



Teacher's Packet

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Welcome to Young Company!

About BYU Young Company

The Young Company serves as a training ground for both BYU actors and teaching artists wanting to work in theatre for young audiences. The group performs in front of 16,000 young people each year on topics that deal with everyday struggles encountered by people of all ages.

What is a dramaturg, and why do they make teacher's packets?

As described on the website for LMDA (Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas,) dramaturgs today have a variety of responsibilities. "Working in theatres and playwrights' organizations, in colleges and universities, and on a project-by-project basis, dramaturgs contextualize the world of a play; establish connections among the text, actors, and audience; offer opportunities for playwrights; generate projects and programs; and create conversations about plays in their communities."

In an effort to "create conversations" about the Young Company productions in our local communities, the dramaturgs at BYU create teacher's packets to share with all educators who will participate in these touring shows. We hope you will use them to enhance the experience your students have and further engage with the performance in ways that are meaningful specifically to your students. We hope you'll discover helpful approaches to learning more about the form and content of our productions in the attached lesson plans and activity ideas!

Welcome Letter

Dear Teachers,

Welcome to Young Company's production of *Hamlet*, a skateboarding tragedy which includes ghosts, cosplay, sword fights, cell phones, scooters, and our favorite angsty teen: Hamlet. I hope that this packet will help you and your students learn from Hamlet and his friends, with activities that you can do before and after the show to help you reflect on important themes like the power of choices, identity, and managing the messy parts about growing up.

While we have added skateboarding to this timeless Shakespearean drama, we hope you and your students will be able to observe more than the cool tricks, but the choices Hamlet makes in the play, and see where maybe he could have done better. You see, Shakespeare's Hamlet didn't have to end so poorly: if Hamlet could only have worked through his problems with the help of a trusted individual, or had made different choices, his story may have turned out quite differently.

In this packet you will find activities and lesson plans that are designed to enhance the experience of the students and to highlight themes from the play that they can take home with them. We hope both you and the students will reflect on Hamlet's choices and use this packet to guide your experience.

Elise Osorio Haines
Dramaturg

Theatre Etiquette

Just like the performers, the audience also has an important role to play. Because some of the students may not have attended a play before, below are expectations to help them prepare for our performance!

- Remember to use the restroom before the show.
- No photography, please, and be sure to turn off your cellphones.
- Before the play starts, quietly follow the actors' instructions when they are seating you.
- Remember to sit flat on the floor with your legs crossed. This allows everyone to see the actors better and prevents limbs from falling asleep during the show.
- During the show, follow the actors' instructions when you are asked to participate.
- Don't speak with your neighbors during the show. We want everyone to be able to hear the actors.
- Please enjoy the show and laugh when you think it's funny!
- You can clap at the end.

Wiggle Workout

Title: 4 Corners *Hamlet* Style

Time: 10 minutes

Activity Description: This is a variation on the game 4 corners, with elements from the play, and should remind students that our choices have consequences.

Assign the 4 corners of the room one of the following stations: The Skatepark, The Graveyard, The Ghost Castle, Denmark.

Choose one student to be Hamlet, this student stands in the middle of the room and closes their eyes. The student counts to ten, while the students each individually choose a corner station to stand at. When the student playing Hamlet is finished counting to ten, they keep their eyes closed and call out the name of a corner station. Any student who is standing at that station is now out, and can go sit down.

For example: At the end of counting to ten, let's say Hamlet calls out "The Skatepark". All students standing at "The Skatepark" corner are now out. Hamlet then closes their eyes, and counts to ten again, and calls out any station. This continues until there is only one student left, who gets to be the next Hamlet.

Play Synopsis - *Hamlet*

Nineteen year-old Prince Hamlet is struggling with the death of his father. Hamlet is further dismayed with his mother, who married his uncle Claudius, just two months after his father died. Claudius is now the King of Denmark, and Hamlet greatly dislikes him as his new step-father-uncle.

Hamlet's dislike for Claudius turns into suspicion, when the ghost of Hamlet's father appears to him on the ramparts of the castle. The ghost tells Hamlet that Claudius poisoned him in his sleep, and then commissions Hamlet to avenge his death, and thus Hamlet begins to plot against Claudius.

