

11.1.2

Lesson 1

Introduction

In this first lesson of the unit, students begin their study of William Shakespeare’s play *Hamlet* by reading and viewing all of Act 1.1, in which the night watchmen encounter a Ghost that looks like King Hamlet. 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 by focusing on Act 1.1, lines 1–61 (from “Who’s there? / Nay, answer me. Stand and unfold yourself” to “Stay! speak! speak! I charge thee, speak!”). Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: What choices does Shakespeare make about how to begin the play? How do these choices contribute to meaning and aesthetic impact?

For homework, students reread Act 1.1, lines 1–190 of *Hamlet* (from “Who’s there? / Nay, answer me. Stand and unfold yourself” to “Where we shall find him most convenient”) and write an objective summary of the scene using this lesson’s vocabulary words.

Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5	Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.
Addressed Standard(s)	
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students respond to the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What choices does Shakespeare make about how to begin the play? How do these choices contribute to meaning and aesthetic impact? <p>① Throughout this unit, Quick Writes will be assessed using the Short Response Rubric.</p>
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe at least two choices Shakespeare makes to begin the play (e.g., the guards' nervous tone or the eerie appearance of the Ghost). Explain how each choice either contributes to meaning or aesthetic impact (e.g., The guards' nervous tone at the beginning of the play contributes to the aesthetic impact by creating an uncertain and anxious atmosphere. In the first few lines, Barnardo asks, "Who's there?" (line 1), only to have Francisco respond, "Nay, answer me. Stand and unfold yourself" (line 2). This exchange demonstrates how nervous both characters are, and because the audience does not know these characters, the audience is also uncertain. In later lines, the audience learns that Barnardo and Francisco are both watchmen and friends. The fact that they do not recognize each other and question each other's identity emphasizes their nervousness and the overall unease of the scene. This atmosphere is confirmed with the Ghost's appearance, which creates further fear in the watchmen.).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> apparition (n.) – a supernatural appearance of a person or thing, especially a ghost assail (v.) – attack vigorously or violently; assault stalks (v.) – walks with measured, stiff, or haughty strides
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> unfold yourself (phrase) – disclose your identity harrows (v.) – torments

Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)

- late (adj.) – living until recently; not now living
- haste (n.) – speed or motion of action
- dreaded (adj.) – causing great fear
- fortified (adj.) – made someone or something stronger

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.4 • Text: <i>Hamlet</i> by William Shakespeare, Act 1.1: lines 1–61 (Masterful Reading: Act 1.1) <p>① In order to provide additional context, the masterful reading extends beyond the lines students read and discuss during the lesson.</p>	
Learning Sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda 2. Homework Accountability 3. Masterful Reading 4. Reading and Discussion 5. Quick Write 6. Film Viewing (optional) 7. Closing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 10% 2. 10% 3. 15% 4. 50% 5. 10% 6. 0% 7. 5%

Materials

- Student copies of the Common Core Learning Standards Tool
- Copies of *Hamlet* for each student
- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist
- 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.
	Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.
	<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: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5. In this unit, students work with William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, analyzing monologues, soliloquies, and other key scenes for Shakespeare's language use and development of complex characters and central ideas. In this lesson, students read and view Act 1.1 of *Hamlet* and explore how Shakespeare begins the play.

- Students look at the agenda.

Instruct students to take out their copies of the Common Core Learning Standards Tool. Inform students that in this lesson they begin to work with a new standard: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5. Instruct students to individually read this standard on their tools and assess their familiarity with and mastery of it.

- Students read and assess their familiarity with standard CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5.

Instruct students to talk in pairs about what they think standard CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5 means. Lead a brief discussion about this standard.

💬 Student responses may include:

- Students identify how authors organize or structure texts (for example, how to begin or end a story).
- Students analyze how structural choices affect the overall meaning of the text.
- Students analyze how structural choices affect the beauty or power of the text.

Consider asking the following questions:

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

💬 Other words for *impact* are *affect*, *change*, or *influence*.

How can an author *impact* a text?

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

① Explain to students that *aesthetic* means “of or relating to the beautiful.”

Activity 2: Masterful Reading**15%**

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.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definition: *late* means “living until recently; not now living.”

- Students write the definition of *late* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

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 whole-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 the following questions:

What does the word *tragedy* mean? 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 including the word *tragedy* in the title of *Hamlet*.

① Students further explore *tragedy*, *tragic hero*, and *tragic flaw* in later lessons.

What information does the reader learn from the first 6 lines (4 names) of the *Dramatis Personae*?

💬 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 Remind students to return to this character list each time they encounter a new character in the play.

Have students listen to a masterful reading of *Hamlet*, 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”). Ask students to focus on what choices Shakespeare makes to begin the play.

▶ Students follow along, reading silently.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students in their reading throughout this lesson:

How does Shakespeare begin the play?

① Consider facilitating a brief whole-class discussion of student observations.

