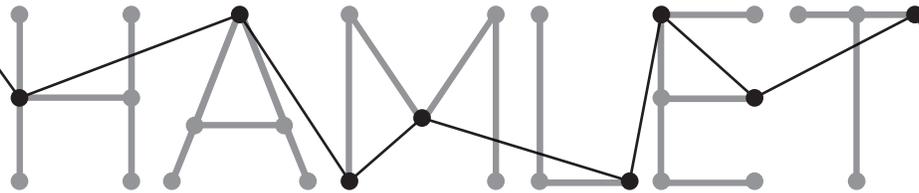




# HOT Season for Young People 2014-15 Teacher Guidebook



AMERICAN SHAKESPEARE CENTER



Photo by Michael Bailey

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# Shakespeare's Text – Which Hamlet is *Hamlet*?

A note from ASC Artistic Director, Jim Warren

In these days of Amazon.com and the proliferation of mega-bookstores, it is hard to imagine that buying a printed copy of a play was once a difficult, if not unfathomable, notion. Before Guttenburg's invention of movable type in the mid-fifteenth century, a single book was about as expensive as a hybrid SUV is today. A monk or scribe sometimes spent an entire year copying a manuscript. After Guttenburg, and certainly by the time Shakespeare had become famous in the theatre world of the early seventeenth century, quartos (in essence, Elizabethan paperbacks) were widely marketed at affordable prices. But plays were considered live entertainment and were rarely available in printed form. Some of Shakespeare's plays made it into print before his death in 1616; most did not.

The road to publication was circuitous at best. First, Shakespeare scribbled his story on paper and delivered it to a scrivener; those hand-written copies are now called "Foul Papers." Next, the scrivener neatly recopied the play, creating "Fair Copy." The "Fair Copy" was turned over to the theatre company's stage manager, who wrote out the lines and cues for each individual actor (each actor received only his own parts, with cues); actors were not given the whole play. The stage manager would take the pages of a single actor's lines, stitch them together from end to end, roll it all up into a scroll and hand each actor his "role."

Though most were not printed until after his death, several of Shakespeare's plays were printed while he was still alive in quarto (paperback) form. Scholars have speculated that some quartos resulted from actors reconstructing entire plays from memory; other quartos may have been officially licensed to the printer by Shakespeare's company. In 1623, seven years after Shakespeare's death, two of his fellow actors, John Heminge and Henry Condell, supervised the publication of 36 Shakespeare plays in one book. This first attempt to create a "complete" edition is called the First Folio (folios were larger than quartos, like coffee-table books). When it came time to give a copy of a play to a printer, which copy would they use? Shakespeare's original Foul Papers? The neater Fair Copy? What about the stage directions for entrances and exits, probably created by the stage manager by writing on the Fair copy and might have included cuts made by the actors? Shakespeare scholar Andrew Gurr thinks the actors cut the texts (that they never performed every line a playwright wrote) and that the cut texts used for performance were "too valuable to the companies to be used for printing."

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* was first performed in 1602 with Richard Burbage in the title role. This play turned out to be one of Shakespeare's most popular, and three different versions of this play were subsequently published:

## **1603: First Quarto(Q1)**

- previously thought to have been printed from an "unauthorized" manuscript created by actors and/or be an earlier and cut version as performed by Shakespeare's company;
- more recent theories suggest that Q1 was prepared specifically for print by unknown agents with access to a range of memorial and material sources.

## **1604: Second Quarto(Q2)**

- thought to be a response to the "bad" first quarto and based on Shakespeare's papers.

## **1623: First Folio(F1)**

- the first collected works of Shakespeare, also thought to be based on Shakespeare's papers.

