

10.21

Lesson 21

Introduction

In this lesson, students listen to a masterful reading of Act 5.1, lines 254–289 (from “Sweets to the sweet, farewell! / I hoped thou shouldst” to “O, he is mad, Laertes, / For love of God, forbear him”), in which Ophelia is buried. Students analyze how Shakespeare develops characters through their responses to Ophelia’s death. Students also analyze how character development in this scene interacts with the development of central ideas. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How do the characters’ reactions to Ophelia’s death further develop central ideas in the play.

For homework, students reread “My Last Duchess” and write a short paragraph (3–5 sentences) explaining how the setting of the poem relates to other elements of the text.

Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
RL.9-10.2	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.
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> 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>
L.9-10.4.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>c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries,</p>

	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.
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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 do the characters’ reactions to Ophelia’s death further develop central ideas in the play?
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the reactions of the main characters to Ophelia’s death (e.g., The Queen expresses how she wanted Ophelia to marry Hamlet; Laertes jumps in the grave, curses Hamlet, and asks to be buried with Ophelia; Hamlet declares his love for Ophelia and fights with Laertes.). • Identify central ideas developed in this scene (e.g., madness, mortality, revenge, action vs. inaction, etc.). • Explain how the characters’ reactions further develop the central ideas (e.g., Laertes’s accusation that Hamlet “[d]eprived” (line 261) Ophelia of her “most ingenious sense” (line 260) develops the central idea of madness by implying that Ophelia was driven to madness because of Hamlet’s actions. By leaping into the grave and asking to be buried with Ophelia, Laertes provides the third example in the play in which death separates family members, refining the central idea of mortality. When Laertes confronts Hamlet at the grave, Laertes says, “The Devil take thy soul!” (line 272), suggesting that Laertes wants to kill Hamlet to avenge Ophelia’s death. Laertes’s desire for revenge refines the central idea of revenge and action vs. inaction. Laertes shows how unlike Hamlet he is, because Hamlet only speaks about revenge but does not act. Laertes fights with Hamlet, demonstrating that he is ready to take action immediately.).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.*
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.*
Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)

- None.*

*See 11.1.2 Lesson 20 for vocabulary from Act 5.1, lines 254–289.

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards: RL.9-10.2, RL. 9-10.3, W. 9-10.9.a, L. 9-10.4.c • Text: <i>Hamlet</i> by William Shakespeare, Act 5.1: lines 254–289 	
Learning Sequence:	
1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda	1. 5%
2. Homework Accountability	2. 15%
3. Masterful Reading	3. 5%
4. Reading and Discussion	4. 55%
5. Quick Write	5. 15%
6. Optional Film Viewing	6. 0%
7. Closing	7. 5%

Materials

- Student copies of the Setting Tool (refer to 11.1.2 Lesson 20)
- Student copies of the Central Ideas Tracking Tool (refer to 11.1.2 Lesson 7)—students may need additional blank copies
- Copies of the Mourners Chart for each student
- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)
- Excerpt from Gregory Doran’s *Hamlet* (2:34:32–2:46:44) (optional)

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	Plain text indicates teacher action.

symbol	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 standards for this lesson: RL. 9-10.2 and RL. 9-10.3. In this lesson, students reread the scene they read in Lesson 20, focusing on how Shakespeare develops the characters in this scene to further develop central ideas of the play.

- ▶ Students look at the agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

15%

Instruct students to take out their responses to the previous lesson’s homework assignment. (Choose a dramatic element other than the one you worked with in class today and add the new dramatic element to your Setting Tool. Include an explanation about how the setting of this scene impacts the new element and text evidence to support your explanation.) Instruct students to share their homework responses in small groups.

- ☞ See the Model Setting Tool at the end of this lesson for sample student responses.

Activity 3: Masterful Reading

5%

Have students listen to a masterful reading of Act 5.1, lines 254–289 (from “Sweets to the sweet, farewell! / I hoped thou shouldst” to “O, he is mad, Laertes, / For love of God, forbear him”). Ask students to consider how the characters express their grief over Ophelia’s death.

- ▶ Students follow along, reading silently.
- ⓘ Consider asking students who are willing and able to read these lines aloud.
- ⓘ **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students in their reading throughout this lesson:

How does Ophelia’s death affect the other characters?

Activity 4: Reading and Discussion

55%

Instruct students to form pairs. Instruct student pairs to review their notes and annotations to generate a list of at least 3 central ideas that Shakespeare has introduced and developed in *Hamlet* that are further developed in this scene.

🗨 Student responses may include:

- Revenge
- Mortality
- Action vs. inaction
- Madness

Instruct students to consider these central ideas as they examine how Shakespeare develops the characters in this scene. Instruct students to annotate for central ideas using the code CI throughout the lesson.