Activity 3: Reading and Discussion

60%

Instruct students to form small groups. Post or project each set of questions below for students to discuss. Instruct students to annotate the text as they read and discuss.

Instruct student groups to read Act 1.1, lines 1–35 (from “Who’s there? / Nay, answer me. Stand and unfold yourself” to “He may approve our eyes and speak to it. / Tush, tush, ’twill not appear”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definition: *apparition* means “a supernatural appearance of a person or thing, especially a ghost.”

① Students may be familiar with this word. Consider asking students to volunteer a definition before providing one to the group.

▶ Students write the definition of *apparition* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definitions: *haste* means “speed or motion of action” and *dreaded* means “causing great fear.”

- ▶ Students write the definitions of *haste* and *dreaded* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

Direct students to the explanatory notes for the definition of the following words: *unfold yourself*.

- ① Consider drawing students' attention to their application of standard [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4.A](#) through the process of using explanatory notes to make meaning of a word.

Describe Barnardo and Francisco's tone in the first 5 lines. What words demonstrate their tone?

- 💬 Barnardo and Francisco seem nervous or upset. The questions "Who's there?" (line 1) and "Barnardo?" (line 4) show that they are unsure of each other's identity. The exclamation point in "Long live the King!" shows that they are upset or excited (line 3). The short sentences also convey a feeling of excitement or nervousness: "Who's there? / Nay, answer me. Stand and unfold yourself" (lines 1–2).

What is Barnardo doing in lines 6–7?

- 💬 Barnardo arrives to take his "hour" on the watch and replace Francisco (line 6).

Based on the masterful reading and the *Dramatis Personae*, what is likely the "thing" that Horatio asks whether it has "appeared again tonight" (line 26)?

- 💬 Horatio refers to the Ghost.

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

- 💬 Marcellus says that Horatio believes "'tis but our [Marcellus's and Barnardo's] fantasy" or something they just imagined (line 28).

How many times have Barnardo and Marcellus seen the Ghost?

- 💬 Marcellus says they have seen the Ghost "twice" (line 30).

Why is Horatio present in this scene?

- 💬 Horatio is there so that "[h]e may approve [Marcellus's and Barnardo's] eyes and speak to it" (line 34), or so that Horatio can find out whether or not Marcellus and Barnardo are imagining the Ghost and so that he may speak to it if it does appear.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

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).

Provide students with the following definition: *assail* means “attack vigorously or violently; assault.”

① Students may be familiar with this word. Consider asking students to volunteer a definition before providing one to the group.

► Students write the definition of *assail* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definition: *fortified* means “made someone or something stronger.”

► Students write the definition of *fortified* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

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

🗨️ Barnardo suggests that Horatio “[s]it down a while” and listen to his story of how he and Marcellus saw the Ghost (line 36).

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—” (line 46), and when it was dark: “Last night of all, / When yond same star that’s westward from the pole” (lines 42–43).

① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, consider explaining that the *mood* of a text is the emotional state that it creates in the reader.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

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.

Provide students with the following definition: *stalks* means “walks with measured, stiff, or haughty strides.”

① Students may be familiar with this word. Consider asking students to volunteer a definition before providing one to the group.

► Students write the definition of *stalks* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

Direct students to the explanatory notes for the definition of the following word: *harrows*.

- ① Consider drawing students' attention to their application of standard L.11-12.4.c through the process of using explanatory notes to make meaning of a word.

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?

- ☞ The Ghost looks like the "King that's dead," Hamlet's father (line 48).

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 verb "harrows" (line 51) shows how scared and unsettled Horatio feels by the appearance of the Ghost.

Reread lines 54–58. Using the explanatory notes and context, paraphrase these lines. What does Horatio ask of the Ghost?

- ☞ What are you who comes at this time of night with the same handsome warrior form as the buried King of Denmark? Tell me!

How does the Ghost react to Horatio's speech?

- ☞ The Ghost is "offended" (line 59) and "stalks away" (line 60).

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" to describe the Ghost (line 30). "Dreaded" has negative connotations, meaning "feared," 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 guards' behavior is jittery. Barnardo asks, "Who's there?" (line 1), which creates a mood of uncertainty.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 4: 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?

Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

- ▶ Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.

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

Transition to the independent Quick Write.

- ▶ Students independently answer the prompt using evidence from the text.
- 💬 See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.

Activity 5: Film Viewing (optional)

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Show Act 1.1, from 0:00–6:36 of the film, which students have heard or read during this lesson. Ask students to focus on the setting and the mood that the director creates.

- ▶ Students view Act 1.1 of the film *Hamlet*.

Instruct students to Turn-and-Talk in pairs about the setting, mood, 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 6: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to reread 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”) and write an objective summary of the scene.

Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

- ▶ Students follow along.

Homework

Reread 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”) and write an objective summary of the scene.

Use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in your written response. Remember to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide your written response.