



William Shakespeare

HAMLET
PRINCE OF DENMARK



Downloadable
**Audio
Files**

Book brief

- 1 *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, was one of Shakespeare's most popular plays during his lifetime and is still very famous all over the world today.
- 2 This tragedy written between 1599 and 1601 is Shakespeare's longest play.
- 3 Set in Denmark, the play tells the story of Prince Hamlet and his revenge against his uncle Claudius.
- 4 Claudius has killed Hamlet's father to become king and marry Hamlet's mother.
- 5 Main themes include madness, the impossibility of certainty and the mystery of death.

William Shakespeare

Hamlet

Prince of Denmark

Retold and Activities by

Elizabeth Ferretti

Illustrated by

Riccardo Guasco

For Review Only

Contents

6	Main Characters
8	Before you Read
10	Act 1
18	Activities
20	Act 2
28	Activities
30	Act 3
40	Activities
42	Act 4
50	Activities
52	Act 5
56	Activities
58	Focus on... CLIL History: William Shakespeare
60	Focus on... Hamlet in the 20th and 21st centuries
62	Test Yourself
63	Syllabus

Main Characters

Hamlet
Prince of Denmark

Gertrude
the Queen, Hamlet's mother,
now wife of Claudius

Ophelia
Polonius' daughter

Horatio
Hamlet's best friend



Claudius

*King of Denmark,
Hamlet's uncle*

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern

student friends of Hamlet

Polonius

the King's friend

Laertes

Polonius' son



Reading **A2 KEY**

1 Choose the correct word (A, B or C) to complete the text.

If you can, go *to* the theatre to see a play. It's so different from watching a film on television. At the theatre, the actors (1) on the stage in front of you. It's much (2) exciting than television because they aren't recording the story, but (3) is happening as you watch them. They move about the stage speaking (4) parts and you feel you are living this moment with (5) It's like going to a concert to see your favourite singer or band which is much better (6) listening to their music on the radio or watching a video of them. Shakespeare wrote plays about history, love and also sad stories (7) are called 'tragedies'. Hamlet was one of Shakespeare's most popular tragedies when he was alive. It's still popular even today and you can see it at theatres (8) over the world. People think that Shakespeare wrote Hamlet between 1599 and 1602. It's his (9) play and is the sad story of a young man, Hamlet, who wants to know if it's true that his uncle, Claudius, killed his brother, Hamlet's father, in order to (10) king of Denmark. His father is dead and his mother, Gertrude, is now married to his uncle, Claudius. Hamlet feels very alone and is lucky to have his good friend, Horatio. Horatio tries to help Hamlet, but the story is very sad at the end, as you'll see.

- | | | |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| A at | B to | C in |
| 1 A are | B is | C was |
| 2 A very | B most | C more |
| 3 A everybody | B everything | C everywhere |
| 4 A your | B our | C their |
| 5 A them | B him | C us |
| 6 A as | B than | C that |
| 7 A which | B who | C when |
| 8 A all | B each | C every |
| 9 A longer | B most long | C longest |
| 10 A became | B become | C begin |



Listening **A2 KEY**

▶ 2 **2** Listen to Act 1 Scene 1 and choose the right answer, A, B or C.

Elsinore Castle is in

- ☒ **A** Denmark.
- ☐ **B** England.
- ☐ **C** Scotland.

1 Before seeing the ghost, Horatio tells Marcellus

- ☐ **A** he isn't afraid of ghosts.
- ☐ **B** he doesn't believe in ghosts.
- ☐ **C** he dreams about ghosts every night.

2 Marcellus saw the ghost for the first time with

- ☐ **A** Hamlet.
- ☐ **B** Horatio.
- ☐ **C** Bernardo.

3 The ghost is like

- ☐ **A** young Hamlet.
- ☐ **B** their dead King.
- ☐ **C** the King of Norway.

4 The ghost is wearing the clothes he wore

- ☐ **A** when he became king.
- ☐ **B** when he was in bed.
- ☐ **C** when he was in the war.

5 Horatio thinks the ghost

- ☐ **A** wants to help Norway.
- ☐ **B** wants to tell them something bad about the future of Denmark.
- ☐ **C** wants Norway and Denmark to be friends.

