

**LESSON NOTES****School: Ba Sangam College****Year/Level: 13****Name: _____****Subject: English****Worksheet 16****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 2****SCENE 1**

Polonius meets with his sly servant Reynaldo and tells him to go to Paris and spy on Laertes. He charges the servant to find any Danes living in Paris and to question them as to Laertes' whereabouts and reputation. Polonius even goes so far as to give Reynaldo permission to use lies to entrap Laertes. After Reynaldo exits in pursuit of his mission, Ophelia enters and tells Polonius that she has been horrified by the Prince. Hamlet came to her in her sewing room with his jacket askew and unfastened, and wearing no hat; his stockings were filthy and unfastened, drooping at his ankles; and he was pale and trembling, looking "piteous." Polonius diagnoses Hamlet's condition as madness due to his love of Ophelia, brought about because Ophelia obeyed her father and spurned Hamlet's advances. Polonius decides to take his information to the king.

SCENE 2

Claudius and Gertrude hire Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, two of Hamlet's childhood friends, to spend time with Hamlet, hoping they will be able to determine the cause of his strange behavior. After attendants take the friends to visit Hamlet, Polonius, followed closely by ambassadors Voltemand and Cornelius, join the royal pair. The ambassadors, who have returned from speaking with the king of Norway about Fortinbras, are happy to report their visit as successful. "Old Norway," they say, has commanded Fortinbras to abandon any acts of force against Denmark. Fortinbras has vowed obedience to his uncle and has turned his attention to Poland,

where he originally told his uncle he was going. Volteward notes that Fortinbras has asked permission for him and his men to pass through Denmark en route to Poland.

As the ambassadors exit, Polonius tells Claudius and Gertrude he thinks Hamlet's love for Ophelia is driving him mad. Polonius then reads them a letter sent from Hamlet to Ophelia, in which he proclaims his love for her. Together, Polonius, Claudius, and Gertrude decide to lay a trap, orchestrating a meeting between Hamlet and Ophelia and watching from afar.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern appear, and Hamlet asks several times what brings them to Elsinore, Hamlet quickly figures out that they've been sent to spy on him. The one good bit of information they give Hamlet is that a company of players has come to Elsinore.

With some excitement, Hamlet greets the players. Hamlet arranges for them to perform *The Murder of Gonzago* in the court the following night—and to incorporate some lines he will give them. Once Hamlet is alone, he speaks aloud, berating himself for his lack of action with the task the ghost has given him. He calls himself a coward and a villain, railing in his grief. Then, pulling himself together, he muses aloud about his plan to use the play—augmented with lines he will write—as a means to probe Claudius's conscience. Hamlet is convinced that if Claudius reacts guiltily, it will prove that the ghost is a noble spirit and not a devil come to trick him.

Questions (5 Marks)

1. What does Polonius instruct Reynaldo to do? (1 mark)

2. What news does Ophelia give Polonius about Hamlet? (1 mark)

3. Why have Rosencrantz and Guildenstern been summoned to Denmark? (1 mark)

4. In what ways are Fortinbras and Hamlet similar and what ways they are different? (2 marks)