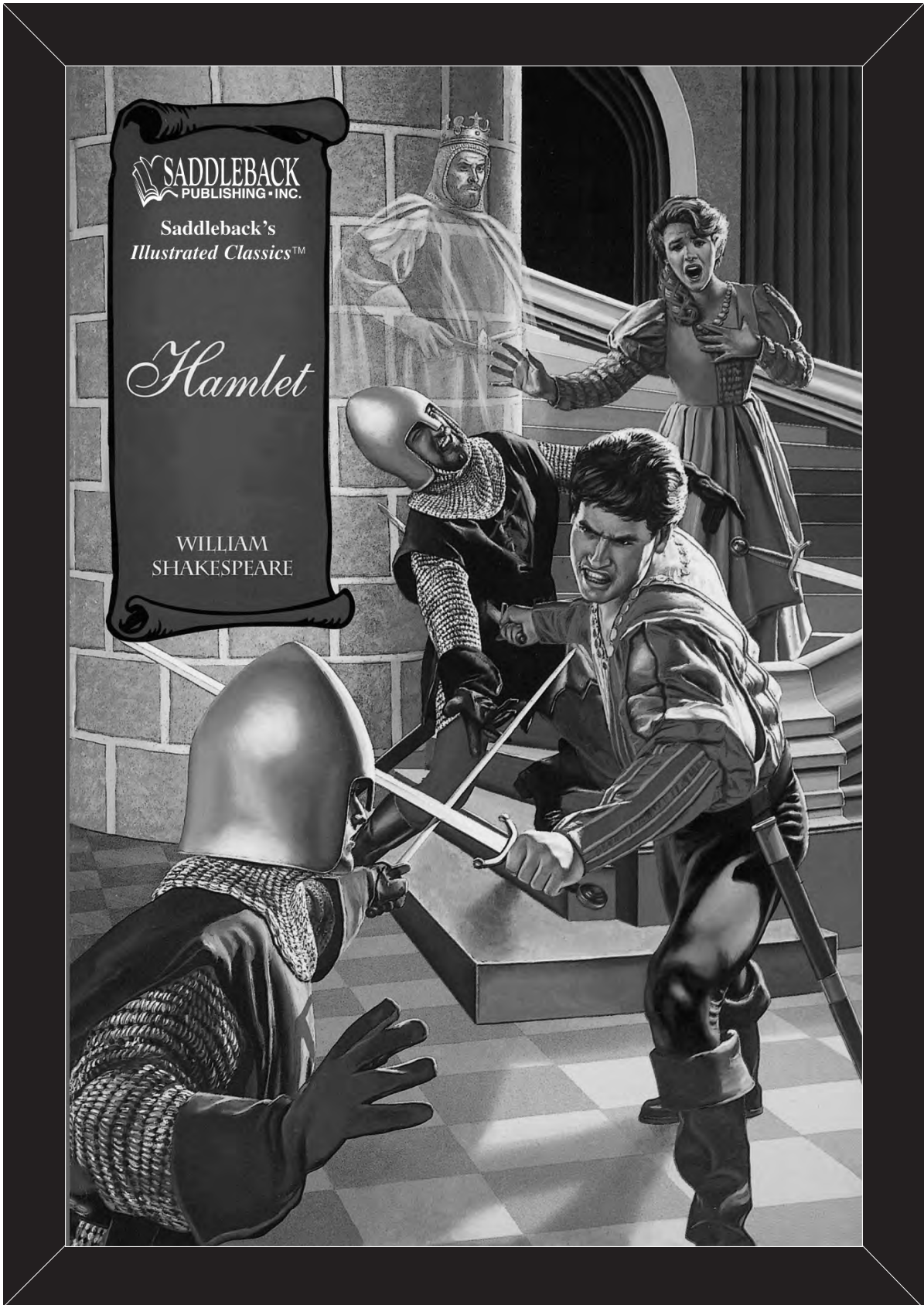


STUDY GUIDE



HAMLET

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NOTES TO THE TEACHER

SADDLEBACK'S ILLUSTRATED CLASSICS™ SERIES

What better way could there be to motivate struggling readers? Here are 45 of the world's all-time greatest stories—in the form of full-color graphic novels, no less! (Check the copyright page in this guide for a complete list of titles.)

