

HAMLET – THE BIG QUESTION

A SEN PSHE and Citizenship Resource



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Shakespeare Schools Foundation wish to thank the following trusts and charitable foundations, without whom this resource could not have been created.



This project has been made possible thanks to the generous support of The Childhood Trust, who fund grass roots charities and their projects to alleviate the impact of child poverty.

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We have been kindly supported by The Big Give, who profile the work of thousands of charities and their projects, providing a platform to promote causes and inspire people to give. We are very grateful to everyone who supported our work through The Big Give.

How to use this lesson plan

This SEN scheme provides you with lessons to teach pupils about forming and talking about their opinions, whilst deepening their understanding of the key themes of the play and the characters that inhabit the world.


It uses Shakespeare's Hamlet to discuss why it is important to accept and take responsibility, whilst also developing:

- Oracy, collaboration, social and communication skills
- Independent thinking, speech and language skills
- Knowledge in personal, social, health education
- Creativity and imagination through drama work

This pack consists of:

- Individual single page lesson plans: the essential overview of each lesson and the basis of your teaching.
- Teaching and learning activities to accompany each lesson plan: further details of lesson activities.
- Resources to accompany each lesson plan,
- Two editable assessment grids, with two different uses:
 1. To assess the class against each stage of the lesson.
 2. To assess each student against the relevant national curriculum link and the lesson objective, with space for assessment evidence and for the student to reflect and self-assess, if appropriate.
- **Orange font** A resource needed from the scheme's resource pack, where you will find all resources arranged in lesson plan order.
- **Jade font** A hyperlink, either to an area of our website or to an external link.¹

This resource is designed to support the rehearsal process for your Festival performance. You may want to use the whole resource, taking it slowly and stretching it out over the course of many weeks before starting rehearsals or you might want to use it more like a pick and mix resource, selecting the exercises

¹ External links are selected and reviewed on their individual educational merits at the time our schemes are published, but we are not responsible for their content as we do not produce, maintain or update them, and have no authority to change them. Some external links may offer commercial products and/or services. The inclusion of a hyperlink should not be understood to be an endorsement by Shakespeare Schools Foundation of that website, the site's owners or their products and services. 

and activities that will be right for you and your young people and using them in rehearsals. You are the expert in your field so do adapt these exercises to suit the needs of your students. With that in mind, we have considered and flagged opportunities for extending, scaffolding and assessing your young people in this resource.

These symbols have the following meanings:



Dig Deeper! Suggestions for further activities beyond the scope of the lesson.



Ideas that may need to be adapted for your learners or areas of extra teacher preparation prior to the lesson (e.g. internet sites to be accessed before the lesson).



Opportunities to document assessment through film or photography. There are points for the students to reflect on what they have learnt. These would also be useful opportunities to ask them to communicate how they felt when they did a particular exercise, with reference to their self-esteem, self-worth, confidence.

How to use this scheme of work: additional notes relating to the diverse nature of SEN

When developing our SEN resources, we ask for advice from our expert teacher network. Here, Jude Ragan, an expert in Autistic Spectrum Disorder and former headteacher at Queensmill School in London, gives her tips on the best ways to approach an SSF scheme of work.

‘At a time when schools are under such financial pressure and are simultaneously being asked to provide more and more, it is worth remembering the core values of teaching, and what, as a profession, we hold dear and do extraordinarily well. In many years of working with teaching staff in both mainstream and special schools, as a teacher, headteacher and for a short while inspector, I saw how teachers feel the imperative to meet the needs of each child in their class, no matter what their starting points, and to do it in an inspirational and motivating way. I have always found it inspiring when teachers know the impediments faced by many of our pupils with special needs and yet set have high and challenging expectations for them, never underestimating their potential.

Many years ago, at Queensmill School, when we first adopted PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System - a wonderful way to demonstrate to autistic children the need to speak and giving them a voice to do so) we thought long and hard about what to call the extruder we use for clay and plasticine work. We couldn't think of anything meaningful that was simpler, so went with the word extruder. Some time later, it was joyous to hear one of the pupils, a small autistic child whose language was just emerging, to look long and hard at it, to arrange his PECS symbols on the sentence strip, and then to say, loud and clear: "I want extruder". Cue cheering. It was the proper label, and of course if children wanted the tool, they used the label.