Each version contains peculiarities that make it unique. Q2 and F1 are very similar but not identical. Q1 was printed first but contains many lines and speeches that scholars call "corrupt," but maybe it

was an earlier, unrevised version. Q1 has about 2800-2900 lines and is, therefore, closer to the length of most Renaissance plays. Q2 has about 3800 lines. F1 is around 3650 lines, but it omits 230 lines from Q2 and adds 80 lines not found in Q2 or any other version. Harold Bloom calls Q2, F1, and the conflated *Hamlet* of 3880 lines “Shakespeare’s White Elephant” and “an anomaly in the cannon” because they are so long. Andrew Gurr writes:

*Shakespeare and his company were in the habit of trimming and redrafting his scripts for use on the stage quite drastically. They shortened long speeches and cut redundant characters in order to streamline the text into something that could easily be put on as a two-hour performance.*

The most intriguing difference found in these versions (revisions?) of *Hamlet* involves the sequence of scenes. Q2 and F1 feature identical scene order while Q1 places the “to be or not to be” soliloquy (followed by the “get thee to a nunnery” scene) much earlier in the play. Some scholars believe that the Q1 scene order is “more logical” and that the story it tells is more direct and immediate. In Q1, “to be or not to be” and the nunnery scene are followed by the fishmonger scene, the arrival of the players, Hamlet formulating his plan “to catch the conscience of the king,” and Hamlet putting that plan into immediate action. In Q2/F1, the fishmonger scene comes first, followed by the arrival of the players, then Hamlet formulating his plan “to catch the conscience of the king”; but then Hamlet seems to lose his momentum, contemplating death with “to be or not to be,” followed by the nunnery scene, and THEN the players perform their play. Obviously, the arc of the story is significantly different in each of the two sequences; but which version is the “right” version? Which version plays “better”? Do the two versions feel different for an audience?

**Our 2014/15 *Hamlet* will use the length of the Q1 text as our guide, but we will be selecting speeches and word choices from all three versions. And we will be rehearsing both scene sequences.**

At this point, my plan is to work up two versions of the show and perform the Q1 sequence on some nights and the F1/Q2 sequence on other nights. Maybe **we’ll flip a coin each night and let an audience member choose our scene order** by calling heads or tails (see *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* for more coin flipping). Whichever way we decide to go, the fact remains that we can never know which version of *Hamlet* is “right” or “definitive” or “Shakespeare’s favorite.” With such an abundance of material from which to choose, the adventure lies in the exploration.

**Jim Warren**  
ASC Artistic Director, Co-founder



Patrick Earl as Hamlet. Photo by Michael Bailey.

# A Unique Experience

*A few notes on American Shakespeare Center's approach to HAMLET.*

## **Lights, lights, lights! (Hamlet, Act 3, Scene II)**

We leave the lights on the audience because we know that Shakespeare wrote his plays thinking about this type of performance environment; **he wrote the audience into the world of the play**. He had audience on three sides of the stage, very close to the action, and in the same daylight or candlelight as the actors (with Lords in the musician's gallery—the balcony—it was more like theatre in the round).

The whole idea of the audience looking through a fourth wall as observers peeping at a slice of life was not written into plays until long after Shakespeare was dead. So if we approach these Renaissance plays with the idea that the **playwrights made every use of the audience**, that the audience and the players were a part of the same world, then we begin to develop a whole different dynamic from fourth-wall realism.

If the audience **shares the same light** as the actors and the stage, then it's easy to see the audience as different characters in different scenes. Your character may confess to the audience, enlist the audience to side with your character's point of view in an argument, use different audience members as props when you talk about certain kinds of people...the choices go on and on. [And we have several moments like this blocked and built into Hamlet which are essential to how the scene is played.]

The **connection/communication/bonding/community-building** that happens in this environment brings these stories to life in ways that fourth-wall realism and cinematic separation between actor and audience can't.

**Jim Warren**  
**ASC Artistic Director, Co-founder**

## **Bid the players make haste. (Hamlet, Act 3, Scene II)**

Another unique aspect of this production is that the company brings part of the audience on stage with the actors. There will be some seating on either side of the stage during the performance, and the actors will interact with these audience members. Audience members on stage may become a prop, a character in the play, or be asked to respond to action taking place. This interactive element keeps the show ever-changing and fresh.

# LESSON 1 – "This above all: to thine own self be true." (Hamlet, Act I, Scene III)

Objective – To explore goals and strategies to reach the goals.

