



3055 BA SANGAM COLLEGE

PH: 6674003/9264117 E-mail: basangam@connect.com.fj



LESSON NOTES

School: Ba Sangam College

Year/Level: 13

Name: _____

Subject: English

Worksheet 20

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 5

Scene 1

In a churchyard, a sexton and a gravedigger prepare a grave. As they go about their business, they are wrapped in their own discussions. Some of what they say is banter; some of what they say has cultural and religious aspects to it.

As one of the men ambles off for liquor, Hamlet and Horatio converge. They speak to the gravedigger, asking about his work, and he tells them he has been a gravedigger since King Hamlet defeated Fortinbras.

When Hamlet asks how long that has been, the gravedigger notes that it's been 30 years, having taken place on the day that young Hamlet was born. As they talk, the gravedigger hands Hamlet a skull; it turns out to be the skull of the former king's jester, Yorick. Hamlet, examining the skull, is struck by the information; he tells Horatio that he had known Yorick well.

A procession appears. Claudius, Gertrude, and Laertes lead, followed by a coffin and various other courtiers and attendants. By what people begin to say, it dawns on Hamlet that this is Ophelia's funeral. With Horatio beside him, he watches in disbelief. Overcome by grief, Laertes jumps into Ophelia's grave, shouting to be buried with her. Hamlet, also overcome, reveals himself and jumps in after Laertes, also proclaiming his sorrow.

The two fight, but Horatio and others in attendance separate them and pull them from the grave. Hamlet professes his love for Ophelia—as well as his admiration for Laertes—and runs off. Claudius sends Horatio after Hamlet and steadies Laertes's resolve, telling him his opportunity for revenge will be here soon.

Scene 2

In the final scene, all are back at Elsinore Castle. Hamlet gives Horatio the details of the failed journey to England. He describes discovering that the papers carried by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern called for Hamlet's death. Hamlet tells Horatio that he replaced the original

documents with forgeries that called for the bearers to be put to death—and that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were carrying them when the pirates captured Hamlet.

A courtier, Osric, approaches Horatio and Hamlet with a message for Hamlet from the king. Osric tells Hamlet that he has been invited to test his skills in a friendly duel with Laertes. Claudius wagers against Hamlet's abilities and wishes to know if Hamlet will accept the challenge. Hamlet does.

People gather for the duel: Claudius, Gertrude, Laertes, Hamlet, Horatio, and a number of lords and attendants. Hamlet and Laertes shake hands, and Hamlet asks for Laertes's forgiveness.

The duel begins, and Hamlet hits Laertes. The king cheers on Hamlet and, with a false display of affection, drops a poisoned pearl into Hamlet's cup of wine. An attendant offers the cup to Hamlet, who waves him off. After Hamlet hits Laertes a second time, Gertrude reaches for the drink. Claudius attempts to stop her, but she insists and unknowingly drinks the poison. Yet again, Shakespeare uses dramatic irony to great effect, as Claudius accidentally murders his wife. Laertes, becoming desperate, finally scores a hit on Hamlet. A scuffle ensues, the foils are exchanged, and, as the duel resumes, Hamlet makes his third hit on Laertes—this time with the poisoned foil. Before anything more can occur, the queen succumbs to the poison she has drunk and collapses. Laertes, realizing that he has been hit by his own poisoned foil, cries out that he has been killed by his own treachery. On the heels of his words, the queen realizes what is happening, exclaims that the drink has been poisoned, and dies.

Hamlet calls for the doors of the hall to be locked at once and demands they get to the cause of the treachery. Laertes speaks up in his final moments, informing everyone that he and Hamlet have been poisoned by the foil, that Gertrude has also been poisoned, and that the king is to blame. In a fury, Hamlet hits the king with the tainted foil and forces him to drink from the poisoned cup. Claudius soon dies. Laertes calls out, begging Hamlet's forgiveness and saying that if they forgive each other, neither his nor his father's death will be on Hamlet and Hamlet's death will not be on him. They agree as Laertes closes his eyes.

Hamlet, now failing, bids his dead mother goodbye and collapses. Horatio comforts him and attempts to drink the last of the wine, but Hamlet stops him. Hamlet implores Horatio to live on and, if he loved him, to take his story to the world.

Sounds in the castle announce the return of Fortinbras from Poland and the arrival of the English ambassadors. Hamlet prophesizes that Fortinbras will become king of Denmark. As he dies, Fortinbras and the ambassadors enter, shocked at the carnage around them. Horatio tells the arrivals what has occurred, and Fortinbras asks that Hamlet be borne away with the honor of a soldier.

QUESTIONS 4 MARKS

1. Shakespeare often uses characters such as the gravediggers in *Hamlet*, Act 5, Scene 1, as comic relief. What is the gravedigger's response when Hamlet asks him, "Whose grave's this, sirrah?"

2. In Act 5, Scene 2 of *Hamlet*, four people die in the mass confusion at the fencing match. In what order do they die?