I love the work of SSF, whom I have observed first hand many times getting something magical from students with all sorts of special needs. I love the language of Shakespeare, and love the fact that, like "extruder", children have a motivating activity in which to hear and to fit such language.

Whether choosing to use the language of the Key Points as is or explaining more, SSF have done some of the necessary spadework. These lesson plans, activities, resources and assessments are brilliantly designed. They leave the teacher to impose upon them the needs of their particular teaching group and the needs of the individuals in it. They offer many links into the National Curriculum, and my bet is that many teachers will find even more meaningful links into various other NC subjects, depending on the routes down which their pupils lead them.

My advice would be simply to print these off, have ready the resources, have ready the hyperlinks on your IWB, and have huge fun with your pupils. With the help of these invaluable resources, let them experience the glory of a Shakespeare play, taking it into their own very individual sphere of influence. Let them have the comfort of repeating and rehearsing and improving and performing, and where possible of course, let their parents have that very special experience of seeing their children as confident, competent, creative learners.’

Jude Ragan

Curriculum Links

This lesson sequence gives young learners opportunities to meet aspects of the Citizenship curriculum for KS2:

- take part in collaborative activities to enhance social and communication issues
- prepare to play an active role as citizens by researching, discussing and debating issues
- reflect on responsibilities, rights and duties
- develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
- accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely

Examples of actions schools can take to promote Fundamental British values, include:

- ensuring all pupils within the school have a voice that is listened to, and demonstrate how democracy works by actively promoting democratic processes such as a school council whose members are voted for by the pupils

There are also elements of the lesson that meet requirements for Speaking and Listening P Scales.

Speaking:

- P7: They contribute appropriately one-to-one and in small group discussions and role-play.
- P8: They take part in role-play with confidence.

Listening:

- P6: Pupils respond to others in group situations [for example, taking turns appropriately in a game such as 'Pass the parcel'].
- P7: Pupils listen, attend to and follow stories for short stretches of time.
- They attend to, and respond to, questions from adults and their peers about experiences, events and stories [for example, 'Where has the boy gone?'].
- P8: Pupils take part in role-play with confidence.
- Pupils listen attentively. They respond appropriately to questions about why or how [for example 'Why does a bird make a nest?', 'How do we copy this picture?'].


The Personal Wellbeing Programme of Study Key Stage 3 – non statutory. The range and content includes:

- examples of diverse values encountered in society and the clarification of personal values
- ways of recognising and reducing risk, minimising harm and getting help in emergency and risky situations
- the features of positive and stable relationships, how to deal with a breakdown in a relationship and the effects of loss and bereavement
- different types of relationships, including those within families and between older and young people, boys and girls, and people of the same sex, including civil partnerships
- the similarities, differences and diversity among people of different race, culture, ability, disability, gender, age and sexual orientation and the impact of prejudice, bullying, discrimination and racism on individuals and communities.

This lesson sequence also provides opportunities to meet some of the statutory requirements of the KS2 National Curriculum for English. Whereby Pupils should be taught to:

- listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
- ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English
- participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates
- gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s)
- consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others
- increase their familiarity with a wide range of books including fiction from our literary heritage
- drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
- provide reasoned justifications for their views

The Big Question - Hamlet

<p>Learning Objectives</p> <p>To participate and collaborate in shared activities.</p> <p>To share my opinion on the Big Question.</p> <p>To identify the reasons to take responsibility for my actions.</p>  <p>Dig Deeper! Suggested Further Activities for lesson follow up.</p> <p>Pupils create freeze frames to show moments in the play. The teacher acts in role as a 'roving reporter' to find out more from these characters.</p> <p>Pupils might suggest other times people need to take responsibility for their actions and create a poster, some drama or piece of writing about it.</p> <p>Pupils write to Hamlet or Claudius about taking responsibilities for their actions.</p>	<p>Big Question: Why is it important to take responsibility for my actions?</p> <p>Vocabulary: responsible, responsibility, fault, Hamlet, Claudius, guilt, admitting,</p> <p><i>You might want to familiarise yourself with the play first. Using the 10 point summary, try mixing up the story points and asking your students to arrange them back into the correct order. You could then create freeze frames of these moments, which will help your students to get an overview of the story before you look into the Big Question.</i></p> <p>Lesson overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring responsibility – Using a starting image, prompt a class discussion to lead into the Big Question. Ask the students to consider their response to the Big Question by placing themselves on Value Spots. Share the facts with the class and then play the Triptico game to work out true or false. Students use these facts to come up with character actions. They then move around the space interacting with each other using gestures and sounds (and text if appropriate). Students role play some scenarios about 'Taking responsibility' and use some commands to explore these moments and what happens next. Students return to the Big Question and the Value spots once more. Students fill in the missing words to describe Hamlet and Claudius. <p>See Teaching and Learning Activities for full details</p>	<p>Assessment Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class discussion about the starting image Value Spots Character actions and interactions Role Play Scenarios Follow up written work <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 point summary Starting Image Speech and thought bubbles Facts about Hamlet and Claudius Triptico Game – True or False Hamlet and Claudius quotes Role Play Scenarios and commands Fill in the gaps Assessment grid for the class Assessment grid per student <p>Teachers Notes</p>
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Teaching and Learning Activities

