

## 10.2

## Lesson 2

## Introduction

In this lesson, students read Act 1.2, lines 90–110 (from “’Tis sweet and commendable in your nature” to “till he that died today / ‘This must be so’”), in which they encounter the character of Hamlet for the first time through the eyes of his uncle and now stepfather, Claudius, who reproaches him for his continued grief over the death of his father. Following a masterful reading of the first part of the monologue, students continue to work with standards RL.9-19.2 and RL.9-10.5 by engaging in a discussion about how Claudius introduces and develops Hamlet. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How do specific word choices in Claudius’s monologue impact the development of Hamlet’s character?

For homework, students reread Act 1.2, lines 90–110 (from “’Tis sweet and commendable in your nature” to “till he that died today / ‘This must be so’”) and respond briefly in writing to the following prompt: To what kinds of standards does Claudius hold Hamlet? Cite at least two pieces of textual evidence to support your claim.

## Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
<a href="#">CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5</a>	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.
<a href="#">CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.4</a>	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).
Addressed Standard(s)	
<a href="#">CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4</a>	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grades 9–10 reading and content</i> ,

	<p>choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4.A</u></p> <p>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.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4.B</u></p> <p>Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., <i>analyze, analysis, analytical; advocate, advocacy</i>).</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4.C</u></p> <p>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, or its etymology.</p>
--	---

## 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"> <li>How do specific word choices in Claudius's monologue impact the development of Hamlet's character?</li> </ul>
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine aspects of Hamlet's character that emerge from this monologue (e.g., Hamlet's tendency towards excessive emotion, weakness, childishness, and unreasonableness, etc.).</li> <li>Identify specific word choices that develop these aspects of Hamlet's character, as viewed by Claudius (e.g., Claudius's description of Hamlet's grief as "unmanly" (line 98) develops three parts of Hamlet's character: his tendency towards excessive emotion, his childishness, and his weakness. The word "unmanly" first implies that Hamlet is acting more like a woman than a man in his "obstinate condolment" for his father's death (line 97), meaning Hamlet's emotions are excessive and weak. Also, the word "unmanly" (line 98) means Hamlet's grief is childlike; Claudius points out</li> </ul>

that Hamlet's father "lost a father / That father lost, lost his" (lines 93–94), and that death is nothing out of the ordinary. Finally, Claudius further criticizes that Hamlet's grief is "[t]o reason most absurd," suggesting that Hamlet seems silly and weak to Claudius (line 107.).

## Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>filial (adj.) – of, relating to, or befitting a son or daughter</li> <li>impious (adj.) – lacking reverence for God, religious practices, etc.</li> </ul>
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or text-dependent questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>obsequious (adj.) – dutiful</li> <li>condolence (n.) – sorrow</li> <li>vulgar (adj.) – of, pertaining to, or constituting the ordinary people in a society; current, popular, common</li> </ul>
Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>commendable (adj.) – deserving praise and approval</li> <li>mourning (n.) – great sadness felt for someone who has died</li> <li>survivor (n.) – a family member who remains alive after another person's death</li> <li>obligation (n.) – something that you must do because of a law, rule, promise, etc.</li> <li>bound (v.) – required by law or duty to do something</li> <li>reason (n.) – ideas and opinions that are fair, sensible, and appropriate</li> <li>absurd (adj.) – extremely silly, foolish, or unreasonable</li> </ul>

## Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
<b>Standards &amp; Text:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards: <a href="#">CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5</a>, <a href="#">CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.4</a>, <a href="#">CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4</a></li> <li>Text: <i>Hamlet</i> by William Shakespeare, Act 1.2: lines 90–110</li> </ul> <b>Learning Sequence:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of Lesson Agenda</li> </ol>	1. 5%

2. Homework Accountability	2. 10%
3. Masterful Reading	3. 5%
4. Reading and Discussion	4. 60%
5. Quick Write	5. 10%
6. Closing	6. 10%

## Materials

- Student copies of Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)

## 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.
❗	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

### Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

5%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standards for this lesson: RL.9-10.5 and RL.9-10.4. In this lesson, students discuss Claudius's first monologue, through which they are introduced to the character of Hamlet. Students determine how Claudius uses language to convey his point of view and how this use of language develops the audience's first impressions of Hamlet.

- Students look at the agenda.

### Activity 2: Homework Accountability

10%

Instruct students to take out their responses to the previous lesson's homework assignment. (Reread Act 1.1, lines 1–190 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.) Instruct students to Turn-and-Talk in pairs about their objective summaries, comparing which aspects they chose to emphasize and the vocabulary words they used.

