

10.9

Lesson 9

Introduction

In this lesson, students continue their analysis of Hamlet’s third soliloquy, Act 2.2, lines 607–634 (from “Bloody, bawdy villain! / Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless / villain!” to “Wherein I’ll catch the conscience of the king”), focusing on how the introduction of a key plot point—that Hamlet will stage a play to determine the guilt of his uncle—serves to advance the plot as well as further develop Hamlet’s character. Students analyze how plot, character, and order of action interact to develop the drama. Additionally, in preparation for the Mid-Unit Assessment, students are introduced to standard W.9-10.2.f, which asks students to write concluding statements. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How does Hamlet’s decision to stage a play advance the plot?

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.9-10.3	Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
Addressed Standard(s)	
W.9-10.2.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> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.2.A</u> Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.2.F</u> 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>

L.9-10.4.a-c	<p>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grades 9-10 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4.A</u> 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> 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> 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>
L.9-10.5.a	<p>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.5.A</u> Interpret figures of speech (e.g., euphemism, oxymoron) in context and analyze their role in the text.</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"> How does Hamlet's decision to stage a play advance the plot?
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate an understanding that Hamlet is waiting for his uncle's response to the play to confirm his suspicions about his father's murder before he seeks revenge (e.g., Hamlet believes that when "guilty creatures" (line 618) see their misdeeds performed before them in a play, they "proclaim[] their malefactions" (line 621), or confess their crimes. Hamlet wants to see if Claudius "blench[es]" (line 626), or flinches at seeing the play so he can ascertain Claudius's guilt. Identify that Hamlet introduces the idea that the Ghost might be untrustworthy, which also

influences his decision to stage the play (e.g., Hamlet is concerned that his father’s ghost may be a “devil” (line 628), and therefore deceptive. Hamlet feels he cannot take the Ghost’s words on faith. He must learn if Claudius is guilty. Hamlet stages the play in hopes Claudius’s response to it will expose him as a murderer.).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • blench (v.) – shrink; flinch
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about (v.) – turn around • cunning (n.) – art, skill • malefactions (n.) – evil deeds, crimes, wrongdoings
Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • struck (v.) – affected suddenly in a bad way • proclaimed (v.) – stated (something) in a public, official, or definite way • organ (n.) – a part of the body that has a particular function

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards: RL.9-10.3, W. 9-10.2.a, f, L. 9-10.4.a-c, L. 9-10.5.a • Text: <i>Hamlet</i> by William Shakespeare, Act 2.2: lines 607–634 (Masterful Reading: Act 2.2, lines 576–634) <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 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 10% 2. 15% 3. 5% 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 Central Ideas Tracking Tool (refer to 11.1.2 Lesson 7)—students may need additional blank copies
- Student copies of the 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.
	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: RL. 9-10.3. 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 further develop Hamlet's character.

- ▶ Students look at the agenda.

Instruct students to take out their copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool. Inform students that in this lesson they begin to work with a new substandard: W. 9-10.2.f. Instruct students to individually read the standard on their tools and assess their familiarity with and mastery of it.

- ▶ Students read and assess their familiarity with substandard W. 9-10.2.f.

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

- 💬 Student responses may include:

- In informational writing, students include a concluding statement or section to support a response.
- In their conclusions, students explain the significance or implications of the response.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

15%

Instruct students to take out their responses to the previous lesson's homework assignment. (Respond briefly in writing to the following prompt: 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 conduct a brief discussion about the responses.

🗨 Student responses may include:

- Hamlet uses the image of "gall" and "bitter[ness]" in Act 2.2, lines 604–605 to develop the central idea of revenge that is developed in his soliloquy in Act 1.5. By failing to take revenge for his father, Hamlet has disobeyed the Ghost's "commandment" (Act 1.5, line 109). To illustrate this, Hamlet shows himself as meek and mild, lacking the spirit to take revenge for his father.
- Hamlet describes himself as "unpregnant of [his] cause" (Act 2.2, line 595) to convey a central idea of action vs. inaction, which he expressed in his first soliloquy in Act. 1.2, in which he exclaims, "break my heart, for I must hold my tongue" (Act 1.2, line 164). In Act 2.2, Hamlet calls himself a "John-a-dreams, unpregnant of [his] cause" (line 595) who "can say nothing" (line 596), and expresses the same central idea of being caught in inaction when he desires and feels obliged to take action.

