

Hamlet

To slack, or not to slack, that is the question;
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The zeros and low marks of outrageous assignments,
Or to take pens against a sea of compositions,
And by opposing, finish them. To work; to accomplish,
No more, and by accomplishment to say we end
The workload, and the thousand essays
That students are heirs to; 'tis a dream
Devoutly to be wish'd. To work, to accomplish;
To accomplish; perchance to succeed; ay, there's the rub;
For in that accomplishment of work what mark may come,
When we have submitted this completed piece,
Must give us pause; there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long a school career.

Workbook



'Oh come on! How can you possibly know that it's Yorick without a proper forensic reconstruction?'

Act I
Questions (22 marks)

Scene i:

1. What three factors suggest Denmark is being threatened? (3 marks)
2. Why are preparations for war being made? (1 mark)
3. Why do Horatio, Marcellus and Bernardo agree to tell Hamlet about the ghost which resembles his dead father? (1 mark)

Scene ii:

4. What actions does Claudius, the new king of Denmark, take to show that he is a skillful leader? (3 marks)
5. What do we learn about Hamlet from his first two lines? (1 mark)
6. List three reasons Claudius and Gertrude give for why Hamlet should stay at court rather than return to school. What is another, unspoken, possibility? (4 marks)

Scene iii:

7. Laertes and Polonius both give Ophelia advice on how she should deal with Hamlet. Since neither really have anything on which to base their suspicions, what conclusion can you draw about their attitudes toward women? (2 marks)

Scene iv:

8. Why is Hamlet not afraid to follow the ghost? (2 marks)

Scene v:

9. What is Hamlet's initial reaction to the ghost's claim that he was murdered? (1 mark)
10. What advantage does Hamlet's decision to act like a madman provide for him? (2 marks)
11. How has Hamlet's attitude towards taking revenge changed by the end of the scene? Why has this change occurred? (2 marks)

Vocabulary (8 marks)

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| _____ 1. Portentous | A. An earnest promise |
| _____ 2. Invulnerable | B. Rashly or wastefully extravagant |
| _____ 3. Malicious | C. The relationship of child or offspring to parent |
| _____ 4. Filial | D. Open to more than one interpretation |
| _____ 5. Prodigal | E. Immune to attack; impregnable; impossible to damage, injure, or wound |
| _____ 6. Vow | F. Full of unspecifiable significance; exciting wonder and awe |
| _____ 7. Pernicious | G. Spiteful |
| _____ 8. Ambiguous | H. Deadly; destructive |

Act II
Questions (22 marks)

Scene i:

1. Polonius says, "By indirections find directions out." (p. 87, lines 66-7). Provide **five** examples of this occurring in the play, up to the end of Act II and, for each example, do the following: (10 marks)
 - a) Name the character who, by indirection, tries to find directions out.
 - b) Elaborate on the method this character will use in order to find out the information they want.
 - c) Name any other character(s) involved.

Scene ii:

2. What is there in Claudius' opening speech that indicates he is a manipulative leader? (2 mark)
3. Who seems more willing to accept Polonius' explanation of Hamlet's madness, Gertrude or Claudius? What evidence is there to support this view? Why does she/he accept the explanation? (3 marks)
4. Support the argument that Hamlet overheard the plan to eavesdrop on him and Ophelia. (3 marks)
5. In his conversation with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Hamlet contrasts how the world really is and how it seems to him. Why does it seem that way? (2 marks)
6. The ghost already explained how and by whom he was murdered. Why does Hamlet seek further proof of his uncle's guilt? (2 marks)

Vocabulary (8 marks)

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| <p>_____ 1. Afflict</p> <p>_____ 2. Discretion</p> <p>_____ 3. Entreat</p> <p>_____ 4. Beseech</p> <p>_____ 5. Contrive</p> <p>_____ 6. Paragon</p> <p>_____ 7. Appurtenance</p> <p>_____ 8. Epitaph</p> | <p>A. Ability or power to decide responsibly</p> <p>B. To make an earnest request of</p> <p>C. Something added to another, more important thing; an appendage</p> <p>D. To inflict grievous physical or mental suffering on</p> <p>E. An inscription on a tombstone in memory of the one buried there</p> <p>F. A model of excellence or perfection of a kind</p> <p>G. To address an earnest or urgent request to; implore</p> <p>H. To plan with cleverness or ingenuity</p> |
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Act III
Questions (23 marks)

