DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION
Louisiana Believes

Hamlet Unit Resources

Student Resource	Location
Section 1: Lessons 1-4	
Text: *Hamlet* Act I by William Shakespeare	Purchased text
Lesson handouts	Pages 2 – 9
Section 2: Lessons 5-8	
Text: *Hamlet* Act II by William Shakespeare	Purchased text
Text: Excerpts from *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* by Tom Stoppard	Purchased text
Text: Selected scenes from *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* by Tom Stoppard	Digital Access/Purchase
Lesson handouts	Pages 10 – 15
Section 3: Lessons 9-10	
Text: *Hamlet* Act III, Scene I by William Shakespeare	Purchased text
Text: "Hamlet's Soliloquies" from *Teaching and Acting Hamlet*	Digital access
Section 4: Lessons 11-13	
Text: Selected scenes from *Hamlet* (1990) by Franco Zefirelli	Purchased text
Text: Selected scenes from *Hamlet* (1996) by Kenneth Branagh	Purchased text
Text: Selected scenes from *Hamlet* (2000) by Michael Almereyda	Purchased text
Lesson handouts	Pages 16 – 17
Section 5: Lessons 14-16	
Text: *Hamlet* Act III, Scene III by William Shakespeare	Purchased text
Lesson handouts	Page 18
Section 6: Lessons 17-21	
Text: *Hamlet* Act III, Scene IV and Act IV by William Shakespeare	Purchased text
Text: “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” by T.S. Eliot	Pages 19 – 22
Lesson handouts	Page 23
Section 7: Lessons 22-23	
Text: *Hamlet* Act IV and Act V, Scene I by William Shakespeare	Purchased text
Text: "Ophelia and Madness" from *Teaching and Acting Hamlet*	Digital access
Text: *Ophelia* by Henrietta Rae	Page 24
Text: *Ophelia* by John Everett Millais	Page 25
Lesson handouts	Pages 26 – 27
Section 8: Lessons 24-27	
Text: *Hamlet* Act V, Scene II by William Shakespeare	Purchased text
Text: "Hamlet and His Problems" by T.S. Eliot	Pages 28 – 33
Text: "The Real or Assumed Madness of Hamlet" by Simon Blackmore	Pages 33 – 40
Lesson handouts	Page 41
Section 9: Lessons 28-31 (Culminating Writing Task)	
Text: *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare	Purchased text
Lesson handouts	Pages 42 – 44
Section 10: Lessons 32-33 (Cold-Read Task)	
Section 11: Lessons 34-39 (Extension Task)	
Text: "New Words in Hamlet?" by Karen Kay	Pages 45 – 48
Lesson handouts	Pages 49 – 53

Hamlet Act I, scene i Annotation Guide

Listen to the audio of Act I, scene i of *Hamlet*. Make note of words and phrases that indicate the setting and mood.

SCENE I. Elsinore. A platform before the castle.

FRANCISCO at his post. Enter to him BERNARDO

BERNARDO: Who's there?

FRANCISCO: Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.

BERNARDO: Long live the king!

FRANCISCO: Bernardo?

BERNARDO: He.

FRANCISCO: You come most carefully upon your hour.

BERNARDO: 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco.

FRANCISCO: For this relief much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,

And I am sick at heart.

BERNARDO: Have you had quiet guard?

FRANCISCO: Not a mouse stirring.

BERNARDO: Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,

The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS

FRANCISCO: I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who's there?

HORATIO: Friends to this ground.

MARCELLUS: And liegemen to the Dane.

FRANCISCO: Give you good night.

MARCELLUS: O, farewell, honest soldier:

Who hath relieved you?

FRANCISCO: Bernardo has my place.

Give you good night.

Exit

MARCELLUS: Holla! Bernardo!

BERNARDO: Say, what, is Horatio there?

HORATIO: A piece of him.

BERNARDO: Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Marcellus.

MARCELLUS: What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?

BERNARDO: I have seen nothing.

MARCELLUS: Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,

And will not let belief take hold of him

Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us:

Therefore I have entreated him along

With us to watch the minutes of this night;

That if again this apparition come,

He may approve our eyes and speak to it.

HORATIO: Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

BERNARDO: Sit down awhile;

And let us once again assail your ears,

That are so fortified against our story

What we have two nights seen.

HORATIO: Well, sit we down,

And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

BERNARDO: Last night of all,

When yond same star that's westward from the pole

Had made his course to illume that part of heaven

Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,

The bell then beating one,--

Enter Ghost

MARCELLUS: Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again!

BERNARDO: In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

MARCELLUS: Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

BERNARDO: Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

HORATIO: Most like: it harrows me with fear and wonder.

BERNARDO: It would be spoke to.

MARCELLUS: Question it, Horatio.

HORATIO: What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,

Together with that fair and warlike form

In which the majesty of buried Denmark

Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee, speak!

MARCELLUS: It is offended.

BERNARDO: See, it stalks away!

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

Exit Ghost

MARCELLUS: 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

BERNARDO: How now, Horatio! you tremble and look pale:

Is not this something more than fantasy?

What think you on't?

HORATIO: Before my God, I might not this believe

Without the sensible and true avouch

Of mine own eyes.

MARCELLUS: Is it not like the king?

HORATIO: As thou art to thyself:

Such was the very armour he had on

When he the ambitious Norway combated;

So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,

He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.

'Tis strange.

MARCELLUS: Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour,

With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

HORATIO: In what particular thought to work I know not;

But in the gross and scope of my opinion,

This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

MARCELLUS: Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows,

Why this same strict and most observant watch

So nightly toils the subject of the land,

And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,

And foreign mart for implements of war;

Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task

Does not divide the Sunday from the week;

What might be toward, that this sweaty haste

Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day:

Who is't that can inform me?

HORATIO: That can I;

At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,

Whose image even but now appear'd to us,

Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,

Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,

Dared to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet--

For so this side of our known world esteem'd him--
Did slay this Fortinbras; who by a seal'd compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands
Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror:
Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king; which had return'd
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same covenant,
And carriage of the article design'd,
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
Of unimproved mettle hot and full,
Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
Shark'd up a list of lawless resolutes,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach in't; which is no other--
As it doth well appear unto our state--
But to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsatory, those foresaid lands
So by his father lost: and this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

BERNARDO: I think it be no other but e'en so:
Well may it sort that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch; so like the king

That was and is the question of these wars.

HORATIO: A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.

In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets:
As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse:
And even the like precurse of fierce events,
As harbingers preceding still the fates
And prologue to the omen coming on,
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climatures and countrymen.–

Re-enter Ghost

But soft, behold! Lo, where it comes again!
I'll cross it, though it blast me. Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me:
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease and grace to me,
Speak to me:

Cock crows

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid, O, speak!

Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life

Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,

For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,

Speak of it: stay, and speak! Stop it, Marcellus.

MARCELLUS: Shall I strike at it with my partisan?

HORATIO: Do, if it will not stand.

BERNARDO: 'Tis here!

HORATIO: 'Tis here!

MARCELLUS: 'Tis gone!

Exit Ghost

We do it wrong, being so majestical,

To offer it the show of violence;

For it is, as the air, invulnerable,

And our vain blows malicious mockery.

BERNARDO: It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

HORATIO: And then it started like a guilty thing

Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,

The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,

Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat

Awake the god of day; and, at his warning,

Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,

The extravagant and erring spirit hies

To his confine: and of the truth herein

This present object made probation.

MARCELLUS: It faded on the crowing of the cock.

Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes

Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,

[175] The bird of dawning singeth all night long:

And then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad;

The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,

No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,

So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

[180] **HORATIO:** So have I heard and do in part believe it.

But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,

Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill:

Break we our watch up; and by my advice,

Let us impart what we have seen to-night

[185] Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,

This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.

Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,

As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

MARCELLUS: Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning know

[190] Where we shall find him most conveniently.