🗨 Student responses may include:

- Francisco, Barnardo, and Marcellus are guards watching the palace of the Danish king.
- Marcellus and Barnardo relieve Francisco, along with Horatio.
- Marcellus and Barnardo have asked Horatio to come with them.
- Marcellus and Barnardo want Horatio to see what they have seen: an apparition in the form of Hamlet's recently deceased father.
- Horatio does not believe them; he thinks that the Ghost is a "fantasy" (line 28).
- The Ghost appears, and all three are very frightened; Horatio is "harrow[ed]" by fear (line 51).
- Horatio, who is a scholar, speaks to the Ghost, demanding to know who or what he is that "usurp'st" the night (line 54).
- The Ghost "stalk[s]" off, offended (line 77).
- Horatio agrees with Marcellus and Barnardo that the Ghost is real and that it looks like "the King" of Denmark, Hamlet's father (line 69).
- Horatio thinks that it means something bad is going to happen in Denmark.
- They discuss the war that is brewing due to the actions of Fortinbras of Norway.
- The Ghost reappears, but disappears again when the "cock" crows (line 165).
- Marcellus, Barnardo, and Horatio are unable to stop or speak to the Ghost.
- They decide to tell Hamlet, son of the late king, who is friends with Horatio, about the Ghost, because they believe that it will speak to him.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion about the opening scene. Select several students to share their summaries.

### Activity 3: Masterful Reading

5%

Have students listen to a masterful reading of Act 1.2, lines 90–110 (from "'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature" to "till he that died today / 'This must be so'"). Ask students to pay attention to Claudius's choice of words.

- ▶ 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:

**What does the audience learn about Hamlet in this excerpt?**

## Activity 4: Reading and Discussion

60%

Remind students of their reading of Robert Browning’s “My Last Duchess,” a poem written in the form of a dramatic monologue, in an earlier unit. Explain to students that in addition to dialogues, *Hamlet* includes dramatic monologues, one of which they begin to explore in this lesson.

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

Instruct student groups to read lines 90–93 (from “’Tis sweet and commendable in your nature” to “But you must know your father lost a father”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definitions: *commendable* means “deserving praise and approval” and *mourning* means “great sadness felt for someone who has died.”

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

**In lines 90–92, who is Hamlet mourning?**

- 💬 Hamlet is “mourning” his father (line 92).

**What are the first two adjectives that the King Claudius uses to describe Hamlet’s nature?**

- 💬 He uses the adjectives “sweet and commendable” (line 90).

**Evaluate Claudius’s sincerity about Hamlet’s “sweet and commendable” nature (line 90). What evidence from the text supports your position?**

- 💬 Claudius is not sincere. His use of the word “but” at the beginning of line 93 indicates a shift to the main purpose of his speech, which is to criticize Hamlet.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

---

Instruct student groups to read lines 93–96 (from “But you must know your father lost a father” to “for some term / to do obsequious sorrow”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definition: *filial* means “of, relating to, or befitting a son or daughter.”

- 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 *filial* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definitions: *survivor* means “a family member who remains alive after another person’s death,” *obligation* means “something that you must do because of a law, rule, promise, etc.,” and *bound* means “required by law or duty to do something.”
  - ▶ Students write the definitions of *survivor*, *obligation*, and *bound* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

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

- 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 Claudius view the loss of Hamlet’s father?

- 💬 Claudius views the death of Hamlet’s father as natural and inevitable. He points out that Hamlet’s “father lost a father” (line 93), just as Hamlet’s grandfather lost his father, and so on.

### How does Claudius emphasize his point in lines 93–94?

- 💬 Claudius emphasizes his point that everybody loses his/her father through the repetition of the words “lost” and “father” (lines 93–94).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

---

Instruct student groups to read lines 96–101 (from “But to persevere / In obstinate condolment is a course” to “a mind impatient / An understanding simple and unschooled”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definition: *impious* means “lacking reverence for God, religious practices, etc.”

- 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 *impious* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

Direct students to the explanatory notes for the definitions of the following words: *obstinate* *condolement*.

- 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.

**Summarize lines 93–98. What is Claudius saying to Hamlet?**

- 💬 Claudius is saying that everyone loses his or her father, and that he or she must mourn for him, but that to carry on grieving for too long is stubborn and inappropriate.

- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, consider asking the following questions:

**Which familiar word is in the word *condolement*?**

- 💬 Condole or condolences.

**What does it mean to *send condolences*?**

- 💬 It means to send sympathy for someone's grief.

**What does Claudius mean by *condolement* in line 97?**

- 💬 Claudius means "sorrow."

- ① Consider drawing students' attention to their application of standard L.11-12.4.b through the process of determining word meaning through word parts.

**What idea links the phrases "mourning duties" (line 92), "filial obligation" (line 95), and "obsequious sorrow" (line 96)?**

- 💬 The idea of duty runs through the phrases "mourning duties" (line 92), "filial obligation" (line 95), and "obsequious sorrow" (line 96).