Scene i:

1. In Act III, what proof is there that Claudius has a conscience? (2 marks)
2. Paraphrase the first **fourteen** lines of Hamlet's "To be or not to be" soliloquy in scene one. (5 marks)

Scene ii:

3. Why is it important to Hamlet that Horatio is unexcitable and sound in judgement? (1 mark)
4. How does Hamlet show that he does not entirely trust his self-control in his soliloquy at the end of scene ii? (1 mark)

Scene iii:

5. Why can't Hamlet kill Claudius at his prayers? To Hamlet, how is Claudius' state different from what King Hamlet's was when Claudius killed him? (2 marks)

Scene iv:

6. Provide two pieces of evidence from the "bedroom scene" which demonstrates that Gertrude was able to watch the play, "The murder of Gonzago," without reacting to it as Claudius did. (4 marks)
7. At the end of Act III, how has Hamlet's opinion of his mother changed? What advice does he give her? Why? (2 marks)
8. Compare Hamlet's treatment of Gertrude with his treatment of Ophelia in Act III, scene i. (5 marks)
9. Which part of Act III, in scene iii or scene iv, do you consider the turning point of the play? (1 mark)

Vocabulary (7 marks)

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| _____ 1. Commingled | A. Tendons; muscles |
| _____ 2. Knavish | B. A means of inflicting severe suffering, vengeance, or punishment |
| _____ 3. Contagion | C. Blended |
| _____ 4. Sinews | D. Unprincipled |
| _____ 5. Visage | E. Demanding or arousing pity |
| _____ 6. Piteous | F. Harmful or corrupting influence |
| _____ 7. Scourge | G. The face or facial expression |

Act IV
Questions (23 marks)

Scene i:

1. How accurately does Gertrude describe to Claudius Hamlet's killing of Polonius? How much of her discussion with Hamlet does she reveal to Claudius? What does this suggest about how her attitude towards Claudius has changed? (5 marks)

Scene v:

2. Why is Gertrude reluctant to see Ophelia? (1 mark)
3. What are the bits and pieces of songs that Ophelia sings both startling, regarding Hamlet, and sad, regarding Polonius? (4 marks)
4. Provide evidence as to whether or not Claudius is sincerely grieved over Polonius' death and Ophelia's mental state. (5 marks)

Scene vii:

5. What reasons does Claudius give throughout Act IV for not having taken action against Hamlet sooner? Is he being honest? (4 marks)
6. What is the relevance of Gertrude entering in the middle of the conversation between Claudius and Laertes (line 163)? (2 marks)
7. How does Laertes' final speech reveal both the best and worst in his nature? (2 marks)

Vocabulary (7 marks)

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| _____ 1. Divulging | A. Reductions in amount, degree, or intensity |
| _____ 2. Discord | B. Being beyond what is required or sufficient |
| _____ 3. Replication | C. A reply to an answer; a rejoinder |
| _____ 4. Convocation | D. About to occur; impending |
| _____ 5. Imminent | E. Becoming known |
| _____ 6. Superfluous | F. Tension or strife |
| _____ 7. Abatements | G. Assembly |

Act V
Questions (22 marks)

Scene i:

1. Why does Shakespeare include the humorous “gravedigger’s scene” at this point in the play? (4 marks)
2. What general view of life does Hamlet express in his comments to Horatio in the graveyard? (4 marks)
3. Paraphrase the debate about whether Ophelia deserves a Christian burial. What are the priest’s feelings? (5 marks)

Scene ii:

4. Why does Claudius tell Gertrude not to drink the wine but not explain why she shouldn’t? (4 marks)
5. What final tribute does Fortinbras give to Hamlet? Why? In a paragraph explain why you think he does this and if you agree. What does this say about the values of their society? (5 marks)

Vocabulary (8 marks)

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|---------------------|--|
| _____ 1. Base | A. Difficult to work with |
| _____ 2. Churlish | B. High praise |
| _____ 3. Conjuraton | C. Of or relating to the body or flesh; bodily |
| _____ 4. Perdition | D. Great happiness; bliss |
| _____ 5. Extolment | E. Loss of the soul; eternal damnation |
| _____ 6. Aloof | F. The lowest or bottom part |
| _____ 7. Felicity | G. Influence or effect by a supernatural power |
| _____ 8. Carnal | H. Distant physically or emotionally |