

# Is hamlet mad?

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Whether Hamlet is mad or not is a largely debated topic. Throughout the play, Hamlet demonstrates numerous acts of feigned insanity and at the same time develops ingenious plans in order to prove the ghost's word and kill Claudius. Hamlet's craziness is just an act as everywhere throughout the play he reveals elaborate plans of revenge. In the first three acts, Hamlet shows signs of intelligence by forming logical plans to test the ghost's words. He said he would "put an antic disposition on" so when he does commit a sin, it would be blamed on his insanity instead (I. v. 197). Even Polonius recognized that "though this be madness, yet there is/method in't" (II. ii. 222-223). A person who is insane does not have a plan behind his actions. His sanity is proven when he thinks "the spirit [he has] seen/may be a devil," and tests the ghost's words with his story-within-a-story plans (II. ii. 606-607). A madman would be blinded with rage and not be able to think this far and devise such a wise plan. Even after confirming the truth in the ghost's words, Hamlet retains his insanity with acts of judgment and gentry. When Hamlet sees a vulnerable Claudius praying, instead of stabbing him at first sight, he decides to wait until Claudius is not "fit and seasoned for his passage" (III. iii. 89). This is not the self-control of an insane man, but rather one who is calm and straightforward in his goal. He once again demonstrates his intelligence when he ruins Claudius' plans to kill him, changing the target from himself to his traitorous friends, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. If Hamlet were truly insane when he read the letter, he would show more rage, possibly attacking Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. He also remains polite to Laertes despite Laertes treating him badly. He feels sympathy for Laertes because like himself, he has lost his father. Hamlet asks for "[his] pardon"

and admits, " I have done you/wrong" (V. ii. 227-228). He keeps his image of a noble until the end, never giving off the ambience of a madman. All in all, Hamlet remains noble, sane, and a scholar until the very end, despite his façade of madness.