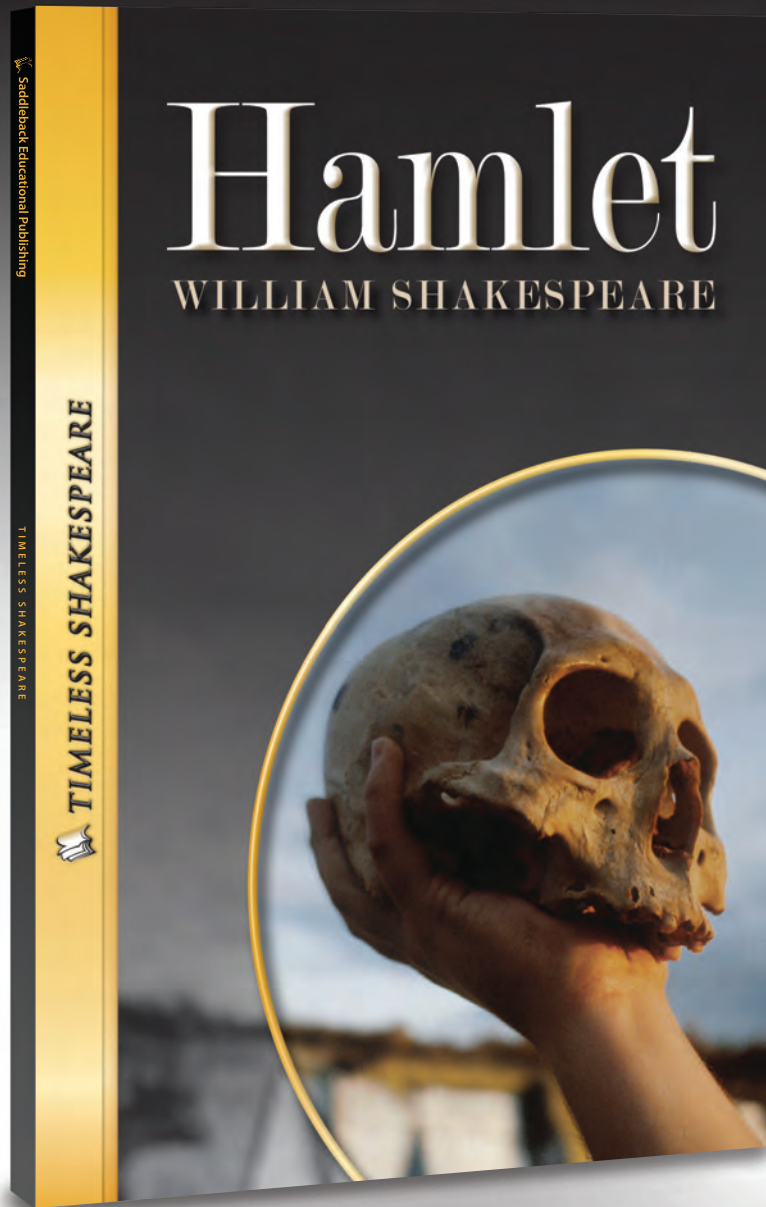




TIMELESS SHAKESPEARE

STUDY GUIDE



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TIMELESS SHAKESPEARE

NOTES TO THE TEACHER

THE PROGRAM

Timeless Shakespeare were expressly designed to help students with limited reading ability gain access to some of the world's greatest literature. While retaining the essence and stylistic "flavor" of the original, each *Timeless Shakespeare* has been expertly adapted to a reading level that never exceeds grade 4.0.

An ideal introduction to later, more in-depth investigations of the original works, *Timeless Shakespeare* utilize a number of strategies to ensure the involvement of reluctant readers: airy, uncomplicated page design, shortened sentences, easy-reading type style, elimination of archaic words and spellings, shortened total book length, and handsome illustrations.

THE STUDY GUIDES

The *Timeless Shakespeare Study Guides* provide a wealth of reproducible support materials to help students extend the learning experience. Features include critical background notes on both the author and the times, character descriptions, chapter summaries, and seven "universal" exercises which may be used to follow up the reading of any *Timeless Shakespeare* novel or play.

In addition to the universal exercises, 27 title-specific exercises are included to review, test, and enrich students' comprehension as well as their grasp of important vocabulary and concepts. All reproducible, the worksheets provided

for Shakespeare's plays are designed to be used act-by-act as the student's reading of the play proceeds. Several exercises are provided for each act. One always focuses on key vocabulary. Others include a simple comprehension check and treatment of an important literary concept such as character analysis, point of view, inference, or figurative language. A three-page final exam is also included in every *Timeless Shakespeare Study Guide*.

