

Brief Questions in Hamlet

Writer: William Shakespeare | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

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- **Who is William Shakespeare?**

Ans:

William Shakespeare was the greatest poet and dramatist of the Elizabethan Age.

- **Which period is known as the Elizabethan Age?**

Ans:

The period from 1558 to 1603 is called the Elizabethan Age.

- **When was 'The Globe' established?**

Ans:

'The Globe' Theatre was established in 1598.

- **Who were the owners of 'The Lord Chamberlain's Men'?**

Ans:

The owners were actors, including Shakespeare.

- **When was Hamlet written and published?**

Ans:

Hamlet was written around 1601 and published in 1603.

- **What was the original title of Hamlet?**

Ans:

The original title was The Tragical Historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark.

- **What is the modern title of Hamlet?**

Ans:

The modern title is The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark.

- **What are the sources of the play Hamlet?**

Ans:

The sources are Ur-Hamlet, Historia Danica, and The Tragic Stories.

- **When does the Ghost appear?**

Ans:

The Ghost appears as Bernardo begins to describe its visits.

- **How does Bernardo describe the Ghost?**

Ans:

Bernardo says the Ghost looks like the late King Hamlet in armour.

- **What happens when Horatio questions the Ghost?**

Ans:

When Horatio speaks to the Ghost, it disappears.

- **Who is Claudius?**

Ans:

Claudius is the present King of Denmark and Hamlet's uncle.

- **How does Claudius justify his remarriage to Gertrude?**

Ans:

Claudius says he married Gertrude to protect Denmark's peace.

- **Why is Hamlet driven to the thoughts of suicide?**

Ans:

Hamlet feels deep sorrow over his mother's quick remarriage.

- **What prevents Hamlet from committing suicide?**

Ans:

Hamlet avoids suicide because it is against God's law.

- **Why is the marriage between Claudius and Gertrude considered incestuous?**

Ans:

It is incestuous because she married her husband's brother.

- **Why does Hamlet call this world "an unweeded garden"?**

Ans:

He thinks his mother's marriage made the world dirty and wild.

- **Who was Niobe?**

Ans:

Niobe was a woman who lost all her children for her pride.

- **What is the meaning of "Frailty, thy name is woman"?**

Ans:

Hamlet says women are weak, blaming his mother's action.

- **What does Polonius say about borrowing money?**

Ans:

Polonius says borrowing or lending money causes loss.

- **When does the Ghost appear for the second time?**

Ans:

The Ghost appears for the second time in Act I, Scene 4.

- **How does the Ghost identify itself to Hamlet?**

Ans:

The Ghost says it is Hamlet's father's spirit suffering in purgatory.

- **Who, according to the Ghost, is responsible for his death?**

Ans:

The Ghost says Claudius killed him by poison.

- **Why is Ophelia distressed and frightened?**

Ans:

She is frightened by Hamlet's strange and wild behavior.

- **Who act as the King's spies against Hamlet?**

Ans:

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern spy on Hamlet for the King.

- **How does Hamlet plan to prove Claudius' guilt?**

Ans:

He plans a play to watch Claudius's guilty reaction.

- **What is the meaning of "To be or not to be"?**

Ans:

It means whether to live or to die.

- **How does Hamlet end his 'To be or not to be' speech?**

Ans:

He says fear of death stops people from ending life.

- **Why does Hamlet advise Ophelia to go to a nunnery?**

Ans:

He wants to save her from the evil of the world.

- **How does Ophelia lament for Hamlet's madness?**

Ans:

She cries that Hamlet's sweet love has turned bitter.

- **How is Claudius's guilt confirmed?**

Ans:

Claudius's reaction during the play confirms his guilt.

- **Why does Hamlet fail to kill the King at prayer?**

Ans:

He thinks killing a praying man will send him to heaven.

- **Why does the Queen fail to see the Ghost?**

Ans:

The Queen cannot see it because of her sinful life.

- **What is the King's motive in sending Hamlet to England?**

Ans:

The King plans to have Hamlet killed in England.

- **What does Hamlet do when pirates attack his ship?**

Ans:

He boards the pirate ship and is taken prisoner.

- **Why are the gravediggers introduced in the play?**

Ans:

They provide comic relief in the tragic story.

- **Who was Yorick?**

Ans:

Yorick was the King's jester and Hamlet's childhood friend.

- **What is the last intrigue of Claudius against Hamlet?**

Ans:

He arranges a fencing match between Hamlet and Laertes.

- **How does Claudius plan Hamlet's murder in the duel?**

Ans:

He poisons Laertes's sword and prepares poisoned wine.

- **How does the Queen die?**

Ans: She drinks the poisoned wine meant for Hamlet and dies.

- **How does Hamlet kill the King at last?**

Ans:

He stabs Claudius and makes him drink the poisoned wine.

- **What kind of funeral is given to Hamlet's body?**

Ans:

Hamlet is given a royal military funeral by Fortinbras.

- **How is Hamlet betrayed by Ophelia?**

Ans:

She returns his gifts and obeys her father to spy on him.

- **At which university had Hamlet been studying?**

Ans:

Hamlet studied at Wittenberg University in Germany.

- **What, according to Polonius, does borrowing do to a borrower?**

Ans:

He says borrowing makes a man wasteful and careless.

- **What is the famous line spoken by Horatio when Hamlet dies?**

Ans:

Horatio says, "Now cracks a noble heart... good night, sweet prince."

- **Who becomes the King of Denmark at the end of the play?**

Ans:

Fortinbras, Prince of Norway, becomes the King.

- **Who remains alive in the last scene of Hamlet?**

Ans:

Only Horatio remains alive at the end.

- **What is comic relief?**

Ans:

A comic scene that lightens the sadness in a tragedy.

- **What is the name of the play within the play?**

Ans:

The name of the play is The Murder of Gonzago.

- **What is an “aside”?**

Ans:

It is a speech spoken to the audience, not to others on stage.

- **When and where was Shakespeare born?**

Ans:

He was born on April 23, 1564, in Stratford-upon-Avon, England.

- **In what sense are Fortinbras and Hamlet contrasted?**

Ans:

Fortinbras acts quickly, but Hamlet delays in action.

- **Who says, “Something is rotten in the state of Denmark”?**

Ans:

Marcellus says this line.

- **Who informs Hamlet of the appearance of the Ghost?**

Ans:

Horatio tells Hamlet about the Ghost.

- **Who is Fortinbras?**

Ans:

Fortinbras is the young Prince of Norway.

- **What is the setting of the play Hamlet?**

Ans:

The play is set in Elsinore Castle, Denmark.

- **What is “The Mouse Trap”?**

Ans:

It is the name Hamlet gives to the play he stages.

- **What is the name of the play within the play?**

Ans:

It is called The Murder of Gonzago, also called The Mouse Trap.

- **Why is Fortinbras preparing war against Denmark?**

Ans:

He wants to regain the land lost by his father to Denmark.

- **How does Polonius die?**

Ans:

Hamlet kills him by stabbing through the curtain.