

# Essay on hamlet

Literature, William Shakespeare



In William Shakespeare's Hamlet, the Queen, Gertrude, disapproves of her son, Hamlet's, behavior. She tries to encourage him to love and accept his new King and step-father, Claudius as much as she does. Resolving this conflict demonstrates that overcoming a conflict can bring a mother and son closer together than ever before. After the death of her husband, Gertrude immediately remarries to his brother, Claudius. As one can imagine, this made Hamlet very upset that his own mother could get over her husband's death and remarry all in the span of just two months. Gertrude defends her quick remarriage by stating, " Do not for ever with thy veiled lids / Seek for thy noble father in the dust" (1. 2. 74-75). Gertrude is explaining to Hamlet that two months is plenty of time to mourn and be at peace with his father's death. Claudius goes on to say, " But to persever / In obstinate condolment is a course / Of impious stubbornness. ' Tis unmanly grief" (1. 2. 98-100). Claudius is reinforcing Gertrude's explanation by insulting Hamlet and calling him childish. This only enforces Hamlet's hate for Claudius. Gertrude tries to console Hamlet by saying, " Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet: / I pray thee stay with us, go not to Wittenberg" (1. 2. 124-125). This shows that Gertrude wants Hamlet to stay and understand her reasoning. By saying that she prays, Gertrude shows Hamlet that she really does care about him. Later when Gertrude attends Hamlet's play, she says, " Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me" (3. 2. 109). By asking Hamlet to sit next to her, Gertrude is showing that she wants to bond with Hamlet. But because Hamlet doesn't, it is hard for Gertrude to be able to express her feelings and thoughts on the situation. Later on, in the major scene between Gertrude and Hamlet in the royal bedroom, Gertrude tries to present her troubles with

Hamlet's behavior lately. Gertrude tells Hamlet, "thou hast thy father much offended" (3. 4. 10). In response to Hamlet's sassy comment, Gertrude calls him mad by saying, "you answer with an idle tongue" (3. 4. 12). By calling him crazy, Gertrude shows that there is no other way to explain his actions. Gertrude continues the conversation by asking multiple questions such as, "What have I done that thou dar'st wag thy / tongue / In noise so rude against me" (3. 4. 46-48). By asking these types of clueless questions, Gertrude is showing Hamlet that she doesn't see anything wrong with her remarriage and Hamlet is completely overreacting to the situation. However, after Hamlet keeps heckling her and accusing her of incestuous acts, Gertrude responds by saying, "O, speak to me no more! / These words like daggers enter in mine ears" (3. 4. 107-108). This plea for silence shows that Gertrude might feel guilty for her actions. She can't stand hearing her son accuse her of doing such disgusting, yet truthful acts. While Gertrude could or couldn't be using these clueless acts to cover up her incestuous doings, Hamlet still interprets his mother's actions as being disgusting and cruel-hearted. After Gertrude and Claudius insult Hamlet for not getting over his father's death, Hamlet has a soliloquy in which he states, "Within a month, / Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears / Had left the flushing in her galled eyes, / She married. O, most wicked speed" (1. 2. 159-162). By calling his mother's tears "unrighteous" shows that Hamlet didn't feel that his mother cared about his father at all. He describes the speed at which she got over his death as "wicked", which implies that Hamlet finds his mother's response very cruel and evil. Later while sitting with Ophelia at his play, he again emphasizes the miraculously short mourning Gertrude felt for the King's death by saying, "

For look you how cheerfully my mother / looks, and my father died within ' s two hours" (3. 2. 125-126). By using a hyperbole and saying his father died two hours ago shows that Hamlet feels that his mother has gotten over the death much too quickly. In response to Gertrude's earlier offer of sitting with Hamlet at the play, Hamlet says, " No, good mother, here's metal more attractive" (3. 2. 110). By just blatantly insulting his mother and refusing to sit by her, Hamlet show Gertrude that he is fed up with her careless actions and doesn't care if she's trying to mend their relationship. It's going to be almost impossible for him to forgive her. Later in the Queen's bedroom, Hamlet confronts Gertrude about her incestuous acts and he expresses his disgust by remarking, " You are the Queen, your husband's brother's wife, / And-would it were not so-you are my mother" (3. 4. 18-19). By telling his mother the exact reason why he is upset with her, Hamlet forces Gertrude to not be clueless and pretend like she doesn't know what's wrong. Now she must face her actions and feel the guilt Hamlet believes she deserves ever so much. In the final act of the play, Gertrude and Hamlet start to put their differences aside. Hamlet is challenged to a duel by Laertes, whose father Hamlet killed. Laertes has put together a diabolical plan with Claudius to kill Hamlet. During the duel, Hamlet impresses his mother and she is proud of him. When he gets a hit on Laertes, Gertrude says, " The Queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet" (5. 2. 302). This is the first scene in which the Queen is proud of her son, and Hamlet is happy that his mother is proud. He responds to her remark by commenting, " Good madam" (5. 2. 303). This acknowledgement of her praising remark shows that they share a bonding mother-son moment. It's like all of their differences have been set aside.

However, this moment does not last long as the Queen drank to Hamlet's success which was poisoned by Claudius. As Gertrude is dying, she musters out, " O my dear Ham- / let! / The drink, the drink! I am poisoned" (5. 2. 328-330). Since Gertrude warns Hamlet about the drink, she wants to make sure that he doesn't have any, but she also wants him to know that Claudius has poisoned her. She wants Hamlet to avenge her death. Hamlet responds by approaching Claudius and saying, " The point envenomed too? / Then, venom, to thy work" (5. 2. 342). After this statement, Hamlet stabs Claudius and forces him to drink from the poisoned cup. By killing Claudius, Hamlet shows that he did care for his mother and that he would do anything for her. This, in turn, supports the message that when a mother and son overcome a conflict, they can be brought closer together than ever before. While throughout the entire play, Hamlet is disgusted by his mother's actions and her incestuous marriage with Claudius, Gertrude still tries to encourage Hamlet to love and appreciate Claudius for taking over the throne. However, when their differences are set aside and they can bond, Hamlet and Gertrude can have a love for one another that is unbreakable, even by death. Since their untimely deaths occurred right after their arguments disappeared, this also allows the two of them to die with a peace of mind knowing that they truly did love each other. Works Cited Shakespeare, William. Folger Library Shakespeare: Hamlet. New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1958. Print.