USING THE STUDY GUIDES

Before assigning any of the reproducible exercises, be sure each student has a personal copy of the *Glossary* and the *Facts About the Author* and *About the Times*. Students will need to be familiar with many of the literary terms in order to complete the worksheets. Obviously, the *Facts About the Author* and *About the Times* lend themselves to any number of writing, art, or research projects you may wish to assign.

The title-specific exercises may be used as a springboard for class discussions or role-playing. Alternatively, you may wish to assign some exercises as homework and others as seatwork during the closing minutes of a class period.

All exercises in this Guide are designed to accommodate independent study as well as group work. The occasional assignment of study partners or competitive teams often enhances interest and promotes creativity.

FACTS ABOUT THE AUTHOR

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

(1564–1616)

William Shakespeare is widely regarded as the finest poet and playwright who ever lived. Yet he was the son of illiterate parents and never attended college!

Much of this remarkable man’s life is shrouded in mystery. He had been dead almost a hundred years before anyone wrote a short account of his life. But we do know that his mother, Mary Arden, was the daughter of a prosperous farmer. His father, John Shakespeare, was a successful glovemaking who also traded in wool, hides, and grain. They lived in an English market town called Stratford-on-Avon, where William was born in 1564. Their house still stands.

Until the age of 13 or 14, Shakespeare probably attended the Stratford grammar school where he read the great Latin classics of Cicero, Virgil, and Seneca. Some stories say that he had to leave school early because of his father’s financial difficulties. But there is no official record of his life until 1582, when he married Anne Hathaway at the age of 18. By 1585, he and Anne had three children. No one knows for

sure what happened to him during the next seven years, although one account says that he was a schoolmaster. In 1592, however, records reveal that he was working in London as both an actor and a playwright. By that year, he had published two popular poems and written at least three plays.

Records from various sources show that Shakespeare became wealthy. In 1597, he bought one of the grandest houses in Stratford. (It had 10 fireplaces!) The next year he bought 10 percent of the stock in the handsome Globe Theater and a fine house in London. His artistic life was very busy and productive. His theatrical company, known as the King’s Men, presented a variety of plays, week after week. It is thought that he rehearsed in the mornings, acted in the afternoons, and wrote at night.

After 1612, he spent most of his time in Stratford with his family. He died there, at the age of 52, on April 23, 1616. The tomb of the great literary genius still stands at Holy Trinity Church in Stratford.

FACTS ABOUT THE TIMES

In 1564, when Shakespeare was born...

About 100,000 people lived in London; the horsedrawn coach was introduced in England; the great Italian sculptor and painter, Michelangelo, died; an outbreak of plague killed more than 20,000 Londoners.

In 1616, when Shakespeare died...

Sir Walter Raleigh began his search for El Dorado; tobacco was becoming a popular crop in Virginia; Pocahontas died; the Catholic church forbade Galileo from conducting any further scientific investigations.

HAMLET

FACTS ABOUT THE CHARACTERS

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark

Claudius, King of Denmark and Hamlet's uncle; brother of the murdered King Hamlet

Ghost, the ghost of Hamlet's murdered father

Gertrude, Queen of Denmark, Hamlet's mother

Polonius, chief adviser to Claudius

Horatio, Hamlet's longtime loyal friend

Laertes, son of Polonius and brother of Ophelia

Ophelia, daughter of Polonius and sister of Laertes

Rosencrantz and **Guildenstern**, Hamlet's former schoolmates

Fortinbras, Prince of Norway; a brave young man

Voltimand and **Cornelius**, Danish courtiers sent by Claudius to serve as ambassadors to Norway

Marcellus, **Bernardo**, and **Francisco**, guards at Elsinore

Reynaldo, Polonius's servant

Osric, a Danish courtier

SUMMARIES BY ACT

ACT 1

Horatio and the guards decide to tell young Hamlet about the appearance of his dead father's ghost outside the castle at Elsinore. Meanwhile, Gertrude and Claudius tell Hamlet that it is time for him to stop mourning his father's death. When they leave the room, Hamlet reveals his thoughts. If not for God's law, he would kill himself out of grief for his father and shame for his mother. He is shocked that she has married such an inferior man as Claudius less than two months after her husband's death! When Hamlet hears about his father's ghost, he decides to speak to it, swearing the others to secrecy. Before leaving for Paris, Laertes tells Ophelia to be wary of Hamlet's attentions in an effort to protect her virtue and

reputation. Polonius then gives Laertes advice about his own conduct and tells Ophelia to avoid Hamlet's company. She promises to do so.