- ① Remind students to use the Central Ideas Tracking Tool to record central ideas they identify and discuss.

Activity 3: Masterful Reading

5%

Have students listen to a masterful reading of Hamlet's third soliloquy, Act 2.2, lines 576–634 (from "Now I am alone / O, what a rogue" to "Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King"). Instruct students to listen for what decision Hamlet makes to determine the guilt of his uncle.

- ▶ 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:

Why does Hamlet decide to have a play performed for Claudius?

Activity 4: Reading and Discussion

55%

Instruct students to form pairs. 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 pairs to read Act 2.2, lines 607–616 (from “Bloody, bawdy villain! / Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless / villain!” to “And fall a-cursing like a very drab, / A stallion!”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Whom does Hamlet describe in lines 607–609? What evidence in the text supports your response?

- Hamlet describes Claudius as a “[b]loody, bawdy villain” (line 607) because he has just been speaking about lacking the courage to avenge his father, “[u]pon whose property and most dear life / A damned defeat was made” (lines 597–598) by Claudius. In other words, Claudius has taken both the king’s property, his wife, and his life, so Claudius is not only a “[b]loody, bawdy villain” but also a “remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain” (lines 607–609).

How does Hamlet describe himself in lines 611–616? What reason does he give for this description?

- Hamlet describes himself as an “ass” (line 611) and as a “whore” who “unpack[s] [his] heart with words / And fall a-cursing like a very drab” (lines 614–615). Hamlet compares himself to an animal and a prostitute because he is talking or “unpack[ing] [his] heart” (line 614) rather than acting to avenge his “dear father murdered” (line 612).

How does Shakespeare further develop central ideas in lines 607–616?

- Shakespeare further develops the ideas of revenge and action vs. inaction in lines 607–616. Hamlet speaks being “prompted to [his] revenge by heaven and hell” (line 613), and yet he continues to talk or “unpack [his] heart” (line 614) rather than act.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to read Act 2.2, lines 616–623 (from “Fie upon ‘t! Foh! / About, my brains! – Hum, I have heard” to “will speak / with most miraculous organ”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

- ① Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definitions: *struck* means “affected suddenly in a bad way,” *proclaimed* means “stated (something) in a public, official, or definite way,” and *organ* means “a part of the body that has a particular function.”
 - Students write the definitions of *struck*, *proclaimed*, and *organ* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

Direct students to the explanatory notes for definitions of the following words: *about* and *cunning*.

- 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.

What does Hamlet mean by “Fie upon ‘t! Foh! About, my brains!” (lines 616–617)?

- 💬 When Hamlet says, “Fie upon ‘t! Foh! About, my brains!” he is commanding his mind to change, to turn his thinking around. Hamlet is telling himself to start thinking about something other than his father’s death or his family duty.

Why does Hamlet describe the scene as “cunning” (line 619)?

- 💬 Hamlet describes the scene as “cunning,” or skillfully done, because it has the potential to make “guilty creatures” (line 618) confess their guilt.

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

What does the prefix *mal-* suggest about the word *malefactions*? Consider other words that begin with the prefix *mal-*.

- 💬 The prefix *mal-* suggests that the word *malefactions* is a negative word, because other words that begin with *mal-* are negative words (for example, *malfunction*, *malformed*, *malady*, or *malaise*).

What do the phrases “guilty creatures” (line 618) and “have proclaimed their malefactions” (line 621) suggest about the meaning of *malefactions*?

- 💬 “Guilty creatures” (line 618) “have proclaimed” or told “their malefactions,” so “malefactions” (line 621) must be evil things, crimes, or wrongdoings.
- ① Consider drawing students' attention to their application of standards L.11-12.4.a, b through the process of using context and word parts to make meaning of a word.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle to define *malefactions*, consider providing the following definition: *malefactions* means “evil deeds, crimes, wrongdoings.”
- ▶ Students write the definition of *malefactions* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

Summarize Hamlet’s reasoning in lines 616–621.