6 Fortinbras wants to

- ☐ **A** go to Denmark to visit its cities.
- ☐ **B** give Denmark some countryside in Norway.
- ☐ **C** win back the Norwegian cities lost in the war.

Act 1

2 Scene 1

People believe that Kronborg Castle in the town of Helsingør, Denmark, is Elsinore Castle.

In front of Elsinore Castle, Denmark.

[Enter Horatio and Marcellus, an officer.]

MARCELLUS. Horatio, do you think it'll come again tonight?

HORATIO. My dear Marcellus, I told you before, I don't believe in ghosts*! I think you were dreaming the other night when you were with Bernardo.

MARCELLUS. You're wrong, Horatio. Bernardo saw it too. Look, it's coming!

[Enter ghost.]

MARCELLUS. Can you see it, Horatio? Isn't it like our dead King?

HORATIO. You're right, Marcellus, this ghost is very like our poor dead King. I'll try to speak to it, even if I'm afraid of it. Ghost, why have you come here this night?

MARCELLUS. Oh no! It's going away. Maybe it's angry.

HORATIO. No! Wait! Speak to us!

[Exit ghost.]

MARCELLUS. Do you believe me now, Horatio?

HORATIO. Yes, the ghost of our dear King, dressed for war. I'm afraid this means something bad is going to happen to Denmark. When our dear, dead King, Hamlet, won the war against Norway, he took a lot of their cities. Now, the young Prince* of Norway, Fortinbras, wants to make war with Denmark to win them back. I must tell young Hamlet. Maybe the ghost will speak to him.

MARCELLUS. Yes, let's go and tell him now!

[Exit all.]

ghost



prince the King's son

Hamlet Prince of Denmark

3 Scene 2

A Room in the Castle. [Enter Claudius King of Denmark, Queen Gertrude, Hamlet, Polonius and Laertes.]

KING. My dear brother, Hamlet, died not long ago, but we have much to be happy about. I've married my brother's wife, Queen Gertrude, and we'll make Denmark stronger than ever before. A message has come from young Fortinbras. Now that my brother is dead, he wants the cities back that Hamlet won in the war. Never! I've written a letter to the King of Norway, Fortinbras' old uncle, telling him no. Now, Laertes, what about you?

LAERTES. I came here to see you become King. Now I'd like to return to France where I was before.

KING. Does your father agree? What do you say Polonius?

POLONIUS. Yes, I agree, my dear King.

KING. Well, you can go then, Laertes. Now, Hamlet, my nephew and my son, why are you still so sad and wearing black?

QUEEN. Yes, good Hamlet, take off those dark clothes. Let Denmark see that you're happy again. Stop thinking of your dead father. You know that everybody must die one day.

HAMLET. Yes, this I know, mother, but these dark, heavy clothes are nothing. My heart is heavier with sad thoughts for my father.

KING. Believe me, Hamlet, I understand you, but you must look to the future now. Your father lost his father; it's all part of nature. Think of me as your father now. One day, you'll become King of Denmark. So, I ask you to stay here with your mother and I and not to go back to school in Wittenberg.

QUEEN. Yes, please, Hamlet, stay with us.

HAMLET. I'll do as you ask, mother.

KING. Wonderful! We must have a party! Come, Gertrude.

[Exit King, Queen, Laertes and Polonius.]

Wittenberg
in Germany
is famous
for Martin
Luther and
the Protestant
Reformation.

William Shakespeare

HAMLET. Oh, I want to die! I lost my poor father just two months ago and already, my mother has another husband, my father's terrible brother. What happened to the love between my mother and father? Now she has given her love to another man, so easily and so soon! However, I can't tell anybody these things and my heart is breaking.

[Enter Horatio and Marcellus.]

HORATIO. Hamlet, my good friend!

HAMLET. Horatio, Marcellus! Why are you here, in Elsinore?

HORATIO. We came when we heard about your father.

HAMLET. You're very kind, my good friends, but I think you also came for my mother's wedding*.

HORATIO. Well, yes, it all happened very quickly.

HAMLET. Too quickly for me! I can still see my father.

