

University of Mary Division of Education

Ms. Megan Griffin

To Think or Not to Think? (That is the Question)

Hamlet Unit Plan

Day 4: Advisement and Priorities

Grade Level: 12th Grade

Subject(s) Area: English

Materials Needed: Copies of *Hamlet*, Printed copies of “4.8.20 Hamlet Polonius’s Advice 1.3.54-80”; Figurative Language PowerPoint

Reading Assignment due today: Act 1:3-4

S standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.2 Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.3 Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.10 By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

Objectives:

- TLW apply themes from the text to their own lives.
- TLW continue identifying themes and motifs in the text.
- TLW provide an objective summary of Act 1.3-4

- TLW rewrite Shakespearean language in order to comprehend what is being said in the drama.

Learning Activities:

1. Bell ringer activity: literary term of the day.
2. Clarification: Draw family trees on the board: Polonius, Laertes, and Ophelia; Claudius, Gertrude, King Hamlet, Hamlet.
3. Ask students to volunteer to read the characters in Scenes 3-4: Laertes, Ophelia, Polonius, (scene 4) Hamlet, Horatio, Marcellus, Ghost. (If not enough students volunteer, I will take one of the roles and I will select students who I know will be comfortable reading in front of the class.) Students may use costumes as they see fit.
 - a. Other students participate with a pen in hand, ready to take notes.
4. As we read Act 1:3-4, we will pause to take note of important motifs that are surfacing and to clarify the meaning of some of the passages.
 - a. How do other characters (esp. Laertes and Polonius) see Hamlet? What do we learn about him?
 - b. Lots of advice is given in scene 3. What advice does Laertes give his sister?
 - c. Hand out Polonius's speech after reading Scene 3: Let's figure out what he said to his son. Why? What does this reveal about Polonius's priorities? (Students will work in groups to sort out some lines, but then we will cover it as a class before we continue reading.)¹
 - d. What advice does Polonius give his daughter?
 - e. Ophelia: Obedient
 - f. Alcohol: motif. What are Hamlet's thoughts on drinking? Why?
 - g. What does Hamlet think his life is worth now? (Pin's fee)
5. Discussion: Student will summarize what happened. Discuss Hamlet's and Ophelia's relationship and Ophelia's family's reaction to it. Which characters feel qualified to give advice? Who listens to advice?
6. Homework: Read 1.5

Assessment:

- Students will be assessed during class discussions and turn-and-talk discussions as I walk around the room. No formal assessment will take place.

Reflection:

Students were excited that they were able to understand Shakespeare with minimal help. They felt encouraged to pursue future reading. The activity took longer than expected: next time I will probably teach Polonius's speech for a whole class period rather than trying to work through more of the play.

¹ If we have extra time for our unit, we can take more time for this activity. Different groups of students can be assigned different personalities. (For example, one group can translate the speech in "gangster" talk. Another can be "stereotype teenagers." Another, "Midwestern." etc.) Then they will present their new monologues to each other.