Hamlet decides to act crazy and disheveled from here on out, to throw off Claudius, but his craze begins to worry many people, including his best friend Horatio and his girlfriend Ophelia. Perhaps it isn't just an act?

Meanwhile, Claudius and his advisor Polonia come up with a plan to spy on Hamlet, as he has been acting very odd. The King orders Hamlet's friends, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to spy on him, while Polonia orders her daughter Ophelia to reject Hamlet, and also report on him.

The tragedy begins to unfold when Hamlet mistakenly kills Polonia who was eavesdropping on Hamlet and Gertrude during a conversation. They decide to hush up the murder and Hamlet leaves for school in England, only to return soon after to discover that his girlfriend Ophelia has died of grief over the death of her murdered mother Polonia. Laertes, Ophelia's brother, creates a plan with Claudius to enact revenge on Hamlet.

With poisoned swords and poisoned drinks the tragic deaths of Hamlet's friends and family unfold, and Horatio continues to tell his best friend's cautionary tale.

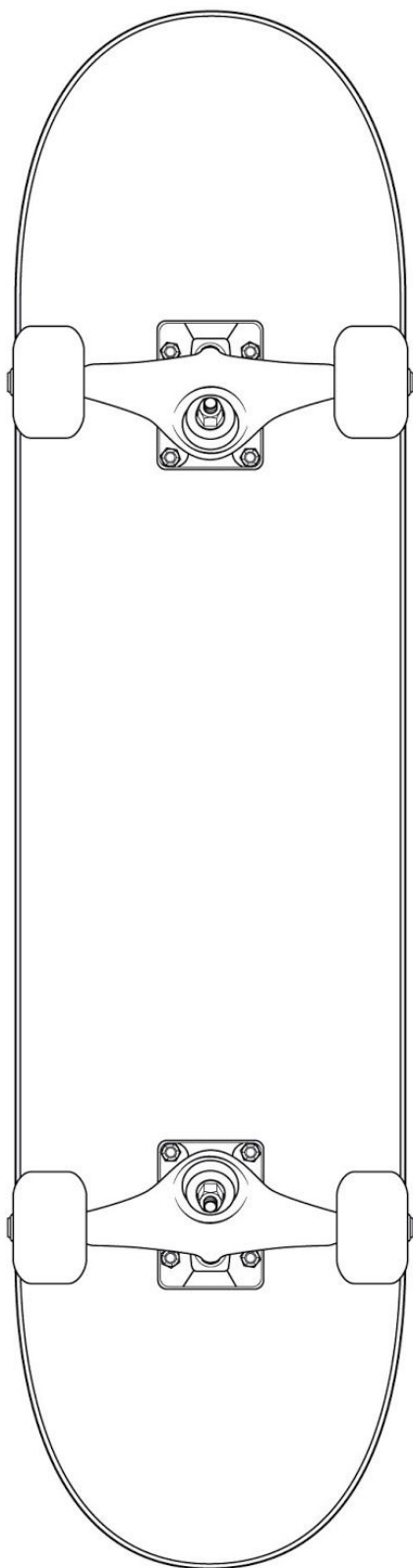
Before the show...

Activity Title: Design Your Own Skateboard Deck

Time: 15-20 minutes

Materials Needed: Print out the following worksheet to color. You will also need coloring utensils such as crayons, colored pencils, markers--any material that can be used for drawing or coloring. Stickers would be great too if on hand!

Activity description: Throughout the play, Hamlet is struggling with his identity and how to express himself during this challenging time of losing his dad, and the quick remarriage of his mother to his uncle. The following printable is an opportunity for students to express themselves through a skateboard deck, and visualize a part of their identity in a healthy way: through art!



Design Your Own Deck!

Our version of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* uses skateboards!

The back of the skateboard, underneath the deck, is the area of the skateboard that is used for artistic expression, often a personalized signature sharing a part of the skater's identity. Design your deck below with your own style! How can you share your identity through your deck design? Perhaps draw some of your favorite things to do, or share what is important to you.

Keep an eye out for the designs on Hamlet's, Ophelia's, and Laertes's decks in the show, and see what they might tell you about their character!

After the show ...

Activity Title: A New Ending!

Time: 25-30 minutes

Materials Needed:

Activity Description: Horatio has been telling Hamlet's tragic story. Help your students to reimagine a new positive ending, one that ideally doesn't end with so much death.