THE REPRODUCIBLE EXERCISES

The eleven reproducible exercises that support each Illustrated Classics title are ideal for use in the academically diverse classroom. All written at a sub-5.0 reading level, they are designed to be “moderately challenging” for all learners—be they on-level recreational readers, older, struggling readers in need of skills reinforcement, or native speakers of other languages who are working to improve their command of language structure.

As a whole, the exercises focus on developing the traditional skillsets that underpin reading competence. The overall goal is to reinforce and extend basic reading comprehension while using the text as a springboard for acquisition of important language arts competencies. Specific skills and concepts targeted in the exercises include: following directions, vocabulary development, recall, cause and effect, recognizing details, generalization, inference, interpreting figurative language, understanding idioms and multiple-meaning words, etc.

All students—regardless of their range of exceptionalities and markedly different experiential backgrounds—can benefit from, and even enjoy, the experience of successfully “showing what they know” via the reproducible exercises.

DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION: OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Responsive teachers have always used a variety of methods and strategies to tailor instruction to the needs of specific students. To this end, the reproducible exercises lend themselves to a variety of presentation modes. Following are some suggestions for varying your approach:

- ▶ **Pre-reading:** Before students begin to read the story, hand out copies of the *Previewing the Story* and *About the Author* exercises. You, or student volunteers, might read them aloud before eliciting answers from the class. The *Interpreting Visual Clues* exercise also lends itself to introducing the story through class discussion.
- ▶ **Assign reading buddies or small reading groups.** Students not yet able to work independently can be paired off as reading buddies who consult with and reinforce each other as they answer questions or solve the puzzles. Small groups can also be formed to cooperatively complete the exercises. If appropriate, groups can compete as teams. (“Winners” might finish first or have the most correct answers.)
- ▶ **When possible, give your students a choice of response modes.** As an alternative to working independently, allowing students to respond orally to the exercise questions may give some students a better chance to demonstrate their grasp of the material. Many students can greatly benefit by “listening to how other people think” as they explain their answers. Choice also increases the struggling student’s sense of autonomy and engagement—which in turn enhances his or her sense of competence and self-esteem.
- ▶ **Native speakers of other languages** will especially benefit from the combination of the pictorial representations in the book and the follow-up printed matter in the exercises. While maintaining different performance expectations for students at different levels, use the vocabulary exercises to help these students add to their stock of English words and phrases. Students at the intermediate to advanced levels are ideal candidates for the *Word Study* and *Language Study* exercises that deal with idioms, figures of speech, and multiple-meaning words.
- ▶ **Suggestions for lesson extensions:**
 - Write a paragraph about your favorite character.
 - Do Internet research on the author or the story’s setting.
 - Write a three-paragraph book report.
 - Use the vocabulary words as the basis for a spelling test.
 - Have students rewrite lines of dialogue in their own words.
 - Ask students to write a new title for the book.



HAMLET

PREVIEWING THE STORY

What's the story about? Read the summary before answering the questions.
Hint: There are no right or wrong answers. Use your imagination!



Hamlet, a young prince of Denmark, was terribly upset about his father's recent death. It seemed hard to believe that the king had been bitten by a snake in his own garden. Then, shortly afterward, Hamlet was shocked to hear that his mother had so quickly married Claudius—the dead king's brother. And now a ghost resembling the dead king is appearing on top of the castle walls.

Hamlet suspects Claudius of murder and vows to get revenge. But partly by chance and partly by his own faults, "getting even" does not make Hamlet happy. As you read, think about the choices Hamlet makes. Perhaps you will begin to wonder what you would have done in his place.

1. Have you—or someone you know or read about—had to accept a stepparent into the family? Name one thing that might be easy about accepting that situation and one thing that might be very difficult.

EASY: _____

HARD: _____

2. *Hamlet* was written 400 years ago. Do you think the people of that time were more likely to believe in ghosts than people are now? Explain why or why not.