Starter – Exploring Responsibility

- Show your students the **Starting Image** and ask them to play ‘I See.’
 - What do they see in the image? Begin with the literal things and then start to ask the students to use detective hats to think about what might be going on.
- Ask them to use the body language of the people in the image to think about what is happening.
- Provide the students with **thought bubbles** so that they can write or say what the people are thinking.
- Provide the students with **speech bubbles** so that they can write or say what they people are saying.
- How do they think this situation might be resolved?
 - *These speech and thought bubbles could be used in classroom displays or to add to working walls – if appropriate for the students.*

Starter - Value Spots

- Ask the class questions that will elicit different answers, such as ‘What is your favourite colour?’ or ‘What do you do most in your spare time?’.
- Note answers and decide on between three and five options.
- Use a coloured spot/part of the classroom/ suitable prop (a Value Spot) to represent this option in the classroom. Ensure it is location based.
- Introduce the Value Spots by showing them where they might stand if they agree strongly with one of the options – close by.
- Also demonstrate that they might stand in the middle of two places if they agree with more than one option.
- Ask the question again and ask them to move to their chosen option. Ask for the reasoning behind their choice.
- Now ask the ‘Big Question: ‘Why is it important to take responsibility for my actions?’
- Take suggestions for answers. Try to make sure that there are a few options that aren’t obvious/not necessarily the ‘correct’ response, as it is good to have a range to stimulate a discussion. E.g Because I want to get rewarded; because it is part of growing up; others are relying on me etc.
 - *If you are concerned that the students might not be able to think of reasons on the spot, you could provide some already written up on A3 paper.*
- Allocate each idea to a coloured spot/part of the classroom/suitable prop and ask the students to move to their chosen response and to share their reasons for their choice.
- Take photographs of where the students have placed themselves to compare with later.
 - *Students could use these photographs to explain in writing or through alternative communication methods why they decided to stand where they did. These could then be displayed in the classroom if appropriate for the students.*



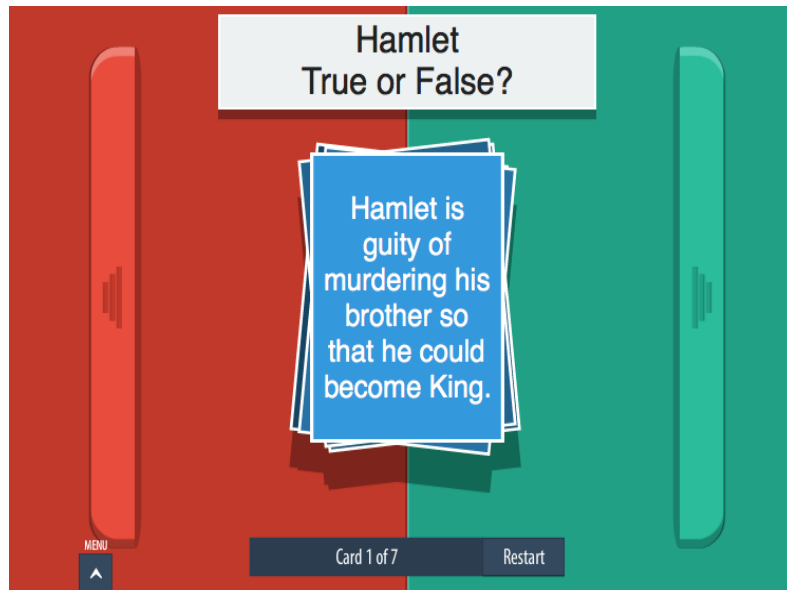
Teaching and Learning Activity One - Exploring characters from Hamlet



