

11.1.2

Unit Overview

“Though this be madness, yet there is method in ’t.”

Text	<i>Hamlet</i> by William Shakespeare
Number of Lessons in Unit	25

Introduction

In this unit, students continue to develop skills, practices, and routines that will be used on a regular basis in the English Language Arts classroom throughout the year: reading closely, annotating text, collaborative discussion, and evidence-based writing. Students continue to practice an approach to close reading that develops their ability to critically analyze texts for deep meaning and collect and analyze evidence for use in writing and discussion.

Students further develop close reading skills as they examine Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. The tragedy of *Hamlet* develops many central ideas, including revenge, mortality, madness, and the tension between action and inaction. Students analyze the play through the close study of Hamlet’s soliloquies and other key scenes to determine how Shakespeare’s language and choices about how to structure the play impact character development and central ideas. The showing of a filmed version of the play in select lessons supplements students’ understanding of plot and background points and encourages them to consider actors’ interpretations of the text.

There are two formal assessments in this unit. The Mid-Unit Assessment asks students to choose one of Hamlet’s first three soliloquies to analyze how Shakespeare develops Hamlet’s character and his relationship to other characters in that soliloquy. For the End-of-Unit Assessment, students identify two central ideas from the play and discuss how these ideas interact and build on one another over the course of the play. In their responses, students identify and discuss at least one literary device that Shakespeare uses to develop or relate these central ideas.

Literacy Skills and Habits

- Read closely for textual details
- Annotate texts to support comprehension and analysis
- Engage in productive evidence-based discussions about text
- Collect and organize evidence from texts to support analysis in writing
- Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis

Standards for This Unit

CCS Standards: Reading — Literature	
RL.11-12.2	Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
RL.11-12.3	Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
RL.11-12.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
RL.11-12.5	Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
RL.11-12.6	Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

CCS Standards: Writing	
W.11-12.2.a-f	<p>Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic. c. Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts. d. Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic. e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
W.11-12.9.a	<p>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Apply <i>grades 11–12 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., “Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics”).

CCS Standards: Speaking & Listening	
SL.11-12.1.a, b, c, d, e	<p>Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues</i>, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas. b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed. c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives. d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task. e. Seek to understand other perspectives and cultures and communicate effectively with audiences or individuals from varied backgrounds.
CCS Standards: Language	
L.11-12.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
L.11-12.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
L.11-12.4.a-d	<p>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grades 11-12 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. b. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., <i>conceive, conception, conceivable</i>). c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or

	<p>determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.</p> <p>d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).</p>
L.11-12.5.a-b	<p>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.</p> <p>b. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.</p>

Note: Bold text indicates targeted standards that will be assessed in the unit.

Unit Assessments

Ongoing Assessment	
Standards Assessed	RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.3, RL.11-12.4, RL.11-12.5, SL.11-12.1.a, c, W.11-12.2.a-f, L.11-12.1, L.11-12.2, L.11-12.5
Description of Assessment	Varies by lesson but may include: responses to text-dependent questions focused on character development, central idea development, and word choice through discussion, and informal writing prompts.

Mid-Unit Assessment	
Standards Assessed	RL.11-12.3, W.11-12.2.a, b, f, L.11-12.1, L.11-12.2
Description of Assessment	In the Mid-Unit Assessment, students select textual evidence from one of Hamlet's first three soliloquies to craft a multi-paragraph response about how Shakespeare develops Hamlet's character in relation to other characters.

End-of-Unit Assessment	
Standards Assessed	RL.11-12.2, W.11-12.2.a-f, L.11-12.1, L.11-12.2,
Description of Assessment	In the End-of-Unit Assessment, students individually write a multi-paragraph response addressing the following prompt: Identify two central ideas from the play. How do these ideas interact and build on one another over the course of the play? In your response, identify and discuss at least one literary device that Shakespeare uses to develop or relate these central ideas.

Unit-at-a-Glance Calendar

Lesson	Text	Learning Outcomes/Goals
1	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 1.1, lines 1–61 (Masterful Reading: lines 1–190)	In this lesson, students begin their study of <i>Hamlet</i> by reading and viewing Act 1.1. Students explore Shakespeare’s language, initial plot points, and the setting of the play. Working in pairs and small groups, students begin to analyze the language, meaning, and implications of the first scene.
2	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 1.2, lines 90–110 (Masterful Reading:)	In this lesson, students encounter the character of Hamlet for the first time through the eyes of his uncle and now stepfather Claudius. Following a Masterful Reading of the first part of the soliloquy, students continue to work with standards RL.11-12.3 and RL.11-12.4 by engaging in a discussion about how Claudius introduces and develops Hamlet. Specifically, they address the impact of Claudius’s word choices and the manner in which he introduces the reader to Hamlet as a character through Claudius’s accusations of an excessive and unmanly grief. In this reading, students acquire a preliminary understanding of the characters of Claudius and Hamlet through their communication with each other. At the same time, they begin to determine the emergence of concepts such as gender roles, the concept of duty, and mortality in this scene.
3	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 1.2, lines 110–121 (Masterful Reading: lines 110–133)	In this lesson, students read the end of Claudius’s monologue to Hamlet. Having previously focused on the development of Hamlet’s character, students now shift their focus to the development of Claudius in this monologue. After reading the new addressed standards SL.11-12.a, c, students listen to a Masterful Reading of an excerpt of Claudius’s monologue and engage in small-group discussion focused on the development of Claudius.
4	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 1.2, lines 133–149 (Masterful Reading 133–164)	Students begin reading Hamlet’s first soliloquy in which he laments his situation and mourns for his father. Students continue to focus on the development of Hamlet’s character. They consider the impact of Shakespeare’s choice to introduce Hamlet from two perspectives, first from Claudius’s point of view, then in his own words. After listening to a Masterful Reading of the full soliloquy, students engage in a group discussion of the development of Hamlet’s character at the beginning of the soliloquy.