- 💬 Hamlet believes that guilty people will confess their crimes when they see their crimes enacted on a stage before them.

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?

- ☞ Hamlet means that murder itself cannot speak because “it have no tongue” (line 622), 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.

- ① Consider drawing students’ attention to their application of standard L.11-12.5.a through the process of interpreting figurative language.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle with this question, consider explaining that *personification* is a type of figurative language that describes giving human qualities or characteristics to nonliving objects or ideas.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to read 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 before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definition: *blench* means “shrink; flinch.”

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

What does Hamlet plan to do?

- ☞ Hamlet plans to stage a play that looks “something like the murder of [his] father” (line 624) so that Hamlet can learn of Claudius’s guilt by Claudius’s reaction to the play.

What does Hamlet mean by “if he do blench / I know my course” (lines 626–627)?

- ☞ Hamlet means that if Claudius “blench[es]” (line 626) or flinches at the play, Hamlet will know if Claudius is guilty of his father’s murder. Then he will know what to do: take his revenge on Claudius.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct students to read 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 question before sharing out with the class.

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

- ☞ Hamlet fears that “the spirit that [he has] seen may be a devil” (line 627), which means that Hamlet is concerned that the Ghost may be there to deceive him. Therefore, Hamlet cannot take the Ghost’s words on faith; he must learn for a fact if Claudius is guilty or not.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to reread Act 1.5, lines 99–102 (from “O all you host of heaven! O Earth! What Else?” to “But bear me stiffly up”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

How does Act 2.2, lines 627–632 develop a central idea of revenge that is also addressed in Act 1.5, lines 99–102?

- ☞ Hamlet wonders if the Ghost is evil in the Act 1.5 soliloquy when he asks “shall I couple hell?” (Act 1.5, line 100). Hamlet begins to worry even more in the Act 2.2 soliloquy when he refers to the Ghost as a “devil” (line 627). Hamlet cannot seek revenge if he is not sure that Claudius killed his father, and his uncertainty about the Ghost makes him uncertain of Claudius’s guilt.

What does “this” mean in Hamlet’s statement: “I’ll have grounds / More relative than this” (Act 2.2, lines 632–633)? What does Hamlet mean by this statement?

- ☞ “This” refers to the words of the Ghost. “I’ll have grounds / More relative than this” means that he can have something better than the Ghost’s accusations to determine the truth of whether Claudius killed his father.
- 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.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to reread Act 2.2, lines 566–569 (from “We’ll ha ‘t tomorrow night. You could for a need” to “which I would set down and insert in ‘t, could you not?”) and answer the following question before sharing out with the class.

According to Hamlet’s request of the players and Hamlet’s doubts about the Ghost, what might be in the lines that Hamlet is adding to the play?

- 🗨️ Hamlet plans to add “a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines” to the play (Act 2.2 lines 567–568) that will make the player’s play parallel Claudius’s murder of Hamlet’s father and marriage to Gertrude, so that Hamlet can monitor Claudius’s reaction to the play to ascertain Claudius’s guilt.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 5: Quick Write

10%

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

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

Instruct students to look at their texts and notes to find evidence and to practice writing introductory and concluding statements that introduce the topic and explain the significance or implications of their response. 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 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.

Model Central Ideas Tracking Tool

Name:		Class:		Date:	
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Directions: As you read, record evidence of central ideas as well as explanations of how the evidence is connected and/or demonstrates the development of the central ideas in the text.

Text:	<i>Hamlet</i> by William Shakespeare
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Act/Scene/ Line #	Central Ideas	Evidence, Connections, and Development
Act 2.2, lines 604– 605	Revenge	Hamlet uses the image of “gall” and “bitter[ness]” in Act 2.2, lines 604–605 to develop the central idea of revenge. By failing to take revenge for his father, Hamlet has disobeyed the Ghost’s “commandment” (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.
Act 2.2, lines 595– 596	Action vs. inaction	Hamlet calls himself a “John-a-dreams, unpregnant of [his] cause” (line 595) who “can say nothing” (line 596), and expresses the same central idea of being caught in inaction when he desires and feels obliged to take action.