

## 11.1.2

## Lesson 9

## Introduction

In this lesson students continue their analysis of Hamlet’s third soliloquy in Act 2.2, lines 616–634, from “Fie upon ’t! Foh! / About, my brains!—Hum, I have heard” to “Wherein I’ll catch the conscience of the King” 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 discuss how these elements—plot, character, order of action—interact in order to develop the drama. Additionally, in preparation for the Mid-Unit Assessment, students are introduced to Writing Standard 11-12.2.f, which requires students to write concluding statements.

Students are assessed on their ability to discuss how Hamlet’s decision to stage a play impacts the action of the drama as well as develops his character. For homework, students review Hamlet’s first three soliloquies, and select a soliloquy to prepare for their formal writing on the Mid-Unit Assessment.

## Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
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).
Addressed Standard(s)	
W.11-12.2.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> <p>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).</p>

## Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>Student learning is 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>How does Hamlet's decision to stage a play impact the action of the drama?</li> </ul>
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate an understanding that, before taking action, Hamlet intends to use the play to reveal the truth about his father's murder.</li> <li>Identify that Hamlet's sense that the Ghost might be a demon or a liar contributes to his doubt and hesitation.</li> </ul>

## Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>blench (v.) – shrink; flinch; quail</li> </ul>
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cunning (n.) – art, skill</li> <li>malefactions (n.) – evil deeds, crimes, wrongdoings</li> </ul>

## Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
<p><b>Standards &amp; Text:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards: RL. 11-12.3, W.11-12.2.f</li> <li>Text: Hamlet, Act 2.2, lines 616–634 (Masterful Reading: lines 576–634)</li> </ul> <p><i>① In order to provide additional context, the Masterful Reading extends beyond the lines students read and discuss during the lesson.</i></p> <p><b>Learning Sequence:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of Lesson Agenda</li> <li>Homework Accountability</li> <li>Masterful Reading</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10%</li> <li>15%</li> <li>5%</li> </ol>

4. Lines 616–634 Reading and Discussion	4. 55%
5. Quick Write	5. 10%
6. Closing	6. 5%

## Materials

- Student copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)
- Student copies of the 11.1 Short Response Rubric (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)

## Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
<b>10%</b>	<b>Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.</b>
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.
❗	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

### Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

**10%**

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standard for this lesson: RL.11-12.3. In this lesson students continue their analysis of Hamlet’s third soliloquy with a focus on how the introduction of a key plot point serves to move the play along, as well as to further develop Hamlet’s character. In addition, the assessment will focus on how Hamlet’s decision to stage a play impacts the action of the drama as well as how his character develops.

- Students look at the agenda.

In this lesson, students begin working with one new standard: W.11-12.2.f. Instruct students to individually read standard W.11-12.2.f and assess their familiarity with and mastery of the standard on their 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool (refer to 11.1.2, Lesson 1).

- Students read standard W.11-12.2.f and assess their familiarity on the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool.

Instruct students to talk in pairs about what they think this standard means. Lead a brief discussion about the standard.

- ☞ Student responses should include the following:
- Include a concluding statement or section to support a response.
  - Explain the significance or implications of the response.

## Activity 2: Homework Accountability

**15%**

Instruct students to discuss in pairs about how they can apply their focus standard, RL.11-12.3 to their 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, RL.11-12.3 to their AIR text from the previous lesson's homework.

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Ask students to take out their writing assignment from the previous lesson's homework:

**Choose one of the images Hamlet uses to describe himself in the “Now I am alone” soliloquy. How is this image related to the development of a central idea from another soliloquy?**

Ask volunteers to share their responses with the class and to conduct a brief discussion about those shared responses.

- ☞ Student responses may include:
- Hamlet uses the image of gall and bitterness in lines 604 to 605 to develop the central idea of revenge with which his soliloquy in Act 1.5 dealt. By failing to take revenge for his father, Hamlet has disobeyed the ghost's “commandment” in Act 1.5, line 109. To illustrate this, Hamlet uses the language of contemporary medicine to show himself as meek and mild, lacking the spirit to take revenge for his father.
  - Hamlet describes himself as “unpregnant with my cause” to convey a central idea of action versus inaction which he expressed in his first soliloquy in Act. 1.2, where he exclaimed “break my heart, for I must hold my tongue” in Act 1.3, line 164. Here he calls himself a “John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause” (line 595), who “can say nothing” (line 596), expressing the same central idea of being caught in inaction when he desires and feels obliged to take action.

### Activity 3: Masterful Reading

5%

Have students listen to a Masterful Reading of Hamlet’s third soliloquy from “Now I am alone / O, what a rogue” to “Wherein I’ll catch the conscience of the King” in Act 2.2, lines 576–634. Ask students to listen for what decision Hamlet makes to determine the guilt of his uncle.

- ▶ Students follow along, reading silently.

### Activity 4: Lines 616–634 Reading and Discussion

55%

Transition students to pairs/groups and ask them to reread lines 616–623 (from “Fie upon ’t! Foh! / About, my brains! – Hum, I have heard” to “will speak / with most miraculous organ”) and discuss the following questions before sharing out with the class:

**In the first lines of the passage, “about” is used to mean “around.” Why does Hamlet say “Fie upon ’t! Foh! About, my brains!” lines 616–617?**

- 🗨 Hamlet is trying to change or turn around his thinking. He is telling himself to start thinking about something other than his father’s death or his family duty.