To consider

To explore the device of soliloquy for disclosing a character's inner life.

Materials needed: Students will need several sheets of paper as they journal throughout the lesson.

## Warm-Up:

- When students enter the room, have the two words "Goal" and "Wish" on the board. Ask each student to fold a piece of paper in half, creating two columns. On one side, they should write the word GOAL, and on the other, WISH. Ask them to take a moment to write definitions and examples of each on their papers.
- Discuss the concept of goals:
  - ✓ What's the difference between a wish and a goal?
  - ✓ Do your students ever set goals for themselves? What are some goals they have right now (short term and long-term)?
  - ✓ How do they decide what their goals are?
  - ✓ Is it a good idea to set goals? Why, what do goals do for you?

## Procedures:

- Now, ask each student to draw a big circle on another sheet of paper. They should then divide the circle into several slices, like a pie chart. These slices or sections represent different life categories, like health, finances, education, career, relationships, spirituality, and community.
- Students should label each section with a category, and then write down goals they hope to achieve in each section.
- Discuss:
  - ✓ What kind of goals did students choose to list? Long-term? Short-term? Both?
  - ✓ Did they focus most of their goals into one category, or several?
  - ✓ What would each student say was their ultimate goal in life?
  - ✓ If they meet their full potential, what do they hope to achieve? What kind of person will they be? What occupation will they hold? What roles in society will they play?
- Based on their pie charts, have students consider their goals, and think of ways by which they can achieve these goals. Ask them to make notes on their pie charts of ways they might reach their goals.
- Next ask students to consider their ultimate goal, and what they need to reach that goal. If they haven't already, have them list 3 supports or conditions that are the most crucial to achieving this main life goal.
- Discuss:
  - ✓ What if those three supports are taken away? How would this loss affect them? How would it affect their goals?
  - ✓ Agree or disagree: It's better to set lower goals than to risk failure by setting higher ones. Why?
  - ✓ Have you ever set a goal that was unrealistic? What happened? What did you learn from that?
  - ✓ If you don't accomplish all your goals does that make you a failure? What's the difference between failing and being a failure? What are some good ways to deal with disappointments?

**Another idea for discussing goals:** Introduce the ancient Greek concept of "entelechy" (en-tel-e-key) "to have a goal". Aristotle believed that everything had an internal goal, a potential that it strives to make actual, a goal it aims at. For example, the entelechy of an acorn is an oak tree, that is what it strives to become. What is your entelechy?

- Now ask students to write a sentence or two about how they could still reach their goal if they lost their supports.
- Finally, students will use their journaling notes from today's activities to write a brief paragraph that will become a soliloquy. Based on the last element of the lesson, in which they wrote about reaching their goals without the support needed, students will create their own soliloquy. In this paragraph/soliloquy they should write in first person, as though they are either talking to themselves or speaking to an imaginary best friend.

Closure -

- Discuss how the soliloquy can almost grow out of the experience of adversity.
- Read Hamlet's first soliloquy "O that this too too solid flesh would melt..." I,ii, 129-158 (Text can be found below if needed.) What were Hamlet's goals? What were his supports that were lost? How were his goals changed by this loss in his life?

Extension – A soliloquy is a dramatic element of a play, so have your students perform them! (If you choose to include this element into the assignment, warn students from the beginning that their work will be shared.)

## SOLILOQUY

### **What is a soliloquy?**

The term "Soliloquy" (so-lil-o-kwee) is generally used as a means of character revelation to the audience or the reader of the drama. The dramatist uses this to convey secret thoughts and/or intentions of a character to the audience or the reader of the drama, but; also while doing so, it preserves the secrecy of those thoughts from the other characters of that drama.

A soliloquy is generally made when the character is alone, or when he/she thinks to be alone, in order to preserve the secrecy from other characters.

### **What is the purpose of soliloquy?**

The main purpose of a soliloquy is to let the audience or the reader know the secret thoughts and/or intentions that the character is having in his mind. It also puts light on the external relationships, thoughts, and the future actions related to the character and to the other characters of the drama.

