to name a few. While it would not be very beneficial to show students this movie in its entirety, it is certainly a useful interpretation to employ as a basis of comparison between the original play and Zeffirelli's version to spark off discussion in class, since students are generally eager to suggest how they would have

directed certain scenes, had the decision been thesis to make.

Finally, students should be exposed to how the work Hamlet has managed to emerge in pop culture. This will be done by showing students a brief ten minute clip of the farce created in the sitcom The Simpson's, followed by a discussion of how this interpretation is similar and also varies from the other movies and texts that have been examined. This parody of the play is wildly different from the original written by Shakespeare, and yet still manages to catch the essence of the play in a few instances. These differences are just s important to note as the similarities, in that the writers of the sitcom placed them there on purpose. These motives and the results that they elicited can then be use as a jumping off point for further class discussion.

It is for these reasons that the teaching of Shakespeare is absolutely essential to the complete education of high school students. Not only are there several levels on which a student can psychologically identify themselves with the characters in Hamlet, but on a more didactic level they are exposed to the usage of several types of literary devices. The texts of Hamlet offer a wonderful opportunity to open up discussions on these topics with students and if these discussions are then followed up by writing exercises, then the students have been given a constructive outlet for their ideas while at the same time begin expose to "high literature".

Possible Contentions to Teaching Hamlet and Responsive Counter-arguments

1. The movies should not be counted as working "texts", and as a teacher you only use movies like this if you are trying to fill up the time in the class period.

(I would argue in response to this that these movies are most certainly texts. After all, the scripts themselves for the movies look much the same as the original play written by Shakespeare (and in the case of Branagh, the script is the exact play in its entirety) and have merely been adapted for the screen.

I do not plan to fill entire class periods by making students watch hour-long segments of these movies, which would only serve to put them to sleep. Instead, I want to show the key scenes in each movie, and compare how the different producers chose to interpret them for the screen. The movies will never take up more than half a class period, and will always be followed by class discussion, and said discussion will also be encouraged to occur while the movie clips are being shown, since sometimes a spontaneous reaction to a scene might be a very useful starting point for the later discussion, and also keeps students alert and focused on the movie.

2. Many of the scenes in these movies are violent and even somewhat graphic, and I do not want my child exposed to these particular scenes.

(While I agree that there are a select few scenes that can be a bit gory (the sword fight between Laertes and Hamlet), I would argue that they are all tastefully done and are not overtly graphic for the sake of being shocking to the audience. There is minimal blood shown, and no swearing of any sort during the fight scenes.

The texts and movies most certainly do not condone the fighting which occurs in these

scenes, and in fact does a very good job of discouraging these sorts of scenarios, in that the end result for the participating parties is not what the characters expected (evil plans backfire and in turn the participants die).

3. I do not feel that a showing of The Simpsons clip would be at all helpful to a student's understanding of this play. Doing this is only catering to pop culture and trying to entertain the students, not educate them.

(While I will freely admit that the usage of this "text" is partly to "hook" the students, I also maintain that the clip is not without merit. It is extremely short (about five minutes) and contains none of the vulgarity that for which The Simpsons is so well known.

This clip offers a totally new perspective on the play in that it only very loosely uses the original play as a starting text. Since it is so different from the other two movies we will be watching clips from, I feel that it provides a very important contrast to the more traditional texts, while still keeping a very basic grounding in the script written by Shakespeare. This clip can be made to work for the teacher by showing students that Shakespearian works do not have to be dry and stuffy, but can also be used to create humorous works even though Hamlet is a tragedy.

Materials Necessary for this Unit Plan

(A class set of the play Hamlet

(For the Body Biography:

(Butcher paper for each group (roughly 6 groups)

(Scissors, markers, glue and whatever else the students may ask for within reason.

(The lesson plans (in this binder)

(Handouts #1-28 (in this binder)

Week One
Monday

10 Min: ? Housekeeping (take roll, hand back any previously assigned works that have been graded et cetera).

? Quote of the week by student - one student will be assigned to bring a quotation of their choice to class every Monday. Students will then write a short written reaction to that quote, and then it will be briefly discussed in class.

10 Min: ? Hand out Intro Activity worksheet (In the worksheet section listed as Worksheet One).

? Discuss the clichés listed on the activity sheet briefly as a class, then break the students into groups of 3-4 students (no more than 4). Students will be allowed to form their own groups.

15 Min: ? Students will discuss the ideas listed on their handout. They will then as a group rank each item according to their agreement with it on a scale of one to ten - one being that they disagree, ten being that they totally agree.

20 Min: ? The teacher will then poll every group keeping track of the scores for each item on the board and then average the score that each item got from the class. These average scores will then be discussed with the class as a whole, ie why did they rank it the way that they did, and if there are major discrepancies between groups, discuss the differing opinions of the groups and their logic behind the opinions.

Week One
Tuesday

5 Min: ? Houskeeping

? Vocabulary Words of the Day - introduce the three words of the day. Students should write them down in their English notebook and then there will be a brief discussion on their pronunciation and usage.

10 Min: ? Discussion led by teacher on the Elizabethan Era. This should be a very brief introductory discussion, as it is only an introduction to the time period. This discussion should focus on Elizabeth's reign and why her coming to power gave religious freedom as well as served to foster the arts where her father (Henry VIII) and her sister ("bloody" Mary) did not, et cetera.

15 Min: ? Discussion of project that they are to do - Distribute Handout #4. (Located in Handouts section). Go over the expectations as well as briefly touching on each of the potential topics so that they will have a small amount of prior knowledge on the topics with which to base their choice of topics upon.

20 Min: ? Break the students into groups of 3-4 (no more than 4). Students will be allowed to form their own groups. In these groups the students are to discuss the potential topics on their handout and decide as a group which of the topics they want to discuss in their presentation to their classmates. Once this is decided they may also begin to discuss how they want to do this presentation as well as exchanging contact information with one another in the event that they decide to work on the project outside of class.

5 Min: ? Homework: Students are to "brainstorm" on the topic which their group chose, and begin doing what research they can from their homes.

Week One
Wednesday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping
? Daily Vocabulary

10 Min: ? Reiteration of assignment and expectations. Give Handout 3 to students and go over the sources on the internet and in the library that they are expected to use.

35 Min: ? Research in the library using both computers and books as sources for information. Students should search as a group for information on their topic and begin to compile said information. Students should also have 3X5 note cards which they are writing down their citations (ie books and internet sites) for reference later. These citations do not have to be formal MLA or APA citations - but students need to be able to find the references later.

5 Min: ? Back to the classroom. No Homework apart from continuing to work on the project.

Week One
Thursday

5 Min: ? Houskeeping

 ? Daily Vocabulary

5 Min: ? Organize back into groups and reiterate project goals. Address any concerns or questions.

40 Min: ? Students are to continue research of their topic in the library as on Wednesday. As a teacher, be sure to be heading around to the various groups and making sure that they are progressing and finding the things that they need as well as staying on task.

5 Min: ? Back to classroom. No homework apart from continuing to work on their projects.

Week One
Friday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping

? Daily Vocabulary

5 Min: ? Split back into project groups. Make sure that none of the groups are having serious issues with their topics or with each other.

40 Min: ? In-class group work. Students should be through with their necessary research at this point and should now be working on organizing their information into a coherent presentation that they will be giving to the class as per the instructions on their handout.

? Be sure that groups stay on task, but also be careful not to intrude or "hover" around students. Be available should students want input or advice.

5 Min: ? Remind students of groups that are to present on Monday - projects should be finished over the weekend if they are not already finished.

Week Two
Monday

10 Min: ? Houskeeping

? Weekly Quote activity (same as week one)

15 Min: ? Group One presents their topic. Teacher should take notes for the "master study guide" to give to students on Thursday.

5 Min: ? Brief quiz (not for a grade) over Group one's presentation.

15 Min: ? Group Two presents their topic. Teacher should take notes for the "master study guide" to give to students on Thursday.

5 Min: ? Brief quiz (not for a grade) over Group two's presentation.

5 Min: ? Teacher will briefly re-cap the presentations and then remind the

class
of the groups that are to present on Tuesday.

Week Two
Tuesday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping
 ? Daily Vocabulary

15 Min: ? Group Three presents their topic. Teacher should take notes for the
"master study guide" to give to students on Thursday.

5 Min: ? Brief quiz (not for a grade) over Group three's presentation.

15 Min: ? Group Four presents their topic. Teacher should take notes for the
"master study guide" to give to students on Thursday.

5 Min: ? Brief quiz (not for a grade) over Group four's presentation.

5 Min: ? Teacher will briefly re-cap the presentations and then remind the class
of the groups that are to present on Wednesday.

5 Min: ? Free time - Encourage students that have yet to present to get together
and make sure that they are ready.

Week Two
Wednesday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping

 ? Daily Vocabulary

15 Min: ? Group Five presents their topic. Teacher should take notes for the "master study guide" to give to students on Thursday.

5 Min: ? Brief quiz (not for a grade) over Group five's presentation.

15 Min: ? Group Six presents their topic. Teacher should take notes for the "master study guide" to give to students on Thursday.

5 Min: ? Brief quiz (not for a grade) over Group six's presentation.

5 Min: ? Teacher will briefly re-cap the presentations.

5 Min: ? Homework:

 ? Study for test on Friday over information presented by the groups.

? Be aware that Act I is due to be read by Monday of Week Three.

Week Two
Thursday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping

? Daily Vocabulary

10 Min: ? Re-cap of all presentations by teacher as well as any pertinent points about topics that may have been left out of the presentations.

35 Min: ? Pass out teacher generated master study guide (Handout #5). Go over this with students and then allow them to break up into small groups (3-4) and discuss and study the handout together.

5 Min: ? Homework:

? Reminder to study for test

? Reminder that Act I is to be read by Monday.

Week Two
Friday

TOTAL 55 Min Period: ? Allow whole period for the taking of the test over the class presentations (test can be found as Handout #5A). Attendance to be taken during the test (to allow them the max time on their test). Students who finish before the period ends may read silently for Monday.

Week Three
Monday

10 Min: ? Pop Quiz on Act I (Handout #6).

10 Min: ? Weekly Quote activity (same as previous weeks).

10 Min: ? Brief discussion of Act I. Allow students to generate their own questions about the text using Dr. Faust's technique (see instructions for this on the next page). Tell students to be aware that these questions could be potential test questions.

20 Min: ? Watch cued up scenes from Act I in the Branagh and Zeffirelli film versions of Hamlet (namely, the opening scene on the battlements in the Branagh version, and the total lack thereof in the Zeffirelli version, and what he does in place of the battlements scene).