**What is Claudius suggesting about grief and its relationship to duty?**

- 💬 Claudius's use of phrases like "mourning duties" (line 92) and "filial obligation" (line 95) treats grief not as an emotion or feeling that may last for some time, but as a duty to be fulfilled that comes to a natural end.

**In lines 96–98, of what fault does Claudius accuse Hamlet?**

- 💬 The words "obstinate" (line 97) and "stubbornness" (line 98) show that Claudius is accusing Hamlet of being stubborn by persisting in his grief.

**What does Claudius mean when he calls Hamlet's grief "unmanly" in line 98?**



💬 Student responses may include:

- By “unmanly,” Claudius means Hamlet is acting more like a woman than a man.
- By “unmanly,” Claudius means Hamlet is acting childishly, behaving more like a boy than a grown man.

- ① It is important here that students consider both possible meanings of *unmanly*, as both are relevant to the central ideas of the play, in particular the concepts of duty and gender roles.
- ① A consideration of Hamlet’s behavior as being potentially womanly could be important as a way of preparing students for their later work with Virginia Woolf.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student groups to read lines 102–106 (from “For what we know must be and is as common” to “A fault against the dead, a fault to nature”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

**In line 102, what does Claudius mean by “what we know must be”?**

💬 By “what we know must be,” Claudius refers to death.

**Where earlier in the speech has Claudius made a similar point?**

💬 In lines 93–95, when Claudius explains that Hamlet’s “father lost a father” (line 93), Claudius also makes the point that death is a commonplace occurrence and mortality is a fact of life.

- ① Consider explaining that *mortality* is a term that may be used to describe similar central ideas described across the Module 11.1 texts.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, consider asking the following questions:

**How is the word *vulgar* used in line 103?**

💬 *Vulgar* is used to mean “ordinary or common.”

**Which other word with a similar meaning does Claudius use in lines 102–103? What is the impact of using these two words close together?**

💬 Claudius uses the word “common” (line 102). He uses the words *common* and *vulgar* close together to emphasize that death is an everyday event.

**What does Claudius’s repeated insistence upon death as an everyday occurrence imply about Hamlet’s character?**

- 🗣️ Claudius implies that Hamlet is wrong or at “fault” for continuing to grieve his father’s death (lines 105–106).

① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, consider asking the following questions:

**What is the impact of the repetition of the word *fault* in lines 105–106 on Claudius’s depiction of Hamlet?**

- 🗣️ It emphasizes that Hamlet is in the wrong, that he is committing a fault.

**What is Hamlet’s “fault” (lines 105–106)?**

- 🗣️ Hamlet’s fault is his excessive grief.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

---

Instruct student groups to read lines 107–110 (from “To reason most absurd, whose common theme” to “till he that died today / ‘This must be so’”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definitions: *reason* means “ideas and opinions that are fair, sensible, and appropriate” and *absurd* means “extremely silly, foolish, or unreasonable.”
- ▶ Students write the definitions of *reason* and *absurd* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

**In line 107, how does Hamlet’s grief appear “to reason,” according to Claudius?**

- 🗣️ Hamlet’s grief seems “absurd,” or ridiculous, “[t]o reason” (line 107).

**What is the reasonable attitude toward death, according to Claudius?**

- 🗣️ According to Claudius, the reasonable attitude toward death is “This must be so” (line 110).

**Paraphrase Claudius’s monologue thus far into a single sentence.**

- 🗣️ Hamlet, your grief at your father’s death is excessive and unreasonable because everyone must die and everyone must experience grief.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses, paying close attention to comprehension of the play in the last question.

## Activity 5: Quick Write

**10%**

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

**How do specific word choices in Claudius’s monologue impact the development of Hamlet’s character?**

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.

① Students will refer to their Quick Write responses from this lesson in 11.1.2 Lesson 4.

## Activity 6: Closing

**10%**

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to reread Act 1.2, lines 90–110 (from “’Tis sweet and commendable in your nature” to “till he that died today / ‘This must be so’”) and respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

**To what kinds of standards does Claudius hold Hamlet? Cite at least two pieces of textual evidence to support your claim.**

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.

Introduce the new focus standard, RL.9-10.2, and model what applying a focus standard looks like. For example, RL.9-10.2 asks students to “Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.” Students who read “My Last Duchess” might say the following: In “My Last Duchess,” the Duke’s madness becomes obvious when he states, “I gave commands; / Then all smiles stopped together.” The central idea of madness interacts with the central ideas of power and status, since the Duke seems to have gotten away with silencing or perhaps killing the Duchess, and speaks freely about her absence in spite of his involvement.

- ▶ Students follow along.

## Homework

Reread Act 1.2, lines 90–110 (from “’Tis sweet and commendable in your nature” to “till he that died today / ‘This must be so’”) and respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

**To what kinds of standards does Claudius hold Hamlet? Cite at least two pieces of textual evidence to support your claim.**

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.