

# HAMLET

## READING COMPREHENSION

### ACT 1

### YEAR 3 AND 4

## QUESTIONS

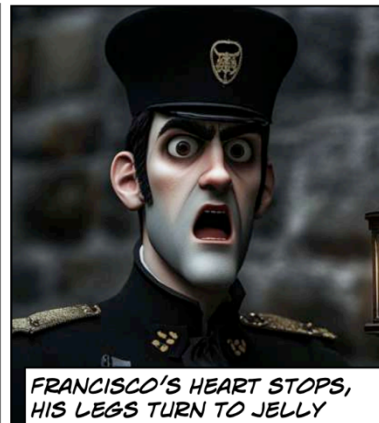


AND SO OUR STORY BEGINS.... IT'S MIDNIGHT. DARK. COLD. A FOG HAS ROLLED IN OFF THE SEA, SWIRLING, WHIRLING. FOR THE PAST FEW NIGHTS, JUST OUTSIDE ELSINORE CASTLE, SOMETHING SPOOKY HAS BEEN HAPPENING AND IT'S GOT EVERYBODY VERY NERVOUS... TONIGHT A GUARD CALLED FRANCISCO STANDS WATCH ALONE AT THE GATES, STAMPING HIS FEET TO KEEP WARM. HE HOLDS UP HIS LANTERN AND STARES INTO THE FOG, SEEMING TO SEE STRANGE FACES, LEERING AND PEERING OUT OF THE DARK, ONLY FOR THEM TO DISAPPEAR AS HE STEPS TOWARDS THEM.

WITHOUT WARNING, A VOICE COMES OUT OF THE DARKNESS...



A VOICE WHISPERS...



1. What time of day or night does the play begin? Tick one box

Midnight       Midday       5.00am       10.00pm

2. Write down the two adjectives used to describe what it is like at the beginning of Act 1

I. \_\_\_\_\_

II. \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is the name of the castle that the story is set in?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What does a voice whisper? Quote directly from the text

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5. How does Francisco feel when he hears the voice? Justify your answer with reference to the text

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6. Why is Barnardo laughing?

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7. A. Who appears through the fog?

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## B. What is his relationship to Hamlet?

### 8. What were the two soldiers called?

Bernard and Francesca	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bernardo and Francisco	<input type="checkbox"/>
Francisco and Bertram	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bertie and Frankie	<input type="checkbox"/>



**SUDDENLY IT APPEARED!!!**

LOOKS IT NOT LIKE THE KING?  
QUESTION IT HORATIO...

THOUGH MOONLIGHT SHONE BEHIND IT, THE FIGURE SEEMED TO SUCK THE LIGHT FROM THE VERY AIR, THE CLOTHES THAT IT WORE RADIATING DARKNESS. INDEED, THE GHOST DID LOOK VERY MUCH LIKE THE DEAD OLD KING HAMLET!!!

THERE IS SILENCE, IT SEEMS TO BE STUDYING HORATIO, LOOKING FOR SOMETHING. THINKING, IF GHOSTS CAN THINK...

AT LAST IT TURNS AND WALKS AWAY...

STAY! I CHARGE THEE SPEAK!!!

HORATIO SHOUTS AFTER IT

IN THE DISTANCE, WHERE THE SEA MEETS THE SKY ARE THE FIRST GLIMMERS OF DAWN. IF THIS SPIRIT IS TRULY THE DEAD KING, THEN ONE PERSON SHOULD BE TOLD...

LET US IMPART WHAT WE HAVE SEEN TONIGHT UNTO YOUNG HAMLET

THIS SPIRIT, DUMB TO US, WILL SPEAK TO HIM!

HORATIO AND BERNARDO WERE TERRIFIED...

WHAT ART THOU THAT USURP'ST THIS TIME OF NIGHT? BY HEAVEN I CHARGE THEE SPEAK!!!

### 9. Who did the ghost look like? Tick one box

Hamlet	<input type="checkbox"/>	Old King Hamlet	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Bernardo

Horatio

10. What did the ghost say?

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11. What does Horatio say to the ghost? Quote directly from the text

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12. Who is the one person who needs to be told that the ghost of Old King Hamlet has been seen?

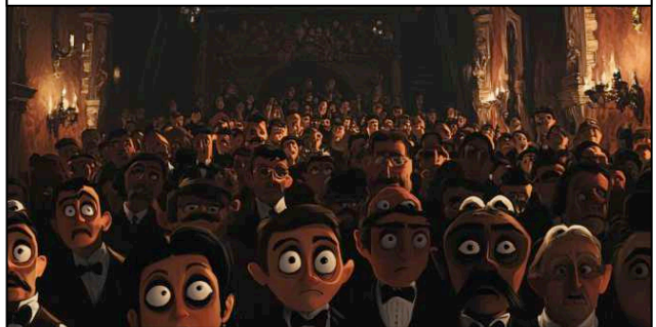
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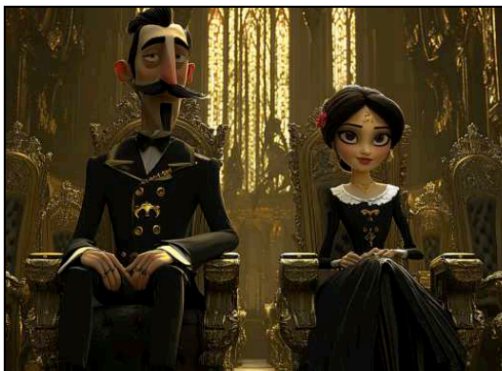
**Stuff you need to know...**