? Compare and contrast the two versions in a follow-up discussion, and ask students for their own opinions on how they would have directed the scenes were they to be given the choice to do so.

5 Min: ? Homework:

? Read Act II for Tuesday and bring questions or observations about the text to class with them.

Week Three
Tuesday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping (distribute study guide for Act I - Handout #7).
 ? Daily Vocabulary

5 Min: ? Brief intro to socratic seminars - teacher should lay down the basic rules and appropriate conduct.

35 Min: ? Conduct seminar. Students should be working from questions that they developed for homework while reading Act II. If the students seem to be struggling or simply not talking at all, then the teacher may ask a few generic questions about the text such as:

 ? Do you think that Polonius was within his rights as a father to send someone to France to spy on his son, Laertes?

 ? Do you think that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are more loyal to Hamlet, or to Gertrude and Claudius?

 ? Give out the Act II study guide at the end of this seminar session (Handout #8).

10 Min: ? Homework:
 ? Students are to write 1-2 pages worth of diary entries as per Handouts #9-10 (given to them at this time). A rough draft of this will be due Thursday, and a polished version will be due Friday.

Week Three
Wednesday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping
 ? Daily Vocabulary

5 Min: ? Discussion of how the diary assignment is working out - address any confusion or major concerns - if there are none then the time rolls over to the next activity.

40 Min: ? Class goes to the library. Here, students are to use the time to conduct a

guided internet search on their character (Handout #12).

- 5 Min: ? Homework:
- ? For Friday: Polished draft of diary entries.
 - ? For Monday (of Week Four) completed reading through Act III.

Week Three
Thursday

- 5 Min: ? Housekeeping
- ? Daily Vocabulary

45 Min: ? Students will be given two options of how they may spend this time:

- ? Begin (or continue) reading Act III for Monday of next week.
- ? Continue to work on their diary in the class so that they can get feedback from their classmates and from the teacher. Allow them to get into small groups to share their progress on the diary if they would like to - otherwise they may work alone.

? At this time, the teacher should distribute Handouts #14-17, telling students that the genres discussed in the handouts can be used in their to make their diaries more full and believable.

- 5 Min: ? Homework:
- ? For Friday: Polished draft of diary entries.
 - ? For Monday (of Week Four) completed reading through Act III.

Week Three
Friday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping (take up diaries)
 ? Daily Vocabulary

5 Min: ? Break students into groups of 3-4 (no more than 4).
Distribute Handout #13.

25 Min: ? Students should now discuss Acts I - II and generate impressions and questions about the text using the questions in the handout as a starting point, but students can branch their discussion off into different areas provided that the discussion remains relevant to the text.

15 Min: ? Teacher begins going around the classroom and asking the groups to share with the rest of the class some of the points that they brought up as a group. Their contribution does not have to be a conclusion that the group came to (though it can be) but can also be a question that they couldn't resolve that they would like to open to the rest of the class.

5 Min: ? Teacher to re-cap the key points of the discussion.
 ? Homework:
 ? Read through Act III for Monday (of Week Four).

Week Four
Monday

10 Min: ? Weekly Quote activity (same as previous weeks).

10 Min: ? Brief discussion of the text that was assigned to be read for today (Act III). Make sure that there was no major confusion over any parts of the text

10 Min: ? Quiz (see Handout #18). Students may silently read when they are finished.

20 Min: ? Conduct a Fish-bowl discussion of Act III (see next page for detailed instructions on how to conduct a fish-bowl discussion). At the end of this discussion, distribute Handout #19 - the study guide for Act III.

5 Min: ? Homework:

? Read (skimming) back over Acts I-III and consider them in light of Hamlet's alleged madness.

Week Four
Tuesday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping

? Daily Vocabulary

10 Min: ? Brief class discussion centering around whether or not students feel that Hamlet is insane or just pretending. Encourage students to cite their texts to a degree to support themselves, rather than just letting them state "I think he's crazy" without any textual support.

35 Min: ? Split the classroom in half for two groups that will be used in the classroom debate on whether Hamlet is sane and pretending to be mad, or just crazy. Give out Handout #20 on debate conduct and your expectations as a teacher for the debate. Then allow students to use the

remainder of the time to begin organizing their argument and exchanging contact information, if they feel it is necessary. (If at all possible, send one group out of the room to either the library or another room so that the groups will not interfere with each other or hear what the other group is planning to do for their argument).

5 Min: ? Homework:
 ? Continue to look over Acts I-III to get further textual referenes that support their argument and bring these references to class on Wednesday. Debate will occur on Thursday.

? Mention that the first two scenes of Act IV need to be read by Friday of this week, and the entire Act needs to be read by Tuesday of Week Five - it is not necessary for them to read this for their debate though it may strengthen their position and they may use citations from this Act (or ANY part of the play) in their side of the debate.

Week Four
Wednesday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping
 ? Daily Vocabulary

2 Min: ? Reiterate debate assignment goals

43 Min: ? Split the class back up into their respective debate groups and have the continue to work on their debate plan as per the debate handout. If at all possible, again separate them physically so that they are not interfering with each other or overhear each other's "strategies" for the debate. Teacher should be available to help however possible.

5 Min: ? Homework:
 ? Students should finish up anything unresolved related to their debate argument, working together outside of class if necessary. Reminder that the debate will occur the following day (Thursday).

? Remember that the first and second scenes of Act IV are to be read for class on Friday of this week.

Week Four
Thursday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping

 ? Daily Vocabulary

45 Min: ? Conduct the debate. Time should be split up thus:

 ? Each side will be given 5 minutes to establish and propose
their
side of the argument.

? The floor will then be open for the remaining 35 minutes to the
debate which will occur according to the guidelines in the debate
handout.

5 Min: ? Teacher closes out debate.

 ? Homework:

 ? Read the first and second scenes from Act IV for tomorrow
(Friday).

? A new set of entries (same in length and expectations as the
first) is due on Monday of Week Five.

Week Four
Friday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping

 ? Daily Vocabulary

10 Min: ? Allow students time to free-write and work on their diary entries, and also get feedback from the teacher if they would like the input.

5 Min: ? Discuss briefly Body Biographies - what they are, how they are used and how they the students will make one and what the expectations are for them (outlined in further detail in the rubrics section and also in Handout #21, which should be given to students at this time).

30 Min: ? Allow students to break into groups of 3-4 students per group. Students will be allowed to form their own groups. Materials will be given to them and they will begin work on their body biographies, remembering to operate within the guidelines and expectations set forth in their handout.

5 Min: ? Clean up from Body Biography mess (the physical mess - any scraps of paper, move desks back if they have been rearranged, et cetera).

? Homework:

? Finish reading Act IV for Monday of Week Five

? Finish another set of diary entries which will be due on Monday of Week Five.

Conducting a Fishbowl Discussion Session

For this type of discussion, four students must volunteer to come to the front of the class and sit at a table together and begin a discussion over the topic. The only students who are allowed to speak are the ones up front, or in the "fishbowl". If other students in the class wish to participate in the "fishbowl" then they must get up and "tag" one of the original students out. The original student then takes their seat again with the rest of the class and may no longer enter into the discussion. Students will be allowed a minimum of two minutes in the fishbowl - ie, if a student is "tagged" out of the fishbowl, they may not immediately "tag" back in.

For their parts, people in the fishbowl will do the following:

1. Discuss the play "in the fishbowl"--in 4 chairs, in the center of the room, surrounded by spectators in their desks; and make pertinent but respectful conversation with other fishbowl members.
 2. Leave quietly and without complaint when they are "tagged" out of the fishbowl.
- For their parts, people NOT in the fishbowl will do the following:

1. Look over the play, record questions, comments, and other notes;
2. Listen actively and attentively to fishbowl leaders and tag the leaders out when appropriate to raise thoughtful questions or offer personal insights, voluntarily and at any time (to let members of the fishbowl know you are ready to participate, just stand tap their shoulder); and
3. vacate the "fishbowl" seat when "tapped" so that other spectators may have the

opportunity to speak.

And for my part, while observing the discussions, I will assess each student's cumulative performance both as discussion leader and as spectator using these criteria:

1. Content: relevance and quality of insights, ideas, and questions, and their substantiation with specific citations from text;
2. Engagement: active participation through verbal contributions, intent listening, and encouragement of other leaders and spectators to speak;
3. Language: use of appropriate background information, vocabulary, and scientific content.

Borrowed partially from:

<http://www.westga.edu/~wac/wac/general/Fishbowl%20Discussion.rtf>

Week Five

Monday

10 Min: ? Weekly Quote activity (same as previous weeks)

5 Min: ? Break students back into their body biography groups and retrieve any necessary supplies. Hand back any graded quizzes or other work.

35 Min: ? Continue work on body biographies in groups as laid out in the body biography handout (#21). Remind them that body biographies are due for presentation tomorrow (Tuesday).

5 Min: ? Clean-up

 ? Homework:

 ? Students are to have Act V read by Wednesday of this week (and so should have finished the entire play).

Week Five
Tuesday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping

 ? Daily Vocabulary

25 Min: ? Group presentations to the class of the body biographies. These should be fairly brief as each group has approximately 3 minutes to present (assuming that there is a class of 30 with 6 groups of 4 and 2 groups of 3). To keep presentations concise, each group should have nominated a spokesperson to present their biography to the class.

20 Min: ? Introduction to class discussion method "1,2,3" (teacher guideline for this is outlined on the page following this). Make sure that the method for discussion is clear and that the rules for the discussion are understood.

? Teacher will now pick a moderator to call upon their fellow students and the discussion will begin. Students will be instructed to focus the attention of the discussion to Act IV, though they may also discuss previous parts of the play as they may relate to Act IV (ie, they may discuss the progression of Hamlet's madness through the Acts).

5 Min: ? Homework:
 ? Reminder that Act V (entire play) is to be read by Wednesday of this week (tomorrow!).

Week Five
Wednesday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping

 ? Daily Vocabulary

15 Min: ? Time allowed for students to work further on their diary entries. The teacher should make a point to move from student to student and inquire

as to how their writing is progressing and if they have any questions or concerns about the assignment.

35 Min: ? Students will be given a choice of how they would like to conduct the discussion today. They may:

- ? Have a socratic seminar (no teacher involvement).
- ? Have a fish-bowl discussion.
- ? Employ the "1,2,3" discussion method and assign a moderator.