Exeunt

Write a brief **objective** summary of the scene.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION
Louisiana Believes

Hamlet's State of Mind Graphic Organizer

Hamlet's thoughts, actions or words	Character's description of Hamlet	Act/Scene/line	Mad or "mad in craft"	Reasons and evidence

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION
Louisiana Believes

***Hamlet*: Film Comparison**

Use this graphic organizer to take notes on how each version uses the elements of film to interpret the source text.

Film Elements	Franco Zeffirelli [1990]	Kenneth Branagh [1996]	Michael Almereyda [2000]
Sound Elements • Sound effects • Music • Background noise			
Language Elements • Lines omitted • Lines emphasized			
Physical Elements • Props • Costumes • Setting			
Dramatic Elements • Actor • Delivery • Mood • Tone			
Camera Elements • Composition • Lighting • Close-ups • Long shots • Transitions			

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION
Louisiana Believes

Conversation Stems for Class Discussion[1]

As you engage in class discussion, it is important to consider the other side, expressing understanding for those who have a different point of view. To do this, you can insert a ***concession*** in your comments. You can also use the templates in the chart to help frame your answers.

Concession Stems

- Although I grant that __, I still maintain that __.
- While it is true that __, it does not necessarily follow that __.
- On one hand I agree with X that __. But on the other hand, I insist that __.
- It cannot be denied that __; however, I believe__.
- Certainly __, but ....
- It goes without saying…
- Perhaps __, yet....

TO DISAGREE	TO AGREE--WITH A DIFFERENCE	TO QUALIFY
• I think **X** is mistaken because she overlooks _____. • **X's** claim that _____ rests upon the questionable assumption that _____. • I disagree with **X's** view that _____ because in the text, _____. • **X** contradicts herself. On the one hand, she argues _____. But on the other hand, she also says _____. • By focusing on _____, **X** overlooks the deeper problem of _____.	• **X** is surely right about _____ because, as she may not be aware, recent studies have shown that _____. • **X**'s theory of _____ is extremely useful because it sheds insight on the difficult problem of _____. • I agree that _____, a point that needs emphasizing since so many people believe _____. • Those unfamiliar with this school of thought may be interested to know that it basically boils down to _____.	• Although I agree with **X** up to a point, I cannot accept his overall conclusion that _____. • Although I disagree with much that **X** says, I fully endorse his final conclusion that _____. • Though I concede that _____, I still insist that _____. • **X** is right that _____, but I do not agree when she claims that _____. • I am of two minds about **X**'s claim that _____. On the one hand I agree that _____. On the other hand, I'm not sure if _____.

[1] Graff, G., & Birkenstein, C. (2014). *They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing* (Third ed.). New York City, New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

T-chart

Use this chart to contrast the effects of the play within the play on Hamlet and Claudius.

Hamlet	Claudius
What effect does Shakespeare create by including the play within the play?	

"The Love-Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"

T.S. Eliot

S'io credesse che mia risposta fosse
A persona che mai tornasse al mondo,
Questa fiamma staria senza piu scosse.
Ma percioche giammai di questo fondo
Non torno vivo alcun, s'i'odo il vero,
Senza tema d'infamia ti rispondo.[1]

Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherized upon a table;
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:
Streets that follow like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question. . .
Oh, do not ask, "What is it?"
Let us go and make our visit.

In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes
Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,
Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,
And seeing that it was a soft October night
Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.

And indeed there will be time
For the yellow smoke that slides along the street,
Rubbing its back upon the window-panes;

[1] This Italian epigraph is taken from Dante's *Inferno*. "If I believed that my response was heard / By anyone returning to the world, / This flame would stand and never stir again, / But since no man has ever come alive / Out of this gulf of Hell, if I hear true, / I'll answer, with no fear of infamy."

There will be time, there will be time
To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet;
There will be time to murder and create,
And time for all the works and days of hands
That lift and drop a question on your plate;
Time for you and time for me,
And time yet for a hundred indecisions
And for a hundred visions and revisions
Before the taking of a toast and tea.

In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.

And indeed there will be time
To wonder, "Do I dare?" and, "Do I dare?"
Time to turn back and descend the stair,
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair—
[They will say: "How his hair is growing thin!"]
My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the chin,
My necktie rich and modest, but asserted by a simple pin—
[They will say: "But how his arms and legs are thin!"]
Do I dare
Disturb the universe?
In a minute there is time
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.

For I have known them all already, known them all;
Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons,
I have measured out my life with coffee spoons;
I know the voices dying with a dying fall
Beneath the music from a farther room.
So how should I presume?

And I have known the eyes already, known them all—
The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase,
And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin,
When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall,
Then how should I begin
To spit out all the butt-ends of my days and ways?
And how should I presume?

And I have known the arms already, known them all—
Arms that are braceleted and white and bare
(But in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair!)

Is it perfume from a dress
That makes me so digress?
Arms that lie along a table, or wrap about a shawl.
And should I then presume?
And how should I begin?

Shall I say, I have gone at dusk through narrow streets
And watched the smoke that rises from the pipes
Of lonely men in shirt-sleeves, leaning out of windows? . . .

I should have been a pair of ragged claws
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.

And the afternoon, the evening, sleeps so peacefully!
Smoothed by long fingers,
Asleep . . . tired . . . or it malingers,
Stretched on the floor, here beside you and me.
Should I, after tea and cakes and ices,
Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis?
But though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed,
Though I have seen my head (grown slightly bald) brought in upon a platter,
I am no prophet–and here's no great matter;
I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker,
And I have seen the eternal Footman hold my coat, and snicker,
And in short, I was afraid.

And would it have been worth it, after all,
After the cups, the marmalade, the tea,
Among the porcelain, among some talk of you and me,
Would it have been worth while,
To have bitten off the matter with a smile,
To have squeezed the universe into a ball
To roll it toward some overwhelming question,
To say: "I am Lazarus, come from the dead,
Come back to tell you all, I shall tell you all"
If one, settling a pillow by her head,
Should say, "That is not what I meant at all.
That is not it, at all."

And would it have been worth it, after all,
Would it have been worth while,
After the sunsets and the dooryards and the sprinkled streets,
After the novels, after the teacups, after the skirts that trail along the floor—

And this, and so much more?—
It is impossible to say just what I mean!
But as if a magic lantern threw the nerves in patterns on a screen:
Would it have been worth while
If one, settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl,
And turning toward the window, should say:
"That is not it at all,
That is not what I meant, at all."

No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;
Am an attendant lord, one that will do
To swell a progress, start a scene or two
Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool,
Deferential, glad to be of use,
Politic, cautious, and meticulous;
Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;
At times, indeed, almost ridiculous—
Almost, at times, the Fool.

I grow old . . . I grow old . . .
I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled.

Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach?
I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk upon the beach.
I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.

I do not think they will sing to me.

I have seen them riding seaward on the waves
Combing the white hair of the waves blown back
When the wind blows the water white and black.
We have lingered in the chambers of the sea
By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown
Till human voices wake us, and we drown.