- *Capture students' work through film or photography for assessment purposes.*
- It might help to draw a family tree with the class and ask how Hamlet might be feeling after his uncle married his mother. How has this changed him? How might he behave?
 - *Be mindful of drawing attention to familial differences and only complete a family tree to clarify the relationships within this play and not if you think that it will distress students.*
- Share the **Facts about Claudius and Hamlet** with the class. You might decide to share them directly or hand them out to each group to do so. These facts contextualise the relationship between these two characters up until Hamlet has staged a re-enactment of Claudius murdering his father at around 2/3 of the way through the play.
- Ask the class any of the following questions or think of some others to suit the needs and abilities of your class:
 - What do we know about the two of them?
 - What might we be able to assume from what we know?
 - How does the relationship change or develop over the course of time?
 - What is good/bad about the relationship?
 - How might they describe it in one word?
 - How do they think the story will end for these two characters?
- Ask pupils for their reaction to the behaviour of Claudius and Hamlet so far? Have they accepted responsibility for their actions – Claudius for killing King Hamlet (Hamlet's father) and Hamlet for planning to kill Claudius?
- Hide the facts or any information that you have recorded from the questions, so that you can now challenge your students to **'True or False'** using the Triptico Game.
- This will consolidate your students understanding of these two characters and ask them to use memory skills to determine if the facts are applicable to one, both or neither character.



Load the game on the interactive whiteboard by clicking on the link below or the screenshot to the left and following the instructions



Instructions

- Load the Triptico cards by clicking [HERE](#)
- You can choose to do this against the clock or in a non time pressured way
- Move the cards to the right (green side) if you think that the fact is true
- Move the cards to the left (red side) if you think that the fact is false
- You will hear sound effects to confirm whether you have got it correct or not!

Teaching and Learning Activity Two – Character actions



- *Capture students' work through film or photography for assessment purposes.*

- Using all of the information gathered about these two characters, ask the students to come up with an action/sign name or a gesture to demonstrate the type of person they are.
- You could challenge your students to come up with a sound to accompany the action or you could give them one of the quotes to use instead of or as well as.
- Invite your class into a circle and ask them to do their action when you say the character name.

- Ask them to look out for things that they really like about other people's actions. Hear some of these.
- Now ask two pupils to move into the circle as Claudius and Hamlet and get them to interact with one another.
- Move past one another, around each other in circles, give them a prop/costume/chair and see how they use it.
- Ask them to use the sounds/quote and use these to communicate with one another too. How can they change the way they say the line/deliver the sound.
- Now give them the scenario 'Claudius has murdered Hamlet's father, Hamlet is seeking revenge'. Using only their actions and sounds, how do they interact now? Experiment with a few other scenarios from earlier in the play and set them off in pairs to try them out.
- Spotlight a few to show and discuss what they liked as a class.
- Ask if Hamlet and Claudius have taken responsibility for their actions? How do we know? What have they done/not done to show this?

Teaching and Learning Activity Three – Role Play



- *Capture students' work through film or photography for assessment purposes.*
- Divide your class into smaller groups of twos and threes and provide them with one of the Role Play scenarios.
- Ask them to imagine that they are the people in this scenario and through acting it out, they need to show the rest of the class the scenario on their card. They shouldn't go any further than that at this stage.
- Ask the groups to practise that and then to move onto what they think could happen next. What should the person do next?
- Ask the groups to show the rest of the class what they have done so far. Remind the class of the Big Question and ask them to think about that when they are watching the scene.
- Warn them that you might give them a command whilst they are doing their scene. You can use the **command cards** for this. You might tell them to Freeze, Rewind, Fast Forward or ask What If? Reassure them that this doesn't mean they have done anything wrong, just that you want to find out more about this moment.
- As they show the scene, freeze them to find out more about how each character is feeling, what they want and what they might say next.
- When they reach the point where they show what happens next, ask them to rewind and give them an alternative option *E.g What if Ben doesn't own up to his mistake to the teacher and just carries on playing? (How might that change what happens later on? Might his friend and him fall out, argue, fight? How will the teacher react to Ben then?)*
- Ask them to rewind and replay the scene but with a different ending. What if Ben admitted his mistake from the beginning? You could also fast-forward to the end of the school day.
- See another group and prompt the rest of the class to use the commands too so that they begin to take control of the role-plays.
- After you have seen a few, or all of them if you have time, discuss what they have learnt about taking responsibility?