? The teacher should also give out handouts #11 and #23. Handout #11 will outline the final expectations for the diary entry project as well as a rubric for students to work from so that they may look back over what they have completed in light of the rubric. Handout 23# should be distributed after the discussion, as it is the master study guide for the play.

5 Min: ? Homework:

? Reminder that diary entry project is due on Monday of this Week Six. (This is the compilation of all previously completed entries as well as the others that they have done in class and at home since the last set of entries was turned in). They should also bring nearly completed or completed drafts of their diaries for discussion on Friday of this week.

? Reminder to study for the test on Friday.

Week Five
Thursday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping
? Daily Vocabulary

45 Min: ? Students will vote as a class on how they want to spend the time in the class period. Their choices are (but not necessarily limited to):

? Read silently. (Reading should be limited to either the play or novels of their choice - not homework for other classes).

? Work in groups to go over the study guide and quiz each other, as well as have small discussions centered around the study guide. (students may form their own groups or study individually, though groups are not to exceed 4 students).

? Work on their diary assignments with their peers - students may again break into small (2-4 student) groups and share their current progress on their diaries. They may also work individually on their writing, but will be encouraged to get feedback from their peers at some point, even if they do not want to work in groups for the entire period.

5 Min: ? Reminders:

? Diaries will be due on Monday of next week (Week Six).

Drafts are to be brought to class tomorrow.

? Final test over the play will be on Thursday of next week

(Week
Six).

Week Five
Friday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping

? Daily Vocabulary

15 Min: ? Teacher should reiterate the final expectations for the diary, as well as show examples of how students may choose to present their diary (ie, can be bound with ribbon, use different fonts, et cetera - this is also mentioned in the handout which they received when the assignment was first given in handouts #9-10).

? Teacher will also distribute handouts #24-25 and briefly discuss the expectations for the essay assignment outlined in the said handouts.

30 Min: ? Students may again get into groups of 3-4 students of their choice and share with peers what they have done with their diaries and get peer feedback. The teacher will also go from group to group and offer feedback to those who want it.

? Students may also begin their writing process for the essay outlined in handouts #24-25, and ask any questions that they may have.

5 Min: ? Homework/Reminders:

? The final product for the diary project is due on Monday of next week (Week Six).

? STUDY for the test on Thursday.

Conducting a "1, 2, 3" Discussion Session

This type of discussion is extremely simplistic. Students shall choose as a class a

fellow student to be the "moderator". This Moderator will have control of the floor at all times, and will choose who is to speak and when. Students will signify that they want to speak by raising their hands, but with a twist. When they raise their hand for the moderator to recognize them, they must hold up either one, two, or three fingers. The significance is thus:

(One finger - they have something very pressing to say that will turn the discussion in a new direction.

(Two fingers - they have something to say in response to something just said.

(Three fingers - they have something interesting to say about the topic, but it is not relevant to what is currently being discussed.

The moderator should then choose who is to speak based upon the fingers being raised. The moderator will then be totally directing how he or she wants the flow of the discussion to go (ie, if the moderator only calls upon people holding up one finger, then there will never be any real discussion). Teacher interaction in this activity should be minimal to nil.

Week Six
Monday

10 Min: ? Weekly Quote activity (same as previous weeks).

? Collect final products for diaries.

30 Min: ? Spend ten minutes watching both the Zeffirelli and Branagh versions of the "to be or not to be" scenes. Discuss as a class the differences of scene, tone, backdrop, and the portrayal of Claudius and Polonius as they watch (ie in Zeffirelli, they are hiding in an alcove, but Hamlet sees their shadows - in Branagh there is the usage of two-way mirrors).

10 Min: ? In light of having watched these two versions of the same scene, have students write out a brief set of ideas on how they themselves would direct the scene,

were they given the option. These written ideas will be turned in, but not for a grade - merely to check for completion.

5 Min: ? Reminder of test on Thursday of this week - study study study!!!
 ? Students should also be working on the essay assignment, which is due on Friday.

Week Six
Tuesday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping
 ? Daily Vocabulary

30 Min: ? To be spent again watching movie clips regarding various character's madness'.
? For the Zeffirelli version, show the scene with Hamlet in the library and Polonius goes to him to try and talk to him. (Act II sc. ii.).

? For the Branagh version, show the flower scene with Ophelia, wherein she distributes flowers to all present while singing songs (Act IV, sc. v).

15 Min: ? Class discussion of these movie versions of the scenes. Some possible questions to get the discussion going:

- ? Were these scenes effective, and still true to the play? How?
- ? What would the students have done differently?

5 Min: ? Distribute practice test (Handout #26) to be completed at home for tomorrow (Wednesday).

? Reminder again of test on Thursday - study!

? Students should also still be working on their essay assignment, which is due on Friday.

? Bring a rough draft of the essay assignment for class tomorrow (Wednesday) - this will not be for a grade, merely for peer-editing.

Week Six
Wednesday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping

? Daily Vocabulary

30 Min: ? Go over answers for the practice test (key is listed as Handout #26A).

15 Min: ? Students will have the option of:

? Silently reading.

? Studying individually or in small groups (not to exceed 4 students).

? Students may talk to the teacher about any concerns either with the test or with their essay assignment. They may also have their rough drafts edited by their peers.

5 Min: ? Reminder of test tomorrow (Thursday).

? Reminder to be finishing up their essays for Friday.

Week Six
Thursday

55 Min: ? Total period to be dedicated to the test (Handout #29 - key is #29A).

Students may silently read when they have turned in their test. Role should silently be taken while the test is being done.

**** Brief Reminder at the end of the period of the essay due tomorrow (Friday) ****

Week Six
Friday

5 Min: ? Housekeeping - pass back graded diary projects and collect the essays.
 ? Daily Vocabulary

10 Min: ? Distribute Handout #27 - the Edith Nesbit story version of Hamlet.
? Allow students time to read this (it's fairly short).

15Min: ? Discuss as a class the differences in Nesbit and Shakespeare's telling of the tale. Ask the following questions as prompts, but be sure that students understand that these are TRUE questions, and that you as the teacher do not have all the answers and that you honestly want to hear what their thoughts on the questions are. Ask:

 ? What key things does Nesbit leave out of her telling? (ie, Fortinbras, Rosencranz & Guildenstern - just as examples). What would be the purpose of her leaving these things out, apart from just making it shorter?

? Do you think that she stays true to the original Shakespearean telling?

10 Min: ? Watch the cued up Simpson's version of Hamlet. (This is an .avi file,

and is included in the back of the handouts section on a page in a sleeve.)

10 Min: ? Class discussion of this version of Hamlet - how it is different than the others, what things it has in common, and what things were done to make it more relevant to society today. Also just ask for the students general impressions of the version - whether or not it "worked" for them, and why.

5 Min: (Any closing comments from teacher or students on the success of the unit.

Unit Layout

- Week One: (Intro to the period
(Group work / library research
- Week Two: (Group presentations
(Test on presentations
- Week Three: (Quiz
(Begin working on diary assignment - draft due Monday of Week Four.
(Reading of Acts I-II
- Week Four: (Quiz
(Fish-bowl discussion
(Read Act III
(Debate
(Begin Body Biographies
- Week Five: (Finish reading the entire play
(Finish body biographies and present to class.
(Rough drafts of final Diary
- Week Six: (Final product for diary due Monday
(Final test Thursday
(Essay due Friday

Opinionnaire Introductory Activity for Hamlet

Rank each of the following statements on a scale of one to ten, with one meaning that you totally disagree, and ten meaning that you heartily agree.

("Frailty thy name is woman!"

("To thine own self be true"...regardless of situation or whom you may hurt in doing this.

(It is better to suffer the hardships of life in silence than try to fight against them.

(An act of vengeance is necessary to right a wrongdoing.

(In order to truly repent of an evil deed, you must give up anything you have gained through that deed (ie. if you robbed a bank, you must give up the money and turn yourself in to the police).

(What "goes around comes around" and in the end, you will always be held accountable for your sins.

(People can be "played" upon just like instruments.

(Words can be just as painful (if not more so) than physical wounds.

("A thought, which quartered, hath but one part wisdom, and ever three parts coward."

("Revenge should have no bounds."

Elizabethan Era Project

Expectations:

Students are to choose as a group a topic from their topic list and do four days of in-class research and development on their topic. They will then make a presentation of their findings to the rest of the class followed by a short quiz to be generated by the group for the rest of the class (not for a grade). This project will be loosely graded upon:

(How engaging the presentation is - usage of visuals, enthusiasm of presenters, et cetera. Overall effectiveness.

(All information is accurate and appropriate. Information is factual and related

logically to the groups chosen topic.

(All necessary material is discussed adequately. Topic is clearly presented and given appropriate depth.

(Appropriate usage of time. Group should use the full amount of time allotted to them, and not simply plow through the material in a minute. Each group member should also be given equal time to participate in the presentation.

This assignment is worth 15 points (approx. 9% of your final grade).

Act I Quiz

1. What is the name of the friend who comes from college to visit Hamlet?
2. What does Laertes tell Ophelia she should do about the love Hamlet has been showing her?
3. What does Polonius tell Ophelia she should do about the love Hamlet has been showing her?
4. What does the Ghost tell Hamlet?
5. Does Hamlet initially believe what the Ghost tells him?

Study Guide for Act I

Synopsis

Scene 1:

Bernardo relieves Francisco from his watch before the castle. Marcellus arrives with Horatio. Once Francisco has gone, Bernardo and Marcellus discuss with Horatio their encounter with the ghost the previous evening. Horatio is skeptical of their claims. The ghost appears and Horatio tries to question it. The ghost refuses to speak and departs. Marcellus asks why the watch is necessary. Horatio tells the story of how years ago, Old Hamlet defeated Old Fortinbras in battle, gaining from him certain lands. Young Fortinbras, who has yet to prove himself in battle, is disputing Denmark's claim to the land now that Old Hamlet is dead. Horatio theorizes that the appearance of the old king may be a portent of danger ahead. The ghost reappears but once more refuses to speak to Horatio, then vanishes as morning approaches. Bernardo, Marcellus and Horatio resolve to inform young Hamlet of what they've seen.