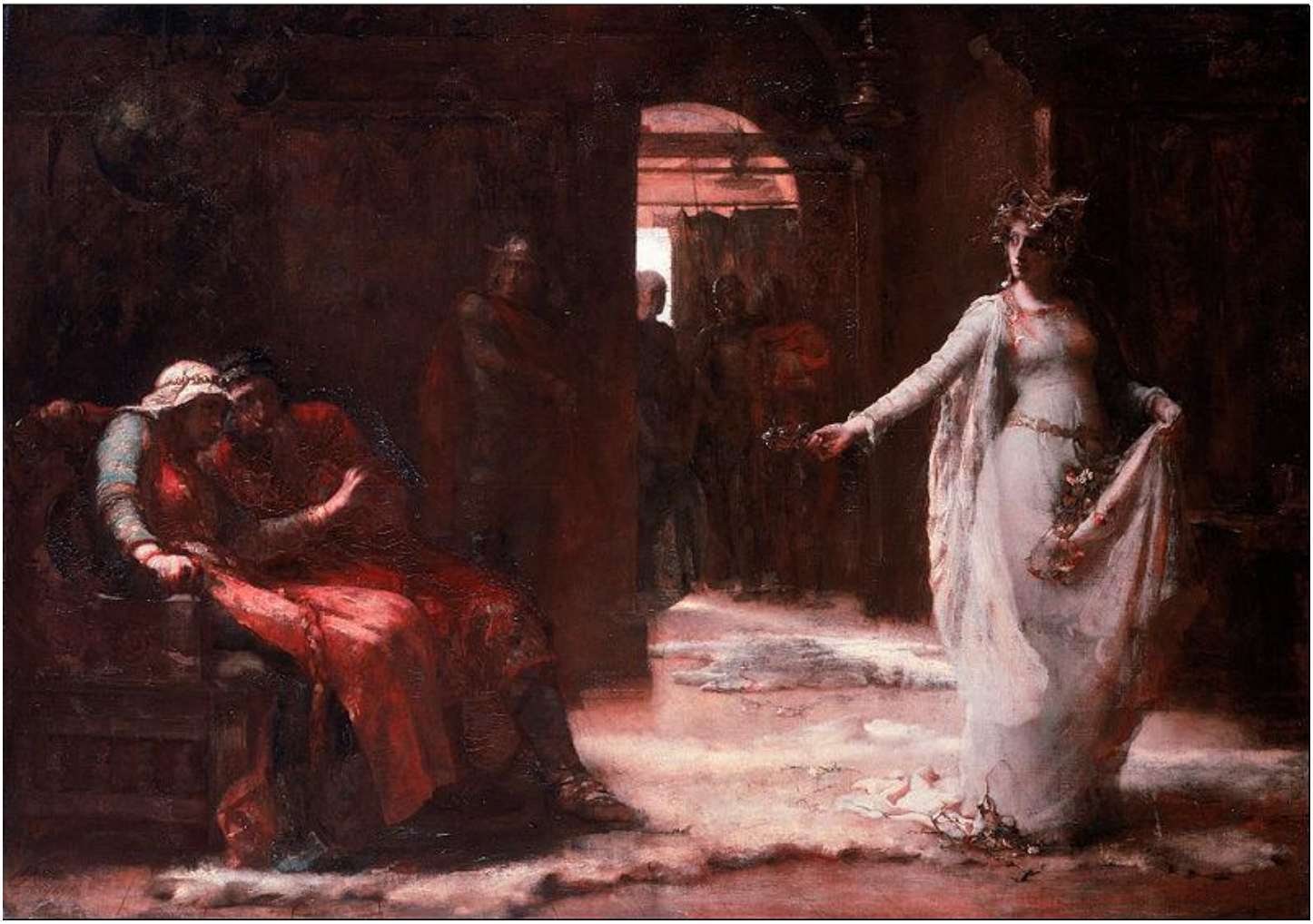
TP-CASTT Poetry Analysis

Use the organizer below to analyze the poem "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock."

T	**Title**: Before reading the poem, make a prediction about what the poem is about based on the title.
P	**Paraphrase**: Translate the poem line by line into your own words. Look for complete thoughts and look up unfamiliar words.
C	**Connotation**: What words or phrases stick out to you? Look for patterns and figurative language, imagery, and sound elements.
A	**Attitude/Tone**: Notice the speaker's attitude toward the subject of the poem. This is the author's tone.
S	**Shifts**: As you look for patterns, also look for contrasts or shifts/changes in poem. Look for changes in language, attitude, setting/imagery, mood, punctuation, other literary devices.
T	**Title**: Examine the title again. What does it mean now that you've read the poem? Did the meaning of the title change?
T	**Theme**: State what the poem is about (subject) and what the poet is trying to say about subject (theme).

Ophelia

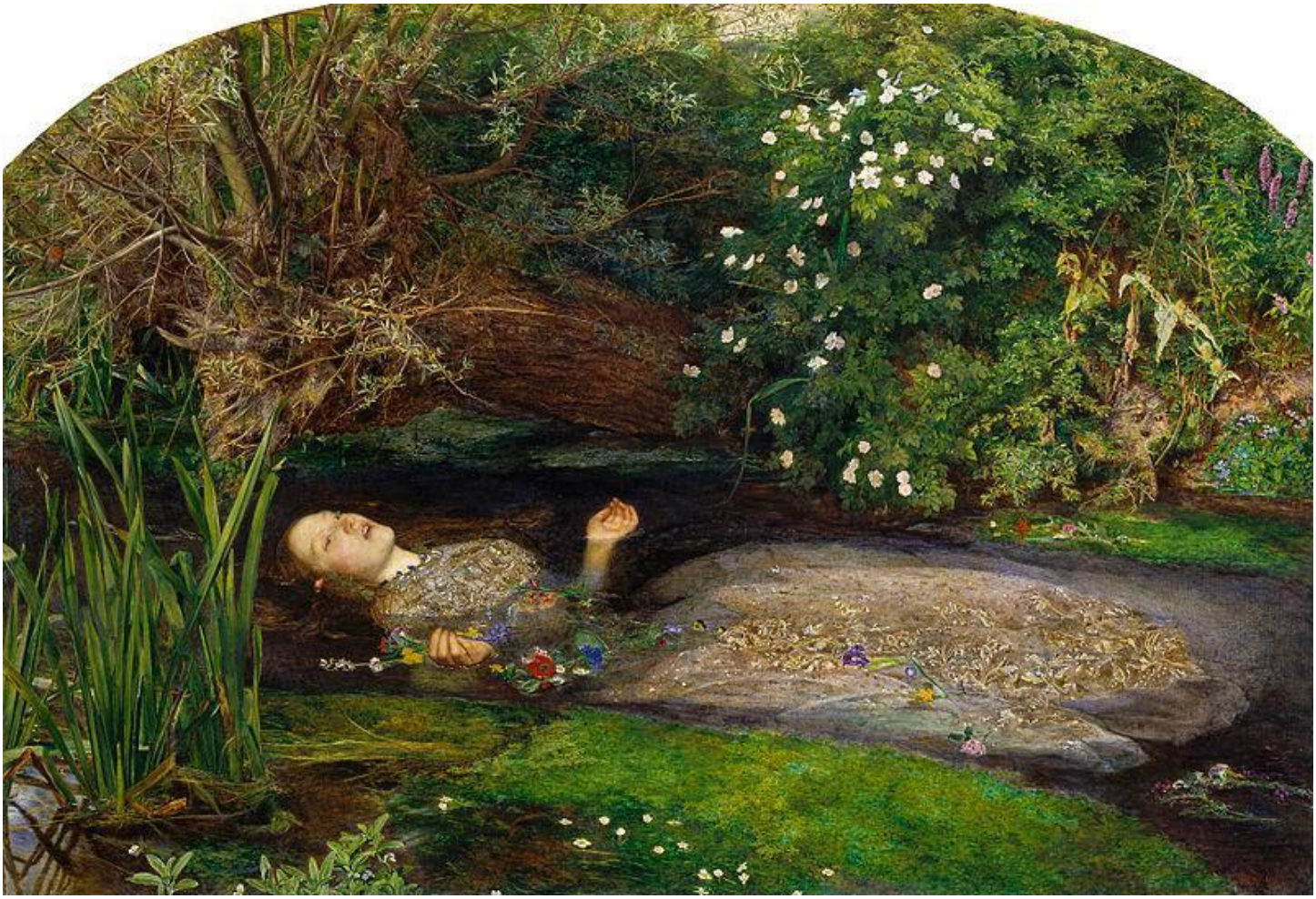
Henrietta Rae



DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION
Louisiana Believes

Ophelia

John Everett Millais



OPTIC[1]

O	**O** is for **Overview**. Describe the main subject of the artwork.
P	**P** is for **Parts.** What parts, elements or details of the artwork seem important?
T	**T** is for **Title.** What information does the title add to the artwork?
I	**I** is for **Interrelationships.** What connections or relationships can be made between the words in the title and the individual parts of the artwork?
C	**C** is for **Conclusion.** What conclusion(s) can be drawn about the meaning of the artwork as a whole? Summarize the message in one or two sentences.