3. Do you think it's morally justifiable to "take revenge" for a wrong done? Explain your reasoning.

4. In the play, Hamlet is troubled by doubts that the ghost's accusations are true. As a result of those doubts, he hesitates to take action. Have you ever suspected some kind of wrongdoing—but failed to take action because you weren't *sure* about it? What were you suspicious about?

5. Hundreds of years ago kings had much more power than they do now. Do you think that very powerful people tend to attract enemies as well as admirers? What negative human emotions might a powerless person feel for a king?



HAMLET

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A. Read about the author's life on the page before the story starts. After reviewing what you have read, study the statements below. Then write **T** for *true*, **F** for *false*, or **NM** for *not mentioned* next to each statement.

1. _____ Shakespeare's plays were never performed during his lifetime.
2. _____ Shakespeare was born in London and died in Stratford-on-Avon.
3. _____ Shakespeare's sonnets have been translated into many other languages.
4. _____ Young Shakespeare could read Greek and Latin as well as English.
5. _____ Shakespeare is better known for his writing than his acting.
6. _____ Shakespeare's son and daughters performed in all his plays.
7. _____ Shakespeare is believed to have been 53 years old when he died.
8. _____ Shakespeare was born in the 15th century and died in the 16th century.
9. _____ Shakespeare wrote some comedies, but he preferred writing tragedies.
10. _____ Shakespeare staged his plays in the Globe Theater.

B. Circle a letter to correctly complete each sentence.

1. The exact date of Shakespeare's birth is uncertain because
 - a. he didn't want anyone to know his age.
 - b. a record of his birth has not been found.
 - c. a fire destroyed his parents' home.
2. When Shakespeare left home and went to London, he was
 - a. engaged to Anne Hathaway.
 - b. already a famous actor.
 - c. not quite 30 years old.
3. Shakespeare maintained control over his own plays by
 - a. forming his own troupe of actors.
 - b. acting in all of his plays.
 - c. attending every rehearsal of his plays.
4. It is safe to assume that people who lived some 400 years ago
 - a. were less talented than modern people.
 - b. had fewer educational opportunities than we do.
 - c. enjoyed television more than we do.

**INTERPRETING VISUAL CLUES**

Stories in illustrated novels are told with pictures as well as with words. Pictures, for example, can show when and where a story takes place. They can also show what the characters are thinking or feeling much easier than words can.

In your book, turn to the referenced page and look closely at the picture. Then circle a letter to answer the question or complete the sentence.

1. **Page 40—top righthand side.**
Notice the clothing and the appearance of the room. It's clear that this story takes place long ago, and that the young man on the left is
 - a. about to apologize to the other man.
 - b. ready to draw his sword and kill the other man.
 - c. undecided about what to do next.
2. **Page 23—top lefthand side.**
By studying the expression on the man's face you can tell that he feels
 - a. puzzled, thoughtful, somewhat disturbed.
 - b. overwhelmed with grief and disappointment.
 - c. happy to be delivering good news.
3. **Page 53—bottom of page.**
From the way the characters are positioned you can tell that
 - a. the young man has been invited to attend the burial.
 - b. the young man doesn't wish to be seen.
 - c. the characters are all afraid of ghosts.
4. **Page 26—bottom of page.**
You can tell that the man on the right is of higher social rank than the other two men because
 - a. he's wearing a crown.
 - b. they wear finer clothes.
 - c. they are bowing to him.
5. **Page 58—middle righthand side.**
You can tell by the position of the King's hand that he is
 - a. patting the queen's arm.
 - b. trying to keep her from drinking.
 - c. joining the queen in a toast.
6. **Page 47—top lefthand side.**
The expression on the young woman's face suggests that she is
 - a. looking for someone.
 - b. happy and carefree.
 - c. deeply distressed.
7. **Page 36—bottom righthand side.**
The details in the picture indicate that
 - a. a large crowd is watching a play being enacted.
 - b. a man is trying to wake up his friend.
 - c. a man is about to poison a woman.