

## 11.1.2

## Lesson 1

## Introduction

In this first lesson of the unit, students begin their study of *Hamlet* by reading and viewing Act 1.1. Students explore Shakespeare's language, initial plot points, characters, 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.

The learning in this lesson is assessed through a Quick Write about how Shakespeare's choices to begin the play contribute to meaning and aesthetic impact. For homework, students reread all of Act 1.1 and write an objective summary using vocabulary from the text when possible.

## Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
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.
Addressed Standard(s)	
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.)
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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., <i>conceive</i>, <i>conception</i>, <i>conceivable</i>).</li> </ol>

	<p>c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or 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>
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## Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>Student learning will be assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students answer the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What choices does Shakespeare make about how to begin the play? How do these choices contribute to meaning and aesthetic impact?</li> </ul>
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe at least two choices Shakespeare makes to begin the play, such as the nervous tone of the guards or the eerie appearance of the Ghost.</li> <li>Explain how each choice either contributes to meaning or aesthetic impact, such as establishing an ominous mood.</li> </ul>

## Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>late (adj.) – living comparatively recently, now deceased</li> <li>unfold (v.) – reveal or display</li> <li>apparition (n.) – a supernatural appearance of a person or thing, especially a ghost</li> <li>assail (v.) – attack vigorously or violently; assault</li> <li>fortified (adj.) – protected or strengthened against attack</li> <li>stalks (v.) – walks with measured, stiff, or haughty strides</li> </ul>
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>harrows (v.) – disturbs keenly or painfully; distresses the mind or feelings</li> </ul>

## Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
<b>Standards &amp; Text:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards: RL.11-12.5, RL.11-12.4, L.11-12.4.a-d</li> <li>Text: <i>Hamlet</i> by William Shakespeare, Act 1.1, lines 1–61 (Masterful Reading: lines 1–190)</li> </ul> <p>① In order to provide additional context, the Masterful Reading extends beyond the lines students read and discuss during the lesson.</p> <b>Learning Sequence:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of Lesson Agenda</li> <li>Homework Accountability</li> <li>Masterful Reading</li> <li>Act 1.1, Lines 1–61 Reading and Discussion</li> <li>Quick Write</li> <li>Film Viewing</li> <li>Closing</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15%</li> <li>10%</li> <li>15%</li> <li>25%</li> <li>10%</li> <li>20%</li> <li>5%</li> </ol>

## Materials

- Student copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)
- Student copies of the Short Response Checklist and Rubric (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)
- Excerpt from Gregory Doran's *Hamlet* (00:00–06:36)

## Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
10%	Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.
no symbol	Plain text indicates teacher action.
	<b>Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.</b>
	<i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i>
►	Indicates student action(s).
💬	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
①	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

## Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

15%

Review the agenda and share the assessed standard for this lesson: RL.11-12.5. In this lesson, students read and view Act 1.1 of *Hamlet* and explore how Shakespeare begins the play.

- ▶ Students look at the agenda.

Ask students to take out their copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool, or distribute if necessary. Inform students that in this lesson they will begin working with new standards RL.11-12.5 and L.11-12.4.b-d. Ask students to individually read these standards on their tools and assess their familiarity with and mastery of them.

- ▶ Students read and assess their understanding of standards: RL.11-12.5 and L.11-12.4.b-d.

Instruct students to talk in pairs about what they think the standards mean. Lead a brief discussion about these standards.

☞ Student responses may include the following for RL.11-12.5:

- Analyze how authors structure texts (for example, how to begin or end a story).
- Analyze how these choices affect the overall meaning of the text.
- Analyze how these choices affect the beauty or power of the text.

☞ Student responses may include the following for L.11-12.4.b-d:

- Identify and use word patterns and changes that make new word meanings or parts of speech.
- Use reference materials (dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses) to find a word's pronunciation, meaning, part of speech, or usage.
- Check the word's meaning using context and a dictionary (either before or while you read).

It is likely that this is students' first encounter with the term "aesthetic impact." If so, spend some time discussing this concept together. Consider asking the following questions:

**What are some other words for the word "impact"?**

☞ Other words for "impact" are "effect," "outcome," or "influence."

**How can an author choose to create a certain impact with a text?**

☞ Authors can choose how to structure a text, for example, how and where to begin a story, or how to end it. They can also choose to give it a happy or a sad ending.

Explain to students that *aesthetic* means "of or relating to the beautiful."

## Activity 2: Homework Accountability

**10%**

Instruct students to talk in pairs about how they applied their focus standard, RL.11-12.1 or RI.11-12.1, to their Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) text. Lead a brief share out on the previous lesson's AIR homework assignment. Select several students (or student pairs) to explain how they applied their focus standard to their AIR text.