Scene 2:

Claudius is holding court. He begins with a brief eulogy for his dead brother, the former king, then he addresses his ambassadors who are being sent to Norway to petition the king to intervene on Denmark's behalf with Fortinbras, who has asked Denmark to surrender the land once held by his father. The ambassadors depart with the promise that they'll do their best. Next Claudius speaks to Laertes, who has requested leave to return to France. Claudius asks Polonius if he consents to let Laertes leave and Polonius says he agrees. Claudius grants Laertes permission to leave. Finally, Claudius turns to Hamlet, who is still in mourning for his father. After a brief exchange, Gertrude, Hamlet's mother, tells him to get over his grief and enjoy his position at court. Hamlet admonishes his mother and in turn, Claudius admonishes Hamlet for his "unmanly grief". Claudius then tells Hamlet that he does not want him to return to his studies at Wittenberg. Gertrude implores Hamlet to stay and Hamlet replies that he will obey her. Claudius declares his approval of Hamlet's accord and escorts Gertrude away.

Hamlet remains behind, lamenting that his fortunes are so bad but that he is forbidden from ending his life due to the religious conventions of his day. Horatio, Bernardo and Marcellus enter. Hamlet is happy to see Horatio, his old schoolmate. After a brief exchange, Horatio tells Hamlet of his encounter with the ghost. Hamlet questions Horatio and the rest about the circumstances of the encounter, then agrees to join them on watch that night.

Scene 3:

Laertes, preparing to leave, is speaking with his sister Ophelia about Hamlet. Ophelia reveals that recently, Hamlet has displayed affection for her which Laertes says she should reject. He explains that Hamlet is subject to the laws that govern his place at court and is not free to marry who he chooses. Ophelia tells Laertes that she will follow his advice. Polonius enters and admonishes Laertes for his lack of haste in departing, then begins to offer him advice on how he should conduct himself while abroad. Laertes bids his father and sister farewell and once again reminds Ophelia of his advice about Hamlet. Ophelia says she will remember. Once he has gone, Polonius asks Ophelia what Laertes meant about Hamlet. She informs her father of the attentions Hamlet has been

showing her and Polonius echoes the warnings Laertes gave her regarding Hamlet's station in life.

Scene 4:

Hamlet, Horatio and Marcellus enter. Horatio hears a booming noise and asks what it is. Hamlet explains that Claudius is having a party and whenever he empties his glass the drums and trumpet sound. Horatio asks if this is customary and Hamlet replies that it is, but rarely observed. He then goes on to lament the sad state that Denmark has fallen into under Claudius. The ghost appears and Hamlet addresses it. The ghost does not answer but motions for Hamlet to follow him. Hamlet agrees, but Marcellus and Horatio try to stop him. Hamlet draws his sword and once again tells the ghost he will follow. They exit but are followed at a safe distance by Marcellus and Horatio.

Scene 5:

Hamlet follows the ghost to a secluded spot, then implores it to speak to him. The ghost reveals that he is the spirit of his father doomed to walk the night until the crimes done during his life are purged. The ghost then asks Hamlet to avenge his murder and reveals that it was Claudius that killed him. The ghost goes on to explain that Claudius poisoned him while he was asleep in his garden. Old Hamlet died without having the opportunity to ask forgiveness for his sins, which led to his ghostly state. As morning comes on, the ghost vanishes again, but asks Hamlet to remember him and to carry out Hamlet's promise of revenge. Horatio and Marcellus catch up with Hamlet and ask him what the ghost has told him. Hamlet refuses to say unless they swear to keep it secret. They are afraid to take an oath but Hamlet presses them. They finally agree when they hear the voice of the ghost imploring them to swear to the oath which they do. Hamlet agrees to tell them everything.

Some questions to consider for Act I:

(What, exactly, is rotten in the state of Denmark?

(Consider the ghost. Should Hamlet believe him? Is he really Hamlet's dad? How does your belief in him affect your reading of the play?

(Is there really a ghost at all? Even if an actor portrays him (as is usually done), how do you know that he is really there for Hamlet? (ie, or is he just a figment of Hamlet's imagination?)

Found At: http://www.hamlet.org/hamlet_synopsis_act1.html

Study Guide for Act II

Synopsis

Scene 1:

Polonius is speaking to his messenger, Reynaldo. He gives Reynaldo some notes and money to give to Laertes in France, then asks Reynaldo to inquire as to Laertes behavior in France. Polonius instructs his messenger to look into who Laertes is spending time with and encourages Reynaldo to fabricate stories to see what sort of reaction he gets from Laertes acquaintances. Reynaldo agrees and departs. Ophelia enters, upset. She tells Polonius that while she was alone in her chambers, Hamlet came in looking disheveled. She says that Hamlet took her by the arm and stared longingly at her, then departed without saying anything. Polonius questions whether or not she heeded his and Laertes advice regarding Hamlet and she says she did. Polonius reasons that this has driven Hamlet to distraction and insists that he and Ophelia see the king and queen at once.

Scene 2:

Claudius and Gertrude are welcoming Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, two school friends of Hamlet. The king and queen explain that they have sent for the pair due to Hamlet's recent depression. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern agree to do what they can for Hamlet. Polonius enters with news that the ambassadors to Norway have returned. He adds that he has learned what has been bothering Hamlet, then goes to fetch the ambassadors. The ambassadors report that Norway discovered Fortinbras had been making plans to attack Denmark, but that Norway has put a stop to those plans and caused Fortinbras to instead make plans to wage battle with Poland. Claudius receives the news gratefully and dismisses the ambassadors. Polonius then explains to Gertrude and Claudius that Hamlet is

mad with love for Ophelia. He reads an excerpt from a letter Hamlet sent Ophelia. Claudius asks how Ophelia received Hamlet's advances and Polonius tells of his warnings to her to reject Hamlet. He proposes that Ophelia's rejection of Hamlet is what has caused his recent melancholy. Gertrude and Claudius are skeptical, but Polonius proposes a test to prove it.

Hamlet enters and Polonius asks Claudius and Gertrude to leave while he speaks to Hamlet. Polonius questions Hamlet and is perplexed by Hamlet's ambiguous answers, particularly about Ophelia. In a round about way, Hamlet warns Polonius to keep Ophelia away from the king. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern enter and greet Hamlet who receives them warmly. Hamlet discusses his recent melancholy then questions the coincidence of the pair appearing at court as they have. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern attempt to cover, but Hamlet finally gets them to confess they were sent for by his uncle and mother. They inform Hamlet that they've brought with them a band of players Hamlet has enjoyed previously, which lifts Hamlet's spirits. Polonius re-enters with news of the players. Hamlet suggests to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern that his "madness" might not be all that it seems.

Polonius informs Hamlet of the arrival of the players and shortly afterwards, several enter. Hamlet greets the lead player warmly and asks him to recite a speech he had once heard the player do. The player gives a moving recital and Hamlet, et al. are amazed at his ability to summon up all his emotions for the speech. Hamlet charges Polonius with seeing to it that the players are well cared for while at court and scolds Polonius when he suggests that they will receive the treatment their station deserves insisting they receive far more respect than that. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern take their leave as well. Hamlet, left alone, chastises himself for being unable to summon the emotions to match his predicament. In the end, he decides to fashion a test for Claudius in the form of a scene he will have the players put on the following night. Some questions to consider for Act II:

(Do you think that Polonius is within his rights as a parent to send someone to spy on his son?

(What kind of friends do you think Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are? Loyal? Self-serving? And where do their ultimate loyalties lie?

Diary Project

For this assignment you will be creating a diary from the perspective of one of the following characters in the play:

- (Hamlet
- (Ophelia
- (Gertrude
- (Claudius
- (Laertes
- (Horatio

You may choose other characters, but they should be approved by me first.

Your diary will consist of a series of entries written from the perspective of your character. Entries should be approximately one half of a page long per entry (single spaced) and each "set" turned in should be for no less than six of these entries.

Entries may be written in an informal manner, and will not be graded upon grammar, spelling or usage. A train of thought technique is totally acceptable, as long as it makes sense in relation to the text.

These entries will be ongoing, and will be turned in for a grade twice prior to the final copy being due. For the final copy you will be expected to present the diary in a creative format (see rubric and examples). You will also be given handouts on ballads, sonnets and odes, which are different genres that you may include in your diary to add dimension, but this is not necessary.

The drafts will be due on Friday of week three, and on Monday of week five. Each draft will be worth 5 points. The final finished product will be due on Monday of week six, and will be worth 30 points.

Diary Library Suggestions

In your library research you should look online for specific things about the time period, as well as suggestions and examples of how others have effectively kept diaries. I have listed some suggested websites below, though you are not limited to these - they are merely suggestions for starting points.

http://nv.essortment.com/dreamdiary_rbed.htm

This website tells how you may keep a diary focusing on your dreams. This type of diary entry can be incorporated into your own character's diary, though the entire diary should not consist of dreams. If you decide to use this, please limit yourself to using only one "dream" entry in your diary.

<http://www.dailydiary.com/>

This site allows you to create your own diary online, and you may also access some other people's diaries. Please stick to merely looking at what others have done for diary entries, as far as content and phrasing.

http://www.christysclipart.com/keep_journal.html

A great page with "dos" and "don't" of journal/diary keeping. Take these with a grain of salt though, since you will not be writing a contemporary diary, but rather a diary from a long time ago.

Discussion Guide for Acts I-II

The following are questions to consider while in your groups, though you are certainly not limited to these questions.

(In Act I, scene two, Hamlet says "Not so, my lord. I am too much in the sun." (ln. 67)

and then later states: "Ay madam, it is common." (ln. 74).

Discuss what possible meanings there may be for sun and common.

(In Act I, scene four, line 105 look at the short speech that Polonius gives to Ophelia. He uses the word "tender" four times in four different ways. This was not because Shakespeare couldn't think of another word for "tender". Discuss the ways in which "tender" is used, and why Shakespeare would choose to repeat himself.

(Act II has many times been called the "spying" Act. Why would this be?

(In Act II scene one lines 75 to 84, Ophelia relates that Hamlet has just come to see her. Read again the description of how he appeared before her, and then discuss Hamlet's possible motives for doing this.

(In Act II scene two lines 255-6, Hamlet claims that "there is nothing good nor bad but thinking makes it so." Discuss whether or not this statement is really true.

(Discuss Hamlet's plan to "catch the conscience of the King" with his play. Do you think that it will work?

Writing a Ballad

Rhyme

Most ballads use one of three different types of rhyme: abac, aabb, or abcb.

* The first type of rhyme, abac, is found in ballads that include a chorus in the verse: the first and third lines of each verse rhyme, while the second and fourth lines, the chorus, are the same in every verse. Here's an example:

* She went down below the thorn
* Fine Flowers in the Valley
* And there has she her sweet babe born
* And the green leaves they grow rarely
*
* She's ta'en out her little penknife
* Fine flowers in the valley
* And there she's twinned her sweet babe of it's life
* And the green leaves they grow rarely

* In the second type, aabb, the first and second lines rhyme with eachother, as do the third and the fourth lines. For example:

* As I was walking al alane
* I saw twa corbies makin' mane
* the tane untae the tither did say
* where shall we gang and dine the day?

