

American Players Theatre
Presents



William Shakespeare's
HAMLET
2013 STUDY GUIDE
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American Players Theatre / PO Box 819 / Spring Green, WI 53588
www.americanplayers.org

HAMLET BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

2013 STUDY GUIDE

Cover Photo: Matt Schwader, Jim DeVita and Deborah Staples.

All photos by Carissa Dixon.

MANY THANKS!

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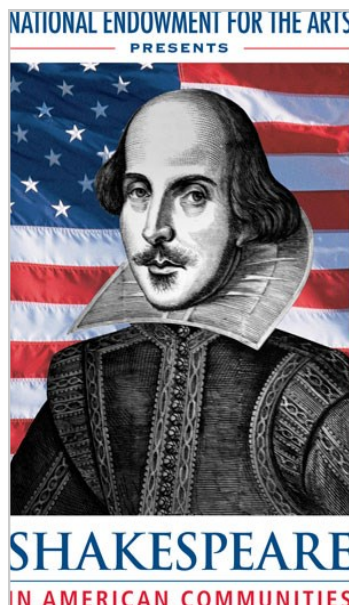
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If you have any questions or comments regarding the exercises or the information within this study guide, please contact Emily Beck, Education Coordinator, at 608-588-9207, or eback@americanplayers.org.

For more information about APT's educational programs, please visit our website.

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Who's Who in Hamlet



Hamlet (Matt Schwader)
Son of the former king, and nephew to the usurper monarch, he returns to Elsinore to bury his father and is drawn by his father's spirit into a plot of revenge. He is revolted by his mother's second marriage.

King Claudius (Jim DeVita)
King of Denmark, he gains the title by murdering his brother and marrying his brother's widow. He is forced to confront his actions when the visiting players perform.



Queen Gertrude (Deborah Staples)
Queen of Denmark and mother of Hamlet, her marriage to Hamlet's uncle Claudius changes the succession of the throne, preventing Hamlet from being named king.



Polonius (David Daniel)
Counselor to the king, and father to Ophelia and Laertes, he pays with his life for meddling in Hamlet's affairs.



Horatio (Ro Boddie)
True and loyal friend to Hamlet and a fellow student at Wittenberg, he comes to Elsinore to attend the funeral of King Hamlet.

Laertes (Eric Parks)
Son of Polonius, attends Claudius' coronation, but then immediately returns to France. He travels to Elsinore once again to avenge his father by slaying Hamlet.



Ophelia (Cristina Panfilio)
In a relationship with Hamlet at the play's beginning, her father Polonius demands she break it off with him.



The Ghost (James Pickering)
Orders Hamlet to avenge his father's death.

Who's Who in Hamlet

The Players (James Pickering, Tracy Michelle Arnold, Travis A. Knight, Ricco Fajardo, Will Burdin, Jack Dwyer, John Pribyl)

They perform an interrupted adaptation of *The Murder of Gonzago*, which was written by Hamlet to trap the king.



The Gravediggers (James Pickering & John Pribyl)
They debate Christian doctrine and unearth former court jester Yorick's skull while digging.

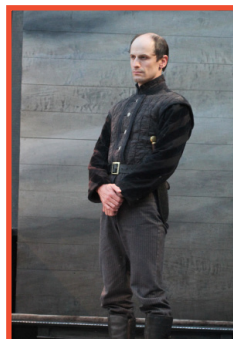


Rosencrantz & Guildenstern (Ryan Imhoff & Steve Haggard)
Hamlet's schoolmates, they betray Hamlet, and he in turn sends them to their deaths.



Fortinbras (Brandon Greenhouse)
Prince of Norway, he goes to battle to honor the memory of his slain father and reminds Hamlet of his failure to avenge his own father's murder.

Reynaldo (Tim Gittings)
Servant to Polonius, he is told to spy on Laertes in Paris.



Osric (Christopher Sheard)
He invites Hamlet to challenge Laertes in swordplay.



Bernardo (Travis A. Knight)
An officer, his "Who's there?" are the first words to the play.

❖ About the Play ❖

Guarding the castle at Elsinore, soldiers Marcellus and Bernardo tell Horatio that they have seen the **GHOST** of the dead King Hamlet. The Ghost reappears, and they decide they must tell the dead king's son (also named Hamlet) about it. Young Hamlet is present at a reception being given by his uncle Claudius, who has just married Hamlet's mother, Gertrude. Claudius is sending ambassadors to Norway to stop a planned invasion by young **FORTINBRAS**.

GHOSTS appear in five of Shakespeare's plays, with *Richard III* being the most ghostly with 11 spirits appearing to the tormented king.

Thirty years earlier Hamlet's father had killed **FORTINBRAS'** father in a duel. By the mutually agreed upon terms of the duel, some land was won by the victor (Hamlet's father). Now young Fortinbras is breaking his father's word of honor by attempting to recover that land "by strong hand and terms compulsory."

Hamlet reflects on the hasty marriage, and learns of the Ghost's visit. That night he meets the Ghost, who reveals that he is the spirit of Hamlet's deceased father, and furthermore that he had been murdered by none other than Claudius. The Ghost demands vengeance, and Hamlet agrees to be the means of that revenge. He warns Horatio and the others not to speak of what has happened, even if he should behave strangely.