[1] Adapted from Pauk, W. (2000). *How to study in college* (7th ed.). Houghton Mifflin Company: Boston.

OPTIC[1]

O	**O** is for **Overview**. Describe the main subject of the artwork.
P	**P** is for **Parts.** What parts, elements or details of the artwork seem important?
T	**T** is for **Title.** What information does the title add to the artwork?
I	**I** is for **Interrelationships.** What connections or relationships can be made between the words in the title and the individual parts of the artwork?
C	**C** is for **Conclusion.** What conclusion(s) can be drawn about the meaning of the artwork as a whole? Summarize the message in one or two sentences.

[1] Adapted from Pauk, W. (2000). *How to study in college* (7th ed.). Houghton Mifflin Company: Boston.

"Hamlet and His Problems"

T.S. Eliot

FEW critics have even admitted that *Hamlet* the play is the primary problem, and Hamlet the character only secondary. And Hamlet the character has had an especial temptation for that most dangerous type of critic: the critic with a mind which is naturally of the creative order, but which through some weakness in creative power exercises itself in criticism instead. These minds often find in Hamlet a vicarious existence for their own artistic realization. Such a mind had Goethe, who made of Hamlet a Werther; and such had Coleridge, who made of Hamlet a Coleridge; and probably neither of these men in writing about Hamlet remembered that his first business was to study a work of art. The kind of criticism that Goethe and Coleridge produced, in writing of Hamlet, is the most misleading kind possible. For they both possessed unquestionable critical insight, and both make their critical aberrations the more plausible by the substitution—of their own Hamlet for Shakespeare's—which their creative gift effects. We should be thankful that Walter Pater did not fix his attention on this play.

Two recent writers, Mr. J. M. Robertson and Professor Stoll of the University of Minnesota, have issued small books which can be praised for moving in the other direction. Mr. Stoll performs a service in recalling to our attention the labours of the critics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, observing that they knew less about psychology than more recent Hamlet critics, but they were nearer in spirit to Shakespeare's art; and as they insisted on the importance of the effect of the whole rather than on the importance of the leading character, they were nearer, in their old-fashioned way, to the secret of dramatic art in general.

Qua work of art, the work of art cannot be interpreted; there is nothing to interpret; we can only criticize it according to standards, in comparison to other works of art; and for "interpretation" the chief task is the presentation of relevant historical facts which the reader is not assumed to know. Mr. Robertson points out, very pertinently, how

critics have failed in their "interpretation" of *Hamlet* by ignoring what ought to be very obvious: that *Hamlet* is a stratification, that it represents the efforts of a series of men, each making what he could out of the work of his predecessors. The *Hamlet* of Shakespeare will appear to us very differently if, instead of treating the whole action of the play as due to Shakespeare's design, we perceive his *Hamlet* to be superposed upon much cruder material which persists even in the final form.

We know that there was an older play by Thomas Kyd, that extraordinary dramatic (if not poetic) genius who was in all probability the author of two plays so dissimilar as the *Spanish Tragedy* and *Arden of Feversham*; and what this play was like we can guess from three clues: from the *Spanish Tragedy* itself, from the tale of Belleforest upon which Kyd's Hamlet must have been based, and from a version acted in Germany in Shakespeare's lifetime which bears strong evidence of having been adapted from the earlier, not from the later, play. From these three sources it is clear that in the earlier play the motive was a revenge-motive simply; that the action or delay is caused, as in the *Spanish Tragedy*, solely by the difficulty of assassinating a monarch surrounded by guards; and that the "madness" of Hamlet was feigned in order to escape suspicion, and successfully. In the final play of Shakespeare, on the other hand, there is a motive which is more important than that of revenge, and which explicitly "blunts" the latter; the delay in revenge is unexplained on grounds of necessity or expediency; and the effect of the "madness" is not to lull but to arouse the king's suspicion. The alteration is not complete enough, however, to be convincing. Furthermore, there are verbal parallels so close to the *Spanish Tragedy* as to leave no doubt that in places Shakespeare was merely *revising* the text of Kyd. And finally there are unexplained scenes—the Polonius-Laertes and the Polonius-Reynaldo scenes—for which there is little excuse; these scenes are not in the verse style of Kyd, and not beyond doubt in the style of Shakespeare. These Mr. Robertson believes to be scenes in the original play of Kyd reworked by a third hand, perhaps Chapman, before Shakespeare touched the play. And he concludes, with very strong show of reason, that the original play of Kyd was, like certain other revenge plays,

in two parts of five acts each. The upshot of Mr. Robertson's examination is, we believe, irrefragable: that Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, so far as it is Shakespeare's, is a play dealing with the effect of a mother's guilt upon her son, and that Shakespeare was unable to impose this motive successfully upon the "intractable" material of the old play.

Of the intractability there can be no doubt. So far from being Shakespeare's masterpiece, the play is most certainly an artistic failure. In several ways the play is puzzling, and disquieting as is none of the others. Of all the plays it is the longest and is possibly the one on which Shakespeare spent most pains; and yet he has left in it superfluous and inconsistent scenes which even hasty revision should have noticed. The versification is variable. Lines like

Look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,

Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill,

are of the Shakespeare of *Romeo and Juliet*. The lines in Act v. sc. ii.,

Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting

That would not let me sleep…

Up from my cabin,

My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark

Grop'd I to find out them: had my desire;

Finger'd their packet;

are of his quite mature. Both workmanship and thought are in an unstable condition. We are surely justified in attributing the play, with that other profoundly interesting play of "intractable" material and astonishing versification, *Measure for Measure*, to a period of crisis, after which follow the tragic successes which culminate in *Coriolanus*. *Coriolanus* may be not as "interesting" as *Hamlet*, but it is, with *Antony and Cleopatra*, Shakespeare's most assured artistic success. And probably more people have thought *Hamlet* a work of art because they found it interesting, than have found it interesting because it is a work of art. It is the "Mona Lisa" of literature.

The grounds of *Hamlet's* failure are not immediately obvious. Mr. Robertson is undoubtedly correct in concluding that the essential emotion of the play is the feeling of a son towards a guilty mother:

> [Hamlet's] tone is that of one who has suffered tortures on the score of his mother's degradation.... The guilt of a mother is an almost intolerable motive for drama, but it had to be maintained and emphasized to supply a psychological solution, or rather a hint of one.

This, however, is by no means the whole story. It is not merely the "guilt of a mother" that cannot be handled as Shakespeare handled the suspicion of Othello, the infatuation of Antony, or the pride of Coriolanus. The subject might conceivably have expanded into a tragedy like these, intelligible, self-complete, in the sunlight. *Hamlet*, like the sonnets, is full of some stuff that the writer could not drag to light, contemplate, or manipulate into art. And when we search for this feeling, we find it, as in the sonnets, very difficult to localize. You cannot point to it in the speeches; indeed, if you examine the two famous soliloquies you see the versification of Shakespeare, but a content which might be claimed by another, perhaps by the author of the *Revenge of Bussy d' Ambois*, Act v. sc. i. We find Shakespeare's *Hamlet* not in the action, not in any quotations that we might select, so much as in an unmistakable tone which is unmistakably not in the earlier play.