Have the students respond to the prompt below, and write new endings to the scenarios for about 10-15 minutes. Then have the students split into groups and share with their group their new ending. Afterwards, lead a discussion using the questions below.

Discussion questions:

1. What were some different choices Hamlet could have made?
2. What were some different choices Ophelia could have made?
3. How do you think our choices impact our lives and classroom?

A New Ending!

In the play, Hamlet is struggling with his circumstances, and to be honest, makes some pretty tragic decisions about how to handle hard things. Help Hamlet out below, by practicing your writing skills and coming up with positive ways to end the play.

Scenario 1

Hamlet has decided to act crazy to throw off the King. He also brings Ophelia in on the joke. What can he do instead?

Scenario 2

Ophelia is told by her mom to spy on and reject her boyfriend, Hamlet. This is pretty confusing, what could Ophelia do instead?

Scenario 3

Hamlet is frustrated with his mother, and her decision to marry his Uncle Claudius. What can Hamlet do?

Scenario 4

Laertes doesn't like the fact that Hamlet is dating his sister, Ophelia. What can Laertes do?

Scenario 5 — For you!

Sometimes life doesn't go as planned. What are some things you can do?

Lesson Plans

Ghost Stories in *Hamlet*

Grade: 4th

Length: 45-60 minutes

Materials:

Paper and pencils for students to write with.

Standards:

Reading: Literature Standard 6

Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.

Reading: Literature Standard 9

Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.

TH:Pr4.1.4.b. Make physical choices to develop a character in a drama/theatre work.

TH:Pr6.1.4.a. Share small-group drama/theatre work, with peers as audience.

Objective:

Students will demonstrate their understanding of the role of ghosts in *Hamlet* by performing a short scene of a ghost coming to warn someone.

Hook/Warm Up: (5-10 minutes)

- While students are sitting in their desks inform them that they are all about to become ghosts. However, these are special kind of ghosts. When you describe the ghost they need to be they are going to transform into that specific ghost, whether that's an old ghost or a ghost with a hurt leg. When you say go the students will stand up from their desks and become that ghost. Make sure to be specific about the space limitations. You can have them walk around as these ghosts or you can have them just stay next to their desks. Whatever works best with your students.
- Switch up the ghost type using examples such as old ghost, dancing ghost, powerful ghost, king ghost etc.
- Have your students return to their seat.
- Ask them what helped them create their ghost character. What physical choices did you make?

Introducing Ghosts: (5-10 minutes)

- Tell students that today you are going to be talking about the role that ghosts can play in storytelling. Have them brainstorm with you different ghost characters in books or movies.
 - Some examples you can list on the board are the ghosts in *Christmas Carol*, *Haunted Mansion*, *Casper the friendly ghost*, *Hamlet's father's ghost*, etc.

- Ask students what the purpose of these ghosts are. List those purposes on the board. They might suggest “to scare” or “to get revenge.” List their suggestions and make sure if they bring up “to warn.” A great example of this is in Christmas Carol. “To warn” is an important theme because the *Hamlet* production they will be viewing is told as a ghost story with the purpose of warning.

Writing: (10 minutes)

- Explain how there are a variety of ways ghost stories are told which depends on the point of view it's narrated from. Review the difference between first and third person narration. Have the students get out a piece of paper and write down what they would want to warn people about if they were writing a ghost story. They can write this as if they are the ghost or if they are someone telling a story about a ghost visiting someone.

Group Work: (10 minutes)

- Have students get into groups of 3 and share their ghost stories.
- Once they are done sharing, explain to them that they now get to act these stories out. Have them choose one story (or combine their stories together) to create a small scene of a ghost coming to warn someone about something.

Performing: (10 minutes)

- Depending on class size, have everyone or just volunteer groups perform their scenes.

Debrief: (5-10 minutes)

- What warnings did you see in the scenes?
- What similarities/differences did you see in these scenes? What about in the way they were told?
- Why do you think ghosts are included in so many stories?
- When we watch *Hamlet* watch how it is told as a ghost story and keep an eye out for characters who are ghosts.