It's possible that this type of ballad evolved from the first: the burden was dropped, and two verses compressed into one

The third type of rhyme, abcb, is the most common type of rhyme found in Child's ballads. In this rhyme scheme, only the second and fourth lines rhyme:

* Her breath was strang, her hair was lang
* And twisted twice about the tree
* And with a swing she came about
* "Come to Craigy's sea and kiss with me"

This type of rhyme is the easiest; there's only one pair of matching words to worry about per verse rather than two, which gives you more freedom in writing the verse content. Ballad makers weren't picky about their rhymes. Less than perfect rhyme combinations such as again/ten, blame/nane, mair/before, king/nane, wrong/won, and pap/that abound in ballads. In fact, a ballad with perfect rhymes is automatically suspect; as balladry was originally an oral tradition, and dialects varied widely, the words didn't necessarily sound like their written-down version. A singer could make even the most unlikely of rhymes work well.

In addition, many ballads rhyme a word with itself:

And while your body it is on

Drawn shall your blood never be
But if you touch me tail or fin
I swear my brand your death will be

Remember that Ballads were generally not written perfectly the first time - play around with your beginnings and the rhyme schemes to find what works best for you.

Found at: <http://costume.dm.net/~drea/ballads/form.html>

Writing a Sonnet

Invented around the year 1200 by poet Giacomo da Lentino, the sonnet is one of the most well known forms of verse. You are probably most familiar with the sonnets of Shakespeare, though poets have been writing sonnets for thousands of years. Sonnets are usually focused on one subject throughout, concentrating on a single idea or problem, and coming to a conclusion at the end.

Though traditionally written sonnets followed specific rhyme schemes, modern sonnets are often written with no rhyme at all. The basic form is 14 lines, often divided in two stanzas of 4, (the octave) followed by the sestet, which is often divided up as one stanza of four and the last two lines set in for a dramatic ending and to encompass the conclusion of the sonnet.

Writing modern sonnets does not require any rhyme scheme at all, but the basic thought process of the sonnet should remain intact. Present a thought and then a conclusion. When we take liberties with poetic forms we often create new ones, don't be afraid to experiment with sonnets and make them your own.

The most famous rhyme scheme used for sonnets is abab, cdcd, efef, gg as in this famous sonnet by Shakespeare:

My Mistress' Eyes Are Nothing Like The Sun
My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun; (a)
Coral is far more red than her lips' red: (b)
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun; (a)
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head. (b)
I have seen roses damasked, red and white, (c)
But no such roses see I in her cheeks; (d)
And in some perfumes is there more delight (c)
Than in her breath that from my mistress reeks. (d)
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know (e)
That music hath a far more pleasing song: (f)
I grant I never saw a goddess go, (e)
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground. (f)
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare (g)
As any she belied with false compare. (g)

Found at: http://njj.essortment.com/howtowriteson_rqas.htm

Writing an Ode

An ode is an exalted lyric poem, aiming at loftier thought, more dignified expression, and more intricate formal structure than most lyrics. Another characteristic of odes is that they are often addressed to someone or something. An ode is a lyrical poem, serious and dignified in subject, tone, and style, often written to celebrate an event, person, being or power--or to provide a vehicle for private meditation. Sometimes an ode may have an elaborate stanzaic structure.

The ode was originally a Greek form used in dramatic poetry, in which a chorus would follow the movements of a dance while singing the words of the ode. Those odes often celebrated a public occasion of consequence, such as a military victory. From those ancient Greek beginnings, the form has descended through the Western culture to appear in English divested of dance and song.

Steps for Writing an Ode

- (Select a subject to write about: Person, place or thing.
- (Write phrases describing how your subject makes you feel and why you feel this way.
- (Write phrases depicting unique characteristics of your subject.
- (Begin joining phrases together into lines for you ode. Remember that an ode does not have to rhyme!
- (Revise your lines following these steps:
 - (Take away any lines that are too similar to each other
 - (Add more feeling to any drab lines
 - (Pick a good opening line or sentence

(Order the remaining lines in the best most logical sequence.

(Select a good closing line that clearly expresses your feelings about your

subject

(Rewrite and polish until you are satisfied that it is conveying what you truly think of your subject.

Found at: <http://www.schoollink.org/csd/pages/engl/ode.html>

Quiz on Act III

1. Complete this line that Hamlet shouts at Ophelia:

"Get thee to a _____!"

2. What does Hamlet instruct Horatio to do during the showing of the play within the play?

3. While Claudius is busy praying, why doesn't Hamlet take the opportunity to kill him?

4. Where does Polonius hide in Gertrude's room?

5. Whom does Hamlet kill by accident?

Study Guide for Act III

Synopsis

Scene 1:

Claudius and Gertrude are questioning Rosencrantz and Guildenstern about their discussions with Hamlet, but the pair report they discovered little about Hamlet's condition. They inform the king and queen that Hamlet perked up when the players arrived

and announce that a play has been scheduled for the following evening. Polonius, accompanied by Ophelia, confirms that Hamlet has requested an audience for the play. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are sent to encourage Hamlet in this enterprise. Claudius then asks Gertrude to leave, as he and Polonius are going to observe Hamlet as he encounters Ophelia. Polonius has her sit where she will be seen by Hamlet when he arrives, then withdraws with Claudius to a safe position. While listening to Polonius advise Ophelia, Claudius is momentarily overcome with guilt because of the acts he has committed.

Hamlet enters, musing on the value and consequences of life versus the peace and simplicity of death. He spots Ophelia and addresses her. She tries to return some gifts he has given her, but Hamlet denies having given them. They have a brief exchange on the qualities of beauty and honesty. Hamlet urges Ophelia to join a nunnery rather than subject herself to becoming a man's sexual object. Realizing that they are being observed, Hamlet flies into a rage and strongly denounces Ophelia. After further denouncing the institution of marriage and making a veiled threat aimed at Claudius, Hamlet leaves Ophelia upset over the part she may have played in his mental breakdown. Claudius and Polonius emerge. Polonius once again states that unrequited love is the cause of Hamlet's problems, but Claudius is beginning to suspect more sinister motives behind Hamlet's behavior.

Scene 2:

Hamlet, in directing the players, outlines his view of contemporary drama. He speaks with contempt for actors who over-emote or pay no attention to the true emotions of the scene. Polonius, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern enter to inform Hamlet that the king and queen will arrive shortly. Hamlet takes Horatio aside and informs him that a scene in the play will come close to the circumstances of his father's murder and asks Horatio to keep an eye on Claudius throughout so that he and Hamlet can compare notes afterwards as to Claudius' reaction.

The king and queen and others enter. Hamlet seems in good spirits as he greets the king and points out that Polonius once acted while at university. Hamlet refuses an offer to sit by his mother, instead preferring to stay near Ophelia, which causes Polonius to once again point out to Claudius and Gertrude Hamlet's attentions toward his daughter. Hamlet and Ophelia exchange several overtly sexual innuendos and Hamlet makes reference to his father's death and his mother's merriment now. The dumb show enters and stages a silent recreation of the play about to be performed including the murder scene which upsets Hamlet, though Claudius doesn't appear to have noticed. The player king and queen enter and begin the action of the play. Their recitation seems to reflect many of the circumstances of Gertrude's life with her former husband. As the scene with the player queen ends, Hamlet asks Gertrude what she thinks so far and she states that the woman seems insincere. Claudius, somewhat more uncomfortable, asks Hamlet if there is more offensive material ahead and Hamlet covers to keep Claudius from suspecting anything. The action of the play continues and Hamlet takes on the part of chorus relating the action as the murder begins. When Hamlet states that the murderer gains the love of the player king's wife, Claudius rises and calls for the lights. Everyone but Horatio and Hamlet leave abruptly with the king.

Hamlet tells Horatio he's ready to take the ghost at his word now and Horatio agrees that Claudius' reaction implies guilt. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern enter and inform Hamlet that his uncle and mother are very upset by the performance. A player enters with a recorder and Hamlet tries to get Guildenstern to play it, which he says he cannot. Hamlet then sternly denounces his "friends" for trying to "play" him like an instrument. Polonius enters to tell Hamlet that his mother wants to see him. Hamlet says he will comply and asks that everyone leave him alone for a few minutes. Hamlet ends by stating that he will confront his mother about her love for Claudius, but will take no sterner action toward her.

Scene 3:

Claudius is speaking to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and informs them of his intentions to send Hamlet to England for his safety and the safety of the realm. He sends them away to prepare. Polonius enters to inform Claudius that Hamlet will be speaking to Gertrude shortly and that he plans to hide in the room and listen to their discussion. Claudius approves and sends Polonius away. Left alone, Claudius is racked with guilt over his offenses and wonders if he can be forgiven for the murder of a king while still holding the office which he has gained by that murder. He kneels and attempts to unburden himself

with prayer. While he is praying, Hamlet enters and determines that now would be a good opportunity to take his revenge against Claudius. After further consideration, he decides that to kill Claudius now, while he is purging his soul, would be to allow Claudius to gain heaven which has been denied to Hamlet's father. Hamlet decides to wait for a better time to kill Claudius, when his actions will send Claudius to a more fitting end. After Hamlet has gone, Claudius rises and states his prayers have been insincere and did not give him the peace he sought.

Scene 4:

In Gertrude's chamber, Polonius tells her he will hide while she speaks to Hamlet. Hearing Hamlet coming, Polonius takes refuge behind a curtain. Hamlet enters and asks his mother what the problem is. Gertrude tells him he has offended his "father" to which Hamlet replies that it is Gertrude that has offended his father. During the ensuing exchange, Hamlet takes Gertrude by the arms to make her sit down and, fearing that her life is in danger, she cries out for help. Polonius also calls out, revealing his presence to Hamlet who quickly draws his sword and stabs through the curtain without knowing who is behind it. He asks his mother if it's the king then states that the act he has committed is as bad as killing a king and marrying his brother.