Lesson	Text	Learning Outcomes/Goals
5	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 1.2, lines 149–164 (Masterful Reading: lines 133–164)	Students read and analyze lines 149–164 from Act 1.2 of <i>Hamlet</i> . Students engage in a discussion about the meaning of these lines and how Shakespeare develops the Queen through this soliloquy. Students also continue to work with standards RL.11-12.3 and RL.11-12.4 and talk explicitly about Shakespeare’s language that is “particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.”
6	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 1.3, lines 1–55 (Masterful Reading: lines 1–145)	In this lesson, students read and analyze lines 1–55 from Act 1.3 of <i>Hamlet</i> , Laertes’s farewell monologue to Ophelia and a brief conversation between Ophelia and Laertes. Students engage in a discussion about the meaning of these lines and how Shakespeare develops the characters of Laertes and Ophelia. This selection also provides an opportunity for students to engage with concepts such as gender roles, family duty, and chastity—concepts that arise again in Unit 3 in relation to Virginia Woolf’s <i>A Room of One’s Own</i> .
7	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 1.5, lines 99–119 (Masterful Reading: lines 1–119)	In this lesson, students read and analyze lines 99–119 from Act 1.5 of <i>Hamlet</i> , Hamlet’s soliloquy following his conversation with his father’s ghost. Students engage in discussions about the impact of Shakespeare’s word choices on the development of central ideas such as revenge and action versus inaction.
8	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 2.2, lines 576–616 (Masterful Reading: lines 445–634)	In this lesson, students read and analyze lines 576–616 from Act 2.2 of <i>Hamlet</i> . This selection is a soliloquy in which Hamlet criticizes himself in contrast to an actor who has just recited a passionate speech. Students discuss the meaning of the soliloquy and analyze Shakespeare’s figurative language and how it contributes to central ideas such as action versus inaction and revenge.
9	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 2.2, lines 616–634 (Masterful Reading: lines 576–634)	In this lesson, students continue their analysis of Hamlet’s third soliloquy with a focus on how the introduction of a key plot point—that Hamlet will stage a play to determine the guilt of his uncle—serves to move the play along as well as further develop Hamlet’s character. Students are able to discuss how these elements—plot, character, order of action—interact in order to develop the drama.
10	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 1.2, lines 133–164; Act 1.5, lines 99–119; Act 2.2, lines 576–634	In this Mid-Unit Assessment, students use textual evidence from one of Hamlet’s first three soliloquies to craft a formal multi-paragraph essay about how Shakespeare develops Hamlet’s character in relation to other characters.

Lesson	Text	Learning Outcomes/Goals
11	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 3.1, lines 64–84 (Masterful Reading: lines 64–98)	In this lesson, students begin to explore Hamlet’s “To be or not to be” soliloquy. Students focus on how Shakespeare’s word choice impacts the meaning of the passage, with attention to his use of beautiful and engaging language to examine one of the central concerns of literature and the human experience. Students are assessed on their ability to discuss how Shakespeare’s language portrays Hamlet’s tone towards life and the contrast he sets up with death.
12	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 3.1, lines 64–98 (Masterful Reading: lines 64–98)	In this lesson, students continue their analysis of Hamlet’s “To be or not to be” soliloquy while shifting focus from the use of figurative language to the development and interaction of central ideas in the soliloquy. Students also consider how the central ideas in this passage relate to others in the play and how the interaction impacts the overall meaning of the drama.
13	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 3.1, lines 99–130 (Masterful Reading: lines 31–63 and 99–130)	This is the first of three lessons on the dialogue between Hamlet and Ophelia. In this lesson, students listen to a Masterful Reading of the staging of a dialogue between Hamlet and Ophelia and then read the beginning of the dialogue in lines 99–130 of Act 3.1. In the beginning of the dialogue, students focus on the development of Ophelia’s character in relation to the other characters in the scene.
14	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 3.1, lines 131–162 (Masterful Reading: lines 1–203)	In this lesson, students read Act 3.1, lines 131–162, the conclusion of the dialogue between Hamlet and Ophelia. Students continue to read and discuss the dialogue in pairs, focusing on the development of Ophelia’s character in relation to Hamlet and Laertes.
15	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 3.1, lines 163–175 (Optional Activity: lines 176–203)	In this lesson, students read and analyze Act 3.1, lines 163–175, Ophelia’s monologue on Hamlet’s madness. Students then compose a Quick Write about Ophelia’s perspective and her characterization of Hamlet.
16	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 3.3, lines 40–103 (Masterful Reading: lines 29–103)	In this lesson, students read and analyze two rich soliloquies that include Claudius’s confession to King Hamlet’s murder and Hamlet’s decision to delay killing Claudius. Students engage in a discussion about how Shakespeare orders the action and further develops the characters of Claudius and Hamlet through these soliloquies. For the lesson assessment, students write about the impact of pairing Claudius’s confession with Hamlet’s “Now might I do it” soliloquy.