- ▶ Students (or student pairs) discuss and share how they applied their focus standard to their AIR text.

## Activity 3: Masterful Reading

**15%**

Explain to students that in this lesson they will begin their exploration of William Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*. First, they listen to Act 1.1 (lines 1–190) in a Masterful Reading. Then they read the beginning of the scene for comprehension and observe how the setting and mood are created in the beginning of the play through spoken language and through what is left unsaid. Finally, they view the scene to further develop their impression of the setting and mood of the scene, and discuss the impact of various directorial decisions around how to begin the play.

Distribute copies of *Hamlet* and ask students to read the title and the Dramatis Personae or Character List. Instruct students to discuss the following questions in pairs before sharing out with the class.

**What information do you gather from the full title of the play: *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*?**

- 🗣 Student responses may include:
  - The play is about a person named Hamlet.
  - This is a tragic or sad play.
  - Hamlet is a prince.
  - The play likely takes place in Denmark.

Lead a brief class discussion on what tragedies students may have read thus far in high school, both in and out of class, and what qualifies those texts as tragedies.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, consider asking: What meanings of the word *tragedy* do you know? How might a play be characterized as a *tragedy*?

- 🗣 Student responses may include:
  - A tragedy is a very sad and unfortunate event.
  - A play might be a tragedy if it is about sad and unfortunate events.

- ① If students have read other Shakespearean tragedies, consider engaging the class in a discussion of common elements of the texts and genre. If not, ask students to consider the impact of the word *tragedy* on the title of *Hamlet*.
- ① Students will further explore tragedy, tragic hero, and tragic flaw in later lessons.

**What information do you gather from the first six lines (four names) on the Dramatis Personae or Character List?**

💬 Student responses may include:

- There is a ghost in the play.
  - Hamlet's father (also named Hamlet) has died.
  - Hamlet's mother (named Gertrude) has remarried Hamlet's uncle, Claudius.
  - Claudius is now the King of Denmark.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students do not know that *late* may mean “deceased,” define it for them as they look at the character list.
  - ① Remind students to return to this character list each time they encounter a new character in the play.

Transition students to a Masterful Reading of Act 1.1, lines 1–190 (from “Who’s there? / Nay, answer me. Stand and unfold yourself” to “Where we shall find him most convenient”). As students listen, ask them to focus on what choices Shakespeare made to begin the play.

- ▶ Students follow along, reading silently.

## Activity 4: Act 1.1, Lines 1–61 Reading and Discussion

**25%**

Instruct students to read lines 1–61 (from “Who’s there? / Nay, answer me. Stand and unfold yourself” to “Stay! speak! speak! I charge thee, speak!”), and circle and make notes about the choices Shakespeare made to begin the play. Students can also box unfamiliar words at this time. Ask students to share their annotations in pairs.

💬 Student responses may include:

- Circles around: Barnardo and Francisco’s first lines (notes about their short, nervous tone); Enter Ghost (notes about this being a scary way to begin a play)
- Boxes around: rivals (line 14), haste (line 14), ho (line 15), liegeman (line 17), Dane (line 17), Holla (line 22), dreaded (line 30), entreated (line 31), apparition (line 33), assail (line 37), fortified (line 38), illume (line 44), scholar (line 49), harrows (line 51), usurp’st (line 54), stalks (line 59)

Instruct students to form groups and to focus on lines 1–35 in order to answer the following questions:

**Describe Barnardo and Francisco’s tone in the first five lines. What words demonstrate their tone?**

- 💬 They seem nervous or upset. The questions (“Who’s there?” and “Barnardo?”) show that they are unsure of each other’s identity. The exclamation point (“Long live the king!”) shows that they are upset or excited. The short sentences also convey a feeling of excitement or nervousness: “Who’s there? Nay answer me. Stand and unfold yourself.”
- ① At this point, consider reminding students to use the explanatory notes to help with challenging language. Students may need the scaffolding in the notes to make meaning of the phrase “unfold yourself” if they have not been able to parse its meaning from context.
- ① Consider drawing students’ attention to their application of standard L.11-12.4.c through the process of determining word meaning through the use of explanatory notes.

**What is Barnardo doing in line 7?**

- 💬 Replacing Francisco on the watch.

**Given what you heard in the Masterful Reading and read on the Character List, what is likely the “thing” that Horatio asks whether it has “appeared again tonight” (line 26)?**

- 💬 The Ghost.

**Reread lines 28–30. According to Marcellus, what does Horatio think of the Ghost?**

- 💬 It is just a fantasy that Barnardo and Marcellus have made up.

**How many times have Barnardo and Marcellus seen the Ghost?**

- 💬 Twice.
- ① Consider explaining to students that the word “ghost” is another word for *apparition* (line 33).