Hamlet pulls back the curtain and realizing who he has killed curses Polonius for his constant interference. Hamlet returns to Gertrude, who is, at first defiant over Hamlet's tone toward her. Hamlet produces a small portrait of his father which he compares to that of Claudius which Gertrude carries. He points out his father's virtues as compared to Claudius' vices. During this exchange, the ghost enters, causing Hamlet to lose his composure. Gertrude is unable to see the ghost and believes that Hamlet has lost his mind. The ghost chides Hamlet for not keeping firm in his resolve and reminds him that he is to leave Gertrude to her fate. The ghost then counsels Hamlet to speak to Gertrude who has been watching Hamlet with horror. Hamlet addresses his mother and tries to explain what is going on. Hamlet tries to make his mother see the ghost as it exits, but she cannot and does not believe it is truly there. Hamlet then begs his mother to confess her sins and not compound them by having further dealings with Claudius. Gertrude, concerned for her son, admits that his words have moved her. Hamlet regrets the death of Polonius and reminds his mother that he is likely to be sent away for his actions. He once again implores his mother not to go to Claudius' bed again, then exits, dragging the body of Polonius.

Questions to consider for Act III:

(Why do you think that Hamlet was suddenly decisive in his action to kill Polonius, whom he mistook to be Claudius?

(What do you think the purpose of the play within the play was? Did it fulfill this purpose?

(Why wouldn't the ghost let itself be seen by Gertrude?

Effective Debating

When engaging in a formal debate, there are several principles that should be followed to insure the integrity of the debate:

1. Try and remember that when in a formal debate, you should maintain all the decorum expected of a professional. Name calling, excessive applause, hissing, booing, and other outbursts are out of order and have no place in a well done debate.
2. Listening to the speaker is the most important, yet most neglected principle of debate. It is well known by the best debaters that they can most easily attack their opponents' arguments by listening carefully to the statements that their opponents might make, and then using those statements as the basis of their own future speeches. After all, this is the essence of debate. When debaters only write and read speeches, they are engaging only in an exhibition and are not actually debating. It is only through careful exploitation of the opposition's own arguments that the really solid points of your debate will be made. Taking notes during another debater's speech can be very helpful in the preparation of your next speech.
3. Do not interrupt the speaker. Allow them to finish what they are saying, and while you are waiting, be constructing your own counter-argument.
4. Supporting your arguments with whatever facts you may have gathered in your research is a great advantage when you are building your points. Rambling off on tangents and engaging in hysterical exchanges does little to advance your point of view. Have as much information available at your table as possible and have it organized for quick reference.

Body Biographies

For your chosen character, your group will be creating a visual and written portrait illustrating several aspects of the character's life within the play.

You have many possibilities for filling up your giant sheet of paper. I have listed several but feel free to come up with your own creations. The choices you make should be based on the text, for you will be verbally explaining them to your classmates. Above all, your choices should be creative, analytical and accurate. After completing this portrait, you will participate in a showing in which you will present your masterpiece to the class.

Suggestions

(Placement - Carefully choose the placement of your text and artwork. For example, the area where your character's heart would be might be an appropriate for illustrating the important relationships within his or her own life.

(Spine - Actors often discuss a character's spine. This is the character's objective and driving force within the play. What is the most important goal for your character? What drives their actions? This is their spine. How can you illustrate it?

(Virtues and Vices - what are your character's most admirable qualities? Their worst?

How can you make others visualize them?

(Color - Colors are often symbolic. What color(s) do you most associate with your character? Why? How can you effectively work these colors into your presentation?

(Symbols - What objects can you associate with your character that illustrate their essence? Are there objects mentioned within the play itself that you could use? If not, choose objects that especially seem to correspond with the character.

This assignment will be worth 15 points.

This worksheet is taken from Teaching English through Principled Practice by Dr. Peter Smagorinsky.

Study Guide for Act IV

Synopsis

Scene 1:

Gertrude, upset over Hamlet's recent actions, encounters Claudius with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Gertrude asks Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to leave them alone a few minutes and then tells Claudius of Polonius' death at the hands of Hamlet. Claudius mourns the death of his trusted advisor. Gertrude tells Claudius of Hamlet's possible intentions to do further damage to the body and Claudius repeats his intentions to send Hamlet to England. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern return and Claudius informs them of Hamlet's actions and sends them to join in the search for Hamlet. Claudius will also inform neighboring principalities of Hamlet in case he attempts to flee Denmark.

Scene 2:

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern find Hamlet just as he has finished hiding the body. They question him about where he has hidden it. Hamlet refuses to answer them and compares Rosencrantz to a sponge which is quick to soak up the favors of the king. He makes another negative reference to the king, then tells his former schoolmates to lead him to the king. Just as they start to lead him away, he breaks away and runs from them, as though playing a child's game of hide and seek.

Scene 3:

Claudius is telling his attendants that he has sent people to find Hamlet. Rosencrantz enters and informs Claudius that they have Hamlet, but that he won't reveal where the body is. Guildenstern brings Hamlet in and Claudius questions him as to where the body is. Hamlet first tells Claudius that Polonius is the main dish at a dinner for worms, then expands the analogy to compare the king to a worm. Claudius loses his patience and demands to know where the body is. Hamlet tells him to send a messenger to seek him in heaven or to seek him himself in hell. Finally, Hamlet reveals that the body is stowed upstairs in the lobby. Claudius then informs Hamlet that he is to leave for England right away. Claudius implies that he has a dark purpose for sending Hamlet to England but Hamlet replies that the king's intentions aren't as secret as he thinks. Hamlet bids farewell, seeming to confuse Claudius with Gertrude, and is led away with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Claudius, left alone, reveals that the notes accompanying Hamlet order that he is to be put to death upon his arrival in England.

Scene 4:

Fortinbras appears briefly, instructing his captain to inform the Danish king that he is leading his men through the kingdom with Claudius' permission. Fortinbras and the soldiers then depart. Hamlet enters with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and asks the captain whose men they are seeing. The captain informs them that they are Fortinbras' men and that they are going to do battle in Poland. Hamlet inquires what the purpose of the battle is and the captain states that it is for a parcel of land that isn't much good to anyone. Hamlet remarks that Polish forces won't defend it, but the captain assures him it is very well fortified. The captain leaves to rejoin his forces and Hamlet asks Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to go ahead of him. Hamlet then muses on the fact that Fortinbras is willing to lead hundreds of men to certain death for a bit of land not worth the sacrifice, yet Hamlet is unable to avenge his own father's murder. At last he

resolves to refocus his energies on carrying out his promised revenge against his uncle.

Scene 5:

Gertrude, Horatio and an attendant enter discussing Ophelia. Gertrude says she does not want to speak to the distracted girl, but the attendant tells her that people are taking Ophelia's mad rantings seriously as a blotch on the kingdom. Horatio encourages Gertrude to see Ophelia and she finally agrees. Ophelia enters, asking for the king. She sings a nonsensical song for Gertrude who does not know the meaning of it. She continues her song as Claudius enters. He tries to reason with her but she begins to sing another nonsensical song which has sexual overtones which she directs at Claudius. He once again tries to quiet her. She continues in her song, once again implying some sort of impropriety on Claudius' part. Unable to silence her, he turns to Gertrude and Horatio to ask how long she has been like this. Ophelia makes reference to her father's death, then declares that she will tell her brother of it and departs. Claudius sends Horatio after Ophelia then decries the many tragedies that have fallen lately.

A noise outside startles him and Gertrude and a gentleman enters to explain that Laertes has returned from France looking to avenge the death of his father. Laertes enters with a legion of Danes demanding to see the king. He asks his men to wait for him outside and confronts Claudius over the whereabouts of his father. Gertrude tries to calm him, but Claudius tells her to release Laertes and faces him. Claudius informs him that his father is dead. Laertes vows revenge on the man who did it. Claudius counsels him to remember who his friends are and Laertes calms a bit. Claudius vows to reveal the circumstances behind Polonius' death. Ophelia re-enters and Laertes is devastated to see her in her distracted state. Ophelia continues to sing suggestive songs, then distributes flowers to Laertes, Gertrude and Claudius each with a nonsensical saying. She continues to sing as she departs. Claudius once again counsels Laertes to take his advice in the matter and sympathizes with Laertes loss. Laertes agrees to be governed by Claudius' better judgement.

Scene 6:

Horatio encounters some sailors who have news and letters for him from Hamlet. He reads the letter, which instructs him to assist one of the men to get to the king with other letters and to accompany the another of the men to where Hamlet is. Horatio does as he is instructed.

Scene 7:

Claudius has just told Laertes how Polonius died. Laertes asks why Claudius did not punish Hamlet for the deed and Claudius explains that he did not because of Gertrude and because the people of Denmark still hold Hamlet in high regard. He confides, however, that there may soon be news which Laertes finds satisfying regarding the matter. A messenger enters with letters from Hamlet. Claudius reads the letter aloud, in which Hamlet has returned and begs an audience before the king so that he can explain how he ended up back in Denmark. Laertes says he is anxious for Hamlet's return so he can exact his revenge. Claudius encourages him in his pursuit, but asks that they work together to make the death look like an accident. Claudius relates that Hamlet has heard many times of Laertes' prowess in swordplay and is envious of Laertes' skill. Claudius suggests that Hamlet may be goaded into a duel with Laertes, during which Laertes could "accidentally" kill him. Laertes adds that he can dip his sword tip into a poison he brought back with him from France which would insure that Hamlet will die if stabbed. Claudius says he will also prepare a glass of wine with poison in case the poisoned rapier doesn't work. As they are finalizing their plans, Gertrude enters and informs them that Ophelia has drowned and describes how it happened. Laertes leaves and Claudius and Gertrude follow, fearing this will once again send him into a rage.

Some questions to consider for Act IV:

(Did Ophelia commit suicide, or was her death an accident? Is it even possible that Gertrude killed her?

(Are Ophelia's songs nonsense, or is there something deeper to them?

(Is there significance to the flowers that Ophelia gives to each character?

Study Guide for Act V

Synopsis

Scene 1:

Two gravediggers are discussing a person who is to be buried that day. The discussion centers around whether or not the person, a woman, should be buried because there is a suspicion that she committed suicide, an offense which is against the church. They agree that it appears people of a certain station in life are granted more privileges than more common folk. They discuss other items and the first gravedigger concludes with a riddle, who builds a stronger home than a mason, shipwright or carpenter. The answer, he says, is a gravedigger, as his home must last through doomsday. As this is going on, Hamlet and Horatio approach the scene. The second gravedigger leaves and Hamlet and Horatio arrive as the first gravedigger goes about his business. He sings a merry song as he does and this surprises Hamlet, though Horatio concludes that his trade makes him less sensitive to death.