Polonius and Ophelia bid farewell to Laertes as he returns to college in France. Polonius warns his daughter Ophelia against Hamlet's courtship. Later, she tells Polonius of a strange visitation by Hamlet, and he orders her to break it off with Hamlet completely, and to turn over the love letters Hamlet wrote to her. Polonius shows the letters to the King and Queen, concluding that rejected love is the cause of Hamlet's supposed **MADNESS**.

Polonius and Ophelia bid farewell to Laertes as he returns

MADNESS is a much-discussed theme in Hamlet. It's generally agreed that the young prince's craziness was (at least mostly) feigned, while Ophelia had a real breakdown after the death of her father.

Hamlet, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were **STUDENTS** at Wittenburg college in Germany. Martin Luther matriculated from the same university, well-known for the study of philosophy and religion.

Hamlet's fellow **STUDENTS** Rosencrantz and Guildenstern arrive, invited by the King to find out what is wrong. Polonius arranges for Ophelia to meet Hamlet where he and Claudius can observe them. Hamlet reflects to himself on the nature of life and death, and which one is a preferable state. Ophelia arrives and attempts to return Hamlet's love letters, but he claims he never wrote her any. They argue, and Hamlet accuses her of being false, and tells her she should go to a nunnery. Claudius witnesses part of this exchange, and is convinced that love is not the cause of Hamlet's behavior, and decides to send his moody nephew abroad.

Meanwhile, travelling **PLAYERS** have arrived, and Hamlet asks them to perform *The Murder of Gonzago* for Claudius so that he and Horatio can judge Claudius' guilt by his reaction. Hamlet contrasts his own inaction with the way the players can become so involved in their characters. When one of the players enacts the poisoning of a king, Claudius becomes agitated and stops the play, leading Hamlet to believe that this behavior is proof of his guilt.

PLAYERS (or actors) in Elizabethan England were viewed with scorn by the higher classes, partly due to bawdy plays, and partly to the fear of crowded theater spaces during the killer plague outbreak.

Gertrude asks to see Hamlet, and Polonius decides to hide in the room to hear what is said. On his way, Hamlet comes across Claudius alone, trying to pray for forgiveness. Though he considers the idea at length, Hamlet decides he can't kill Claudius while he's in prayer or his soul may go to heaven.

About the Play

Even nobels like Hamlet didn't escape punishment for high crimes like **MURDER**. If a guilty party wasn't executed, they were often still subjected to torture devices like "The Rack," "The Collar" and "The Iron Maiden.

When Hamlet arrives at his mother's "closet" (bedroom), he finds someone hiding behind the curtain and **MURDERS** him, assuming it's Claudius. It turns out to be Polonius, father of Hamlet's estranged girlfriend. Hamlet argues fiercely with Gertrude, eventually persuading her to change her ways. The Ghost appears, restraining Hamlet's anger towards his mother, and reminding him of the need for revenge. Claudius instructs Rosencrantz and

Guildestern to take Hamlet immediately to England. They have been instructed to present a letter to the English King upon arrival demanding that Hamlet be immediately executed. While travelling to the ship, Hamlet passes the Norwegian army on its way to fight for a small patch of land, and contrasts their determination with his own lack of resolve.

In Elsinore, Ophelia has descended into madness. Laertes returns, blaming Claudius for his father's death, and is incensed to see Ophelia in this state. Claudius persuades him that the blame is Hamlet's. When Claudius receives a letter from Hamlet reporting his return to Denmark, he embarks on a new scheme to kill him with Laertes' help. They arrange a duel in which Laertes' sword will be unblunted and poisoned. Claudius will also **POISON** a drink, which he will offer Hamlet. Gertrude arrives with the news that Ophelia has drowned.

While the **POISON** used to seal Hamlet and company's fates was likely a fictitious concoction, poison such as arsenic and nicotine were tools of the murderers' trade in Elizabethan England.

Hamlet meets Horatio on returning to Elsinore. On the way, they see two **CLOWNS** digging a grave, and Hamlet talks to the one of the gravediggers, reflecting on the skulls he finds. They discover that the grave is for Ophelia. Hamlet reveals himself to the funeral party, proclaiming his love for Ophelia is greater than Laertes', which doesn't sit very well with him. Later, Hamlet tells Horatio how the trip to England was a subterfuge for his death, arranged by Claudius, and how he managed to escape by replacing the letter with one saying Rosencrantz and Guildestern should be executed instead.

CLOWNS or fools like the Gravediggers in *Hamlet* were thought to make large themes - such as suicide and death - more relatable to the common audiences at the theater.

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Osric enters with news of the proposed fencing match, and Hamlet accepts the challenge. With Hamlet in the winning the match, Gertrude toasts him, and unknowingly drinks from the poisoned cup. Laertes wounds Hamlet with the poisoned rapier, and is then wounded with it by Hamlet. Before he dies, Laertes apologizes to Hamlet, and tells him about Claudius' plots,. Hamlet cuts the King with the poisoned blade and forces him to drink from the poisoned cup. Fortinbras arrives with a number of men, who declare that **ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD**. Hamlet, close to death, passes the Danish succession to Fortinbras, and instructs Horatio to tell his story.

ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD is also the name of a famous play by Tom Stoppard that focuses on the story of *Hamlet* from the perspective of these two small characters. It is also playing at APT this summer, using the same cast and set.

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❖ American Players Theatre's *Hamlet* ❖



Matt Schwader as the introspective Prince.

Hamlet is widely considered one of the greatest plays in the English language. It is the birthplace of many adages that are still in use today – for example “Neither a borrower nor a lender be”; “The lady doth protest too much, methinks”; and, of course, “To thine own self be true”. Not to mention that “To be, or not to be” is probably the most often quoted line in the history of English theater. So of course every classical actor wants to play Hamlet. But that comes with an interesting set of challenges. How does an actor play a part that everyone thinks they know?

APT actor Matt Schwader took that challenge head on this season, and he was excited to share some of the process of playing the famous Prince of Denmark.

And, after all, this isn't Matt's first time playing the title role, but he's done some soul searching since that first production back when he was in high school.

“I played Hamlet in high school, understudied it professionally and have played various roles in other productions, so I was very familiar with the play already,” says Matt. “My process for this one was simply to read the play. I'm always in search of how one scene or monologue comes out of a previous moment and then how it informs the next. Bringing the role to life, however, demands personal exploration. I spent a lot of time contemplating the loss of loved ones and injustice in the world.”



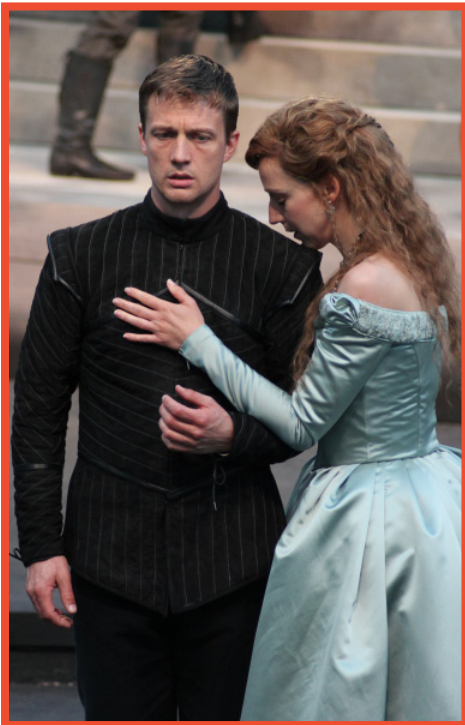
He wants his family back together...



...and he may be willing to kill to get what he wants.

After all, much of *Hamlet* is about loss: of his father, of his family, his friends and his girlfriend. And maybe, at times, even the loss of his mind and his will to live. According to Matt, “I honestly don't know too many people that wouldn't lose their grip if their dead father came to them to inform them that their mother had an affair with their uncle, who consequently murdered their father and that person should now seek vengeance. Now add to that best friends and girlfriends that are lying to your face and spying on you for the government. Good luck staying sane with all that! I think Hamlet discovers that madness is a handy camouflage and he uses it to catch people off guard. But as the heat of the plot rises, the feigned madness turns at times into actual madness.”

On the dark topic of suicide – the topic at the heart of that famous “To be, or not to be” soliloquy – and the question of whether Hamlet was really suicidal or not, Matt says of APT's production “we took the angle that he is VERY close to suicide. He starts the play off lamenting that suicide is a sin, ‘...or that the Everlasting had



Hamlet and Ophelia's happier times are left largely off stage.

not fixed his canon against self-slaughter.' I think the despair of losing his father and the feelings of abandonment by his mother have put him in a place where life has lost all meaning. Every scene in this play is a contemplation on life versus death. Hamlet is obsessed with what is on the other side and in the end he goes there, never to return.

One of the other characters that goes to that dark place is Hamlet's one-time love, Ophelia, played by Cristina Panfilio. In another famous scene, Hamlet claims that he never loved her, and demands that she goes to a nunnery. Though it may seem that he is shunning her, Matt says there was nothing else to be done.

"Really, Ophelia is the one who forsakes Hamlet. Her father orders 'that she should lock herself from his resort, admit no messengers, receive no tokens.' Which she does. Then at the top of the nunnery scene she is being forced to return Hamlet's love letters. It's true that Hamlet denies the letters and says he 'loved her not,' but who hasn't said such things out of a broken heart? And how could he possibly have stayed with her anyway, knowing the dark path he was headed down? That's what is so heartbreaking about the nunnery scene. Here we have two people that love one another desperately but are being pressured by both fathers to end the relationship, which, clearly, neither wants to do."

Death is such a large part of *Hamlet* that it could almost be considered another character. It's a topic approached from a number of angles; even the play's more comic scenes are played by gravediggers. But for Hamlet death is a complex issue, needing a lot of consideration.

"Death for Hamlet personally would be a release. It is something he is seeking for himself from the first monologue to the very last speech," says Matt. "He struggles with his relationship to death throughout; mostly dealing with what punishments might come in death for a life poorly lived. It's why he can't kill Claudius while he prays. Hamlet wants Claudius to go to hell, not heaven. It's also why, I believe, it takes him so long to kill him. Hamlet isn't a murderer by nature. The afterlife is a fearful place for someone who commits murder and he is well aware of this."

