



## 3055 BA SANGAM COLLEGE

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### LESSON NOTES

School: Ba Sangam College

Year/Level: 13

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: English

Worksheet 13

Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Strand	Reading and Viewing
Sub Strand	Communication Text Types – media, everyday communication, literary texts
Content Learning Outcome	Read and demonstrate understanding of a variety of complex texts.

### LITERATURE

### GENRE: DRAMA

### TITLE: HAMLET

### PLAYWRIGHT: WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

### ACT 1

### SCENE 1

Bernardo and Francisco stand the night watch at Denmark's Elsinore castle. Francisco is about to go off duty when Marcellus, another sentinel, appears with Horatio, a friend of young Prince Hamlet. As soon as Francisco leaves, Marcellus and Bernardo eagerly discuss two appearances of a ghost during their watch. The spirit resembles the late King Hamlet, Prince Hamlet's father. Horatio is unconvinced.

As they attempt to convince him that the apparition is more than their imaginations, the ghost appears to the three of them. At the others' urging, Horatio begs the ghost to speak, but it refuses and slips away.

Horatio is terrified and suggests that the ghost's presence signifies something terrible for Denmark. Noting that the ghost is wearing the very armor he had on when he fought old Fortinbras of Norway, Horatio recounts the story of King Hamlet, who was drawn into battle with Fortinbras over a small piece of land. Fortinbras is killed in the battle, and, as victor, King Hamlet wins back the land—land that Fortinbras's son, also named Fortinbras, now seeks to reclaim.

As Horatio's story concludes, the ghost appears again and seems about to speak. Suddenly, however, the rooster crows with the rising sun and the ghost slips away. Horatio suggests they inform Hamlet of what they've seen.

### SCENE 2

Claudius holds court at Elsinore and thanks everyone for their support through the kingdom's recent events: the death and funeral of his brother, King Hamlet, and Claudius's subsequent marriage to Gertrude. Claudius then turns to the matter of young Fortinbras of Norway, giving everyone the latest information on the warlike young man's actions.

Claudius speculates that Fortinbras thinks Denmark may be in chaos and that this environment may offer him an advantage. Claudius relates that he has written to Fortinbras's uncle, the present king of Norway who is gravely ill. The letter informs the older man of his nephew's actions.

Claudius then turns his attention to Laertes, son of the counselor Polonius. With a show of fatherly affection for Laertes, Claudius presses to know what he has to ask. Laertes, having come from France for Claudius's coronation, now asks permission to return to France. Ascertaining that Laertes has his father's blessing to depart, Claudius agrees that Laertes may go.

Claudius and Gertrude then chide Hamlet about his continued mourning for his father. Claudius tells Hamlet that while it is commendable to honor one's father, to so prolong a display shows a weakness of character. He then invites Hamlet to look upon him as a father and wishes Hamlet to reconsider going back to school in Wittenberg and instead stay in Denmark with them. Gertrude echoes his words. As Hamlet vows to obey, Claudius and Gertrude leave.

Alone, Hamlet reveals the depth of his despair, saying that were it not against God's law, he would contemplate suicide. He speaks of how weary he is of life, and we come to understand that it is not just his father's death that has Hamlet in such sorrow but also the quick marriage of his mother to his uncle.

Hamlet's grief is interrupted by the entrance of Horatio, Marcellus, and Bernardo, who have come to tell him of the ghost they've seen. Wildly shocked and interested, Hamlet peppers them with questions and makes plans to stand watch with them that night. As the men part, Hamlet asks them to tell no one else what they have seen. The others, swearing their loyalty to him, give their word.

### **QUESTIONS (8 Marks)**

1. Describe the atmosphere at the beginning of the scene.

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2. What supernatural event takes place in scene 1?

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3. What message does Claudius have for the people of Denmark in Scene 2?

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4. Describe Hamlet's reaction to his mother's marriage.