The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an "objective correlative"; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked. If you examine any of Shakespeare's more successful tragedies, you will find this exact equivalence; you will find that the state of mind of Lady Macbeth walking in her sleep has been communicated to you by a skilful accumulation of imagined sensory impressions; the words of Macbeth on hearing of his wife's death strike us as if, given the sequence of events, these words were automatically released by the last event in the series. The artistic "inevitability" lies in this complete adequacy of the external to the emotion; and

this is precisely what is deficient in *Hamlet*. Hamlet (the man) is dominated by an emotion which is inexpressible, because it is in excess of the facts as they appear. And the supposed identity of Hamlet with his author is genuine to this point: that Hamlet's bafflement at the absence of objective equivalent to his feelings is a prolongation of the bafflement of his creator in the face of his artistic problem. Hamlet is up against the difficulty that his disgust is occasioned by his mother, but that his mother is not an adequate equivalent for it; his disgust envelops and exceeds her. It is thus a feeling which he cannot understand; he cannot objectify it, and it therefore remains to poison life and obstruct action. None of the possible actions can satisfy it; and nothing that Shakespeare can do with the plot can express Hamlet for him. And it must be noticed that the very nature of the *données* of the problem precludes objective equivalence. To have heightened the criminality of Gertrude would have been to provide the formula for a totally different emotion in Hamlet; it is just *because* her character is so negative and insignificant that she arouses in Hamlet the feeling which she is incapable of representing.

The "madness" of Hamlet lay to Shakespeare's hand; in the earlier play a simple ruse, and to the end, we may presume, understood as a ruse by the audience. For Shakespeare it is less than madness and more than feigned. The levity of Hamlet, his repetition of phrase, his puns, are not part of a deliberate plan of dissimulation, but a form of emotional relief. In the character Hamlet it is the buffoonery of an emotion which can find no outlet in action; in the dramatist it is the buffoonery of an emotion which he cannot express in art. The intense feeling, ecstatic or terrible, without an object or exceeding its object, is something which every person of sensibility has known; it is doubtless a study to pathologists. It often occurs in adolescence: the ordinary person puts these feelings to sleep, or trims down his feeling to fit the business world; the artist keeps it alive by his ability to intensify the world to his emotions. The Hamlet of Laforgue is an adolescent; the Hamlet of Shakespeare is not, he has not that explanation and excuse. We must simply admit that here Shakespeare tackled a problem which proved too much for

him. Why he attempted it at all is an insoluble puzzle; under compulsion of what experience he attempted to express the inexpressibly horrible, we cannot ever know. We need a great many facts in his biography; and we should like to know whether, and when, and after or at the same time as what personal experience, he read Montaigne, II. xii., *Apologie de Raimond Sebond*. We should have, finally, to know something which is by hypothesis unknowable, for we assume it to be an experience which, in the manner indicated, exceeded the facts. We should have to understand things which Shakespeare did not understand himself.

"The Real or Assumed Madness of Hamlet"

Simon Augustine Blackmore

The mooted question of the Prince's sanity has divided the readers of Shakespeare into two opposing schools; the one defending a feigned, and the other an unfeigned madness. The problem arises from the Poet's unrivalled genius in the creation of characters. So vivid were his conceptions of his ideal creations that, actually living and acting in them, he gives them an objective existence in which they seem living realities, or persons walking among us, endowed with our human emotions and passions, and subject to the vicissitudes of our common mortality. The confounding of this ideal with the real has given rise to two divergent schools. The critics of the one, unmindful of the fact that Hamlet is wholly an ideal existence, are accustomed to look upon him as real and actual as the men they daily meet in social intercourse, and accordingly judge him as they would a man in ordinary life. The other school, ignoring the different impersonations of Hamlet upon the public stage, considers him only as an ideal existence, and places the solution of the problem in the discovery of the dramatist's intention in the creation of the character.

The Poet with consummate art has so portrayed the abnormal actions of a demented mind, and so truly pictured all the traits of genuine madness, even in its minutest symptoms, that a real madman could not enact the character more perfectly. Conscious of his skill in this portrayal so true to life, he has in consequence depicted the court of Claudius divided in opinion on Hamlet's feigned or unfeigned madness, just as the Shakespearean world is divided today. To say that the Queen, and Polonius, and others thought him mad, is no proof of his real madness; but only that by his perfect impersonation he succeeded in creating this belief; and that such was his purpose is clear from the play. If the court firmly believed in the dementia of the Prince, Claudius, who was of a deeper and more penetrating mind and an adept in crafty cunning, stood firm in his doubt from the first. The consciousness of his guilt made him alert and, like a criminal

ever fearing detection, he suspected the concealment of some evil design under Hamlet's mimic madness. If today we find eminent physicians standing with Polonius and the Queen in the belief of Hamlet's real madness, we see on the opposite side others with the astute king and an overwhelming majority of Shakespeare's readers. That many physicians should deem the Prince's madness a reality is nothing surprising. Well known are the celebrated legal cases in which medical specialists of the highest rank were divided in judgment on the sanity or insanity of the man on trial.

Let a man mimic madness as perfectly as Hamlet, and be summoned to court on trial of his sanity. If it be shown by judicial evidence, that before beginning to enact the role of madman, he had never throughout his life exhibited the least symptom of dementia, but, on the contrary, was known as a man of a sound and strong mind; if it be shown that before assuming the antics of a madman, he had actually summoned his trusted friends, informed them of his purpose, cautioned them against betrayal, and even sworn them to secrecy; if it be proved that on every occasion, when moving among his intimate friends, he is consistently sane, and feigns madness only in the presence of those who, he fears, will thwart his secret design; and if it be shown on reputable testimony that he entered upon his course of dementia to guard an incommunicable secret, and to shield himself in the pursuit of a specified end, difficult and dangerous of attainment; such a man on such evidence would in open court be declared beyond all doubt sane and sound of mind by the unanimous verdict of any specially impanelled jury.

The mad role that Hamlet plays to perfection, is certainly a proof of Shakespeare's genius, but by no means a surety of the insanity of the Prince, unless we be prepared to maintain that no one save a madman can simulate dimentia. If, as Lowell has well remarked, Shakespeare himself without being mad, could so observe and remember all the abnormal symptoms of insanity as to reproduce them, why should it be beyond the power of an ideal Hamlet, born into dramatic life, to reproduce them in himself any more than the many tragedians, who, since Shakespeare's day, have so successfully mimicked the madness of the Prince upon the public stage?

The perfect portrayal of Hamlet's mad role has been ascribed to the unaided genius of Shakespeare. The character, it is thought, is nothing more than the outward expression of the Poet's subjective and purely mental creation. Such a notion, while highly magnifying the powers of the artist, is, however, contrary to psychological facts. Our ideas are mental images of things perceived by the senses. They depend upon their objective realities no less than does an image upon the thing which it images. The dictum of Aristotle: "There are no ideas in our intellect which we have not derived from sense perception," has become an axiom of rational philosophy. If then all natural knowledge originates in sense perception, Shakespeare's perfect knowledge of the symptoms of insanity was not the product of his imagination alone, but was due to his observation of these symptoms existing in real human beings. His portrayal is admittedly true to nature, and it is true to nature because a reflex or reproduction of what he himself had witnessed in demented unfortunates. This fact has been placed beyond reasonable doubt by a legal document which was recently discovered in the Roll's Office, London. [The document is a record of a lawsuit of a Huguenot family with whom Shakespeare boarded, and in whose interest he appeared several times as a sworn witness in court.] From it we learn that Shakespeare lived on Muggleton Street, directly opposite a medical college near which was an insane asylum. Here, by studying the antics of the inmates, he had every opportunity to draw from nature, when engaged in the creation of his mad characters. It is therefore more reasonable to infer that his accurate knowledge of traits which are common to the demented was not solely the product of his imagination, but rather the result of his studied observations of individual cases.

