

'To be or not to be...'

Task 2 – Jigsaw activity: Introducing Hamlet's life (to be cut into 3)

Group 1

Read your information about Hamlet, and be ready to tell the other students what you have read.

Hamlet's family

Hamlet's beloved father Old Hamlet has recently been murdered. His mother Gertrude has, even more recently, married his uncle Claudius. Hamlet thinks that Claudius may have been the murderer, and certainly thinks he is an ambitious, evil man. He loves his mother, but thinks she has been disloyal to Old Hamlet's memory. Hamlet has no brothers or sisters. He has been separated from the family, as he is studying away at university. At the moment he is back home and has just attended his father's funeral, followed quickly by his mother's wedding to her new husband.

Group 2

Read your information about Hamlet, and be ready to tell the other students what you have read.

Hamlet's friends

Hamlet's closest friend is a young man called Horatio. Two other young men, called Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, are also at university with him. They are all back at the castle with Hamlet now. He thinks some of them are betraying him by spying on him for Claudius, the uncle who he hates. They are worried about him, and think he is depressed. He had been seeing a beautiful young girl called Ophelia at the castle, and said he was in love with her. However, Hamlet and Ophelia don't seem to be together any more, and Hamlet feels that she finished their relationship.

Group 3

Read your information about Hamlet, and be ready to tell the other students what you have read.

Hamlet's social status

Hamlet is the Prince of Denmark. He lives a luxurious life in a castle, and can have whatever possessions he wants. As the son of a king, and future king himself, he is expected to think of the peace and prosperity of his country before everything else. As the old king has gone, the nearby country of Norway is looking to take advantage of the confusion and possibly invade. As a public figure, Hamlet is always being watched and judged by the people.