**Look at the explanatory notes to determine what *cunning* means in the line “cunning of the scene” line 619. Why does Hamlet describe the scene as *cunning*?**

- 🗨 *Cunning* means “art” or “skill” according to the explanatory notes. Hamlet is describing the scene as being skillfully done.
- ① Consider drawing students’ attention to their application of standard L.11–12.4.c, through the process of consulting reference materials.

**Use the context of the speech to determine the meaning of *malefactions* (line 621). Paraphrase Hamlet’s reasoning.**

- 🗨 “Guilty creatures” (line 618) “have proclaimed” them (line 621), so they must be evil things, crimes, or wrongdoings. Guilty people, when they see their deeds reenacted, will give their guilt away by their reaction.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle to define *malefactions* using context clues, ask them to look for who is “proclaiming” them.
- ① Also, consider using this as an opportunity to teach L.11–12.4.a, b through the process of using context and word parts to make meaning of a word.

**What other words can you think of that begin with the prefix *mal*?**

💬 Student responses may include:

- malfunction
- malformed
- malady
- malaise

Briefly discuss the meaning of the prefix *mal* and how it contributes to the meaning of a word.

Inform students that *personification* is a type of figurative language that describes giving human qualities or characteristics to a nonliving object or idea.

**What does Hamlet mean by, “For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak with most miraculous organ” (lines 622–623)? How does Shakespeare’s use of personification impact your understanding of these lines?**

- 💬 Murder itself cannot speak, but it can reveal itself in other ways. By personifying murder, Shakespeare talks about the act of speaking in two ways to show that things can be said without literally speaking.
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Have students reread lines 623–627 (from “I’ll have these players / play something like the murder of my father” to “If he do blench, / I know my course”) and answer the following questions.

**What is Hamlet planning to do?**

- 💬 He is going to stage a play of his father’s murder and observe Claudius’s reaction.

***Blench* means “shrink; flinch; quail.” What does Hamlet mean by “if he do blench, I know my course” (lines 626–627)?**

- 💬 He means that he’ll kill Claudius or otherwise take his revenge on him if the play reveals that he’s the murderer.
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Have students to reread lines 627–632 (from “The spirit that I have seen / May be a devil” to “with such spirits / Abuses me to damn me”) and answer the following questions.

**What are Hamlet’s fears about the ghost of his father?**

- 💬 The Ghost might be a demon, “the spirit that I have seen may be a devil,” and so he can’t be trusted.
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For the next series of questions, have students refer to Hamlet's second soliloquy (Act 1.5, lines 99–120) and reread lines 99–102 ("O all you host of heaven! O Earth! What Else? / And shall I couple hell? O fie, hold, hold, my heart, / and you, my sinews, grow not instant old, / But bear me stiffly up").

**How do lines 627–632 of this soliloquy develop a central idea of revenge, also addressed in lines 99–102 of Act 1.5 ("shall I couple hell...")?**

- 💬 It seems like Hamlet might be wondering if the Ghost is evil in the Act 1.5 soliloquy and begins to worry even more in this soliloquy. Hamlet cannot seek revenge if he is not sure that Claudius killed his father, and his uncertainty about the Ghost makes him uncertain that Claudius committed the murder.

- ① Remind students that they should be keeping track of central ideas in the play using the Hamlet Central Ideas Tracking Tool provided in 11.1.2 Lesson 7. Encourage students to record related concepts in the right-hand column of the Tool, noting how these concepts support the development of larger central ideas. Related concepts that arise in this lesson include family duty and morality.

**How do lines 627–632 change your understanding of Hamlet's actions thus far in the play, specifically relating to his decision about whether to take revenge against Claudius?**

- 💬 Previously it seemed like Hamlet has been hesitating with no reason, but now he is revealing that he has doubts about whether Claudius killed his father.

**What does "this" mean in Hamlet's statement: "I'll have grounds / More relative than this" (lines 632–633)? What does Hamlet mean by this statement?**

- 💬 It means that he can have something better to determine the truth of whether Claudius killed his father than the words of the ghost. *This* refers to the words of the ghost.

- ① Consider drawing students' attention to the final two lines of the soliloquy as an example of a couplet. Define couplet for students as a pair of lines in poetry, which usually rhyme and have the same meter.

**How does Shakespeare's use of language make the final couplet more striking in lines 633–634?**

- 💬 Shakespeare uses rhyme to make the lines stand out.

- ① Consider drawing students' attention to additional literary devices such as alliteration in the final couplet.
- ① Explain to students that alliteration refers to the repetition of the initial consonant sound in words appearing close together in a text.

Look back to Act 2.2 lines 566–569 from last lesson's Masterful Reading, in which Hamlet asks the players to add lines to the play:

**How does your work in this lesson shape your understanding of what might be in the lines that Hamlet is adding to the play?**

- ☞ Hamlet seems to be adding lines that make the action of the play parallel Claudius's murder of Hamlet's father and marriage to Gertrude.

### Activity 5: Quick Write

**10%**

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt and to practice writing a concluding statement that explains the significance or implications of the response:

**How does Hamlet's decision to stage a play impact the action of the drama?**

Instruct students to look at their text and notes to find evidence. Remind students 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: Closing

**5%**

Display and distribute the homework assignment: For homework, instruct students to review Hamlet's first three soliloquies, and select a soliloquy to prepare for their formal writing on the Mid-Unit Assessment.

- ▶ Students follow along.

Introduce the Mid-Unit Assessment prompt for Lesson 10:

**Select one of Hamlet's first three soliloquies. In this soliloquy, how does Shakespeare develop Hamlet's character in relation to other characters? Use evidence from the play to support your answer.**

## Homework

Review Hamlet's first three soliloquies and select a soliloquy to prepare for your formal writing on the Mid-Unit Assessment.