At midnight, old King Hamlet's ghost tells Prince Hamlet that he has been murdered by Claudius. Young Hamlet promises revenge.

ACT 2

Ophelia tells Polonius that Hamlet's behavior is very strange. Thinking that Hamlet is sick with love for Ophelia, Polonius decides to tell the king and queen about it. The king and queen tell Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to spy on Hamlet and find out what's wrong with him. Cornelius and Voltimand return from Norway and report that young Fortinbras has agreed not to attack

Norway, but instead will go against the Poles. When Polonius reports Hamlet's infatuation with Ophelia, Gertrude and Claudius agree that this might explain his strange behavior. Claudius and Polonius decide to eavesdrop on Hamlet and Ophelia. Then Rosencrantz and Guildenstern enter again. Now Hamlet discovers they've been brought to the castle to observe him. They mention a group of traveling actors who will be putting on a play at the castle. Hamlet asks the actors to include several new lines written by him. He thinks these lines will cause a reaction in the king and so prove his guilt.

ACT 3

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern report to the king and queen that Hamlet wants them to attend the play that night. The king and Polonius overhear Hamlet telling Ophelia that he never loved her. That evening, when the actors perform the new scene in the play, Hamlet sees that the king is very upset. The scene is very similar to his father's murder. When the king abruptly exits, Hamlet and Horatio are sure of the king's guilt. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern enter and tell Hamlet that his mother wishes to see him. Polonius is hiding in the queen's room while Hamlet visits his mother. Hearing a noise and thinking it is the king, Hamlet kills Polonius through the drapes. The Ghost reappears, and asks Hamlet to speak more kindly to his mother. Then Hamlet exits, dragging out the body of Polonius.

ACT 4

Realizing that he was Hamlet's intended victim, the king sends Hamlet to England. He writes a letter to the King of England, telling him to have Hamlet killed as soon as he arrives. Hearing of Fortinbras's advance on Poland, Hamlet sees Fortinbras as courageous and himself as cowardly. He again vows to avenge his father's death. Ophelia visits the queen and appears to have gone insane. When Laertes returns to Denmark, he is grief-stricken to see his sister's pitiable condition. After Hamlet's ship is attacked by pirates, he's brought back to Denmark in exchange for a reward. Now the king and Laertes plan to kill Hamlet in a duel. As they talk, the queen enters to tell them that Ophelia has drowned.

ACT 5

Two gravediggers dig a grave for Ophelia. Hamlet talks to Horatio about how death treats everyone equally. At Ophelia's funeral, Hamlet and Laertes fight over who loved Ophelia more. Later, Hamlet explains that he exchanged the king's letter with one of his own. When Rosencrantz and Guildenstern present it to the King of England, they, instead of Hamlet, will be killed. Hamlet and Laertes have the duel that had been planned. The results are fatal to Hamlet, Laertes, the king, and the queen. Fortinbras returns from Poland and claims his position as the new King of Denmark.

LITERARY GLOSSARY

aside lines spoken by an actor that the other characters on stage supposedly cannot hear; an aside usually shares the character's inner thoughts with the audience

Although she appeared to be calm, the heroine's aside revealed her inner terror.

backstage the part of the theater where actors prepare to go onstage, where scenery is kept, etc.

Before entering, the villain impatiently waited backstage.

cast the entire company of actors performing in a play

The entire cast must attend tonight's dress rehearsal.

character a fictional person or creature in a story or play

Mighty Mouse is one of my favorite cartoon characters.

climax the outcome of the main conflict of a play or novel

The outlaw's capture made an exciting climax to the story.

comedy a funny play, film, or TV show that has a happy ending

My friends and I always enjoy a Jim Carrey comedy.

conflict the struggle between characters, forces, or ideas at the center of a story

***Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* illustrates the conflict between good and evil.**

conclusion the resolution of all plot conflicts, bringing a story to a close

That play's conclusion was very satisfying. Every conflict was resolved.

dialogue words spoken by the characters in a novel or play

Amusing dialogue is an important element of most comedies.

drama a story, usually not a comedy, especially written to be performed by actors in a play or movie

The TV drama about spies was very suspenseful.

event something that happens; a specific occurrence

The most exciting event in the story was the surprise ending.

figurative language colorful wording not meant to be taken literally, but to form a colorful, sharp picture in the mind

A "screaming" headline may be set in large type, but it makes no sound at all.

introduction a short reading that presents and explains a novel or play

The introduction to *Frankenstein* is in the form of a letter.

motive the internal or external force that makes a character do something

What was that character's motive for telling a lie?