In the end, it's Hamlet's only true friend, Horatio, played by Ro Boddie, who remains to tell the story of what befell the palace of Elsinore. Though Horatio doesn't play the biggest role, he's a very important character. Matt says "A visitor to Elsinore, Horatio comes of his own volition and for the sake of Hamlet. He brings news of the Ghost directly to Hamlet (not the King) and promises to keep it secret. Horatio is the only one of Hamlet's relationships that is not tainted by Claudius' scheming. Rosencrantz, Guildenstern and Ophelia reveal themselves to be spies for Claudius, but Horatio stays true to Hamlet even in the face of chaos. This, for Hamlet, is a touchstone of humanity. He needs a friend like Horatio as a reminder of truth, goodness, integrity, justice and honor. Without him Hamlet is awash in a world of betrayal and insanity. Ultimately, Horatio is the only one Hamlet can count on to tell his story truly."



If not for Horatio, Hamlet would have no one he could trust.



The sentinels guard Elsinore at the top of *Hamlet*.

Seeing Shakespeare outdoors is a special experience. That, after all, is how Shakespeare's work was originally seen in London's Globe Theatre. And while the great outdoors offers some amazing benefits to the theater experience (and also the occasional mosquito), it also offers some unique challenges and opportunities to APT's designers.

Alejo Vietti designed the costumes for this production of *Hamlet*, and he's working at APT for the first time this season. He says that while every theater has its own processes for design, working at APT is unique in a number of ways. According to Alejo, "What is interesting about APT is that it's an outdoor environment and that you're also doing it in rotating repertory, which means the actors will be performing

in other plays between performances of *Hamlet*. You have to be very good about trying to convey the character through the costumes, because it helps the actors get into character. The moment an actor puts on that costume, it has to transport them immediately into character. That way they can go perform *Hamlet* today and do *Two Gentlemen of Verona* tomorrow. You always need to be conscious that character comes first."



Alejo's costume design for Gertrude's red dress.

Weather plays its own role at APT, a role that always has to be considered in the design process. "Designing *Hamlet* for an outdoor theatre where the season spans from the summer into the late fall has its challenges," says Alejo. "You have to address the climate factor. These costumes will be performing under severe heat and rain and all kinds of weather. So choosing the fabrics and the way you construct every garment is very important. You have to be faithful to the design, but also very conscious about the actor who is wearing it and how it will affect that actor differently when they're wearing it at night or in the morning; in summer or fall."

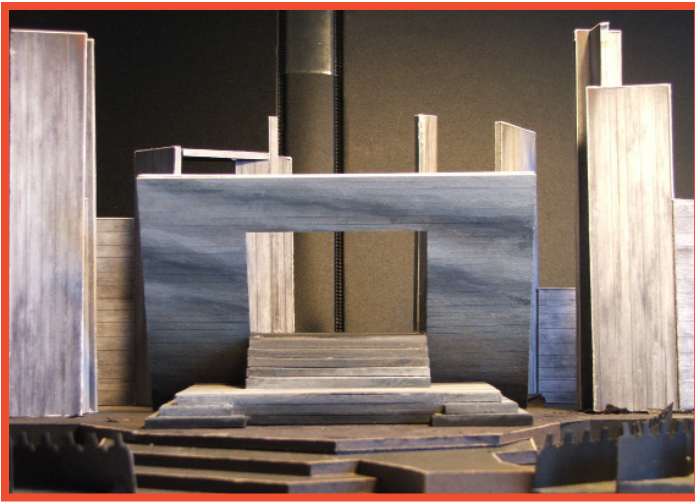
Much like the actors, the designers have the mixed blessing of designing for a very high-profile play, but Alejo says he fully enjoyed the effort, stating: "The challenge of designing for *Hamlet* is wonderful, because you're talking about one of the most famous plays ever

written. I think that comes from the fact that *Hamlet* touches every subject and everything that is important in life. It discusses life and death. It discusses family relationships. Power. Corruption. Friendship. Every single thing that's important to anyone's life, anywhere in the world is addressed in *Hamlet*. You couldn't ask for a more fulfilling play to work on."



And the dress in action.

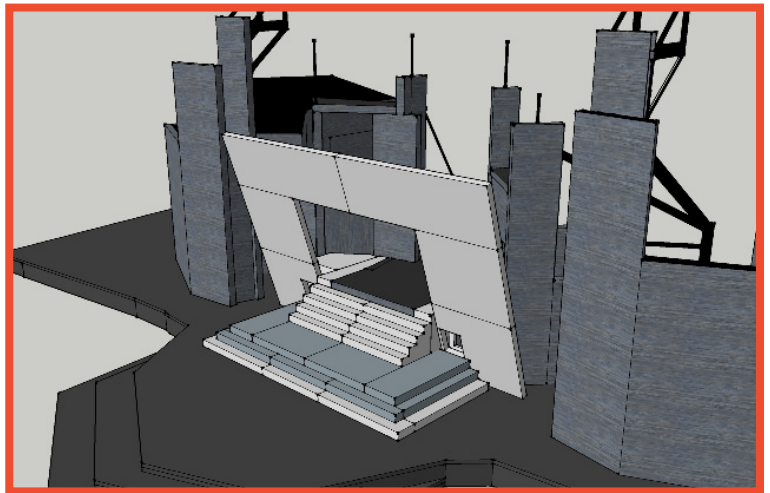
Like costumes, the sets are a key component in providing plays with a look and feel that will keep audience and actors in the play, and in the moment. Veteran APT scenic designer Takeshi Kata designed *Hamlet*'s set along with Andrew Boyce. (The two of them also worked together on the set of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, which is now playing on the same stage.) APT rarely has more than one set designer working on a given play, and Takeshi enjoyed the process of working with another designer.



