

EXTRA WRITING ASSIGNMENTS/DISCUSSION QUESTIONS - *Hamlet*

Interpretation

1. What is the setting of *Hamlet*?
2. Where is the climax of the play? Explain your choice.
3. What are the main conflicts in the play, and how are they resolved?
4. Give a summary of the events in the plot.

Critical

5. Think of a different title for the play. Explain your choice.
6. Explain why *Hamlet* is a tragedy.
7. Describe the relationship between Hamlet and his mother.
8. What things motivate Hamlet?
9. Choose a passage from *Hamlet* (at least 10 lines). Analyze the meter, rhymes and word choice in relationship to the meaning and action of the passage.
10. Characterize William Shakespeare's style of writing. How does it contribute to the value of the play?
11. Compare and contrast Hamlet and Horatio.
12. Compare and contrast Horatio and Laertes.
13. There are several "bad guys" in *Hamlet*. Who do you think is the worst? Why?
14. Describe Hamlet's relationship with Ophelia.
15. What happened to Ophelia? Why?
16. Could the play *Hamlet* have been resolved without killing off all of the main characters? If so, how? If not, why not?

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17. Are the characters in *Hamlet* stereotypes? If so, explain why William Shakespeare used stereotypes. If not, explain how the characters merit individuality.
18. Explain the role of each: Rosencrantz & Guildenstern, Polonius, Osric, and Laertes.

Critical/Personal Response

19. Which minor character is the most important to the play?
20. What was Hamlet's biggest problem?
21. What would you have done if you were Hamlet and found out that your father had been murdered by your uncle and your mother?
22. Do you think the relationship between the King and Queen is realistic? Explain why or why not.
23. Who is responsible for Ophelia's death?

Personal Response

24. Did you enjoy reading *Hamlet*? Why or why not?
25. Suppose Hamlet had killed the King instead of Polonius at first. How would the play have changed?
26. Suppose Ophelia had lived. How would that have affected the story?
27. Would you have liked living in Hamlet's time of knights and castles? Why or why not?
28. Describe what your castle would be like if you were to build one.
29. Many writers today leave their endings open for a sequel (in case it becomes a box-office hit). Such is not the case with *Hamlet*. The end is definitely the end; all the main characters die. Which type of ending do you prefer? Why?