The gravedigger begins tossing up skulls and with each one, Hamlet ponders the meaning of the life of the person who once owned the skull. Hamlet asks the gravedigger whose grave it is and the gravedigger replies that it's his. Hamlet questions him further and after several rounds of wordplay, the gravedigger reveals that it was for a woman. Hamlet inquires how long the man has been a gravedigger and he replies that he has been there since the day "young Hamlet" was born, then clarifies that he's been there thirty years. Hamlet asks him other questions. The gravedigger produces another skull and pronounces that it is the skull of the king's jester, Yorick. Hamlet asks to see it. Hamlet reminisces about Yorick who he knew as a youngster then asks Horatio if this was the ultimate fate of Alexander. He goes on to muse about what becomes of people after their death and wonders whether their deeds while on earth are enough to justify the ends to which they come.

Seeing the king, Laertes and others approaching, Hamlet and Horatio take cover to determine what's going on. Laertes asks the priest what further services remain and the priest replies that they've already done more than they should have, considering Ophelia's death may have been a suicide. Laertes rebukes the priest, stating that Ophelia will make it to heaven well ahead of the priest. This statement reveals to the hidden Hamlet that it is Ophelia that's being buried. Gertrude scatters flowers into the grave, then Laertes leaps into the grave and demands that the dirt be piled on them both. Hamlet takes issue with this and advances, also leaping into the grave. He struggles with Laertes. Claudius orders that they be parted and attendants manage to separate them and they emerge from the grave. Hamlet then announces that he, too, loved Ophelia and states his objections to Laertes show of grief. Claudius and Gertrude make excuses for Hamlet's actions and Hamlet concludes by stating he does not understand why Laertes has acted so abusive toward him. He storms off and Claudius asks Horatio, then Gertrude to follow Hamlet. He then reminds Laertes that soon his chance for revenge will come.

Scene 2:

Hamlet and Horatio are conferring in a room of the castle. Hamlet is relating how he came to return to Denmark instead of ending up in England and remarks on how fate seems to be interceding in his life. He relates how he found the packet Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were carrying and examined the letters sent by Claudius, learning that he was to be killed upon arrival in England. He describes how he wrote a second letter, ordering that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern be put to death and sealed it with his father's signet ring and replaced it all where he had found it. He further states that he feels no guilt for

the deaths of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern as they took on their assignment happily, wishing to curry favor with the king. Hamlet returns to the theme of revenge and asks Horatio, given all the offenses Claudius has committed against Hamlet and Denmark, if he isn't justified in killing Claudius. Horatio reminds him that the news from England should arrive shortly and Hamlet says he plans to act beforehand. He regrets having offended Laertes and admits that Laertes grievances with Hamlet are similar to Hamlet's grievances toward Claudius. He resolves to try to make amends once he's handled Claudius. Osric, a courtier, enters and addresses Hamlet. After a great deal of wordplay, during which Hamlet has Osric remove, then replace his hat, Osric states that the king has placed a wager that Laertes cannot best Hamlet in a tournament using rapiers and daggers. Hamlet agrees to the trial and sends Osric on his way. A short time later a lord appears asking when the trial can take place and Hamlet states he will comply with what the king wishes. The lord reports the king and queen are on their way. Once the lord has gone, Horatio cautions Hamlet to listen to any misgivings he has about the contest. Hamlet states that he is willing to abide what providence sends him.

Claudius, Gertrude, Laertes and others enter for the tournament. Claudius asks Hamlet to shake hands with Laertes and call a truce to their differences. Hamlet speaks to Laertes, asking his pardon for the offenses Hamlet has committed against him. Laertes says he's unsatisfied by Hamlet's words, but will put aside their differences until a more appropriate time. Hamlet and Laertes choose their foils, still exchanging words, and Laertes looks for the one with the poisoned tip. Claudius drinks a toast then vows to toss a pearl into the cup for Hamlet if he makes the first or second hit. Hamlet and Laertes begin their duel. Hamlet makes the first hit and Claudius places the pearl into the cup but Hamlet refuses to drink. Hamlet makes a second hit and Claudius declares that he will win. Gertrude takes the cup to drink to Hamlet's health. Claudius tries to stop her, knowing the wine is poisoned, but she insists. Hamlet still refuses to drink. Laertes, in an aside, states his conscience almost keeps him from carrying out his revenge against Hamlet. They resume the match and while waiting for a ruling on a hit, Laertes wounds Hamlet. They scuffle and in the scuffle, they exchange rapiers and Hamlet wounds Laertes. The queen falls and cries out that she is poisoned. Hamlet cries out for the doors to be locked, but Laertes tells him that the poison that has killed his mother will soon kill him. He confesses to the plot and that the tip of the rapier is poisoned as is the wine. Hamlet stabs Claudius with the rapier and for good measure forces him to drink the wine as well.

Laertes calls out to Hamlet to forgive him for his plot against Hamlet and in return he forgives Hamlet for the offenses he has committed against Laertes. Laertes dies. Not wanting to outlive his friend, Horatio tries to drink from the cup too, but Hamlet stops him and asks Horatio to report on all he has witnessed. A shot is heard from far off and Hamlet asks what it is. Osric reports that it is Fortinbras, returning from his Polish adventures, saluting the returning English ambassadors. Hamlet, with his dying breath, names Fortinbras as his successor, then dies. Fortinbras and the ambassadors enter and are taken aback by the gruesome scene they find. The ambassador announces that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead as requested in the king's order. Horatio explains that the king didn't give the order and requests that Hamlet and the rest be placed on view while he recounts all that has befallen them. Fortinbras hastens the story to be told and recalls that he has some claim to lands in Denmark. Horatio states that he has some information on that as well. Fortinbras calls on four captains to bear Hamlet to the stage, stating that had he been given the chance, he may have proven a worthy king. Some questions to consider for Act V:

(In the soliloquy to Yorick, consider what Hamlet may mean when he says "now, get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her let her paint an inch thick, to this end she must come. Make her laugh at that."

(Why would Shakespeare have one of his characters say about England that "there all the men are as mad as he (Hamlet)" inferring that all men are mad in England - but the play was acted on an English stage?

(Why would Hamlet's dying wish be for Horatio to tell the world his story?

Essay Topics

Below are the topics you may choose from to write your essay. You are not limited to these, however if you choose to use another topic it must be first approved by me. The final paper on your topic is due on Friday of Week Six.

(Is something rotten in the state of Denmark? If so, what precisely is it? Is anyone in particular responsible or is the rottenness simply a condition of life?

(Of what significance is Ophelia to Hamlet? How truly was Hamlet in love with Ophelia?

(Compare and contrast the characters of Hamlet and Horatio. How alike or dislike are they and why?

(Although Hamlet ultimately rejects it at the end of the play, suicide is an ever-present solution to the problems in the drama. Discuss the play's suggestion of suicide and imagery of death.

(Despite all its tragedy, comic elements abound in Hamlet and make the play both more enjoyable and more modern. Find a minimum of three humorous instances in the play and then discuss how these moments impact the rest of the play.

(A tragedy, by definition, should include a hero with a single tragic flaw that is the cause of his fall. Make an argument, either for or against the play Hamlet being a tragedy.

Practice Test

For the actual test, you will not be allowed to use your books on the multiple choice or short answer portions, though you will be allowed to use your books and notes for the essay portion.

In doing this practice test, try to do the multiple choice and short answer sections without your book, and while I don't expect you to write entire essays on the example essay questions, you should at least try and write a skeletal outline and think about how you would flesh that outline out a bit for the test.

Multiple Choice:

There will be ten of this type of question on the test.

1. Of what country is Hamlet a prince?
 - a. Poland
 - b. England
 - c. Denmark
 - d. France

2. Who is Hamlet's true friend?
 - a. Guildenstern
 - b. Rosencrantz
 - c. Horatio
 - d. Alger

3. The play within the play is titled:
 - a. The murder of Gonzlaes
 - b. The murder of Gonzo
 - c. The murder of Ghandi
 - d. The murder of Gonzago

4. How does Ophelia die?
 - a. She drowns.
 - b. She stabs herself.
 - c. She jumps off the castle wall.
 - d. She dies in her sleep.

5. What other country is Laertes in for most of the play?
 - a. Poland
 - b. England
 - c. Denmark
 - d. France

Short Answer:

For the following questions, provide a written answer. Most will require only one sentence, or even a single word. There will be ten of these types of questions on the test.

6. What does the Ghost tell Hamlet in the first Act?

7. Whom does Hamlet kill by accident?

8. How does Claudius react to the play within the play?

9. What is the final fate of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern?

10. Name at least two people left standing at the end of the play (ie, they aren't dead).

Short Essay Portion:

At this point in the test, you will turn in the multiple choice and short answer sections and spend the rest of the period (until you are satisfied or time runs out) on this portion. You will be allowed the usage of your books and notes, and you will be given a possible three essay choices and you will pick one of them to write on. Here, you will be given two to consider.

1. Rot and poison are constant images used in the play. Discuss how this imagery effects the rest of the play both physically and metaphorically.

2. Make an argument either for or against Hamlet being mad.

Hamlet
As told by
Edith Nesbit

Hamlet was the only son of the King of Denmark. He loved his father and mother dearly and was happy in the love of a sweet lady named Ophelia. Her father, Polonius, was the King's Chamberlain.

While Hamlet was away studying at Wittenberg, his father died. Young Hamlet hastened home in great grief to hear that a serpent had stung the King, and that he was dead. The young prince had loved his father so tenderly that you may judge what he felt when he found that the Queen, before the King had been laid in the ground a month, had determined to marry again - and to marry the dead King's brother.

Hamlet refused to put off mourning for the wedding.

"It is not only the black I wear on my body," he said, "that proves my loss. I wear mourning in my heart for my dead father. His son at least remembers him, and grieves still."

Then said Claudius the King's brother, "This grief is unreasonable. Of course you must sorrow at the loss of your father, but -"

"Ah," said Hamlet bitterly, "I cannot in one little month forget those that I love."

With that the Queen and Claudius left him, to make merry over their wedding, forgetting the poor good King who had been so kind to them both.

And Hamlet, being left alone, began to wonder and to question as to what he ought to do. For he could not believe the story about the snake-bite. It seemed to him all to plain that the wicked Claudius had killed the King, so as to get the crown and marry the Queen. Yet he had no proof and could not accuse Claudius.

And while he was thus thinking came Horatio, a fellow student from Wittenberg.

"What brought you here?" asked Hamlet, when he had greeted his friend kindly.

"I came, my lord, to see your father's funeral."

"I think it was to see my mother's wedding" said Hamlet, bitterly. "My father! We shall not look upon his like again."