A model of the *Hamlet* set.

“In working with another designer, we were able to come up with more options and ideas for the set,” Takeshi said. “Even though I typically work with directors and other designers, the process of set design is often fairly solitary. In having a partner, we were able to discuss ideas, look at the strengths of each of our design ideas, and improve upon them with ease. We talked about both plays and what each show required, how scenes might be staged and how to create a world where two very different plays can be housed. We communicated through sending many sketches and models to each other and the directors. We saw many interesting versions of the design before we landed on what we have now. It was wonderful to have a talented and gracious collaborator to work with.”

When Takeshi and Andrew were designing the set, they were thinking about the way it looked, of course. They also considered the safety of the actors (floors can get slippery, so they mixed sand into the paint to give it texture and grip) and the ability of set pieces to be broken down and moved by the production assistants between performances (which often happens in less than an hour!). But they were also considering the play itself.



An autocad visualization of the same set.

Takeshi explains “I try to create a space that is more ritualistic or theatrical, rather than realistic and literal. Creating a space that takes itself too literally becomes a fight against nature, whereas a more poetic approach to the space can be enhanced by the beautiful surrounding *Up the Hill*. I try to think about the moment after the show when we all notice the star-filled sky. Can the space live harmoniously with that moment when we are waking up from the narrative journey?”



And the final product.

“We tried to keep the space simple but evocative, so that Shakespeare’s beautiful language can fill the space around the actors in the unique way you need to see their world,” says Takeshi. “The story happens in the space between the actors and the audience members. I hope that the space will excite imagination so that you actively engage in this story. The more we listen and the more we participate in the storytelling process, the fuller and richer the world of the narrative is going to unfold before us. My hope is that the space transforms with your imagination to many different realities and emotional states during the show.”



Wordles, Wordles, Wordles: Pre-Reading for Hamlet Using Key Words

This is a pre-reading activity for Hamlet.

What's On for Today and Why

For many students, Shakespeare's language can be intimidating. For English Language Learners (ELLs) this can be especially true. In an effort to make the language more approachable before reading, and allow students to make some predictions about the text, students will analyze a Wordle of the top 150 words in Hamlet. Wordle.net is a website that allows you to cut and paste text and create a word cloud (a visual of the words in the play) that occur the most. The most frequent words appear the largest in the word cloud. By allowing students to explore the language of the text before reading and predict what will occur in the play, the text becomes more accessible.

This lesson should take one class period to complete.

What You Need

- Handouts #1-4
- Folger edition of Hamlet
- Available in Folger print edition and Folger Digital Texts

Documents:

- Wordle, Wordle, Wordle Handouts

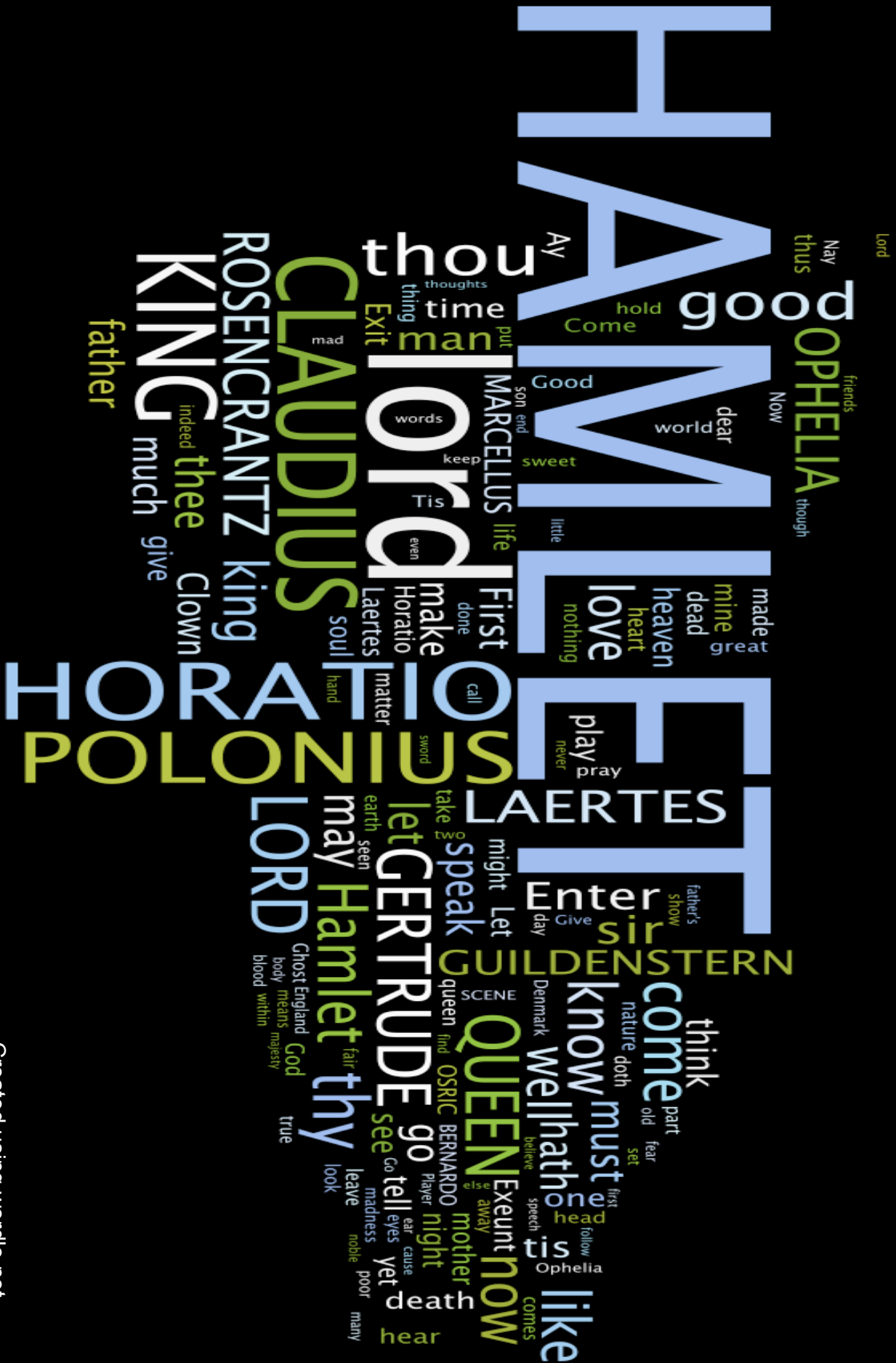
What To Do

1. Divide students into small groups and give them Handout #1 (Wordle of the play). Explain to the class that this word cloud shows the words in the play that are used the most. Before reading, explain to the class that they will analyze this language, categorize it, and finally make some predictions about what the play will be about.
2. Give students Handout #2. This handout has five categories: "Characters, Critical/Important Nouns, Archaic Words, Stage Directions/Locations, and Other." Review with students what these titles mean. Depending on their backgrounds, they may be more or less familiar with terms such as "archaic words," "stage directions," and so on.
3. Instruct students to place words from Handout #1 into appropriate categories on Handout#2. Depending on the students you have, you may choose to get them started by selecting a few words as a class and placing them in the appropriate category. Also, remind students at this point that there is not a clear right or wrong answer; they are simply collaborating and offering their best guess as to where these words belong.
4. As students work, circulate among them to answer questions on pronunciation, etc.
5. Bring the whole class back together and ask for groups to volunteer (either on a whiteboard, chalkboard, Smartboard, or using a document projector) to explain where they have placed their words and why.
6. If you wish, you can share Handout #3 with the class, which places some of the words from Handout #1 into their appropriate locations. An alternative is to have them check their predictions after the class has completed reading Act 1.
7. For homework/classwork, have students use Handout #4 to make predictions about what they think will happen in the play.

How Did It Go?

While they were working in small groups, were students collaborating and having thoughtful conversations about the language in the word cloud? Were students able to explain (verbally or in writing) why they chose to place a word/s into certain categories on Handout#2? Did students make intriguing/clever/thoughtful/accurate predictions about the play on Handout #4?

This lesson was provided by Christina Porter through the Folger Shakespeare Lesson Plan



Created using wordle.net



Characters	Critical/ important nouns	Archaic words	Stage directions/ locations	Other
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A large, empty gray rectangular area intended for students to write their notes or answers.



Characters	Critical/ important nouns	Archaic words	Stage directions/ locations	Other
✧ Hamlet	▪ Blood	❖ Nay	○ Enter	✓ Pray
✧ Horatio	▪ Nature	❖ Thus	○ Exit	✓ Speak
✧ Polonius	▪ Madness	❖ Tis	○ England	✓ Make
✧ Claudius	▪ Mother	❖ Thou	○ Denmark	✓ Keep
✧ Rosencrantz	▪ Night	❖ Thy		✓ Think
✧ Ophelia	▪ Day	❖ Hath		✓ Believe
✧ Guildenstern	▪ God	❖ Ay		✓ Give
✧ Laertes	▪ Soul	❖ Doth		✓ Dead
✧ Marcellus	▪ Heart			✓ Sweet
✧ Osric	▪ Love			
✧ Bernardo	▪ Heaven			
✧ Ghost	▪ Sword			
	▪ Fear			
	▪ Man			
	▪ Time			
	▪ Life			
	▪ Son			



Predictor Stem

Starters*

- I predict that...
- I bet that...
- I think that...
- I wonder if...

Using the predictor stem starters, and the words from your organizer, make **at least** four predictions about what you think will happen in the play *Hamlet*.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

* Adapted from *When Kids Can't Read What Teachers Can*
Do by Kyleen Beers, Heinemann, 2003

“To be or not to be” -- Appreciating the Language and Interpreting the Meaning of Hamlet’s Soliloquy

Plays/Scenes Covered
Hamlet, 3.1

What’s On for Today and Why

This lesson introduces students to Hamlet’s soliloquy, “To be or not to be” in which he questions himself and his need to act in avenging his father’s death. They will be encouraged to listen to the language and the sound and rhythm of the word choices.