### **HAMLET'S FIRST SOLILOQUY: (Act 1, Scene 2)**

*O that this too too solid flesh would melt,  
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!  
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd  
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God!  
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable  
Seem to me all the uses of this world!  
Fie on't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,  
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature  
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!  
But two months dead! — nay, not so much, not two:  
So excellent a king; that was, to this,  
Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother,  
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven  
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!  
Must I remember? Why, she would hang on him  
As if increase of appetite had grown  
By what it fed on: and yet, within a month, —  
Let me not think on't, — Frailty, thy name is woman! —  
A little month; or ere those shoes were old  
With which she followed my poor father's body  
Like Niobe, all tears; — why she, even she, —  
O God! a beast that wants discourse of reason,  
Would have mourn'd longer, — married with mine uncle,  
My father's brother; but no more like my father  
Than I to Hercules: within a month;  
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears  
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,  
She married: — O, most wicked speed, to post  
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!  
It is not, nor it cannot come to good;  
But break my heart, — for I must hold my tongue!*

## Lesson 2 – Speak the speech, I pray you! (Hamlet, Act 3, Scene II)

Using the Shakespearean Convention of Audience Engagement to Examine the Tragedy of Hamlet  
By Robyn Berg

NOTE: Students will need prior knowledge of *Hamlet*. If it's possible to set up the classroom like a true Elizabethan theatre, with the audience surrounding the playing space on three sides and everyone fully lit the students may be able to take the idea of actor-audience relationship even further! (for help creating this space, check out the ASC guide page 38)

### Warm Up:

- Begin class with a group brainstorm on the plot of *Hamlet*. Who are the major players? What happens to them in the beginning, middle and end of the play?
- Then, move into the activity of Pantomime Telephone. To play this game, the group should separate into lines of approximately 5-8 people. The last person in line comes up with a 5-10 second pantomime based on a *Hamlet* theme--such as Ophelia drowning, Gertrude drinking from the poisoned goblet, Laertes being struck with a sword etc. (S)he taps the shoulder of the next person in line, who turns around and watches the pantomime being performed. Once this new person has silently observed the action, (s)he taps the next person in line and the game of Pantomime Telephone continues until the very last person performs the activity for the whole group. Just as in the traditional Telephone Game, everyone discuss whether the activity changed as it was passed down the line.

*All the world's a stage, and all the  
men and women merely players:  
they have their exits and their  
entrances; and one man in his time  
plays many parts, his acts being  
seven ages.*

*~William Shakespeare*

### Procedures:

#### ACTIVITY ONE:

- Now that the students have pantomime under their belts, ask them to pantomime playing racquetball (in which a solo player hits a ball against a wall).
- Next, ask them to partner up and pantomime tennis (noting that with a partner; there is now a give and take).
- This is the difference between performing FOR an audience and performing WITH an audience! Shakespeare wrote for that communion between actor and audience. He asked that the audience play a part in his plays (Cleopatra's court, Henry V's army etc.) or that they lend an ear for troubled characters (Hamlet).

#### ACTIVITY TWO:

- Students should be separated into small groups of approximately 6-10 people. Ask them to rehearse a given scenario in which an audience MUST be involved (a basketball game or a trial, for example) and pantomime it for the other group(s). Group members play all the parts—for example, basketball players and fans.
- Discuss briefly after each group performs—how necessary is the audience to this scene? A basketball game is very different without fans! What do the fans provide for the players and vice versa?

#### ACTIVITY THREE:

- In the same groups, students brainstorm their own scenario that requires audience engagement and discuss how to add the element of voice this time around. They now put all

their players as the focal point of the scene, thereby having to engage the other group(s) watching as the audience. Discuss briefly after each group performs—how did the players get the audience involved? Did the audience have a part to play in the scene? How was it different using the voice this time around?