Since Hamlet then on the testimony of medical experts exhibits accurately all the symptoms of dementia, the question of his real or pretended madness can be solved only by ascertaining the intention of the Poet. We may safely assume that a dramatist so renowned in his art has not left us in darkness concerning a factor most important in this drama. In our doubt we may turn for light to other dramas wherein he portrays demented

characters with equal skill. Nowhere can we find more striking elements of contrast and resemblance than in Lear and Ophelia. The grandeur of Lear in his sublime outbursts of a mighty passion, differs surprisingly from the pathetic inanities of the gentle Ophelia; yet Shakespeare leaves no doubt of the genuine madness of the one and the other. In Lear, supreme ingratitude, blighting the affections of a fond and over-confiding parent, has wrecked his noble mind; in Ophelia, the loss of a father by the hand of a lover, whose "noble and most sovereign reason" she has seemingly blasted by rejecting his importunate suit, has over-powered her feelings, and left her "divided from herself and her fair judgment, without the which we're pictures, or mere beasts." Both Lear and Ophelia are portrayed as genuinely mad, and nevertheless, unlike Hamlet, they disclose no purpose nor design in their madness, nor seek to conceal the cause of their distress. On the contrary they always have on their lips utterances which directly or indirectly reveal the reason of their mental malady.

Far otherwise is it with Edgar and with Hamlet. Hence, a comparison of the nature of their madness may be a flash of light in darkness. Both are pictured as feigning madness. If Edgar, the victim of a brother's treachery, enacts in his banishment the role of a fool with a perfection which eludes discovery; so does Hamlet, the victim of his uncle's treachery, deceive by his mimic madness all but the crafty King. Both, unlike Lear and Ophelia, enter upon their feigned madness for an expressed specific purpose, and both, far from revealing the real cause of their grief, are ever on the alert to conceal it; because its discovery would frustrate the object of their pursuit. As in the drama of Lear, the Poet has left no possible doubt of the real madness of the king, and of the feigned insanity of Edgar, so also we may reasonably expect to find in his Tragedy of Hamlet, not only clear proofs of Ophelia's madness, but also, sufficient indications of the Prince's feigned dementia.

The first of these indications is the fact that the assumed madness of Hamlet is in conformity with the original story, as told in the old runic rhymes of the Norsemen. Considering moreover the exigencies of the plot and counterplots, the role of madman

seems evidently forced upon him. As soon as he had recovered from the terrible and overpowering agitation of mind and feelings with which the ghostly revelation had afflicted him, he realized that the world had changed about him; that he himself had changed, and that he could no longer comport himself as before at the court of Claudius. This change, he feels he cannot fully conceal, and, therefore, welcomes the thought of hiding his real self behind the mask of a madman. But he must play his role, not indifferently, but with such perfection of truthful reality as to deceive the whole court, and above all, if possible, his arch-enemy, the astute and cunning King. With this in view, the dramatist had of necessity to portray the hero's madness with all the traits of a real affliction; for, if the court could discover Hamlet's madness to be unreal, his design and purpose would be thereby defeated.

It seems evident that the Poet in the very concept of the plot and its development, intended, in the portrayal of Hamlet's antic disposition, to produce the impression of insanity, and, nevertheless, by a flashlight here and there, to expose to us the truth as known alone to himself and to Hamlet's initiated friends. Throughout the first Act, wherein the Prince is pictured in acute mental grief at the loss of his loved father and the shameful conduct of his mother, there is nothing even to suggest the notion of dementia. It is only after the appalling revelations of the ghost, which exposed the secret criminals and his own horrid situation that he resolved to wear the mask of a madman in the furtherance of his suddenly formed plan of "revenge." Hence, at once confiding his purpose to his two trusted friends and swearing them to secrecy, he begins to play the part and to impress upon the court the notion of his lunacy.

Had Shakespeare failed to shed this strong light upon Hamlet's purpose, he would certainly have left room for doubt; but not satisfied with this, he scatters through the drama other luminous marks, to guide our dubious path. A strong mark is found in the many soliloquies in which the Prince, giving way to the intensity of his feelings, expresses the inmost thoughts of his heart; in them were surely offered ample opportunities to expose, here and there, some trace of his supposed affliction. But it is remarkably strange

that never, like the insane, does he lapse in his frequent monologues into irrelevant and incoherent speech, nor use incongruous and inane words. Another luminous index is Hamlet's intercourse with his school-fellow and sole bosom friend, the scholarly Horatio. The Prince throughout takes him into his confidence, and Horatio, therefore, surely knew his mental condition; yet in mutual converse, whether in public or in private, he always supposes his friend to be rational, and never, by any sign or word, does he manifest friendly sentiments of sorrow or of sympathy, as he naturally would, if ignorant of the feigned madness of Hamlet. Horatio is well aware that everyone assumes his friend to be demented, and, nevertheless, because true to him and to his sworn promise of secrecy, he does nothing to dispel, but rather lends himself to sustain the common delusion. Another striking indication is the Prince's treatment of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. After worming out their secret mission from the King, Hamlet partly lifts the veil for us in the words:

HAMLET: But my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

GUILDENSTERN: In what my dear lord?

HAMLET: I am but mad north-northwest; when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.

Again, Hamlet's instruction to the players, his cautious direction to Horatio, as well as his skillful intermittent play of madness when in the same scene he addresses Horatio, Ophelia, the King, and Polonius, display, not only a sane, but also a master mind, versatile in wit, and ready to meet cunning subterfuge with artifice at every point. If he were really mad, he could never have preserved such perfect consistency in word and action towards so many people under rapid change of circumstances; always sane in dealing with his friends, and always simulating madness in presence of those whom he mistrusted. Once he was obliged to raise his vizor in presence of his mother. It was in the formal interview, when she sought to shelter herself against his merciless moral onslaught by asserting his madness. But by unmasking himself he baffled her, and proceeded in a

terrible but righteous wrath to lacerate her dormant conscience, till he awakened her to the shameful sense of her criminal state and to manifest contrition.

An objection to Hamlet's sanity is sometimes seen in his own alleged confessions of madness. He seeks pardon, they say, from Laertes for his violence against him on the plea of madness. This objection is rather an argument to the contrary; for insane persons are never known to plead insanity in self-exculpation. The objection, moreover, is not valid, because it is based upon a misinterpretation of the word madness. The madness of which Hamlet speaks in the present instance and which he pleads in excuse, is not a fixed mental malady, but what in common parlance is a madness synonymous with a sudden outburst of anger, in which self-control is lost for the moment. Such was the madness of Hamlet, when in sudden anger he slew Polonius, and again, when at Ophelia's grave, his mighty grief was roused to wrathful expression by the unseemly and exaggerated show of Laertes.

All these indications scattered through the drama are intermittent flashes, which, amid the darkness of doubt, illumine the objective truth of Hamlet's feigned madness. But there is still another and independent truth which, though already alluded to by a few eminent critics, merits here a fuller consideration. This truth grows to supreme importance when viewed in relation to Shakespeare and his dramatic art. A little reflection on the nature and principles of art will engender a repugnance to any theory of Hamlet's real madness. Art is the expression of the beautiful, and dramatic poetry is a work of art, and like every other art it has its canons and its principles. If poetry be the language of passion of enlivened imagination; if its purpose be to afford intellectual pleasure by the excitement of agreeable and elevated, and pathetic emotions; this certainly is not accomplished by holding up to view the vagaries of a mind stricken with dementia. The prime object of tragic poetry is to expose some lofty and solemn theme so graphically that its very portrayal will awaken in our moral nature a love of virtue and a detestation of vice. This verily is not effected by delineating the mad antics of some unfortunate whose disordered mind leaves him helpless to the mercy of the shifting winds

of circumstances, and irresponsible to the moral laws of human life. No spectator can discover in the portrayal of the irrational actions of a madman an expression of the beautiful. It gives no intellectual pleasure, stirs no pleasing emotion, and engenders no love of virtue and hatred of vice.