- ① Consider drawing students' attention to their application of standard W. 9-10.9.a through the process of annotating for central ideas.
- ① Remind students to use the Central Ideas Tracking Tool to record central ideas they identify and discuss. 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.

Distribute the Mourners Chart. Instruct students to form small groups. Post or project each set of questions below for student groups to discuss.

Instruct student groups to read Act 5.1, lines 254–289 (from “Sweets to the sweet, farewell! / I hoped thou shouldst” to “O, he is mad, Laertes, / For love of God, forbear him”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class. Instruct students to record their responses to the questions in the “Words/Actions” column of the Mourners Chart.

Provide students with the following definitions: *rash* means “acting or tending to act too hastily or without due consideration” and *asunder* means “into parts.”

- ① Students may be familiar with these words. Consider asking students to volunteer definitions before providing them to the group.
 - ▶ Students write the definitions of *rash* and *asunder* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definition: *conjures* means “creates or imagines (something).”

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

Direct students to the explanatory notes for definitions of the following words: *decked* and *splenitive*.

① Consider drawing students’ attention to their application of standard L. 9-10.4.c through the process of using the explanatory notes to make meaning of a word.

What do Gertrude’s words and actions at the burial site suggest about her relationship with Ophelia?

- ☞ Gertrude’s words and actions show that she was fond of Ophelia. She scatters flowers on Ophelia’s grave and says that she had “hoped” that Ophelia would “have been [] Hamlet’s wife” (line 255).

What do Laertes’s words and actions at the burial site suggest about his relationship with Ophelia and his relationship with Hamlet?

- ☞ Laertes demonstrates his love for Ophelia when he “[!]eaps in the grave” (line 262.1) and then asks to be buried with her. Laertes demonstrates that he may be angry enough to kill Hamlet when he says, “The devil take thy soul!” (line 272) and begins to fight with him.

Why does Hamlet approach Laertes (lines 267–271)? What evidence in the text supports your answer?

- ☞ He wants to confront Laertes. He announces himself as “This is I, / Hamlet the Dane!” (lines 270–271), making himself sound impressive and trying to intimidate Laertes. He is making fun of Laertes’s melodramatic behavior.

How does Hamlet describe himself in lines 275–277?

- ☞ Hamlet says he is “not splenitive and rash” (line 275) yet he has in him “something dangerous” (line 276), which Laertes should fear.

Does the text support or contradict Hamlet’s description of himself? How?

- ☞ Student responses may include:
 - Hamlet is not splenitive or rash; Hamlet has still not taken any action against Claudius.
 - Hamlet is splenitive and rash. He is planning to murder Claudius and has impulsively killed Polonius, thinking he was the King.
 - There is something dangerous about Hamlet because he has a fight with Laertes and has been contemplating murdering Claudius. He has already murdered Polonius and his behavior around Ophelia was disturbing.

What evidence in the play supports or contradicts Hamlet’s statement that he loves Ophelia?

🗨 Student responses supporting Hamlet’s statement may include:

- Hamlet gave Ophelia tokens of his affection before his father died.
- When Hamlet hears Ophelia coming, after his “To be or not to be” soliloquy, he says, “Soft you now, / The fair Ophelia.—Nymph, in thy orisons be all my sins remembered” (Act 3.1, lines 96–98), using a term of endearment for her, even though she cannot hear him.
- Hamlet only said cruel things to Ophelia because he knew Claudius and Polonius were listening and he was pretending to be crazy. He asks, “Where’s your father?” (Act 3.1, line 141).
- He only said cruel things to Ophelia because she was returning his gifts. When Ophelia tries to give him her remembrances, he says, “No, not I. I never gave you aught” (Act 3.1, line 105).
- He is grieving now that he has discovered that Ophelia is dead: “I loved Ophelia. Forty thousand brothers / Could not with all their quantity of love / Make up my sum” (Act 5.1, lines 285–287).

🗨 Student responses contradicting Hamlet’s statement may include:

- Hamlet was cruel to Ophelia when she was forced to return his gifts. He laughs and accuses her of lying and/or being immodest: “Ha, ha, are you honest?” (Act 3.1, line 113).
- Hamlet used offensive language to Ophelia: “Get thee to a nunnery. Why wouldst thou be / a breeder of sinners?” (Act 3.1, lines 131–132).
- Hamlet did not seem to care that Ophelia’s feelings were hurt: When Hamlet says, “I loved you not” (Act 3.1, line 129), Ophelia responds, “I was the more deceived” (Act 3.1, line 130), but Hamlet continues berating her by saying, “Get thee to a nunnery!” (Act 3.1, line 131).
- Hamlet says he values honor but he cannot be believed because sometimes he says what he means and other times he pretends to be mad and says crazy things. For example, when Ophelia returns his “remembrances” (line 102), he denies giving them to her, denies loving her, and then says he did love her.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses. Instruct students to add to their charts based on the discussion.