HORATIO. Oh! Where?

HAMLET. In my head. But why such a strange question?

HORATIO. We think we saw your father's ghost last night.

HAMLET. What? Where?

HORATIO. Marcellus saw him the night before too, and asked me to watch with him outside the castle last night. I didn't believe him.

Then, I saw it with my own eyes.

HAMLET. Did you speak to this ghost?

HORATIO. I tried, but it didn't answer. Please, come and watch with us tonight, Hamlet. I'm sure your father's ghost will speak to you.

HAMLET. This is all very strange. Don't tell anybody else. I'll come tonight between eleven and twelve.

HORATIO. We'll wait for you.

[Exit Horatio and Marcellus.]

HAMLET. Can this all be true? I'll see tonight!

[Exit Hamlet.]

wedding when two people get married

Claudius and Gertrude are telling Hamlet not to be sad anymore about his father's death.



▶ 4 Scene 3

A Room in Polonius' House. [Enter Laertes and Ophelia.]

LAERTES. Ophelia, my dear sister. I've come to say goodbye. I'm going back to France and the ship is waiting for me.

OPHELIA. I'll write to you, my dear brother.

LAERTES. I'm glad of that. But remember, Ophelia, don't listen to Hamlet when he says he loves you. One day he'll be King so you can never be his wife. Don't let him play with your love.

OPHELIA. I'll remember your words dear Laertes. Take care.

LAERTES. Don't worry about me. Oh! Here's father.

[Enter Polonius.]

POLONIUS. Are you still here, Laertes? Your ship is waiting for you. But before you go, listen to your father. Remember, when you're in France, don't say everything you think, and don't do everything that comes into your head. Be nice to people, but not too friendly. Don't get angry with people, but don't be too kind. Listen more than you talk. Dress well but not too well. Don't borrow any money and don't give any to anybody. Finally, always be true to yourself.

LAERTES. Thank you father for your advice but I really must go now. Goodbye father, goodbye Ophelia, and remember my words.

[Exit Laertes.]

POLONIUS. What did Laertes say to you, Ophelia?

OPHELIA. It was about Hamlet.

POLONIUS. Recently, I've seen you and Hamlet often together. What does Hamlet want from you?

OPHELIA. Oh father, he says he loves me!

POLONIUS. My dear daughter, you're too young to understand about love. I'm sure Hamlet is just using you. Please, don't speak to him anymore.

Hamlet Prince of Denmark

OPHELIA. But father, he's done nothing to hurt me. He sends me letters full of sweet words.

POLONIUS. Enough child! Hamlet is a prince. You can never be his wife. Now, you're too young to know better, but when you're older you'll thank me.

OPHELIA. Alright father, I'll do as you ask.

[Exit all.]

5 Scene 4

In front of Elsinore Castle. [Enter Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus.]

HAMLET. It's a very cold night. What time is it?

[sound of music.]

HORATIO. Almost midnight. I can hear music. Where's it coming from?

HAMLET. It's the King. He's having a party. He does this often, and all the world is laughing at Denmark! It's terrible!

[Enter ghost.]

HORATIO. Look, Hamlet, the ghost is here.

HAMLET. Ah! You're so like my father. Please, speak to me.

HAMLET. Look, my friends, it wants me to follow it.

MARCELLUS. Don't go, Hamlet!

HORATIO. Yes, stay with us. Maybe it's dangerous.

HAMLET. Then, I'll stay here near the castle, but leave me alone with the ghost.

HORATIO. Alright. Come Marcellus, we'll wait for Hamlet inside.

[Exit Horatio and Marcellus.]

HAMLET. Now we're alone, speak to me.

GHOST. Hamlet, I'm the ghost of your father and I've come to tell you how I died.

HAMLET. I'm listening.



GHOST. Everyone thinks a snake killed me, but while I was sleeping in my garden, somebody came and put poison* in my ear. That snake is now King of Denmark.

HAMLET. Do you mean, Claudius, your brother, killed you?

GHOST. Yes... Now you must kill Claudius for me, but don't hurt your mother and don't tell anybody about our meeting.

HAMLET. I'll do all you ask, dear father.

