Hamlet Act I and II Guided Reading Questions

ACT I scene 1

1. What does Marcellus see when on watch?

2. Where does the play take place (name the country)?

3. Whose appearance does the ghost have?

ACT I scene 2

1. What does Laertes ask of the King?

2. Why might Hamlet be depressed?

3. How long has the King been dead?

4. What did the Queen do that bothered Hamlet?

5. Why does Hamlet think Horatio came to Elsinore?

6. Why would Hamlet suspect foul play?

ACT I scene 3

1. What does Laertes say about Hamlet’s love for Ophelia?

2. What advice does Polonius give Laertes?

ACT I scene 4

1. What does the ghost want from Hamlet?

2. Who does the ghost accuse of being the person who killed him?

ACT II scene 1

1. Why is Reynaldo going to Paris?

2. Why is Ophelia frightened?

3. What does Polonius believe is the source of Hamlet’s “madness”?

ACT II scene 2

1. What are Rosencrantz and Guildenstern supposed to do?

2. What does the Queen think is bothering Hamlet?

3. What does Hamlet think of Denmark?

4. What is Hamlet hoping the play will do?

Act III Guided Reading Questions

ACT III scene 1

1. What does the Queen hope is wrong with Hamlet?

2. What is the purpose of Ophelia entrapping Hamlet while Polonius and Claudius hide?

3. What is the meaning of Hamlet's soliloquy “To be or not to be"?

4. What does Hamlet confess to Ophelia?

5. What does Hamlet tell Ophelia?

6. What does Claudius think?

7. What does Polonius hope Claudius will do with Hamlet?

ACT III scene 2

1. Who wrote the play that the players will perform?

2. What is Hamlet hoping will happen during the play?

3. What is the play about?

4. What does "The Lady doth protest too much" mean?

5. What is the name of the play within the play?

6. What is the "witching time of night"?

7. What is Hamlet planning for the Queen?

ACT III scene 3

1. What is the King planning for Hamlet and why?

2. What is Polonius going to do?

3. Why can't Hamlet kill Claudius while he is praying?

ACT IV Guided Reading Questions

ACT IV scene 1

1. What happened to Polonius?

2. Where does Claudius say to put Polonius’ body?

ACT IV scene 2

1. What does Hamlet think of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern?

2. Where did Hamlet put Polonius’ body?

ACT IV scene 3

1. What does Hamlet say Polonius is?

2. What is Claudius going to tell people?

ACT IV scene 4

1. What does Fortinbras want?

2. What is Norway fighting for?

ACT IV scene 5

1. What does Ophelia want from the Queen? –

2. What warning does Ophelia give?

3. What is wrong with Ophelia?

4. What is Claudius saying about their bad fortune?

5. What message does the messenger bring?

6. Is Claudius truly guiltless in the death of Polonius? Explain.

7. What bothers Laertes?

ACT IV scene 6

1. What does the letter say?

ACT IVscene 7

1. Of what does the King convince Laertes?

2. The King has a back-up plan. What is it?

3. What does the Queen tell Laertes?

ACT V Guided Reading Questions

ACT V scene 1

1. Why wouldn't Ophelia get a Christian burial?

2. Why IS she getting a Christian burial?

3. What does the grave digger throw up from the hole?

4. What does Hamlet say about the skull?

5. When did the gravediggers begin their jobs?

6. Whose skull did they find and how long had it been buried?

7. What is Yorick's skull missing?

8. What does Laertes do when Ophelia is being buried?

9. What does Hamlet say about Ophelia?

ACT V scene 2

1. Who will win the dual between Hamlet and Laertes, according to Horatio?

2. What warning does Claudius give Gertrude? Why?

3. What happens during the scuffle between Hamlet and Laertes?

4. What does Laertes tell Hamlet?

5. How does Hamlet finally avenge his father's death?

6. Of what does Laertes exhonerate Hamlet and himself?

7. What does Hamlet tell Horatio to do?

8. Who should be the next king, according to Hamlet?

9. What does Horatio do?