

10.14

Lesson 14

Introduction

In this second lesson on the dialogue between Hamlet and Ophelia, students read Act 3.1, lines 131–162 (from “Get thee to a nunnery. Why wouldst thou” to “The rest shall keep as they are. / To a nunnery, go”), the conclusion of the dialogue between Hamlet and Ophelia. Students continue to read and discuss the dialogue in pairs, focusing on the development of Ophelia’s character in relation to Hamlet and Laertes. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How does Shakespeare develop Ophelia’s character through her interactions with Laertes and Hamlet?

For homework, students reread Act 1.2, lines 150–162 (from “(Let me not think on ’t; frailty, thy name is woman!)” to “O, most wicked speed, to post / With such dexterity to incestuous sheets”) and explain briefly in writing the connections between Hamlet’s ideas in that soliloquy and his conversation with Ophelia in this lesson’s excerpt.

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.9-10.9.a	<p>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.9.A</u></p> <p>Apply <i>grades 9-10 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., “Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work [e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare]”).</p>

SL.9-10.1.a-d	<p>Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.A</u> Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.B</u> Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, presentation of alternate views), clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.C</u> Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.D</u> Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.</p>
L.9-10.4.c	<p>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 9-10 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <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>

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 Shakespeare develop Ophelia's character through her interactions with Laertes and Hamlet?

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Describe how Ophelia interacts with Laertes and how their interaction develops her character (e.g., Ophelia's interaction with Laertes shows her to be a confident, witty woman. When Laertes gives Ophelia advice about how and why she should not "lose [her] heart or [her] chaste treasure open" to Hamlet's affections (Act 1.3, line 35), Ophelia reminds Laertes not to be a hypocrite: "Do not ... / Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven, / Whiles ... / [you] ... reck[] not [your] own rede" (Act 1.3, lines 51–55). With this response, Ophelia demonstrates her wit and self-confidence in her relationship with her brother—she does not merely accept his advice but gives it back to him.).
- Describe how Ophelia interacts with Hamlet and how their interaction develops her character (e.g., Ophelia's interactions with Hamlet reveal her to be polite and kind, as she never retaliates when Hamlet questions her "honesty" (Act 3.1, line 122), or otherwise berates her. Even when Hamlet tells Ophelia she should not marry lest she become "a breeder of sins" (Act 3.1, line 132), or when he commands that she go to a "nunnery" (Act 3.1, line 151), Ophelia only ever replies with exclamations for "[h]eavenly powers [to] restore him!" (Act 3.1, line 153) or asks polite, honest questions: "What means your Lordship?" (Act 3.1, line 116). Ophelia's consistent references to Hamlet as "Lordship" (Act 3.1, line 116), or some variation of that, show that she honors Hamlet and his rank even when he does not act princely towards her.).

Vocabulary**Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)**

- breeder (n.) – an animal, plant, or person that produces offspring or reproduces
- arrant (adj.) – downright; thorough
- knaves (n.) – unprincipled, untrustworthy, or dishonest people
- calumny (n.) – a false and malicious statement designed to injure the reputation of someone or something; false criticism or slander
- wantonness (n.) – disregard for what is right, just, humane, etc.

Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)

- nunnery (n.) – convent; sometimes used mockingly to refer to a brothel

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

- plague (n.) – a large number of harmful or annoying things
- amble (v.) – to walk slowly in a free and relaxed way
- lisp (v.) – to speak imperfectly, especially in a childish manner

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards: RL.9-10.3, W. 9-10.9.a, SL. 9-10.1.a-e, L. 9-10.4.c Text: <i>Hamlet</i> by William Shakespeare, Act 3.1: lines 131–162; review of Act 1.3: lines 13–48 	
Learning Sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of Lesson Agenda Homework Accountability Masterful Reading Reading and Discussion Review of Laertes’s Monologue Quick Write Closing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5% 10% 5% 50% 15% 10% 5%

Materials

- Student copies of the Character Tracking Tool (refer to 11.1.2 Lesson 3)—students may need additional blank copies
- Student copies of the 11.1 Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist (refer to 11.1.2 Lesson 7)
- Student copies of the Short Response Checklist and Rubric (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

5%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standard for this lesson: RL. 9-10.3. In this lesson, students read the second half of the dialogue between Hamlet and Ophelia and review Laertes's monologue to analyze how Shakespeare develops Ophelia's character in relation to Laertes and Hamlet.