#### ACTIVITY FOUR:

- Now that the group has examined audience engagement with pantomime and simple scenes, it's time to try it out with Shakespearean text.
- Using an edited version of Act 1, Scene 2 (text found on the next page if needed), do a round robin reading of the scene as a group. In this scene, King Claudius is addressing his entire court—the play's characters that are present and the audience, who can make up additional members. As he has recently assumed the throne (from his dead brother, Hamlet's father) and married Gertrude (Hamlet's mother), he must convince the court he has good intentions. Next, Claudius and Gertrude address Hamlet, who seems to still be sulking over recent events. Hamlet plays many of his lines as asides or short speeches directly to the audience (perhaps trying to get them to be on his side?). The King and Queen get Hamlet to agree to stay home for a bit, instead of going back to school at Wittenberg and all exit.
- After reading through and discussing the scene, cast and rehearse it up on your feet. Since Claudius has some rather large speeches, you may want to break that role up and have multiple students try their hand at playing the King. Being a member of the court (with no lines) is still a very important role to play too. The court's reactions to Claudius and to Hamlet as they address the audience are prime examples of the actor audience relationship that dominated Shakespeare's plays.
- If time permits, perform the scene from beginning to end.



*Ben Gorman as Claudius and Patrick Earl as Hamlet. Photo by Michael Bailey.*

Closure – Wrap up by discussing the scene.

- How did Hamlet and Claudius get the audience involved?
- How did it feel to be a character or a member of the court?
- How much harder do you think Claudius must work to get his court (and his stepson) to support his ascension to the throne?
- Do you think Hamlet will shake off his bitterness?
- How might the audience help him to come to terms with his new reality?
- Does Gertrude seem to side with her husband, her son or to be stuck in the middle?
- What might happen directly after this scene?

## SCENE II. A room of state in the castle.

*Enter KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, HAMLET, Lords, and Attendants*

### KING CLAUDIUS

Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death  
The memory be green, and that it us befitted  
To bear our hearts in grief and our whole  
kingdom  
To be contracted in one brow of woe,  
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature  
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,  
Together with remembrance of ourselves.  
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,  
The imperial jointress to this warlike state,  
Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,--  
With an auspicious and a dropping eye,  
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,  
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,--  
Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd  
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone  
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.  
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,--

### HAMLET

[Aside] A little more than kin, and less than kind.

### KING CLAUDIUS

How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

### HAMLET

Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the sun.

### QUEEN GERTRUDE

Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,  
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.  
Do not for ever with thy veiled lids  
Seek for thy noble father in the dust:  
Thou know'st 'tis common; all that lives must die,  
Passing through nature to eternity.

### HAMLET

Ay, madam, it is common.

### QUEEN GERTRUDE

If it be,  
Why seems it so particular with thee?

### HAMLET

Seems, madam! nay it is; I know not 'seems.'  
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,  
Nor customary suits of solemn black,  
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,  
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,  
Nor the dejected 'havior of the visage,  
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,  
That can denote me truly: these indeed seem,

For they are actions that a man might play:  
But I have that within which passeth show;  
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

### KING CLAUDIUS

'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,  
Hamlet,  
To give these mourning duties to your father:  
But, you must know, your father lost a father;  
That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound  
In filial obligation for some term  
To do obsequious sorrow: but to persevere  
In obstinate condolment is a course  
Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief;  
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,  
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,  
An understanding simple and unschool'd:  
For what we know must be and is as common  
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,  
Why should we in our peevish opposition  
Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,  
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,  
To reason most absurd: whose common theme  
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,  
From the first corse till he that died to-day,  
'This must be so.' We pray you, throw to earth  
This unprevailing woe, and think of us  
As of a father: for let the world take note,  
You are the most immediate to our throne;  
And with no less nobility of love  
Than that which dearest father bears his son,  
Do I impart toward you. For your intent  
In going back to school in Wittenberg,  
It is most retrograde to our desire:  
And we beseech you, bend you to remain  
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,  
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

### QUEEN GERTRUDE

Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet:  
I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Wittenberg.

### HAMLET

I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

### KING CLAUDIUS

Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply:  
Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come;  
This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet  
Sits smiling to my heart: in grace whereof,  
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,  
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,  
And the king's rouse the heavens all bruit again,  
Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

*Exit.*

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