GHOST. Morning is here, I must go, dear Hamlet, but remember me.
[Exit ghost.]

HAMLET. Oh sad day! Horatio and Marcellus mustn't speak about the ghost and I can't tell them my father's terrible story. I must keep it in my heavy heart and I'll act* as if I'm mad* to cover my plans.

[Enter Horatio and Marcellus.]

HORATIO. Hamlet, we couldn't wait anymore. We were worried.

MARCELLUS. Are you alright, Hamlet?

HAMLET. Yes, but sadder than before.

HORATIO. Please, tell us what happened. Did the ghost speak to you?

HAMLET. Yes, and now my heart is heavier than before.

HORATIO. But why? Tell us dear Hamlet. Maybe we can help.

HAMLET. I'm sorry, my friends, but I can say nothing. But one thing, I must ask you. Please, don't tell anybody about what you've seen.

HORATIO. We won't, you can be sure of that.

MARCELLUS. Can we help you in any other way?

HAMLET. Try to understand me and don't listen to the others when they say I'm mad.

HORATIO. Of course you aren't mad, Hamlet!

HAMLET. Remember this well in the future my dear friends. Now let's go and sleep. The night has been very long and full of dark thoughts. 

[Exit all.]

poison



act (here) to move and talk in a way which isn't normal for you

mad crazy



After-Reading Activities • Act 1

Stop & Check

1 Put the sentences about Act 1 in the right order (1 to 10).

- A ☐ Laertes tells his sister, Ophelia, to be careful about Hamlet..
- B ☐ The ghost tells Hamlet how he died.
- C ☐ The King and Queen ask Hamlet to stay at Elsinore Castle.
- D ☐ Polonius tells his daughter, Ophelia, that Hamlet is probably using her.
- E ☒ Horatio sees the ghost with Marcellus.
- F ☐ The King tells everybody that he has married Gertrude.
- G ☐ Hamlet waits for the ghost with Horatio and Marcellus.
- H ☐ Polonius gives his son, Laertes, a lot of advice.
- I ☐ Laertes asks the King if he can go back to France.
- J ☐ Horatio tells Hamlet about the ghost.

Vocabulary

2 Shakespeare wrote tragedies like the sad story of Hamlet, but he also wrote funny plays about love called 'comedies'.

Where do you think you can find the following words, in tragedies or comedies? Put T (tragedies) or C (comedies) after each word.

- | | | | | |
|----------|-------|----|----------|-------|
| love | C | 8 | good | _____ |
| 1 hate | _____ | 9 | worried | _____ |
| 2 enjoy | _____ | 10 | bad | _____ |
| 3 hurt | _____ | 11 | pleasant | _____ |
| 4 afraid | _____ | 12 | laugh | _____ |
| 5 upset | _____ | 13 | kiss | _____ |
| 6 sad | _____ | 14 | kill | _____ |
| 7 glad | _____ | 15 | hit | _____ |



Reading **A2 KEY**

3 Complete the text about Act 1 with one word for each space.

At first Horatio says he doesn't believe *in* ghosts. Then, when he sees it, he wants to speak (1) it, but the ghost goes (2) without saying anything. He agrees (3) Marcellus that the ghost is very like their poor dead king, Hamlet's father. The ghost (4) dressed for war and Horatio is afraid that something bad is going to happen to Denmark. They decide to tell young Hamlet about what they (5) just seen. The ghost comes back (6) midnight and tells Hamlet that Claudius killed him.

Pre-Reading Activity • Act 2

Listening

6 4 Listen to Act 2 Scene 1 and decide if the following sentences are true (T) or false (F).

	T	F
Polonius has sent a friend to visit Laertes.	☒	☐
1 Ophelia is happy when she comes to her father.	☐	☐
2 Ophelia was reading when Hamlet arrived.	☐	☐
3 Hamlet pulled Ophelia's arms.	☐	☐
4 Hamlet's hair was tidy.	☐	☐
5 Hamlet didn't say anything to Ophelia.	☐	☐
6 Polonius thinks Hamlet loves Ophelia.	☐	☐
7 Polonius doesn't want to tell Ophelia's story to the King.	☐	☐