Design in *Hamlet*

Grade: 5th

Length: 45-60 minutes

Materials:

- Excerpts from the text of *Hamlet* found at the bottom of the lesson
- Pictures of skateboard decks also found at the bottom of the lesson

UEN Core Standards:

Reading Literature Standard 7: Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g. graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).

Theatre Perform Strand 5.1.5.b: Demonstrate the use of technical elements in a drama/theatre work.

Theatre Respond Strand 7.1.5.a: Explain personal reactions to artistic choices made in a drama/theatre work through participation and observation.

Objective:

Students will demonstrate their understanding of how visual elements add to text by deconstructing some of Hamlet's lines and creating a skateboard deck design based on what they understand about the character of Hamlet.

Warmup (10-15 minutes)

- Play the game Hello.
 - Encourage the students to walk about the room. After, invite them to greet a fellow student by shaking their hand and saying hello. They should then resume walking around the room.
 - Repeat the above instructions, but ask the students to say "hello" within different scenarios such as:
 - Saying hello to their best friend
 - Saying hello to someone they do not trust
 - Saying hello to someone who has really bad breath
 - Saying hello to their teacher/principal
 - Saying hello to someone but its really windy outside so it's hard to hear each other
 - Saying hello to a really good friend that you haven't seen in a really long time.
 - Say hello like you are a cowboy or cowgirl
 - Say hello like you are an astronaut
 - You can create more scenarios if you would like.
 - Restrictions: Students are only allowed to shake hands and say hello. They should not be having other conversations or touching fellow students beyond the shaking of their fellow student's hand. Students should be saying hello to someone new each time, not the same friend. When walking about the room, students should be silent and listening for your next instruction.

- Have a discussion about the many different ways that there are to say hello.
 - What was your favorite way to say hello?
 - How did you show that what you were doing each time was different? How did you differentiate greeting someone you knew from greeting someone you didn't know?

Instruction (20-25 minutes)

- The play that is coming to the school is called *Hamlet*. This is a very old show, written hundreds of years ago by a man named Shakespeare. However, when you watch this play, the characters will look like they are from today's time period! When you watch, see if you can see what they do with the costumes, props, and set to show that this play is taking place today.
- Ask if any of the students have seen a play before (or if they haven't, have they watched a movie before)?. When we watch a play or movie, there are things that help us to know more about the characters and about the story, or what we sometimes call the text or the script. What might some of those things be?
 - Costumes, Sets, Lighting, Sound, Hair, Makeup.
 - Go over how each of costumes, sets, lighting, sound, hair and makeup might help the audience to understand what is happening. If students are struggling, examples are listed below.
 - Costume Example: If someone is wearing fancy clothes with lots of jewels, what does that tell us?
 - Set Example: When characters are surrounded by trees, grass, a bench, and a lake, what does that tell us?
 - Lighting Example: bright warm light can tell us what?
 - Sound Example: different kinds of music or effects can help us to understand what is going on.
 - Hair and Makeup: If someone has scraggly hair and clothes that are torn, what does that tell us?
- Ask the class to think back on their experience with the warmup. The word we said was always "Hello" however, it had different meanings each time you said "Hello". We talked about how our bodies and voices helped us to show that the meaning was different every time we said hello. Sometimes, a story or a play is similar to our warmup. We can hear the words being spoken, but there are things that help us to understand the story, such as costumes, the lighting in the play, or the set. These visual elements help us to understand what the text from the story means.
- Explain, that in *Hamlet*, some of the characters have skateboards that they use in the story. Objects that actors use in a story are called props.
 - On skateboards, there is what is called a deck (the flat part you stand on). Skateboarders can decorate the bottom side of the deck however they would like.
- To help the students prepare for the play, explain that we are going to look at the main character Hamlet and some of what he says during the play. This will help us get to know him better.
 - These are some of Hamlet's words during the show: "To be, or not to be? That is the question — / Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer / The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, / Or to take arms against a sea of troubles, / And, by opposing, end them?"

- Ask students what they think Hamlet is saying. Break down big words with them.
- From what Hamlet says, what do we know about him?
 - Help the students understand that this is something Hamlet says during the middle of the play when he is faced with a hard decision. He feels like he is faced with hard things and wonders if he should just let it happen to him or fight back against these hard things.

