

## Introduction to *Hamlet*

Name of your father (or closest male role model)	Name of your mother (or closest female role model)	Name of your father's brother (your uncle) or your father's best friend

### Quickwrite:

You are away at college when you receive a call. Your father has died unexpectedly. When you get home, you discover that your mom has grown very close to your uncle (or father's best friend) and they plan to get married next month.

1. What is your reaction?
2. What questions are running through your mind?
3. What actions do you take?

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Setting:

*Hamlet* takes place in \_\_\_\_\_ during the \_\_\_\_\_.

### Characters:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Prince of Denmark
  - In college
  - Son of Queen Gertrude and the late King Hamlet of Denmark
  - Nephew of Claudius, the new king
2. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Hamlet's mother
  - King Hamlet's widow
  - Just married Claudius, her brother-in-law
3. \_\_\_\_\_
  - New ruler of Denmark
  - Just married his dead brother's wife
  - Doesn't really like or trust Hamlet
4. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Appears several times
  - Will only speak to his son, Hamlet

5. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Hamlet's girlfriend
  - Sweet, innocent
  - Dutiful daughter
  - Father is a member of Claudius's court
6. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Ophelia's brother
  - College student in France
  - Great at fencing
7. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Father of Ophelia and Laertes – very involved in their lives
  - Trusts advisor to King Claudius
  - Worried about Hamlet's relationship with Ophelia
8. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Prince of Norway, Denmark's neighbor
  - King Hamlet killed his father in battle
  - Chip on his shoulder against Hamlet and King Claudius
  - Presents a threat to Denmark's security

#### Important Terms to Know:

- \_\_\_\_\_: a character who contrasts with another character (usually the protagonist) in order to highlight particular qualities of the other character

### CONFLICT

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quest for power</li> <li>• Quest for justice</li> <li>• Fortinbras vs. Claudius</li> <li>• Hamlet vs. Claudius</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hamlet: "That ever I was born to set it right!"</li> <li>• Broken, corrupted family</li> <li>• Duty as a royal son</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elite class vs. working class</li> <li>• Treatment of women (misogyny)</li> <li>• King's desires vs. People's needs</li> <li>• Hamlet: "Words, words, words!"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hamlet faces heavy doubts</li> <li>• Learning to conquer fear</li> <li>• Polonius: "To thine own self be true." But Hamlet must figure out what that means</li> </ul>