PRE-READING

NAME _____ DATE _____

Read the Introduction at the front of *Hamlet*.

1. *Hamlet* is set about 500 years ago. About what year was that? _____

2. What word or words in the Introduction suggest that this play is *not* a comedy?

3. After reading the Introduction, study the book's cover. Which character do you think is pictured in the *background*? _____

4. Hamlet himself is pictured in the foreground of the cover. In what way does this picture suggest the "anguished character of Hamlet"? (*Anguished* means "very upset" or "distressed.")

5. Have you ever known anyone who seemed anguished about something? What did that person say or do that suggested anguish?

6. Suppose you suspected that someone had deliberately harmed a member of your family. How would you feel? What, if anything, would you do about it?

7. The world today is very different from the way it was 500 years ago. Do you think the causes of anguish have changed, too? Explain your reasoning.

COMPREHENSION CHECK

NAME _____

DATE _____

Circle a letter to answer each question.

1. **What do Horatio and the guards decide to do after the Ghost leaves?**
 - a. try to find it again
 - b. shoot at it
 - c. tell young Hamlet about it
2. **Why is Claudius writing to the King of Norway?**
 - a. to ask him to order young Fortinbras to leave Denmark alone
 - b. to request a new place for Hamlet to live
 - c. to ask permission for Hamlet to attend school there
3. **What request does Laertes have for Claudius?**
 - a. He wants a job in the court.
 - b. He wants permission to return to France.
 - c. He wants Claudius to protect his sister, Ophelia.
4. **Why is Hamlet so angry with his mother?**
 - a. because she married so soon after her husband's death
 - b. because she won't let him go back to school in Wittenberg
 - c. because she pays more attention to Claudius than to him
5. **What does Polonius tell Ophelia to do?**
 - a. spend more time with Hamlet
 - b. stop talking to Hamlet
 - c. spend more time studying
6. **What do Marcellus, Bernardo, and Horatio do when Hamlet starts to follow the Ghost?**
 - a. They tell the Ghost to go away.
 - b. They encourage Hamlet to follow the Ghost.
 - c. They try to hold Hamlet back.
7. **What does the Ghost tell Hamlet?**
 - a. that Claudius had murdered him with poison
 - b. that Claudius is a good man who deserves respect
 - c. that Claudius and Gertrude are deeply in love

WORDS AND MEANINGS

NAME _____

DATE _____

A. Find and circle the hidden vocabulary words from Act 1. Words may go up, down, across, backward, or diagonally. Check off each word as you find it.

- | | |
|----------------|-----------|
| ___ REVENGE | ___ MOCK |
| ___ BECKONS | ___ DOUBT |
| ___ FRAILITY | ___ MOURN |
| ___ REQUEST | ___ VOWS |
| ___ REPUTATION | ___ GRIEF |
| ___ ADVANTAGE | ___ AVOID |

H	A	J	F	L	C	P	F	E	I	R	G
W	D	X	R	E	G	N	E	V	E	R	B
Q	V	Y	A	E	B	H	G	K	G	X	E
M	A	R	I	O	Q	V	K	C	F	S	C
O	N	B	L	A	P	U	A	O	D	W	K
I	T	N	T	M	P	F	E	M	R	O	O
L	A	P	Y	Z	N	C	D	S	E	V	N
N	G	A	S	R	T	U	E	U	T	V	S
K	E	S	U	Y	K	B	T	B	U	O	D
T	R	O	Q	E	I	J	L	W	G	D	C
J	M	A	V	O	I	D	F	I	M	H	X
R	E	P	U	T	A	T	I	O	N	Z	N

B. Now complete each sentence with one or more of the hidden words.

1. If you lose someone you love, you feel great _____, and you _____.
2. When you _____ someone, you try not to see him or her.
3. If others think highly of you, you have a good _____.
4. If you try to profit from another’s weakness, or _____, you are taking _____.
5. Solemn promises to do something are called _____.
6. If people make fun of you, or _____ you, you might begin to _____ yourself.
7. To _____ a favor is to ask for it.
8. Someone who _____ you motions for you to come near.
9. To get _____ is to punish someone for a wrong done to you.