IN HAMLET'S TIME, WHEN A KING DIED, EVERYBODY IN HIS COURT HAD TO WEAR BLACK AND ACT SAD FOR AT LEAST SIX MONTHS. THIS WAS CALLED THE PERIOD OF MOURNING. IF THE PEOPLE REALLY LIKED THE KING, THE PERIOD OF MOURNING COULD ACTUALLY GO ON FOR A WHOLE YEAR (AND YOU KNOW HOW MUCH THEY LIKED OLD HAMLET!) IF YOU ONLY HAD ONE PAIR OF BLACK SOCKS, THIS COULD BE TRICKY/SMELLY.

NEXT MORNING, AND ALMOST EVERYONE, FROM THE LOWEST SERVANT TO THE HIGHEST LORD, IS GATHERED IN THE CASTLE THRONE ROOM WAITING FOR CLAUDIUS TO MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT.



IT'S ONLY BEEN TWO MONTHS SINCE OLD HAMLET DIED AND THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THE NEW KING HAS CALLED THEM ALL TOGETHER. EVERYONE IS CURIOUS. WHAT COULD HE POSSIBLY WANT TO TELL THEM?



NOBODY LOOKING AT CLAUDIUS'S NEW OUTFIT WOULD BE IN ANY DOUBT THAT IT HAD COST A LOT OF MONEY. THERE'S REAL GOLD WOVEN INTO THE FABRIC AROUND HIS COLLAR! HIS MOUSTACHE IS FRESHLY TRIMMED AND GERTRUDE HAS AN EXPENSIVE NEW HAIRDO, IT SEEMS THEY ARE BOTH DRESSED TO IMPRESS!!!

THOUGH YET OF HAMLET OUR DEAR BROTHER'S DEATH THE MEMORY BE GREEN, AND THAT IT US BEFITTED TO BEAR OUR HEARTS IN GRIEF. YET SO FAR HATH DISCRETION FOUGHT WITH NATURE THAT WE WITH WISEST SORROW THINK ON HIM TOGETHER WITH REMEMBRANCE OF OURSELVES.

THIS SPEECH IS A **BIG DEAL**, HE'S SAYING LIFE DOESN'T STOP AND ALTHOUGH WE GRIEVE FOR OLD HAMLET, WE MUST REMEMBER TO BE HAPPY FOR OURSELVES!!!

13. In Hamlet's time what did people do when a King died? Write down two things

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

**14. How many months has it been since Old Hamlet died?**

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**15. What does Claudius say in his speech? Tick one box**

Life doesn't stop and although everyone is sad about Old Hamlet dying everyone must also remember to be happy

Everyone must continue to wear black and mourn Old Hamlet for another 4 months

He is so sad that he will stay indoors for the next 12 months and no one must disturb him.

**16. Do you think Claudius is a good man?**

YES  NO  NOT SURE

**Give a reason for your answer**

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# HAMLET

## READING COMPREHENSION

### ACT 1

### YEAR 3 AND 4

## ANSWERS

1. What time of day or night does the play begin? Tick one box

Midnight

2. Write down the two adjectives used to describe what it is like at the beginning of Act 1

- a. Cold
- b. Dark

3. What is the name of the castle that the story is set in?

Elsinore Castle

4. What does a voice whisper? Quote directly from the text

“Long live the king”

5. How does Francisco feel when he hears the voice? Justify your answer with reference to the text

He feels scared and frightened- we know this because it says “his heart stopped and his legs turn to jelly”

6. Why is Barnardo laughing?

Because he scared Francisco by pretending to be a ghost!

7. A. Who appears through the fog?

Horatio

- B. What is his relationship to Hamlet?

His best friend

8. What were the two soldiers called?

Bernardo and Francisco

9. Who did the ghost look like? Tick one box

Old King Hamlet

10. What did the ghost say?

Nothing- it was silent

11. What does Horatio say to the ghost? Quote directly from the text

“Stay! I charge thee speak!!!”

12. Who is the one person who needs to be told that the ghost of Old King Hamlet has been seen?

Hamlet/Young Hamlet

13. In Hamlet’s time what did people do when a King died? Write down two things

- A. Act sad
- B. Wear black

14. How many months has it been since Old Hamlet died?

2 months

15. What does Claudius say in his speech? Tick one box

Life doesn’t stop and although everyone is sad about Old Hamlet dying everyone must also remember to be happy

16. Do you think Claudius is a good man?

Answers will vary- key is that the child has justified their answer, e.g. not sure- it’s too early to say although he doesn’t seem very considerate of how Hamlet is feeling or no-if we believe the ghost then he killed Hamlet’s dad!