- ▶ Students look at the agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

10%

- ① Students will be held accountable for the second part of their homework in Activity 5: Review of Laertes's Monologue.

Activity 3: Masterful Reading

5%

Have students listen to a masterful reading of Act 3.1, lines 131–162 (from “Get thee to a nunnery. Why wouldst thou” to “The rest shall keep as they are. / To a nunnery, go”). Ask students to note the figurative language Hamlet uses.

- ▶ 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 do Hamlet and Laertes develop Ophelia's character?

Activity 4: Reading and Discussion

50%

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. Encourage students to each take a role (Hamlet or Ophelia) as they read each section aloud.

- ① Remind students to use the Character Tracking Tool to record character development as they identify and discuss.

Instruct student pairs to read lines Act 3.1, lines 131–140 (from “Get thee to a nunnery. Why wouldst thou” to “believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definitions: *breeder* means “an animal, plant, or person that produces offspring or reproduces,” *arrant* means “downright; thorough,” and *knaves* means “unprincipled, untrustworthy, or dishonest people.”

① Students may be familiar with some of these words. Consider asking students to volunteer definitions before providing them to the group.

- ▶ Students write the definitions of *breeder*, *arrant*, and *knaves* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

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

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 Shakespeare use the multiple meanings of “nunnery” (line 131) to develop Hamlet’s feelings about Ophelia?

- ☞ Hamlet has already accused Ophelia of being unchaste, so he could be suggesting she go to a real “nunnery” so that she will become chaste, or he could be suggesting she go to a brothel because she is so unchaste.

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

Why would Hamlet tell Ophelia to go to a nunnery? What subject(s) did he just discuss with her that relate to a nunnery?

- ☞ Hamlet has just discussed Ophelia’s chastity, so he suggests she go to a place where women have to be chaste—a “nunnery,” or a convent.

What new reason for Ophelia needing a “nunnery” does Hamlet introduce in lines 131–132?

- ☞ Hamlet suggests again that Ophelia go to a “nunnery” (line 131), so that she will not be “a breeder of sinners” (line 132); so she will not have children.

What evidence in lines 132–139 does Hamlet use to support this reason?

- ☞ Hamlet tells Ophelia that all men are “arrant knaves” (line 139), and gives himself as an example. Although he is “indifferent honest” (line 132), he claims he could accuse himself of many things: “I could accuse me of such things that it / were better if my mother had not borne me” (line 133–134). In other words, he has done enough bad in the world that he feels it may have been better if his mother had not given birth to him.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to read lines 141–145 (from “Where’s your father? At home, my lord” to “Farewell. / O, help him, you sweet heavens!”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Why might Hamlet ask about Ophelia’s father at this point?

- 🗨️ Hamlet knows or suspects that either Polonius is listening or that he asked Ophelia to give back his “remembrances” (line 102). Hamlet says that Polonius should “play the fool nowhere but in ’s own house” (line 144). In other words, Polonius should not involve himself in things that do not take place outside his own home.

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

Where is Polonius?

- 🗨️ He is hiding and listening to Hamlet and Ophelia’s conversation.

What does Ophelia’s exclamation in line 145 suggest she believes about Hamlet?

- 🗨️ When Ophelia exclaims, “O, help him, you sweet heavens!” she is begging the “heavens” to relieve Hamlet of his madness, which implies she thinks Hamlet is losing his mind.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to read lines 146–153 (from “If thou dost marry, I’ll give thee this plague” to “and quickly, too. Farewell. / Heavenly powers, restore him!”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definition: *calumny* means “a false and malicious statement designed to injure the reputation of someone or something; false criticism or slander.”

① **Differentiation Consideration:** 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 *calumny* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definition: *plague* means “a large number of harmful or annoying things.”

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

What plague or curse does Hamlet place on Ophelia as a *dowry*?

- ☞ Hamlet tells her that if she does marry, she will not escape “calumny” (line 148) no matter how pure or chaste she is.

The explanatory note for line 151 states that “monsters” can refer to “cuckolds.” Who does Hamlet suggest will be a cuckold? Why?

- ☞ Hamlet says that if Ophelia is to marry, she should “marry a fool” because “wise men” (line 150) know what “monsters” (line 151), or cuckolds, women will turn them into by cheating on them. Hamlet feels that Ophelia is being unfaithful in breaking off their love.