Plenary

Return to the Value Spots



- *Capture students' work through film or photography for assessment purposes.*
- Remind the students of everything they have done in these two lessons to help them answer the Big Question again. (You could do this by showing the **Starting image** and their **thought and speech bubbles** from their exploration of responsibility, reminding them of their gestures/sounds work on Hamlet and Claudius and the role-playing discussions.)
- Ask the Big Question again. Ensure that the options are positioned where they were before, or associated with the coloured spots or props as before and ask the students to move according to their opinion now.
- Take a photo to compare their places or show the photo from before to see the change in the two positions.
- Discuss why they have moved/not moved and how they might use what they have learnt about accepting responsibility.
 - *These photographs can be compared with the images previously taken of the value spots. These could then be displayed in the classroom if appropriate for the students.*

Fill in the gaps

- Ask the students to fill in the missing words:
 - Hamlet is a _____ son.
 - Claudius is a _____ King.
- If necessary, provide them with a word mat or resources to find exciting and interesting words to use.
- You could put these on display and use them in your rehearsal rooms when preparing for your performance of the play.
 - *Add these completed sentences to the classroom display, if appropriate for students.*

Appendix 1

HAMLET

THE BIG QUESTION

Resources Pack



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HAMLET

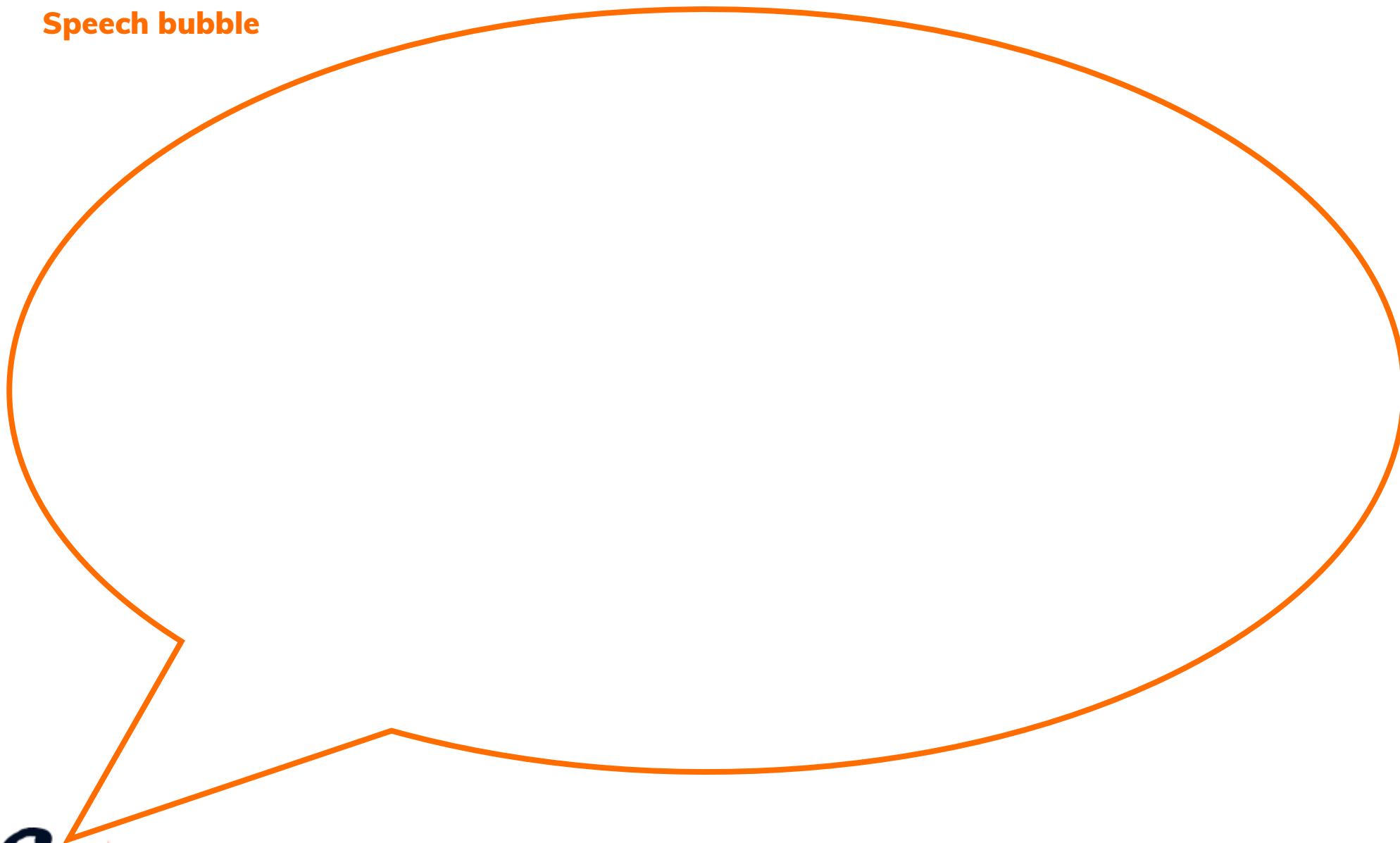
10 Events

1. On King Hamlet's death, his brother Claudius succeeds to the Danish throne and marries King Hamlet's wife, Gertrude.
2. The old King's grieving son, Prince Hamlet is told by his father's ghost that he was murdered by Claudius. Hamlet swears to exact revenge on his uncle.
3. Ophelia is Hamlet's sweetheart and her Father, Polonius, is the King's counsellor. Her brother, Laertes, departs to France. Polonius and Laertes forbid Ophelia to have further dealings with Hamlet.
4. Hamlet feigns madness to protect himself the King. Queen Gertrude and Polonius orchestrate and spy on a meeting between Hamlet and Ophelia to discover the source of this insanity.
5. Hamlet abuses and rejects Ophelia.
6. Hamlet restages the murder of his father and convinces himself of Claudius' guilt.
7. Hamlet accidentally kills Polonius and is banished to England by Claudius, who plots to have him murdered in transit.
8. Ophelia, driven insane by the death of her father, commits suicide.
9. Laertes swears revenge on Hamlet, who has returned from England. Laertes and Claudius conspire to poison him in a friendly duel.
10. During the duel, Gertrude mistakenly drinks poison meant for Hamlet. Laertes cheats and both he and Claudius are killed by the dying Prince.

