

# Hamlet college essay essay



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Hamlet one of Shakespeare's greatest plays, where the young prince of Denmark must uncover the truth about his father's death. Hamlet a play that tells the story of a young prince whose father recently died. Hamlet's uncle Claudius marries his mother the queen and takes the throne. As the play is told Hamlet finds out his father was murdered by the recently crowned king. The theme that remains constant throughout the play is appearance versus reality. Things within the play appear to be true and honest but in reality are infested with evil.

Many of the characters within the play hide behind a mask of falseness. Four of the main characters that hid behind this mask are Polonius, Rosencrantz (Guildenstern), the king Claudius. From behind this mask they give the impression of a person who is sincere and genuine, in reality they are plagued with lies and evil.

There appearance will make it very difficult for Hamlet to uncover the truth, the characters hide behind. Polonius the king's royal assistant has a preoccupation with appearance. He always wants to keep up the appearance of a loving and caring person. Polonius appears like a man who loves and cares about his son, Laertes. Polonius speaks to his son with advice that sounds sincere but in reality it is rehearsed, hollow and without feeling. Polonius gives his advice only to appear to be the loving caring father. The reality is he only speaks to appear sincere as a politician, to look good rather than actually be good: " And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry. This above all: to thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man. Farewell; my blessing season this in thee!" Act 1 Polonius gives his son Laertes his blessing to go away, he sends

a spy to follow him and keep an eye on him. This shows his lack of trust for anyone, he gives the appearance of a confident father who trusts his son to go off on his own. In reality he lies about his trust for his son by sending a spy to watch him. His advice he gives his son is rehearsed and only said to give the appearance of a loving father. Polonius further adds to the theme appearance versus reality by ordering Ophelia to stop seeing Hamlet. He lies to her telling her that Hamlet does not love her, he only lusts for her, in truth he does love her: Ay, springs to catch woodcocks. I do know, When the blood burns, how prodigious the soul. Through the play Polonius hides behind his mask appearing to be a honest loving parent. In reality Polonius lies, manipulates people and eavesdrops on people's conversation. Polonius helps contribute to the theme appearance versus reality by showing how his appearance is not his true nature, behind the mask there lies someone totally different. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are two of Hamlet's childhood friends who when asked by the king, try to find out what is troubling the young prince. Both help to contribute to the theme by showing their appearance of being Hamlet's friends. The pair go to Hamlet pretending to be his friends when in truth they are only there because the king asked them to find the truth. There is some irony within the twins, they are asked by the king to find out the truth by hiding within a lie, by pretending to be his friend: A dream is but a shadow Act II. Hamlet knows their purpose for their visit is to dig into his soul to find the real reason for his actions as of late. As the play continues the twins are asked again by the king to go to Hamlet and try again to find the real reason for Hamlet's behavior. Hamlet insults them at every chance knowing they are lying to him about their purpose of the visit: 'Tis as easy as lying; govern these ventages with your finger and thumb, give it breath with <https://assignbuster.com/hamlet-1565-words-college-essay-essay/>

your mouth...Act III As the melodrama continues Hamlet goes with the twins to reclaim money that another state owes Denmark. Hamlet is sent by the king to retrieve the assets. In actuality Hamlet is sent off to winter because the king, Claudius knows that Hamlet knows too much and must be killed. The twins show their appearance of being Hamlet's friends but in truth they have a hidden reason for visiting with Hamlet. Both show that it will be very difficult for Hamlet to uncover the fidelity hidden within the lies. Claudius the king of Denmark's conduct in council gives him the appearance of an honest and honorable man. In Act one scene two Claudius in the presence of council shows his true skill and ease of manner at speaking. Claudius speaks well of the spent king by showing a general love for him by all his subjects. Claudius shows respect for the old sovereign by speaking kind words of him. In reality he cares little for the old king, he speaks kindly only to give the appearance of loving brother. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death the memory be green, and that it us befitted to bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom to be contracted in one brow of woe Act I As Claudius sends Voltimand and Cornelius off to give the king of Norway the message of Fortinbras, he thanks and gives them complete trust, in the deliverance of the notation. This shows his trust and caring for his subjects in front of the council, winning even more consent from the council: We doubt it nothing: heartily farewell. Act I Claudius increases his appearance of an honest and honorable man, in front of the council by showing his respect for Polonius. He gives him the power to let his son Laertes stay or leave for Norway. Claudius speaks highly of Polonius giving him thanks and saying that he was responsible for Claudius becoming king: The head is not more native to the

heart, The handmore instrumental to the mouth, Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.

What wouldst thou have, Laertes (Act I ii, 47-50) This council would see this as a man who greatly respects his subjects and cares for them. This adds to the difficulty of uncovering the truth for Hamlet later. Hamlet enters the council chamber and speaks with Claudius. The king (Claudius) speaks with Hamlet seeming to be concerned with Hamlet. He gives advice that over grieving is not healthy, this shows a concern for Hamlet's well being. This conduct of Claudius gives him the appearance of being kind in front of council that accepts him even more for his family values: How is it that the clouds still hang on you? Act I Claudius appears to be even more caring when insulted by Hamlet he still shows love and general care for Hamlet. A normal king would have become angry and Hamlet would have gotten into trouble. Claudius shows the council that he is understanding of Hamlet's grief over his father: A little more than kin, and less than kind. Act I . Claudius gives Hamlet advice that over grieving can be harmful and not healthy. Claudius tells Hamlet that he is a admirable person for grieving for so long over his dad's death. Yet again Claudius keeps putting on the appearance of the honorable man. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet, To give these mourning duties to your father: But, you must know, your father lost a father; That father lost, lost his; and the survivor bound In filial obligation for some term To do obsequious sorrow; but to persevere In obstinate condolence is a course Act I Claudius further makes it difficult to uncover the truth by announcing that Hamlet is next in line for the throne of Denmark. This shows that Claudius would let Hamlet become the next king when he is gone.

This reveals a love and care for Hamlet to the council and Gertrude making Claudius appear to be kind, loving person: You are the most immediate to our throne; And with no less nobility of love Act I Claudius final conduct that makes him a difficult truth to uncover, is his care and want that Hamlet remain in Denmark.

Claudius is insulted by Hamlet, he asks Hamlet to stay only that his queen Gertrude wants Hamlet to stay. Claudius appears to be concerned with Hamlet's well being, Gertrude and council see this, making Claudius a more deserving person to be king. As Claudius speaks in council he gives the appearance of someone who is a deserving person that should be king. Claudius is voted in asking meaning he is already approved by everyone. Claudius gives respect to his subjects giving the council the impression that he respects them. The king shows general concern for Hamlet, his nephew. This will make it very difficult to prove the truth about Claudius in the future for he has not only, one the love and respect of council (that voted him in). But also has prevented a attack on Denmark (from Fortinbras) proving that he is good king that can protect the state from harm. Claudius makes it very difficult for Hamlet to uncover the truth about the true nature of Claudius in the future. Through the characters within the play all help to show the theme, that being appearance versus reality. Polonius, Rosencrantz (Guildenstern) and the king all appear to be good and honest. As Hamlet finds out, all contain lies and have hidden intentions within them. As each character is presented in the play all appear to be good and honest making it a difficult task for Hamlet to uncover the hidden truth about the nature of each

character. As Hamlet best said it something is rotten in Denmark That being the lies which have replaced or covered the true state of each character.