

English 200: Reading (and Rereading) *Hamlet*

Passage Analysis Sheet

Copy and paste a passage from an electronic version of *Hamlet* into a Word document; the course web site links to online texts produced by University of Victoria, Project Gutenberg and MIT. Use Word's comment function to annotate the passage, focusing on the elements described in the "Close Reading of Drama" handout:

- Imagery
- Language (repetition, significant words, rhythm, alliteration, metaphor, pun)
- Allusion
- Speakers (relationship between speakers, biases, tone)
- Arrangement (how word order creates patterns or raises questions)
- Key moment (identify and explain why it is significant)
- Concepts/theme
- Relationship of passage to other scenes, lines, or speeches

After you have made your notes on the passage, type a short response (1-2 paragraphs) to the following questions:

- How do the language, imagery, structure, and themes contribute to the passage's overall meaning and effect?
- Why is this passage significant to the play?

Although you may select any speech or dialogue you wish, your passage should be anywhere from 30-80 lines, and you should make a minimum of **ten** notes. If you're having trouble choosing a passage, the following exchanges and soliloquies will provide fruitful material for annotation. Note that line numbers are from our textbook version of the play. Line numbers in your selected online *Hamlet* may differ slightly.

- Claudius's first speech (1.2.1-39)
- Hamlet, Gertrude, and Claudius's exchange regarding Hamlet's mourning (1.2.64-132)
- Hamlet's first soliloquy (1.2.133-164)
- Laertes and Ophelia's conversation regarding Hamlet (1.3.1-55)
- Polonius and Ophelia's conversation regarding Hamlet (1.3.95-145)
- Horatio and Hamlet's argument over whether Hamlet should speak to the Ghost alone (1.4.42-96)
- Excerpt from Hamlet's exchange with the Ghost (1.5.1-119)
- The conversation between Polonius and Ophelia regarding Hamlet's madness (2.1.85-133)
- Hamlet and Polonius's "fishmonger" conversation (2.2.187-238)
- Hamlet's first conversation with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (2.2.240-334)
- Hamlet's soliloquy on the player and his own inaction (2.2.576-634)
- Hamlet's "to be or not to be" speech (3.1.64-98)
- The "get thee to a nunnery" exchange between Hamlet and Ophelia (3.1.99-162)
- Ophelia's, Claudius's and Polonius's commentary on Hamlet's behavior to Ophelia (3.1.163-203)

- Hamlet's exchanges with the courtiers, Gertrude, and Ophelia at the performance of *The Mousetrap* (3.2.98-175 or 3.2.253-296)
- Claudius's soliloquy on his murder of his brother (3.3.40-76)
- Excerpt from the exchange between Hamlet and his mother (3.4.11-102, 3.4.99-159, or 3.4.160-221)
- Hamlet's exchange with Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and Claudius (4.3.1-77)
- Hamlet's conversation with the captain and his soliloquy on the contrast between himself and Fortinbras (4.4.10-69)
- Gertrude's and Claudius's discussion with the mad Ophelia (4.5.1-78)
- Laertes's dialogue with Claudius (4.5.122-175)
- Ophelia's exchange with Laertes (4.5.176-224)
- Claudius and Laertes's discussion of revenge (4.7.122-158)
- The gravediggers' conversation (5.1.1-62)
- Hamlet's dialogue with the gravedigger and his rumination upon Yorick's skull (5.1.145-223)
- Hamlet and Laertes's fight in the graveyard (5.1.258-311)
- Hamlet's description of his actions on the boat to England (5.2.1-90)
- Death of Laertes and Hamlet (5.2.344-398)
- Exchange between Horatio and Fortinbras after Hamlet's death (5.2.400-449)