Application (15-20 minutes)

1. Draw a skateboard deck for Hamlet based on what you know about him!
2. To help students draw a skateboard deck:
 - a. First draw a rectangle. Then erase the short sides and draw half circles on both short ends of the rectangle. This should give you the basic shape of a skateboard deck.
 - b. Students can then draw their designs for the skateboard deck for Hamlet.
3. Discussion
 - a. Have students get back into a group.
 - b. Why did you draw what you drew?
 - c. Look at your neighbors' boards. What can you see that they did to try to portray Hamlet? What do you like about their board? Why?
 - d. How do visual elements help us to understand what is going on in a story?

Hamlet's Speech:

"To be, or not to be? That is the question — / Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer / The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, / Or to take arms against a sea of troubles, / And, by opposing, end them?"

Pictures:





Iambic Pentameter in *Hamlet*

Grade: 6th

Length: 45-60 minutes

Materials:

- This Lesson plan is adapted from Young Company's "Iambic Pentameter in Comedy of Errors" Lesson Plan
- "The Sketch Show—English Class" video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zfVLTKktt3A>
- "Examples from *Hamlet* with lines cut into individual strips. (Found at the end of this lesson plan)
- Blank slips of paper for students to write iambic pentameter sentences on.

UEN Core Standards:

Reading: Literature Standard 7: Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they "see" and "hear" when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.

Language Standard 3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

Theatre Perform Strand 6.T.P.5: Communicate meaning using the voice through volume, pitch, tone, rate, and clarity.

Theatre Respond Strand Standard 6.T.R.1: Demonstrate audience skills of observing attentively and responding appropriately in classroom presentations, rehearsals, and live performance settings.

Objective:

Students will demonstrate an ability to identify iambic pentameter by performing various lines of their own as well as lines from *Hamlet* for each other in class.

Hook (10-15 minutes):

1. Ask students to take shoes off (optional) sit in a circle and make a two-beat sound they have heard today with their feet, hands, and/or mouth. The facilitator will give an example to start off the round (i.e. taking off the toothpaste lid and squeezing it, clicking the remote to open your car door and the latch popping open, etc.). Everyone in the circle then repeats the facilitator's sound. The person to their right makes a sound of his/her choosing, then everyone in the circle repeats it and all other sounds one at a time, going back to the first sound from the facilitator. The creation and recollection of sounds continues around the room while keeping a steady beat.
 - a. At the end of each round, invite the next student to begin a new sequence of sounds, if time allows.
 - b. After everyone has participated, ask to hear some of the beats individually and choose/nominate one for the group to begin to move to while played on the drum—figure out how it might sound differently on the drums.
 - c. Rule for moving to the drum: when you hear the beat, move; when it stops, freeze.

2. Debrief:
 - a. What was easy about this game?
 - b. What was difficult about the game?
 - c. Why is rhythm/pacing important in this game?
 - d. What does rhythm/pacing have to do with Shakespeare?

Instruction (25-30 minutes):

1. Talk about how Shakespeare used poetic devices in his plays to create rhythm and emphasize certain words and ideas. By understanding this rhythm, we can learn a lot about the character speaking the words and the way Shakespeare intended the words to be spoken. This rhythm also made Shakespeare's words sound more poetic.
2. Share that the way that we talk and say words actually has a poetry and a rhythm to it.
3. Watch "The Sketch Show—English Class" video (link in materials) with the class. Point out the man who has "trouble with his emphasis." Isn't it silly that he doesn't know which syllables to emphasize? We naturally are emphasizing certain syllables on words to make a rhythm without even knowing it!
4. Write the words "iambic pentameter" on the board. Share that this is one of the "poetic devices" Shakespeare used to create his poetry. Break down the words with the class together.
 - a. Iambic: an iamb is two syllables in which the first syllable isn't emphasized and the second syllable is. Use an example of a person's name or a city.
 - i. Example: "Detroit." We naturally say it and emphasize the second syllable: "de-TROIT." Wouldn't it sound silly if someone came up and said it like "DE-troit?"
 - ii. This is why it sounds weird to say "em-PHA-sis." Because we naturally want to say it like "EM-phasis." Words have a natural rhythm.
 - iii. Ask the students to think of and share other words that are naturally iambs.
 1. Today, obey, diverged, because, etc.
 - iv. You can also put two single syllable words together to make an iamb.
 1. "I will," "Don't tell," "Wait up."
 - b. Pentameter a rhythm with five of something.
 - i. Penta = five, meter = rhythm
 - c. So "iambic pentameter" means that it's a rhythm with five iambs in it. An iamb has two syllables, so a line of iambic pentameter has ten syllables in each line.
5. At the bottom of the lesson plan are listed some lines from the play.
 - a. Read through the first two together and decide as a class whether they are iambic pentameter or just rhyming lines (called prose).
 - i. First lines:
 1. Horatio: "I met him once; he was a goodly king."
 2. Ophelia: "I would give you some violets, but they all withered away when my mother died."
6. Print out the rest of the lines for the students on slips of paper. Have the students get into pairs (or assign them into pairs). Each pair should have one line that is iambic pentameter and one that is not. Have each pair decide which lines are iambic pentameter and which are not.
7. Discuss as a class.
 - a. Which one of these is iambic pentameter and which one is not?
 - i. **You as the teacher can see the explanations written under the lists of iambic pentameter and prose lists. The lines of iambic pentameter have "/" symbols to help you understand where each iamb is. The prose lines have explanations as to why they are prose.**