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17	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 3.4, lines 41–102 (Masterful Reading: lines 1–102)	In this lesson, students read Act 3.4, Hamlet’s murder of Polonius and confrontation with Gertrude, and her repentance. Students listen to a Masterful Reading of the whole scene. Then they reread Hamlet’s confrontation with Gertrude and her repentance, using a jigsaw activity to analyze Hamlet’s monologues.
18	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 4.4, lines 34–56 (Masterful Reading: lines 34–69)	In this lesson, students read Hamlet’s final soliloquy (Act 4.4, lines 34–69), paying particular attention to lines 34–56. Students should notice how Shakespeare continues to develop Hamlet’s character in this passage. Students first read closely for comprehension and then work in pairs to consider larger ideas related to Hamlet’s character.
19	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 4.4, lines 56–69 (Masterful Reading: lines 34–69)	In this lesson, students use annotation to focus on central ideas they encounter in Hamlet’s last soliloquy (Act 4.4, lines 34–69). Earlier lessons in this unit analyzed central ideas within a single soliloquy. This lesson requires students to analyze central ideas as they develop across multiple scenes in the play. This builds on the work students did in the previous lesson and provides scaffolding for the Module Performance Assessment, which requires analysis of central ideas across the module’s three texts.
20	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 5.1, lines 254–289 (Masterful Reading: lines 1–68 and 224–319)	In this lesson, students listen to a Masterful Reading of the opening of Act 5.1 before reading a passage in which the characters gather at Ophelia’s grave. As students read the scene, they pause to notice how the setting impacts other elements in the drama.
21	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 5.1, lines 254–289	In this lesson, students reread the scene at Ophelia’s grave (Act 5.1, lines 254–289) in order to analyze how Shakespeare develops his characters through their responses to Ophelia’s death. This lesson follows a lesson in which students completed a close reading of the scene that explored students’ literal understanding of the text and demonstrated how the setting of a scene impacts other dramatic elements. Previous lessons in the unit focused on analysis of central ideas <i>or</i> narrative elements. This lesson integrates both standards for a complex analysis of how character development impacts central ideas.
22	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 5.2, lines 239–332 (Masterful Reading: Act 4.7, lines	In this lesson, students read and analyze lines 239–332 from Act 5.2 of <i>Hamlet</i> , in which Hamlet and Laertes fence and then wound each other with the poisoned blade. Students also listen to a

Lesson	Text	Learning Outcomes/Goals
	141–186 and Act 5.2, lines 239–332)	Masterful Reading of the conversation between Claudius and Laertes to provide context about the plan to kill Hamlet. Students analyze how central ideas introduced and developed throughout the play interact during the play’s final scene.
23	<i>Hamlet</i> , Act 5.2, lines 344–398 (Masterful Reading: 333–398)	In this lesson, students finish their reading of <i>Hamlet</i> and analyze the play’s tragic resolution in which Hamlet, Laertes, Claudius, and Gertrude all die. To support their analysis, students view a film representation of the fencing match and the resulting action.
24	<i>Hamlet</i>	This lesson comprises Part I of the End-of-Unit Assessment for 11.1.2. In this lesson, students collect evidence to support their analysis of how central ideas interact and build on one another in <i>Hamlet</i> .
25	<i>Hamlet</i>	This lesson comprises Part II of the End-of-Unit Assessment for 11.1.2. In this lesson, students draft a multi-paragraph response to the End-of-Unit Assessment prompt: Identify two central ideas from the play. How do these ideas interact and build on one another over the course of the play? In your response, identify and discuss at least one literary device that Shakespeare uses to develop or relate these central ideas.

Preparation, Materials, and Resources

Preparation

- Read and annotate *Hamlet*.
- Review the Text Analysis Rubric.
- Review all unit standards and post in classroom.

Materials and Resources

- Copies of the *Hamlet* text
- Masterful recording of the text
- Film interpretation of *Hamlet*
 - This unit uses the Royal Shakespeare Company’s 2009 film directed by Gregory Doran, available on DVD, digital download, or online streaming (free-of-charge, but contains commercials)

- Self-stick notes for students
- Writing utensils including pencils, pens, markers, and highlighters
- Methods for collecting student work: student notebooks, folders, etc.
- Access to technology (if possible): interactive whiteboard, document camera, and LCD projector
- Copies of handouts and tools for each student: see materials list in individual lesson plans
- Copies of the Text Analysis Rubric and Checklist
- Copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist
- Copies of the Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist
- Copies of 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool
- Copies of *Hamlet* Central Ideas Tracking Tool