"My lord" answered Horatio, "I think I saw him yesternight."
Then, while Hamlet listened in surprise, Horatio told how he, with two gentlemen of the guard, had seen the King's ghost on the battlements. Hamlet went that night, and true enough, at midnight, the ghost of the King, in the armor he had been wont to wear, appeared on the battlements in the chill moonlight. Hamlet was a brave youth. Instead of running away from the ghost he spoke to it - and when it beckoned him he followed it to a quiet place, and there the ghost told him what he had suspected was true. The wicked Claudius had indeed killed his good brother the King, by dropping poison into his ear as he slept in his orchard in the afternoon.

"And you," said the ghost, "must avenge this cruel murder - on my wicked brother. But do nothing against the Queen - for I have loved her and she is your mother. Remember me." Then seeing the morning approach, the ghost vanished.

"Now," said Hamlet "there is nothing left but revenge. Remember thee - I will remember nothing else - books, pleasure, youth - let all go - and your commands alone live on my brain."

So when his friends came back he made them swear to keep the secret of the ghost, and then went in from the battlements, no gray with mingled dawn and moonlight, to think how he might best avenge his murdered father.

The shock of seeing and hearing his father's ghost made him feel almost mad, and for fear that his uncle might notice that he was not himself, he determined to hide his mad longing for revenge under a pretended madness in other matters.

And when he met Ophelia, who loved him - and to whom he had given gifts, and letters, and many loving words - he behaved so wildly to her, that she could not but think him mad. So she told her father, and showed him a pretty letter from Hamlet. And in the letter was much folly, and this pretty verse -

"Doubt that the stars are fire;
Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt I love."

And from that time everyone believed that the cause of Hamlet's supposed madness was love.

Poor Hamlet was very unhappy. He longed to obey his father's ghost - and yet he was too gentle and kindly to wish to kill another man, even his father's murderer. And sometimes he wondered whether, after all, the ghost spoke truly.

Just at this time, some actors came to the Court, and Hamlet ordered them to perform a certain play before the King and Queen. Now, this play was the story of a man who had been murdered in his garden by a near relation, who afterward married the dead man's wife.

You may imagine the feelings of the wicked King, as he sat on his throne, with the Queen beside him and all his court around, and saw, acted on the stage, the very wickedness that he had himself done. And when, in the play, the wicked relation poured poison into the ear of the sleeping man, the wicked Claudius suddenly rose, and staggered from the room - the Queen and others following.

Then said Hamlet to his friends -

"Now I am sure the ghost spoke true. For if Claudius had not done this murder, he could not have been so distressed to see it in a play."

Now the Queen sent for Hamlet, by the King's desire, to scold him for his conduct during the play, and for other matters; and Claudius, wishing to know exactly what happened, told old Polonius to hide himself behind the hangings in the Queen's room. And as they talked, the Queen got frightened at Hamlet's rough, strange words, and cried for help, and Polonius behind the curtain cried out too. Hamlet, thinking it was the King who was hidden there, thrust his sword at the hangings, and killed, not the King, but poor old Polonius.

So now Hamlet had offended his uncle and his mother, and by bad hap killed his true love's father.

"Oh! What a rash and bloody deed is this," cried the Queen.

And Hamlet answered bitterly "Almost as bad as to kill a king, and marry his brother." Then Hamlet told the Queen plainly all his thoughts and how he knew of the murder, and asked her, at least, to have no more friendship or kindness of the base

Claudius, who had killed the good King. As they spoke the King's ghost again appeared before Hamlet, but the Queen could not see it. So when the ghost had gone, they parted.

When the Queen had told Claudius what had passed, and how Polonius was dead, he said "This shows plainly that Hamlet is mad, and since he has killed the Chancellor, it is for his own safety that we must carry out our plan, and send him away to England."

So Hamlet was sent, under charge of two courtiers who served the King, and these bore letters to the English Court, requiring that Hamlet should be put to death. But Hamlet had the good sense to get at these letters, and put in others instead, with the names of the two courtiers who were so ready to betray him. Then, as the vessel went to England, Hamlet escaped on board a pirate ship, and the two wicked courtiers left him to his fate, and went on to meet theirs.

Hamlet hurried home, but in the meantime a dreadful thing had happened. Poor pretty Ophelia, having lost her lover and father, lost her wits too, and when in sad madness about the Court, with straws, and weeds, and flowers in her hair, singing strange scraps of songs, and talking poor, foolish, pretty talk with no heart of meaning to it. And one day, coming to a stream where willows grew, she tried to bang a flowery garland on the willow, and fell into the water with all her flowers and so died.

And Hamlet had loved her, though his plan of seeming madness had made him hide it; and when he came back, he found the King and Queen, and the Court, weeping at the funeral of his dear love and lady.

Ophelia's brother, Laertes, had also just come to Court to ask for justice for the death of his father, old Polonius; and now, wild with grief, he leaped into his sister's grave, to clasp her in his arms once more.

"I loved her more than forty thousand brothers," cried Hamlet, and leapt into the grave after him, and they fought till they were parted.

Afterwards, Hamlet begged Laertes to forgive him.

"I could not bear," he said, "that any, even a brother, should seem to love her more than I."

But the wicked Claudius would not let them be friends. He told Laertes how Hamlet had killed old Polonius, and between them they made a plot to slay Hamlet by treachery.

Laertes challenged him to a fencing match, and all the Court were present. Hamlet had the blunt foil always used in fencing, but Laertes had prepared for himself a sword, sharp, and tipped with poison. And the wicked King had made ready a bowl of poisoned wine, which he meant to give poor Hamlet when he should grow warm with the sword play, and should call for drink.

So Laertes and Hamlet fought, and Laertes, after some fencing, gave Hamlet a sharp sword thrust. Hamlet, angry at this treachery - for they had been fencing, not as men fight, but as they play-closed with Laertes in a struggle; both dropped their swords, and when they picked them up again, Hamlet, without noticing it, had exchanged his own blunt sword for Laertes' sharp and poisoned one. And with one thrust of it he pierced Laertes, who fell dead by his own treachery.

At this moment the Queen cried out, "The drink, the drink! Oh, my dear Hamlet! I am poisoned!"

She had drunk of the poisoned bowl the King had prepared for Hamlet, and the King saw the Queen, whom, wicked as he was, he really loved, fall dead by his means.

Then Ophelia being dead, and Polonius, and the Queen, and Laertes, and the two courtiers who had been sent to England, Hamlet at last found courage to do the ghost's bidding and avenge his father's murder - which if he had braced up his heart to do so long before, all these lives had been spared, and none had suffered but the wicked King, who well deserved to die.

Hamlet, his heart at last being great enough to do the deed he ought, turned the poisoned sword on the false King.

"Then - venom - do thy work!" he cried, and the King died.

So Hamlet in the end kept the promise he had made his father. And all being now accomplished, he himself died. And those who stood by saw him die, with prayers and tears, for his friends and his people loved him with their whole hearts. Thus ends the tragic tale of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark.

Name: _____

Final Hamlet Test

Follow the instructions for each section. You may write on this test.

Multiple Choice:

For the following questions, circle the best option for answering the question. Each question is worth one point.

1. What is the name of the friend who has come to visit Hamlet from college?

- a. Hexus
- b. Hennio
- c. Halpius
- d. Horatio

2. Where does Polonius hide in Gertrude's room?

- a. Behind the bed.
- b. Behind the curtains.
- c. Behind the door.
- d. Under the bed.

3. Where does Hamlet repeatedly tell Ophelia to go?

- a. A nunnery.
- b. A nursery.
- c. A novus-pax.
- d. A Neanderthal.

4. Whom does Hamlet kill by accident?

- a. Claudius
- b. Gertrude
- c. Polonius
- d. Ophelia

5. What does Polonius say there is in Hamlet's alleged madness?
 - a. Method
 - b. Motivation
 - c. Means
 - d. Nothing - he just thinks Hamlet is plain crazy.

6. How does Ophelia die?
 - a. She drowns.
 - b. She stabs herself.
 - c. Hamlet kills her.
 - d. She dies in her sleep.
7. In the famous "to be or not to be" soliloquy, what is Hamlet considering?
 - a. Killing Claudius.
 - b. Suicide.
 - c. Apologizing to Ophelia.
 - d. Nothing. He's just talking nonsense out loud.

8. Whose skull is it that Hamlet addresses?
 - a. Yonnick
 - b. Osric
 - c. Yorick
 - d. Marcellus

9. To what country does Claudius send Hamlet?
 - a. Poland
 - b. England
 - c. Denmark
 - d. France

10. How does Hamlet escape the ship he is on, which is bound for the country Claudius is sending him to?
 - a. He jumps overboard and swims to shore.
 - b. He jumps onto a fisherman's boat.
 - c. He jumps onto a pirate's boat.
 - d. He doesn't escape at all.

Short Answer:

For this section, briefly answer each question. Answers should be no more than a

sentence, and can be as little as a single word. Each question is worth one point.

1. How does Claudius react to the play within the play?
2. What is the name of the soldier that Hamlet encounters on his way to the ship?
3. What profession does Polonius say he will take up if he is mistaken about the cause of Hamlet's madness?
4. What is the final fate of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern?
5. What does Ophelia distribute to the King, Queen and Laertes in her madness?
6. How does Hamlet react when he sees that Ophelia is dead and being buried?
7. What does Hamlet do with the body of Polonius?
8. How do Claudius and Laertes plan to kill Hamlet (in their plot together)?
9. How does Gertrude die, and what does she tell Hamlet just before she dies?
10. What is the dying wish that Hamlet imparts to Horatio?

Name: _____

Essay Portion:

When you have completed the other sections, detach them from them from this page and turn them in. ONLY THEN may you get out your book and notes for this section.

For this section, look over the topic options and choose ONE of them to write on. Again, you MAY use your text and notes for this portion, and in fact should quote the text if at all possible (though don't make your entire essay a series of quotes). Please write on your own paper, and not on this page.

Make the best use of your time - write a quick outline if you like, but begin writing as quickly as possible. Perfection is not expected, but clarity of thought is, especially since you get to use your notes. This section will be worth 20 points.

The essay topics are:

(Images of death and the grave pervade the entire play. Discuss how the various times we are closely shown death and the grave impact the progression and tone of the play.

You should use a minimum of three examples from the text.

(Rot and poison are constant images used in the play. Discuss how this imagery effects the rest of the play both physically and metaphorically.

(Make an argument either for or against Hamlet being mad. Be sure to support your argument with examples from the text.