

Ed shakespeare's  
play hamlet  
shakespeare leads  
you



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

ed by thought. It is the great irony of life that consciousness, the driving force of mankind that has delivered us from the age of stone to that of industry, delivers us also to the inescapable prison of the mind. Events that in the cycle of life are little more than trivial, can be given by the mind's eye power enough to consume us whole. The grief of the moment can become, with thought, a crashing wave that leaves behind only a semblance of sanity in its wake, for in thinking there is both life and death. Trapped inside the prison of his mind, chained by a grief consciousness served only to torture him with, Hamlet, the prince of Denmark, reveals to the world that more gruesome than the death thinking brings him is the carnage it brings to those around him. The question that puzzles everyone is: Was Hamlet truly insane or was it all an act? The term insanity means a mental disorder, whether it is temporary or permanent that is used to describe a person when they dont know the difference between right and wrong. They dont consider the nature of their actions due to the mental defect.

In William Shakespeares play Hamlet Shakespeare leads you to believe that the main character, Hamlet, might be insane. There are many clues to suggest Hamlet is insane but in fact he is completely sane. Throughout the play Hamlet makes wise decisions to prove his so-called madness to others when obviously it is merely an act. He knows exactly what he is leading up to.

He just delays to act due to his indecisiveness or inaction. An example of this is when Hamlet says Now might I do it pat, now a is a-praying;/ And now Ill dot. And so a/ goes to heaven,/ And so am I revenged that would be

scanned:/ A villain kills my father, and for that,/ I, his sole son, do this same villain send/ To heaven./ Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.

(III. iii. 73). This very scene illustrates Hamlets tragic flaw: indecision. He has the perfect opportunity to kill the newly King yet holds himself back from doing what he set out to do. His reason was that by killing him while hes praying, his soul goes to heaven and this wouldnt be considered true revenge. This is not a thought of an insane person. An insane person would have completed the murder at this opportunity.

In Act III, scene I, line 55, To be or not to be..., Hamlet displays his indecisiveness by thinking about suicide because of the situation he is in.

He constantly is wavering back and forth stuck somewhere in the middle. He can not do anything about it because he sees two sides to everything. He cant determine his course of action because he is caught in the crossroads (Lowell 187). He would rather be dead than live with the thought of his fathers death going unavenged, but knows that the Everlasting fixed His canon against self-slaughter. Thus conscience takes a major part in the thought and action of murder. This is why he delays so long to commit the murder. An insane person would not wait.

They would be more apt to act in impulse. Hamlets madness only existed when he was in the presence of certain characters. When Hamlet is around Polonius, Claudius, Gertrude, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern, he behaves irrationally. For example in Act II, scene II, lines 173-174, Polonius asks Hamlet, Do you know me, my Lord? Hamlet replies, Excellent well.

You are a fishmonger. He fools Polonius into believing that Ophelia is the reason for his inexplicable and rash behaviors. Hamlet pretends not to know who Polonius is, even though he is Ophelias father. After Polonius talks with Hamlet he explains to the King the cause of Hamlets crude actions: Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,/ Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,/ Thence to a lightness, and by this declension/ Into a madness wherein now he raves/ And we all mourn (II. ii.

147-150). When Hamlet is around Horatio, Bernardo, Fransisco, the players and the