

Hamlet chart critical thinking examples

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Incidents of dramatic irony in Act I and Act II:

- Everyone believes the king died as a result of a snake bite when in reality he had been poisoned. Ironic because Claudius had spread the rumor of the snakebite while he was really the killer. Characters: Ghost, Hamlet, Claudius. Sympathy for Hamlet, because he learned that the king was murdered.

Antipathy for Claudius because we learn he is a murderer. Evidence: The testimony of the ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast, “ With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts— / O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power / So to seduce!—won to his shameful lust / The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen: / O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!

2. Horatio and Marcellus swear to Hamlet not to tell his secrets. Ironic because Hamlet is only pretending to be crazy. (Shakespeare) Characters: Marcellus, Horatio, and Hamlet Sympathy for all three characters, Hamlet because he must hide the truth from his friends and Marcellus and Horatio because they think their friend is mad. Evidence: The reaction of Horatio and Marcellus “ O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!”

- Polonius states that it is Hamlet’s love for Ophelia that is making him crazy. Ironic because we know that he is only pretending. (Shakespeare) Characters: Ophelia, Polonius Sympathy for both characters because they are confused by Hamlet’s behavior. Evidence: The statement made by Polonius “ That hath made him mad. / I am sorry that with better heed and judgment / I had not quoted him: I fear'd he did but trifle, / And meant to wreck thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!”

One example of dramatic irony in Hamlet occurs in Act 1, scene 5, when Hamlet is confronted by the ghost of the king. Everyone previously thought

that the king died as the result of snakebite. This rumor was spread by Claudius. However when the king comes back from the dead we learn that he actually was murdered. Claudius poisoned the king. This act revealed only to Hamlet set him on his path of revenge. I feel that this scene is instrumental in setting up the drama that follows this scene.

This scene manipulates audience sympathies by causing them to sympathize with Hamlet. Even though he commits some dirty deed throughout the course of the play the audience still feels bad for him because of this scene. They realize the weight of the secret he carries and understand his motives for getting back at Claudius. The audience also realizes that Claudius is power hungry and deceitful. The audience is programmed to dislike Claudius. The characters are developed throughout this scene because the audience realizes the truth of their character. As secrets are revealed we see who they truly are, not who they are rumored to be.

This scene sets forth the conflict for the rest of the drama. Since this secret is revealed, Hamlet decided to take revenge on Claudius. To throw off suspicions he pretends to be mad. This influences how all the other characters view Hamlet and begins the conflict between Claudius and Hamlet.

Works Cited:

Shakespeare, W. (2010) Hamlet Penguin Classics Print.