

# Example of literature review on to be the tragedy of hamlet prince of denmark

[Literature](#), [William Shakespeare](#)



William Shakespeare's Hamlet tells the story of the prince of Denmark, who is much troubled by an encounter with his dead father, former king of Denmark, claiming he (the father) was murdered by his brother, the current king of Denmark. Because of the revelation, Hamlet became bothered. The event with his father's "heavenly body" allowed Hamlet to think about and make a stand about certain dilemmas of life.

The story as previously mentioned is filled different topics and ideas that usually plague an individual or a nation at their time and age. Ideas of the fear of the unknown or the inevitability of death were much represented in the speeches Hamlet, himself, utters. Perhaps the most notable and infamous words mouthed in Shakespeare's tragedy happened during Act III Scene I when the main character, Hamlet, spoke about the significance of existence with the words "To be, or not to be?" This is a question people have the benefit to often ponder on.

### **“ To be, or not to be: that is the question:**

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer

The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune

Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,

And by opposing end them?—To die,—to sleep,—

No more; and by a sleep to say we end

The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks

That flesh is heir to,—“

The word "be" was used in the play to imply the meaning of existence as

Hamlet ponders upon the words, "to be or not to be". In this speech, the

prince tries to keep an open mind regarding the morality behind the action of

suicide or bringing death upon oneself. Simply put, he justifies one's action of ending one's own existence. Evidently to him and probably his country, suicide is a taboo, not very well accepted in the community. Why is it that a man ought not to take his own life if he had already suffered enough, especially since such an act is so easily done? He deliberates whether it would be more honorable, or moral, for a man to suffer from his good or ill-fated fortunes silently and passively though he continues to live or to just end all suffering by the infliction of death thereby ending all of them.

There is much importance given to that one word " be" in Shakespeare's Hamlet. Throughout the story, existence, or " be" as in to be, was portrayed as a gift so easily taken, and even taken for granted. This was exemplified by many characters in the story. As was revealed, the current king and brother of former king of Denmark took the life of the latter so that he may be able to ascend the throne without thoughts of them being family or them caring for each other as brothers. It was also easily taken for granted by Polonius who did not think of the danger he was in while spying on Hamlet and his mother Gertrude, and his daughter Ophelia who died when she fell in the river and eventually drowned because she was not able to regain her balance. More than just the word " be", Shakespeare gives more emphasis and significance to the word as he portrays the kind of nonchalance and unimportance one bestows on one's life. He was able to stress in the story that existence should not be merely lived but lived with a full and significant life.

There is also another part of existence which was stressed by Shakespeare,

especially on that speech of Hamlet. This is the natural opposite of existence or "be" which is "not be" or to not live. Shakespeare gives importance to the fact that death is imminent and befalls all as what eventually happened to many of the characters in the play, including Hamlet himself. But whether it is our duty to end our own existence is what Shakespeare would like for us to deliberate. He voices his concerns with Hamlet finding the logic behind the suicide. Even the most troubled soul would rather choose an existence with so much passive and quiet suffering than to end one's life and go to the place where no one has gone before. The story of Hamlet puts to mind that existence may end in this life but it rises anew in another. This new life, or new existence or "be[ing]", however, is filled with ambiguous details and unknown territories that one dares not try bridge it sooner.

Shakespeare gives notice, further, to the fact of a "heavenly body" or being in the persona of his late father's ghost and thus brings to question whether existence may still come without that of the physical or mortal body. Though this was more connected to the Christian theme of the play saying that the father was not anointed properly and roams the world as a disturbed soul, his existence even in spirit shows that the meaning of be can also be expressed in forms other than that of the physical life.

The nature of man's existence is so relevantly revealed in the line, and even in other parts of the story. It shows that even if suffering is a part of everyday life, man still finds a reason to continue their ways. One knows one lives because of suffering. Though their beliefs tell them that the fate of death is not, and should not, be in their hands because of such suffering,

existence or non-existence, “ to be or not be”, is undoubtedly a bafflement altogether.