- b. Why do you think Shakespeare sometimes used poetic devices and sometimes didn't?
 - i. Rich characters used poetry a lot and poor characters don't as much.
 - ii. When characters are feeling strong emotions.
 - iii. What were some of the ways we could identify what was iambic pentameter and what was not?
8. Have the students hold onto their iambic pentameter slips of paper and collect the prose slips of paper.

Application (10-15 minutes):

1. Hand out blank slips of paper and have the students try to write a sentence in iambic pentameter on it. Tell them it has to be a sentence that would be appropriate for kindergartners to read. It can't be inappropriate or vulgar. Remind them that iambic pentameter
 - a. Is ten syllables that follow a structure of un-emphasized, then emphasized.
2. Have the students get back into their pairs (or you can assign them into new pairs).
 - a. Each pair should have three slips of paper (one from *Hamlet* and two that the students wrote, one for each student).
3. Ask the students to stand up and, in their pairs, to take turns "performing" their iambic pentameter sentence to each other. They can also take turns performing the *Hamlet* line for each other.
4. If you have time, and there are any students that want to perform for the class, you can have students perform one of the *Hamlet* lines for the class.
5. Debrief:
 - a. Was it difficult to write your sentences? Why or why not?
 - b. What is the difference between reading these lines on paper and "performing" them for each other?
 - c. What could you do when "performing" your line to make it easier to understand?

Lines of Text: You as the teacher can see the explanations written under the lists of iambic pentameter and prose lists. The lines of iambic pentameter have "/" symbols to help you understand where each iamb is. The prose lines have explanations as to why they are prose. When printing, make sure to take print the version of the line without the "/" to mark the iambs.

Iambic Pentameter Lines:

Class example. Don't print this example out.

Horatio:

"I met/ him once;/ he was/ a good/ly king."

"I met him once; he was a goodly king."

Claudius:

"And now,/ Laert/es what's/ the news/ with you?"

"And now, Laertes what's the news with you?"

Polonia:

"He hath,/ my lord,/ wrung from/ me my/ slow leave."

"He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave."

Hamlet:

"A litt/le more/ than kin/ and less/ than kind."

"A little more than kin and less than kind."

Gertrude:

"Let not/ thy moth/er lose/ her prayers,/ Hamlet."

"Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet."

Prose Lines:

Class example. Don't print this example out.

Ophelia:

"I would give you some violets, but they all withered away when my mother died."

Why? There isn't the same rhythm. Some are two stressed syllables in a row. It's also too long.

Hamlet:

"I will watch tonight. Perchance will walk again.

Upon the platform 'twixt eleven and twelve, I'll visit you."

Why? There isn't the same rhythm. Some are two stressed syllables in a row. It's also too long.

Claudius:

"My words fly up my thoughts remain below. Words without thoughts never to heaven go."

Why? There isn't the same rhythm. Some are two stressed syllables in a row. It's also too long.

Hamlet:

"Thou livest. Report me and my cause aright. Tell my story."

Why? It is too long!

Horatio:

"The guard in dreadful secrecy did this impart to me:"

Why? It is too long!