

Hamlet vs henry the v

Literature



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Hamlet vs. Henry V While Shakespeare's work have received tremendous historical acclaim, perhaps his two most praised works are Hamlet and Henry V. Scholars regard the titular characters in these works constitute some of the most complex and profound characters Shakespeare has invented (Bloom, 49). This essay examines these plays through a variety of critical perspectives.

There are a number of reasons that Henry V is a great leader and that Hamlet is a potential disaster as a leader. Perhaps the most overarching consideration is that Prince Hamlet is witnessed in a specific negative condition, while the reader over the course of Shakespeare's works is able to follow expansive aspects about Henry V. In Hamlet's particular scenario his father has recently been murdered and his uncle has married his mother. Early in the play Hamlet remarks, "A little more than kin, and less than kind" (Shakespeare, 64). By stating more than kin, Hamlet is indicating that Claudius is more than his uncle, and less than kind indicates that he is still not his true father. In this way it's clear that Hamlet's leadership ability is greatly hindered by his morose state. While Hamlet is situated in a depression, Shakespeare indicates that Henry V was able to mature and become a great leader. After the Dauphin mocks Henry V for his youthful indiscretions, Henry turns the situation. Henry states, "But this lies all within the will of God,/ To whom I do appeal, and in whose name/ Tell you the Dauphin I am coming on/ To venge me as I may, and to put forth/ My rightful hand in a well-hallowed cause" (Shakespeare, 281). In this instance, Henry has used the rhetorical technique of claiming God has inspired his cause. This further demonstrates Henry's ability to inspire others and position himself as virtuous. Ultimately, while Hamlet is sometimes a prisoner of his

<https://assignbuster.com/hamlet-vs-henry-the-v/>

circumstances, Henry uses his surrounding environment to his best advantage.

It seems that the thing Shakespeare values most in people is valor. Hamlet demonstrates valor in his desire to avenge his father's death. Henry V demonstrates valor on a much grander scale, as his position as king and military leader allows him to act valorous in leading his country into battle. Consider when, before going into battle, Henry V states, "If we are marked to die, we are enough/ To do our country loss" (Shakespeare, 300). Here Shakespeare is glorifying Henry's leadership. Conversely, it appears that the thing Shakespeare most decries in people is ignorance and stupidity.

Shakespeare's contempt of stupidity is demonstrated in Hamlet through the characters Polonius, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Polonius is frequently depicted as being long-winded and dense; Polonius is also killed by less than glorious circumstances, namely hiding behind a curtain. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, who demonstrate their ignorance by attempting to spy and manipulate Hamlet, are themselves ultimately killed. Shakespeare's characterization of these individuals clearly demonstrates contempt.

In conclusion, this essay has examined Hamlet and Henry V. Within this context of investigation the research demonstrates that Henry V is a much greater leader than Hamlet because of his rhetorical techniques and the personal situation that Shakespeare situates him in. The research further considers what Shakespeare values the most and least in people. Ultimately, it's clear these plays are two of Shakespeare's most intellectually penetrating.

References

Bloom, Harold. *Shakespeare the Invention of the Human*. Doubleday. 2000.

Shakespeare, William. *Henry V*. New York: Penguin Classics. 1992.

Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet: Prince of Denmark*. New York: Penguin Classics. 1992.