Students will use the attached word study list of words/phrases to discover meanings and etymologies and to begin to form an appreciation for and understanding of this well-known soliloquy. ELL/ESL students are interested to learn that native English speakers are as challenged as they are when reading Elizabethan English. Students will also view, discuss, and write in response to two film presentations of Hamlet’s soliloquy. They will use specific criteria to compare the different interpretations that each actor brings to his performance. This lesson will take two class periods of 45 minutes over two days.

What You Need

- Folger edition of Hamlet (Available in Folger print edition and Folger Digital Texts)
- Notebooks/files in which students have been keeping word studies, references to specific lines of dialogue, and notes on performance/directing activities
- Print or online dictionaries that include etymology information
- Two different film versions of Hamlet’s soliloquy

Documents:

- Word Study List

What To Do

DAY 1

1. Write the first line of Hamlet’s soliloquy, “To be or not to be -- that is the question” on the chalk board or Smart board for students to read. For ELL/ESL students, you might note that, as the son of a murdered king, Hamlet describes his turmoil in this soliloquy, and debates whether he should or should not avenge his father’s death, and he considers his own death.
2. Write the words “bodkin” and “fardels” on the board. Explain that some of the words Hamlet uses will be unfamiliar. For instance, the lines “with a bare bodkin” and “who would fardels bear” make use of archaic words choices which are not used today. When researching the word “rub” in the dictionary, students will find that the current use of the idiomatic phrase to “rub out” is included, but has a different meaning. For students, particularly ELL/ESL learners, this pre-reading discussion should help to reduce the confusion that occurs when confronting unfamiliar words and allows students to concentrate on the text.
3. Hand out copies of Hamlet’s soliloquy, “To be or not to be,” 3.1.64-98, pages 127-9. Have students highlight/underline unfamiliar words/phrases. Let students know that this soliloquy introduces and explains Hamlet’s decisions and actions in Act 3 and will serve as a reference point as they continue to read.
4. Have students read the soliloquy aloud by “reading around the room” with each student reading a line and

stopping at a punctuation mark or end punctuation mark. Encourage students to read and listen to Hamlet's description without being concerned if they don't understand every word/phrase.

5. Ask students to highlight/underline words/phrases that are descriptive and have students identify the descriptive words they chose and why they did so.
6. Have the students read the soliloquy aloud a second time starting from the opposite side of the room from the first reading. Ask students to highlight/underline any additional descriptive words/phrases and discuss.
7. Hand out copies of the Word Study list. Assign students to work in pairs or small groups and complete the word study. Students should be encouraged to use the Folger notes whenever possible. Have students note the words' etymologies and to make observations about why they may be interesting and/or important to their meaning. ELL/ESL students may find similar word origins in their native language and should be encouraged to share these with the class.
8. Ask students to select several lines/phrases from the soliloquy which are descriptive and then explain their choices. For example, they may want to refer to the sound and rhythm of the phrases and/or the image created. Discuss in class and have students keep their responses in their notebooks/files.

DAY 2

1. In preparing to view the films, discuss and list several criteria of good speaking and acting, being sure to include the use of voice in volume, expression, emphasis, and phrasing.
2. Write the names of the actors/character roles on the board for students and ask students to write comments in their notebooks about the individual performances, including notes about each actor's vocal expression and physical demonstration of emotion.
3. View two film performances of Hamlet's soliloquy. After viewing the films, and before discussion begins, have students write their responses to the performances, making reference to the criteria of good speaking and acting that the class established earlier.
4. As a class, discuss and/or review in writing the reactions to the performances. You might also discuss the delivery of certain words/phrases students identified as descriptive during the first day. Have students raise questions they may have about the performances. Questions could include:
 - Which performance was better? Why? Refer to expression and emotion in delivery.
 - Did viewing the films help to give meaning and understanding to the soliloquy? Ask for specific examples
 - Explain Hamlet's arguments. What options does he think he has as the son of the murdered king? What option do you think he will pursue? Why?
 - Why must Hamlet avenge his father's death?
 - What do we learn about Hamlet's character from this soliloquy?
 - How has reading aloud, completing the word study, discussing, and viewing the performances helped to give meaning to this piece of literature?

How Did It Go?

- Were students able to understand what is happening in the soliloquy?
- Were students able to identify descriptive words in the soliloquy?
- Did students see differences in the two video performances?
- Were students able to compare and contrast the performances?
- Were students able to complete the word study and discuss the etymologies of the words?
- Were students able to write/talk about their personal reactions to the soliloquy?
- Were students able to answer the suggested questions following the viewing of the films?

This lesson was provided by Carol Moran Petrallia through the Folger Shakespeare Lesson Plan.



Word Study - Hamlet's Soliloquy "To be or not to be", *Hamlet*, 3.1

Many of the following words and phrases are referenced in the Folger edition of *Hamlet*. Note the meanings of the words and phrases in the spaces below. Find the etymologies (word histories) for specific words in print dictionaries or online sources.