Nothing, it is true, may be so abhorrent to our world of existences, but may, in some form or other, be brought under the domain of art. "Men's evil passions have given tragedy to art; crime is beautified by being linked to an avenging Nemesis; ugliness is clothed with a special form of art in the grotesque." Even pain and suffering become attractive in the light of heroism which endures them in the cause of truth and justice. In consequence, the dramatist enjoys the privilege of portraying characters of every hue, of mingling the ignoble with the noble, and of picturing life in all its varied forms, with the view that the contemplation of such characters will excite pleasure or displeasure, and moral admiration or aversion in every healthy mind. This is true only when these characters are not pitiable mental wrecks, but agents free, rational, and responsible. A healthy mind can find nothing but displeasure and revulsion of feeling at the sorry sight of a fellow-being whose reason is dethroned, and who as a mere automaton concentrates in his mental malady the chief elements of the tragedy and its development of plot. A drama so constructed is intellectually and morally repugnant to human nature. Rob the hero of intelligence and consciousness of moral responsibility, and you make the work devoid of human interest and leave it wholly meaningless. Such an unfortunate should not be paraded before the public gaze in defiance of the common feelings of humanity; but in all kindness, be relegated to the charitable care of some home or refuge.

Hamlet's Madness Chart

Use the chart below to note each author's differing ideas on Hamlet's madness.

T.S. Eliot	Simon Blackmore

Culminating Writing Task Directions

How does Hamlet's apparent madness impact the central ideas of the text to reveal a theme?

Write a literary analysis using proper grammar, conventions, spelling, and grade-appropriate words and phrases. Cite several pieces of strong and thorough textual evidence to support the analysis, including direct quotations and parenthetical citations.

Culminating Writing Task Directions

How does Hamlet's apparent madness impact the central ideas of the text to reveal a theme?

To answer this question:

- Select two or more central ideas of *Hamlet* (e.g., vengeance for a wronged father, questioning life after death).
- Trace the development and perceptions of Hamlet's madness in the play.
- Determine whether Hamlet is mad or "mad in craft."
- Determine the impact of his insanity or pretense.
- Examine how that impact shapes and refines the selected central ideas to reveal a theme.

Write a literary analysis using proper grammar, conventions, spelling, and grade-appropriate words and phrases. Cite several pieces of strong and thorough textual evidence to support the analysis, including direct quotations and parenthetical citations.

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION
Louisiana Believes

Culminating Writing Task Rubric

	3	2	1	0
Reading and Understanding Text	• Shows **full comprehension** of ideas both explicit and inferential indicated by grade-level reading standards • **Accurate** analysis and reasoning is demonstrated through **ample** textual evidence	• Shows **comprehension** of ideas indicated by grade-level reading standards • **Mostly accurate** analysis and reasoning is demonstrated through **adequate** textual evidence	• Shows **limited comprehension** of ideas indicated by grade-level reading standards • **Minimally accurate** analysis and reasoning is demonstrated through **minimal** textual evidence	• Shows **no comprehension** of ideas indicated by grade-level reading standards • **Inaccurate or no** analysis and reasoning is demonstrated with **little or no** textual evidence
Writing about Text	• Addresses the prompt and introduces a topic or **precise** claim(s), distinguishing claim(s) from counterclaims • Development is even and organized to make important connections and distinctions with **relevant** support[1] • Language creates cohesion and clarifies relationships among ideas • **Formal** and **objective** style and tone **consistently** demonstrate awareness of purpose and audience	• Addresses the prompt and states a topic or claim(s) • Development is organized with **some** support and cohesion • Language creates cohesion and links ideas • Style and tone demonstrate awareness of purpose and audience	• Addresses the prompt and has an introduction • Development and support are **minimal** • Language links ideas • Style and tone demonstrate **limited** awareness of purpose or audience	• Does not address the prompt • **Lacks** organization, is **undeveloped**, and **does not** provide support • Language and style demonstrate **no** awareness of purpose or audience
Language Conventions	• **Full command** of conventions indicated by grade-level standards • **Few minor errors** do not interfere with meaning	• **Some command** of conventions indicated by grade-level standards • **May have errors** that occasionally interfere with meaning	• **Limited command** of conventions indicated by grade-level standards • **Errors** often interfere with meaning	• **No command** of conventions indicated by grade-level standards • **Frequent and varied errors** interfere with meaning

[1] Support includes evidence, facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, other information and examples.

"New Words in *Hamlet*"

Karen Kay

It is often said that Shakespeare's use of language in Hamlet is particularly rich and innovative. A frequently quoted remark is that, in writing Hamlet, Shakespeare introduced 'over six hundred' new words into the English language. Internet sources, particularly, tend to repeat this information. However, while Shakespeare did employ a wide vocabulary in the writing of Hamlet, the figure of 'over six hundred' refers to words that, according to Alfred Hart (1943), Shakespeare had not previously used in any of his plays. Hart called these 'fresh' words.[1] His research involved putting the plays into chronological order[2], and counting the words, then arriving at the number of fresh words used in any given play. That meant that, in Shakespeare's first play, all of the words were fresh, since he had not used them before. This is not the same thing as words that are new to the English language. Both G. R. Hibbard and Stephen Greenblatt correctly state that Shakespeare employed over 600 words that were new to him in Hamlet, Hibbard citing Hart's work directly[3]. These sources have sometimes been misunderstood, and the mistake has arisen.

What Hart did say was that a hundred and seventy words in Hamlet were new to the English language[4]. He cites the Oxford English Dictionary, or OED, in his articles, and this is one possible source for his information. However, determining when words were first used in Elizabethan English is no easy matter. There are no audio recordings that would allow us to listen to speech, and thus our understanding is confined to what we

[1] Alfred Hart, 'The Growth of Shakespeare's Vocabulary', Review of English Studies, 19, no. 75 (July 1943), pp. 242-54 (p. 249). Hart counted 606 'fresh' words in Hamlet, of which 396 were not used in any of Shakespeare's other plays.

[2] Hart faced some difficulty here, because the dates when the plays were written are frequently disputed. Cf. Hart, 'Growth', p. 246.

[3] Cf. William Shakespeare, Hamlet, ed. by G. R. Hibbard, The Oxford Shakespeare (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), p. 30, and Stephen Greenblatt, Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare (London: Cape, 2004), pp. 307-8.

[4] Alfred Hart, 'Vocabularies of Shakespeare's Plays', Review of English Studies, 19, no. 74 (April 1943), pp. 128-40 (p. 135).

read in texts. We can never be certain that what we think is the first appearance of a word in our literature is really the very first; all we can say is that no earlier use has yet been discovered. In addition, we do not know how long a word or expression may have been used in the spoken language, before being written down. So we cannot be sure, even if a trusted source like the OED cites Hamlet as the first instance of a word being used, that it had never been written or spoken before.

Also, we must think about what counts as a 'word'. Are 'believe', 'believed', 'believing', 'believer' and 'belief' all different words, or forms of the same word? And what about the part of speech a word belongs to? 'Cool' may be a verb or an adjective, and may be used literally, or metaphorically, as in 'Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper/ Sprinkle cool patience' (Ham. 3.4.119-20)[5]. The OED records first instances of different forms and meanings of words. Some of these are archaic, so even if Shakespeare uses a word we recognise, he may be using it in an unfamiliar way. Hamlet contains many words that we use today that were then used as different parts of speech, or with other meanings, such as 'emulate' (used as an adjective, 1.1.82) and 'unimproved' (according to the OED, meaning 'not reproved', and according to the Arden Shakespeare, meaning 'untried', 1.1.95)[6]. Issues like these mean that every scholar may arrive at a different conclusion when deciding which words and usages appeared for the first time in any given work of literature.[7]

[5] All quotations follow the spellings and the act, scene and line numbers of William Shakespeare, Hamlet, ed. by Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, The Arden Shakespeare, 3rd Series (London: Thomson Learning, 2006). These are often different from the quotations as cited in the online OED.

[6] Cf. Hamlet, p. 157, n. 95.