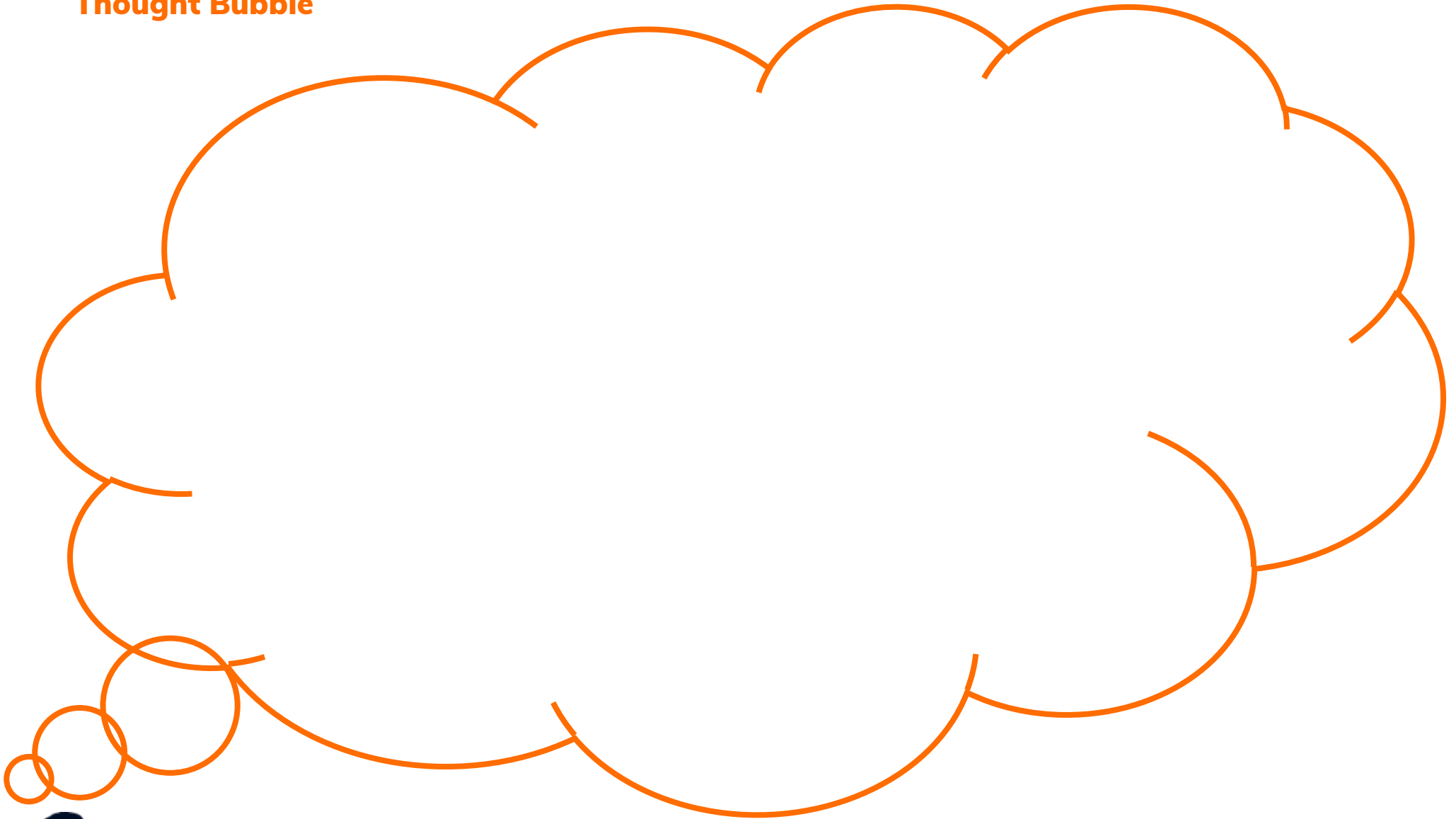
Starting Image



Speech bubble



Thought Bubble



Facts about Claudius and Hamlet

Claudius	Hamlet
He banishes Hamlet to England, and later arranges for him to be killed in a duel with Laertes.	He is the Prince of Denmark and the son of King Hamlet and Queen Gertrude.
He recently killed his brother, became the King and married his brother's wife.	He is known for his indecisiveness, often thinks about things too much, and spends a lot of time arguing with himself.
He spies on his new stepson.	His father's ghost appears to him, tells him that he was murdered and demands that he seek revenge.
He hides the truth about being a murderer from his new wife.	He struggles to accept his mother's remarriage and expresses disgust towards the relationship, as he thinks that their wedding happened too soon after his father's funeral.

Quotes:

Hamlet:

'To be, or not to be, that is the question:'
I have of late, lost all my mirth'

Claudius:

'O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven'
'How is it that the clouds still hang on you?'

Scenario Cards

<p>Sarah has been asked to do chores at home but she decides to play with her friends instead. Her parents come home to discover the chores haven't been done.</p> <p>What should Sarah do next?</p>	<p>Ben accidentally tripped someone over in the playground. They are hurt and a teacher is coming to help them.</p> <p>What should Ben do next?</p>	<p>Adele forgot to take her shoes off when she came into class and there is now mud all over the carpet. The teacher asks how this happened.</p> <p>What should Adele do next?</p>
<p>Lisa has eaten the last biscuit in the tin but it was promised to someone else. They go to get their biscuit and it has gone.</p> <p>What should Lisa do next?</p>	<p>Liam told a lie about someone talking in class when it was actually him. The teacher is telling off his friend.</p> <p>What should Liam do next?</p>	<p>Ibrahim borrows a book from the library. When he returns it, the librarian discovers that there are some ripped pages inside.</p> <p>What should Ibrahim do next?</p>

Commands

Freeze

Commands

Rewind

Commands

Fast

Forward

Commands

What If?

Fill in the gaps

Hamlet is a _____ son.

**Claudius is a _____
King.**