Instruct students to answer the following questions in their small groups and record their responses in the “Central Ideas” column of the Mourners Chart.

Compare Laertes’s words and actions to Hamlet’s words and actions in this scene. In what ways does Laertes serve as a foil for Hamlet?

🗨️ Student responses may include:

- Laertes and Hamlet are both grieving for Ophelia.
- Laertes publicly expresses his anger at Hamlet. Hamlet has only expressed his thoughts about Claudius in private.
- Laertes uses melodramatic language and actions to express his grief (e.g., he jumps into the grave and asks to be buried with Ophelia). Hamlet expresses his grief and anger more in private than in public, though in the beginning Claudius reprimanded him for wearing black and being excessive in his grief.

How does Laertes’s role as a foil for Hamlet in this scene further a central idea?

🗨️ Student responses may include:

- Having Laertes as a foil emphasizes the different responses to mortality. Laertes is very public in his grief, cursing Hamlet, leaping in the grave, and fighting Hamlet as the cause of his father’s and sister’s deaths. Hamlet is more private in his grief, trying to find an appropriate means of avenging his father’s death; he usually broods and plots as evidenced by his soliloquies.
- Having Laertes as a foil highlights the central idea of action vs. inaction. Laertes does not spend a lot of time thinking about the situation. He curses Hamlet and fights him as soon as he sees him, while Hamlet tries to find the proper response to the Ghost’s command to avenge the king’s murder and delays his action throughout the whole play.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses. Instruct students to add to their charts based on the discussion.

Remind students that their notes and annotations on this scene help them keep track of evidence they use in the lesson assessment and later in the End-of-Unit and Performance Assessments, which focus on the development of central ideas.

① This focused annotation supports students’ engagement with W. 9-10.9.a, which addresses the use of textual evidence in writing.

Activity 5: Quick Write

15%

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

How do the characters’ reactions to Ophelia’s death further develop central ideas in the play?

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: Film Viewing (optional)

0%

If time and access allow, consider showing students an excerpt of Act 5.1 from Gregory Doran’s *Hamlet* (2:34:32–2:46:44), from the gravediggers’ initial conversation until all characters exit the graveyard. Ask students to focus on Hamlet’s musings on death.

- ① Viewing this portion of the play supports comprehension by allowing students to experience visually the impact of the setting on other elements of the drama, and offers students the opportunity to examine more thoroughly Hamlet’s consideration of death, particularly in relation to his musings about “poor Yorick.”
- ① Note that Gregory Doran’s *Hamlet* omits some of the banter between the gravediggers, though the general tone of the conversation is clearly light-hearted.

Activity 7: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to reread “My Last Duchess” from 11.1.1 and write a short paragraph (3–5 sentences) explaining how the setting of the poem is important to other elements of the text.

Homework

Reread “My Last Duchess” and write a short paragraph (3–5 sentences) explaining how the setting of the poem is important to other elements of the text.

Model Setting Tool

Name:		Class:		Date:	
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Directions: In the first column record a dramatic element that is affected by the setting (e.g., plot, mood, characterization). In the second column, explain how the setting impacts the dramatic element. In the third column, record text evidence that shows how the setting affects the other dramatic element.

Element	Impact of Setting	Text Evidence
Dialogue	<p>The gravediggers talk about where people who commit suicide are allowed to be buried as they dig a hole for a woman who has drowned.</p> <p>The gravediggers joke about death as they dig a new hole in the graveyard.</p> <p>Laertes talks about what will happen to the priest and Ophelia after death because of the funeral ceremony in the graveyard.</p> <p>Gertrude expresses her affection for Ophelia at the grave.</p> <p>Hamlet and Laertes argue about who loved Ophelia more as they fight by her grave.</p>	<p>“Is she to be buried in Christian burial, when she willfully seeks her own salvation? ... hang themselves more than / their even-Christian.” (lines 1–30)</p> <p>“What is he that builds stronger than either the mason ... Go, get thee in, and fetch me a / stoup of liquor.” (lines 42–62)</p> <p>“What ceremony else? / That is Laertes, a very noble youth ... A minist’ring angel shall my sister be / When thou liest howling” (lines 230–252)</p> <p>“Sweets to the sweet, farewell! I hoped thou shouldst ... sweet maid / And not have strewed thy grave.” (lines 254–257)</p> <p>“What is he whose grief / Bears such an emphasis ... Nay an thou’lt mouth, / I’ll rant as well as thou.” (lines 267–301)</p>
Plot	<p>The gravediggers’ opening conversation reminds readers that Ophelia drowned.</p> <p>Hamlet learns that Ophelia has died because he sees the funeral procession and hears Laertes speaking at the grave.</p>	<p>“Is she to be buried in Christian burial? ... and drown him, he drowns not himself.” (lines 1–19)</p> <p>“What, the fair Ophelia?” (line 253)</p>

