

Part 1 – Characterization and Plot

1. Claudius opens this scene by questioning Rosencrantz and Guildenstern about Hamlet.
2. How does the audience know that Claudius perceives Hamlet as a threat to him? Provide example(s).
3. Guildenstern recognized a “crafty madness” in Hamlet. Who else had recognized this in Hamlet? Support your response by quoting from the play.
4. How did Gertrude feel about a ‘match’ between Hamlet and Ophelia? Support your response with quote(s) from the text.
5. How is Hamlet reassured of Claudius’ guilt (of King Hamlet’s murder)?
6. Why doesn’t Hamlet kill Claudius in III.iii when he has the opportunity?

Part 2 – Dramatic Devices

7. Explain the following line: “I say we will have no mo marriage. Those // that are married already--all but one--shall live; // the rest shall keep as they are.”
8. At the end of III.i, Claudius revealed to Polonius his opinion of the source of Hamlet’s antic disposition. Explain his opinion and support it with lines from the text.
9. What part did he play and what does this foreshadow?
10. What did Hamlet call the play ‘within’ the play? What device is he using? What is the purpose of the play within the play?
11. What is the meaning of Hamlet’s allusion to Nero in his 5th soliloquy (III.ii)? What is the topic and purpose of this speech?
12. Explain the allusions Hamlet uses in III.ii

Part 3 – Big Ideas

13. What is the meaning of Claudius’ aside, “O ‘tis too true. // How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience.”? Explain the quote, and discuss how it relates to the overall meaning of the play so far.
14. Hamlet’s 4th soliloquy begins with a question (III.i). Identify and explain this question. Then, provide examples of how this question has emerged in other forms in Acts I and II.
15. Discuss Hamlet’s treatment of Ophelia throughout Act III. Choose 3 adjectives to describe his behavior toward her, and support your choices with examples from the text.
16. What is Hamlet reacting to when he makes the comment, “That’s wormwood.”? Discuss how this reflects the theme(s) of the play, and relate it to earlier comments made by Hamlet.
17. Discuss Hamlet’s treatment of Gertrude in Act III.iv. How does this parallel his treatment of Ophelia. Discuss his problems with women throughout Acts II-III.
18. Discuss Claudius’ plans for Hamlet. How does this contribute the theme(s) of the play? Support your response with lines from the play.
19. Choose 3 themes or motifs established in Acts I – III. Provide 2 examples to support each of your choices. Discuss how you know the themes are the main ideas expressed by the author so far.