[7] Cf. Hart, 'Vocabularies', pp. 129-30, for an explanation of his word-counting methods. For example, he writes, 'I counted as one word a noun used adjectivally, an adjective used as a noun or an adverb, an adverb used as a preposition, or a preposition used as a conjunction or adverb. [...] In general, I did not count inflected forms of a verb, e.g., present participle, past participle or gerund, as distinct from the parent verb. If a participle had acquired a specialized sense or represented a substantive with the addition of –ed or –ing, it was reckoned as a distinct word' (p. 129). Also cf. N. F. Blake, Shakespeare's Language: An Introduction (London: Macmillan, 1983), pp. 41-2, for a discussion of lexical innovation in Hamlet and contemporary literature.

The online edition of the OED gives a number of words that make their first appearance in the English language in Hamlet.[8] These include such colourful words as 'avouch' (1.1.56), 'blastments' (1.3.41), 'fanged' (3.4.201), 'gibber' (1.1.115) and 'strewments' (5.1.222), as well as the more ordinary 'defeated' (1.2.10), 'reword' (3.4.142), 'survivor' (1.2.90), and 'unpolluted' (5.1.228). Shakespeare uses 'cudgel' in I Hen. IV with the literal meaning 'to beat with a cudgel', but in Hamlet it has the figurative meaning of racking one's brain: 'cudgel thy brains no more about it' (5.1.52). Expressions include 'Gods bodkin', (2.2.467), an oath meaning 'God's dear body!', and the melodramatic 'Unhand me, gentlemen' (1.4.84).

Many critics agree that Hamlet is notable for linguistic inventiveness and variety. According to Auden, in *Hamlet* Shakespeare was 'developing a more flexible verse', but also using prose innovatively: Hamlet speaks verse in passionate scenes and soliloquies, and prose conversationally.[9] For Frank Kermode, the language of Hamlet is characterised by 'limitless variation'.[10] Paired words and expressions, Kermode finds, are particularly characteristic of Hamlet. They can be oppositional, as 'spirit of health, or goblin damned' (1.4.40), or express similar ideas, as in 'whips and scorns of time' (3.1.69), 'dead waste and middle of the night' (1.2.197), or 'the trappings and the suits of woe' (1.2.86). Also notable are oxymorons, like 'crafty madness' (3.1.8) and 'defeated joy' (1.2.10), as well as repetition of adjectives, and indeed of sounds, as in 'bloody, bawdy villain,/ Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain' (2.2.515-16). We can see why, for Alfred Hart, 'Hamlet is the supreme example of Shakespeare's delight in and command of fresh and forceful words'.

[8] For those who have access to the OED online, http://dictionary.oed.com/ a list of 121 entries was found using Advanced search, and entering Shakes. in the first cited author field and Ham. in the quotation work field. However, this search may yield instances, as with 'crimeful' and 'defeat', where Shakespeare uses the word first in another play. Searches with Shakes. in first cited author and Ham. in first cited work, or with Shakes. in quotation author and Ham. in first cited work, yield only 96 entries. However, the word 'cool' in an adjectival, figurative sense, 'cool patience', whose first instance is given as Hamlet, appears in none of these search results, so all may be incomplete. The search facility appears to be sensitive to the exact forms of the author and title, which are frequently abbreviated, so entering Shakespeare and Hamlet will not bring up a full list.

[9] W. H. Auden, Lectures on Shakespeare, ed. by Arthur Kirsch (London: Faber, 2000), p. 160.

[10] Frank Kermode, Shakespeare's Language (New York: Farrar, 2000), p. 97.

Source: Kay, K. (2006). New Words in *Hamlet*. Retrieved October 26, 2015, from http://www.britaininprint.net/shakespeare/study_tools/new_words_hamlet.html. Used with permission of Britain in Print.

Extension Task Directions

1) Choose a single, repeated word from *Hamlet* and investigate the significance of that word in terms of specific and central issues in the play.

a. Significance to central issue 1

b. Significance to central issue 2

c. Significance to central issue 3

2) Use an online dictionary to discover the word's evolution and multiple meanings, and then apply that knowledge to lines in the play to examine the various interpretations that can result.

Word Evolution	**Time**	**Place**	**Meaning**
Origin			
Change			
Change			
Change			

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION
Louisiana Believes

Extension Task Directions

Part of Speech	Meaning

Line from *Hamlet*	Different meanings	Different interpretations

Extension Task Directions

3) Then write a multi-paragraph argumentative essay that introduces a claim about the significance of the word you chose in terms of specific and central issues in the play; cites strong and thorough textual evidence; organizes reasons and evidence logically; creates cohesion through words, phrases, and clauses; establishes and maintains a formal style and objective tone; and provides a related conclusion. Your completed writing should use grade-appropriate words and phrases and demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage, punctuation (observing hyphenation conventions), and spelling.
4) Present your findings to the class, conveying a clear and distinct perspective with organization, development, substance, and style appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. Make strategic use of digital media, such as graphs or audio, to enhance understanding of your findings and add interest.

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION
Louisiana Believes

Extension Task Rubric

	3	2	1	0
Reading and Understanding Text	• Shows **full comprehension** of ideas both explicit and inferential indicated by grade-level reading standards • **Accurate** analysis and reasoning is demonstrated through **ample** textual evidence	• Shows **comprehension** of ideas indicated by grade-level reading standards • **Mostly accurate** analysis and reasoning is demonstrated through **adequate** textual evidence	• Shows **limited comprehension** of ideas indicated by grade-level reading standards • **Minimally accurate** analysis and reasoning is demonstrated through **minimal** textual evidence	• Shows **no comprehension** of ideas indicated by grade-level reading standards • **Inaccurate or no** analysis and reasoning is demonstrated with **little or no** textual evidence
Writing about Text	• Addresses the prompt and introduces a topic or **precise** claim(s), distinguishing claim(s) from counterclaims • Development is even and organized to make important connections and distinctions with **relevant** support[1] • Language creates cohesion and clarifies relationships among ideas • **Formal** and **objective** style and tone **consistently** demonstrate awareness of purpose and audience	• Addresses the prompt and states a topic or claim(s) • Development is organized with **some** support and cohesion • Language creates cohesion and links ideas • Style and tone demonstrate awareness of purpose and audience	• Addresses the prompt and has an introduction • Development and support are **minimal** • Language links ideas • Style and tone demonstrate **limited** awareness of purpose or audience	• Does not address the prompt • **Lacks** organization, is **undeveloped**, and **does not** provide support • Language and style demonstrate **no** awareness of purpose or audience
Language Conventions	• **Full command** of conventions indicated by grade-level standards • **Few minor errors** do not interfere with meaning	• **Some command** of conventions indicated by grade-level standards • **May have errors** that occasionally interfere with meaning	• **Limited command** of conventions indicated by grade-level standards • **Errors** often interfere with meaning	• **No command** of conventions indicated by grade-level standards • **Frequent and varied errors** interfere with meaning

[1] Support includes evidence, facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, other information and examples.

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION
louisiana Believes

Multimedia Presentation Rubric

	3	2	1
Demonstration of understanding	The presentation addresses all elements of the task and effectively demonstrates understanding of the topic, text(s), or findings.	The presentation partially addresses the task and generally demonstrates understanding of the topic, text(s), or findings.	The presentation does not address the task or demonstrates a lack of understanding of the topic, text(s), or findings.
Organization and development of presentation	The presentation is organized clearly and logically so that listeners can easily identify the central ideas or claims and follow the line of reasoning; the supporting evidence is relevant and from credible sources.	The presentation is organized and has a clear central idea or claim and supporting evidence from credible sources.	The presentation has a central idea or claim and/or supporting evidence.
Multimedia components	The presentation effectively incorporates multimedia components (e.g., videos, graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays to clarify, support, or enhance, the central ideas or claims.	The presentation incorporates multimedia components (e.g., videos, graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays.	The presentation either fails to incorporates multimedia components (e.g., videos, graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays or the components are distracting and ineffective.
Delivery of presentation	Speaker maintains consistent and appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.	Speaker makes eye contact and can be generally heard and understood.	Speaker sometimes makes eye contact and is generally difficult to understand.