1. line 73 - rub
 meaning:
 etymology:
2. line 75 - shuffled off this mortal coil
 meaning:
3. line 77 - makes calamity of so long life
 meaning:
4. line 80 - despised
 meaning:
 etymology:
5. line 81 - office
 meaning:
6. line 83 - his quietus make
 meaning:
7. line 84 - bare bodkin
 meaning:
 etymology:
8. line 84 - fardels
 meaning:
 etymology:
9. line 87 - undiscovered
 meaning:

10. line 87 - bourn
 meaning:
 etymology:
11. line 88 - puzzles
 meaning:
 etymology:
12. line 91 - conscience
 meaning:
 etymology:
13. line 92 - native hue
 meaning:
14. line 93 - cast
 meaning:
15. line 94 - pitch
 meaning:
16. line 94 - moment
 meaning:
17. line 95 - With this regard
 meaning:
18. line 95 - their currents turn awry
 meaning:
19. line 96 - Soft you now
 meaning:
20. line 97 - orisons
 meaning:

Researching **etymologies** will generate questions about words and phrases that are **idiomatic** and **archaic**. Abbreviations such as ME for Middle English and OFr. for Old French can be referenced and explained as well. This is an interesting way to introduce a discussion about our living and dynamic language. The words **orisons**, meaning prayer, is an archaic usage and may be found in the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

“To Show Virtue Her Own Feature,” Insider’s Guide to Hamlet: Ophelia’s Madness

What’s On for Today and Why

The class will break into five groups of equal numbers to create a photographic “Illustrated Ophelia” series, similar to the tradition of editions of the Complete Works, primarily in the 19th Century, where drawings were used to illustrate key moments from the plays.

In this lesson, students will use the program, Instagram, with captions depicting moments from Ophelia’s life in Hamlet. At the culmination of this lesson, students will have performed close readings of at least one of the scenes with Ophelia, will have selected key lines of language, will have produced photographic renderings of central moments from the play in the form of tableaux allowing the class to follow her journey through language and image.

This lesson will also allow students to explore Ophelia’s journey into madness.

This lesson should take two to three 45-minute classes and requires access to popular technology via smart phones, tablets, or computers.

This lesson will work best if you have already studied the play through Act 4, Scene 5.

What You Need

- Folger edition of Hamlet (Available in Folger print edition and Folger Digital Texts)
- Folger Video, “Ophelia and Madness” (below)
- Digital cameras or smart phones;
- Projector and screen or Smart Board
- Instagram accounts

Links:

Ophelia and Madness: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhJWwoWCD4w&feature=youtu.be>

What To Do

DAY 1

1. Show the Folger video “Ophelia and Madness.” Look especially at the section between 2:20 - 3:15 when the actor playing Ophelia in the Folger Theatre production discusses how Ophelia undergoes a transformation from a passive to an active figure.
2. Facilitate a discussion about this topic and ask them to reflect on Ophelia’s plight. Invite conversation about any other elements of the Folger video.
3. Next, look at examples of Shakespeare illustrated. Many examples exist from the 19th Century. Excellent resources include:
 - Shakespeare Illustrated (Emory University)
 - Illustrated Shakespeare (University of Wisconsin)
 - Luna Images (Folger Shakespeare Library)
4. Break the class into five groups of equal size, and assign each one of Ophelia’s scenes (1.3, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 4.5)
5. Once each group has a scene, they should work on it, either by doing a table-read (i.e., a reading with all the parts cast and with people sitting around the table with pencils in hand) or by staging it. Students should choose which mode they prefer. Whatever they do, they are to each mark lines that could be “caption

worthy” -- a moment that really distills the essence of Ophelia, of an event, or of a relationship.

6. The groups should have ample time to work on this (30 - 40 minutes), and this part of the exercise might run into the next class.

DAY 2

1. Each group should review the captions from Day 1. Once they have reviewed these, they should choose three lines or phrases from which they will create a tableaux -- a frozen picture that will dramatize the piece of text with which they are working. It is important that they justify their choices not only in terms of the line they're using, but of the context in which the line occurs.
2. When the tableaux are completed, one of the group members will take a picture of the scene and upload it to Instagram so that effects may be added (time should be allowed for students to play with this program, if they aren't already familiar with it). While this is fun and creative, the students should be able to justify their choices for the kinds of effects they use.
3. Since there are three captions that must be staged, every student in the group should have an opportunity to be in a tableaux, even as an extra to the scene.
4. When all the groups have their photos ready, with effects and captions, they will present their work to the class. Photos may be shared to Instagram's site or to Facebook.
5. Each group should consider the following questions in their presentation:
 - What is the context for the chosen text?
 - What is the tableaux communicating about this text and the context from which it is taken?
 - Why were these particular lines chosen over others?
 - What other lines were being considered? Why weren't they selected?
 - What effects from Instagram were used and why?

What can we learn about Ophelia's journey into madness, from textual and visual points of view, based on this project? To the extent you can, all responses should be defended by evidence from the text.

How Did It Go?

- Were students engaged in project-based learning?
- Did you see evidence of collaborative close reading?
- Did students engage in interpretive practices with complex text?
- Did they communicate their intended messages effectively through visual media?
- Were they able to gain a clear understanding of Ophelia's journey and transformation in the play?

This lesson was provided by Kevin J. Costa through the Folger Shakespeare Lesson Plan.