To what other marriage might Hamlet also be referring with this image?

- ☞ He may be referring to his parents’ marriage, suggesting that his mother made his father a cuckold by marrying again so quickly.

How does Ophelia respond? What do both of her responses reveal about her attitude towards Hamlet?

- ☞ Ophelia again asks “[h]eavenly powers” (line 153) to bring Hamlet to his senses. The cumulative impact of her responses to Hamlet’s cruelty is that she is more concerned for Hamlet than she is insulted by his rude accusations.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to read lines 154–158 (from “I have heard of your paintings too” to “you nickname God’s creatures and make / your wantonness your ignorance”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definition: *wantonness* means “disregard for what is right, just, humane, 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 *wantonness* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definitions: *amble* means “to walk slowly in a free and relaxed way” and *lisp* means “to speak imperfectly, especially in a childish manner.”

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

What does Hamlet mean by *paintings*?

- ☞ He means make-up, because he says, “God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another” (lines 155–156). Women make themselves “another” face (line 156) by applying make-up.

What is the impact of lines 154–158 on Hamlet’s tone toward Ophelia and women in general?

- ☞ Hamlet’s tone is harsh and critical. He accuses Ophelia and all women of “painting[]” (line 154) their “face” (line 155) and walking suggestively as in a “jig” or an “amble” (line 156), speaking with a “lisp” (line 157), and having “wantonness” and “ignorance” (line 158).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to read lines 158–162 (from “Go to, I’ll no / more on ’t”. It hath made me mad” to “The rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

What reasons has Hamlet given in the previous lines for having “no more marriage” (lines 159–160)?

- ☞ Student responses may include:
 - Men are “arrant knaves” (line 138) who lie.
 - Women make “monsters” or cuckolds of men (line 151).
 - Women “paint[]” (line 154) their faces, “jig and amble” (line 156), “lisp” (line 157), and are “wanton[]” and “ignorant[]” (line 158).

To whom might Hamlet be referring when he says, “Those that are married already, / all but one shall live” (lines 160–161)?

- ☞ Hamlet refers to his mother, Gertrude, and uncle, Claudius, when he says, “Those that are married already, / all but one shall live” (lines 160–161). Hamlet means his mother will live, and his uncle will die.

Review lines 131–162. What phrase does Hamlet repeat throughout this excerpt? What impact does the repetition have?

- 🗨️ Hamlet repeats some form of “Get thee to a nunnery” (line 131). The repetition reinforces Hamlet’s obsession with Ophelia’s chastity, and how her chastity and honesty are interconnected.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 5: Review of Laertes’s Monologue

15%

Transition students to a whole-class discussion of Laertes’s monologue in Act 1.3, lines 1–48. Discuss the following questions as a whole class. Remind students to refer to their annotations from the previous lesson’s homework. Encourage students to take notes and annotate their texts during the discussion for use in this lesson’s Quick Write and later lesson assessments.

- ① This focused annotation supports students’ engagement with W.11-12.9.a, which focuses on the use of textual evidence in writing.
- ① Consider reminding students that this is an opportunity to work with standard SL.11-12.1.a-e. Direct students to their copies of the 11.1 Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist as necessary.
- ① Remind students to use the Character Tracking Tool to record character development they identify and discuss.

What advice does Laertes give Ophelia regarding Hamlet?

- 🗨️ He tells her to “[h]old” (line 7) the “trifling of his favor” (line 6) as “a toy” (line 7). In other words, she should not take his love seriously.

What reasons does he give for this advice?

- 🗨️ Student responses may include:
 - Hamlet is young and as he “grow[s]” (line 14) and “waxes” (line 15), or changes, so may his “mind and soul” (line 16), or his love for Ophelia.
 - Because Hamlet is the son of a king, he “is subject to his birth” (line 21) and “his will is not his own” (line 20) regarding whom he can marry.
 - If Ophelia acts on her love outside of marriage, her “honor” will “sustain” a “loss” (line 33) of her “heart or [her] chaste treasure” (line 35).

Consider the idea that both men are raising here. Which of Laertes’s lines in Act 1.3, lines 13–48 echo Hamlet’s lines in Act 3.1, 131–162?