**Why is Horatio present in this scene?**

- 💬 So that he can see the Ghost and speak to it.

Instruct groups to read lines 36–46 (from “Sit down awhile, / And let us once again assail your ears” to “Marcellus and myself, / The bell then beating one—”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class. Encourage students to read the dialogue, with each student taking a role (Barnardo, Francisco, Horatio, or Marcellus).

**In lines 36–39, what does Barnardo suggest to Horatio?**

- 🗣️ Barnardo suggests that Horatio sit and listen to his story of how he and Marcellus saw the Ghost.
- ① If students do not know the meaning of the words *assail* and *fortified*, consider giving them the meanings in the vocabulary box. The students may notice the tone of the words to be aggressive, which increases the tension of the scene.
- ① Explain to students that the mood of a text is the emotional state that it creates in the reader.

**What mood does Shakespeare create through Barnardo’s story? How does he accomplish this?**

- 🗣️ Shakespeare creates an unsettling, sinister mood through Barnardo’s story. Barnardo describes the Ghost appearing in the middle of the night (“The bell then beating one—”), when it was dark (“Last night of all, / When yond same star that's westward from the pole”).

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Instruct groups to read lines 47–61 (from “Peace, break thee off! Look where it comes again” to “Stay! speak! speak! I charge thee, speak!”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

**How does each of the men react to the appearance of the Ghost?**

- 🗣️ Marcellus shouts, “Peace, break thee off!” (line 47). Barnardo describes it as looking “like the King that’s dead” (line 48). Horatio says that it “harrows [him] with fear and wonder” (line 51).

**Whom does the Ghost look like? Hint: Use the Character List to understand to whom the men refer.**

- 🗣️ The Ghost looks like the King who has died, Hamlet’s father.

**What is the cumulative impact of the men’s reactions on the mood of the text?**

- 🗣️ The cumulative impact of their reaction contributes to the scary, foreboding mood of the text. The image of the word *harrow* especially shows how scared and unsettled Horatio feels by the appearance of the Ghost.
- ① If students do not know the meaning of *harrow* direct them to the explanatory notes, especially the image, which should give them quite a vivid impression of how the men are feeling.

**Reread lines 54–58. Using the explanatory notes and context, paraphrase these lines. What is Horatio asking?**

- 🗣️ Horatio is asking the Ghost to tell them who he is and why he is there.



**How does the Ghost react to Horatio's speech?**

☞ He is “offended” (line 59) and “stalks away” (line 60).

① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students need support, consider providing them with the definition of the word *stalks* (line 60) in the vocabulary box.

**In addition to Barnardo's story and the men's reactions to the Ghost, how does Shakespeare create a mood in this act?**

☞ Student responses may include:

- Shakespeare uses the word “dreaded” (line 30) to describe the Ghost. “Dreaded” has negative connotations, which creates a scary mood.
- Shakespeare creates a night setting with only a few characters. The castle is otherwise quiet and seems deserted, which creates a mood of fear and the sense that something bad is about to happen.
- Shakespeare shows that the guard's behavior is jittery: “Who's there?” (line 1) which creates a mood of uncertainty.

**Activity 5: Quick Write****10%**

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

**What choices does Shakespeare make about how to begin the play? How do these choices contribute to meaning and aesthetic impact?**

Remind students to look at their text and notes to find evidence, and to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

① Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

- ▶ Students independently answer the prompt, using evidence from the text.

☞ See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.

**Activity 6: Film Viewing****20%**

① During this activity, show Act 1.1 (the first 6:36 of the film), which students have heard or read during this lesson.

Instruct students to focus on the setting and the mood that the director creates as they are watching the film. Consider writing the following prompt on the board:

**What mood does the director create in the beginning of the play? How do his choices contribute to the meaning and aesthetic impact of Shakespeare's words?**

- ▶ Students view *Hamlet* Act 1.1, considering the setting and mood of the opening scene.

Instruct students to Turn-and-Talk in pairs about the setting and the choices the director made to begin the film.

🗣️ Students responses may include:

- The director chooses to start the film as if through a security camera. This creates a creepy, voyeuristic mood.
- The director chooses to use dark lighting that parallels the dark mood of the scene.
- The director chooses to show the perspective of the Ghost approaching the guard, which is scary.
- The director chooses not to show the Ghost on the security camera, which increases the strange nature of the Ghost and the scene.

## Activity 7: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to reread all of Act 1.1 (lines 1–190) and write an objective summary, using any of the vocabulary words as appropriate (unfold, apparition, assail, fortified, harrows, stalks).

- ▶ Students follow along.

## Homework

Reread all of Act 1.1 (lines 1–190) and write an objective summary, using any of the vocabulary words as appropriate (*unfold, apparition, assail, fortified, harrows, dreaded, stalks*).