	Hamlet and Laertes fight at the graveside.	“This is I, / Hamlet the Dane / The devil take thy soul ... Hamlet! Hamlet! / Gentlemen / Good my lord, be quiet.” (lines 270–281)
Tone	<p>The setting contrasts with the gravediggers’ light tone.</p> <p>The setting supports the sorrowful tone of the mourners.</p> <p>The setting makes the angry words between Hamlet and Laertes inappropriate.</p>	<p>“What is he that builds stronger than / either the mason ... Go, get thee in, and fetch me a / stoup of liquor.” (lines 42–62)</p> <p>“Sweets to the sweet, farewell! / I hoped thou shouldst ... T’ o’ertop old Pelion of the skyish head / Of blue Olympus.” (lines 254–266)</p> <p>“I loved Ophelia ... I’ll rant as well as thou.” (lines 285–301)</p> <p>“The devil take thy soul! ... I’ll rant as well as thou.” (lines 272–301)</p>
Mood	<p>The setting of the graveyard impacts the play by creating a mournful or somber mood.</p> <p>At first the mournful mood is contrasted with the joking between the gravediggers.</p> <p>Next, the somber mood is developed by what takes place in the graveyard setting: Ophelia is buried. The characters’ grief during Ophelia’s burial in the graveyard demonstrates the mournful mood.</p>	<p>They can joke about the dead and death because “[c]ustom hath made it in [them] a property of easiness” (lines 69–70), or because being around death is part of their job.</p> <p>Gertrude says, “Sweets to the sweet, farewell!” (line 254), Laertes jumps into Ophelia’s grave to be buried with her, and Hamlet says, “I loved Ophelia. Forty thousand brothers / Could not with all their quantity of love / Make up my sum” (lines 285–287).</p>

Mourners Chart

Name:		Class:		Date:	
Mourner	Words/Actions What does each character say and do?	Central Ideas How do the character's words and actions develop or refine a central idea?			
Gertrude					
Laertes					
Hamlet					

Model Mourners Chart

Name:		Class:		Date:	
Mourner	Words/Actions What does each character say and do?	Central Ideas How do the character’s words and actions develop or refine a central idea?			
Gertrude	<p>Throws flowers on grave</p> <p>Calls Ophelia “sweet” (line 254) and “sweet maid” (line 256)</p> <p>Says she had hoped Ophelia would be Hamlet’s bride</p>	<p>Mortality:</p> <p>Gertrude sincerely mourns Ophelia as a “sweet maid” (line 256) and says, “I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet’s wife” (line 255).</p>			
Laertes	<p>Curses Hamlet when Gertrude mentions him, “O, treble woe / Fall ten times treble on that cursèd head” (lines 258–259) and “The devil take thy soul!” (line 272).</p> <p>Jumps in grave to be buried alive with Ophelia</p> <p>Fights Hamlet</p>	<p>Mortality:</p> <p>Laertes grieves loudly and publicly for Ophelia; Hamlet grieves quietly for his father; Hamlet is prompted to display grief.</p> <p>Action vs. inaction:</p> <p>Even though Laertes has a well-thought-out plan for revenge, he goes ahead and instinctively attacks Hamlet; Hamlet wants to kill Claudius, but has never given in to this urge and still has no real plan.</p>			
Hamlet	<p>Mocks Laertes’s melodrama</p> <p>Fights with Laertes</p> <p>Professes love for Ophelia</p>	<p>Mortality:</p> <p>Hamlet accuses Laertes of making a show of mourning Ophelia: “What is he whose grief / Bears such an emphasis” (lines 267–268), while he (Hamlet) is the one who most mourns her: “Forty thousand brothers / Could not with all their quantity of love / Make up my sum” (lines 285–287).</p> <p>Revenge:</p> <p>Hamlet’s description of himself supports the idea that he is dangerous and capable of taking his revenge: “have I in me something dangerous” (line 276).</p> <p>Action vs. inaction:</p> <p>Responds to Laertes’s display of grief without considering the situation rather than merely thinking about it; recalls</p>			

		<p>Hamlet’s many thoughts about revenge that have not been acted on. Compare to the previous instance of Hamlet’s acting without thinking, when he accidentally killed Polonius.</p> <p>Even when describing himself, Hamlet expresses the tension between thought—“though I am not splenitive and rash” (line 275)—and action or emotion: “Yet have I in me something dangerous” (line 276).</p> <p>The description supports the idea that Hamlet is reluctant to take revenge because he is “not splenitive and rash,” (line 275) even while he is fighting.</p>
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