- 🗨️ Students responses may include:

- Laertes and Hamlet both discuss Ophelia's chastity. Laertes cautions Ophelia about losing her "heart or [her] chaste treasure" to Hamlet's potentially impermanent declarations of love (Act 1.3, line 35). Laertes also tells her that "[t]he charest maid is prodigal enough / If she unmask her beauty to the moon" (Act 1.3, lines 40–41), which means that Ophelia (or any girl) cannot be too careful in showing her beauty.
- Hamlet tells Ophelia "[t]hat if you be honest and fair, [her] honesty / should admit no discourse to [her] beauty" (Act 3.1, lines 117–118), meaning if she is indeed chaste, she should not let her beauty interfere with her chastity. Multiple times Hamlet tells Ophelia to "[g]et thee to a nunnery" (Act 3.1, line 131), either so she can be chaste, or so she can be unchaste, as the alternate meaning of "nunnery" is a whorehouse. Hamlet also says that unchaste women like Ophelia make men into "monsters" (line 151), or cuckolds, with their promiscuousness.

How does Ophelia respond to Laertes's advice? How does this relate to her response to Hamlet's accusations? Consider both *what* she says and *how* she says it.

🗨 Student responses may include:

- Ophelia responds politely and kindly to both Laertes and Hamlet.
- She assures Laertes, "I shall the effect of this good lesson keep / As watchman to my heart" (Act 1.3, lines 49–50).
- She boldly suggests that Laertes should follow his own advice as well: "Do not ... show me the steep and thorny way to heaven, / Whiles ... [you] ... reck[] not [your] own rede" (Act 1.3, lines 51–55).
- Instead of arguing with Hamlet, Ophelia questions his accusations as if she does not understand him: "My lord?" and "What means your Lordship?" (Act 3.1, lines 114 and 116).
- Even when arguing against Hamlet she uses a question rather than a statement, showing her submissiveness: "Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce / than with honesty?" (Act 3.1, lines 119–120).

Activity 6: Quick Write

10%

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

How does Shakespeare develop Ophelia's character through her interactions with Laertes and Hamlet?

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 7: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to reread Act 1.2, lines 150–162 (from “(Let me not think on ’t; frailty, thy name is woman!)” to “O, most wicked speed, to post / With such dexterity to incestuous sheets”) and respond briefly in writing to the following question:

How do Hamlet’s ideas in Act 1.2, lines 150–162 connect to his conversation with Ophelia in Act 3.1, lines 131–162?

- ▶ Students follow along.

Homework

Reread Act 1.2, lines 150–162 (from “(Let me not think on ’t; frailty, thy name is woman!)” to “O, most wicked speed, to post / With such dexterity to incestuous sheets”) and respond briefly in writing to the following question:

How do Hamlet’s ideas in Act 1.2, lines 150–162 connect to his conversation with Ophelia in Act 3.1, lines 131–162?

Model Character Tracking Tool

Name:		Class:		Date:	
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Directions: Use this tool to keep track of character development throughout the module. Trace character development in the texts by noting how the author introduces and develops characters. Cite textual evidence to support your work.

Text:	<i>Hamlet</i> by William Shakespeare
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Character	Trait	Evidence
Ophelia	Kind	Whenever Hamlet says something particularly cruel or outrageous Ophelia exclaims something like “Heavenly powers, restore him!” (Act 3.1, line 153)—she only wants Hamlet to be well.
Hamlet	Angry	Hamlet is angered by Ophelia’s refusal of his love and demands she go to a “nunnery” (Act 3.1, lines 130, 140, 149, 151, and 162). He insults Ophelia throughout most of his interactions with her in Act 3.1.
	Mean	Hamlet says mean-spirited things about women throughout his interaction with Ophelia in Act 3.1, including things like claiming that unchaste women turn men into “monsters” (line 151), and implies that women are deceptive in nature as evidenced by their “paintings” (line 154), or makeup.
Laertes	Brotherly	Laertes advises Ophelia not to fall for Hamlet’s affections as Hamlet’s marriage decisions are “not his own” (Act 1.3, line 20) because he is royalty, and because he is young and fickle. Laertes also tells Ophelia she must remain chaste, because if she loses her reputation then no matter how virtuous she is she will “scape[] not calumnious strokes” (Act 1.3, line 42); she will never be respected if she loses her virginity too early.