

Hamlet: Personal Essay

Writing Situation

While today's reader is probably not from royalty and has never been visited by a ghost, there are many circumstances in the play *Hamlet* that are common to a person's life:

- Losing a loved one
- Losing faith and trust in a close family member or friend
- Navigating romantic relationships
- Wondering about the uncertainty of life
- Wondering about what happens after death
- Having someone steal something from you
- Dealing with rejection, depression, or disappointment
- Being caught in the middle of a conflict or issue between two people you love
- Wanting revenge or justice for a wrong done to you or your family
- Seeing circumstances of life differently than your parents
- Protecting someone you love
- Having to wait for something you want
- Having to prove yourself right about something
- Challenging someone's authority
- Getting caught for doing something wrong or illegal
- Confronting someone for doing something wrong
- Questioning your faith in God
- Supporting a friend in a time of trouble
- Breaking bad news to someone

Hamlet is a play with many universal themes about life. There is something in the play that all readers and viewers can relate to.

Writing Directions

Write a letter to a friend or family member about how you personally relate to the play *Hamlet*:

Which character do you relate to and why? What circumstances does the character go through that reminds you of your situation? Narrate the specifics of the plot as it relates to the character you have chosen. Narrate the specifics of the similar situation you find yourself in. Reflect how the circumstances in the play are a mirror to your own circumstances. Include two or three quotes from the play that demonstrate the character's feelings. End the essay with a reflection about how the play has changed or shed light on your own situation. Paper must be 750 to 1000 words. It will be assessed as both a Reading/Viewing and Writing/Representing piece.

Categories and Criteria	Proficient			Not Proficient
	6 – Exceptional	5 – Experienced	4 – Capable	3 -1 (Not Proficient)
Narrates and reflects on a personal experience or feeling and connects it to part of the play.	Paper clearly and creatively connects a personal experience or feeling to a part of the play. The connection demonstrates the writer has an insightful understanding of the play's themes.	Paper clearly connects a personal experience or feeling to a part of the play. The connection demonstrates the writer has a clear understanding of the play's themes.	Paper connects a personal experience or feeling to a part of the play. Connection may be superficial. The writer demonstrates a surface understanding of the play's themes.	Paper connects a personal experience or feeling to a part of the play. Connection is too brief and underdeveloped. The writer demonstrates a limited understanding of the play's themes.
Quotes passages of the play to support the personal connection.	Quotes 2 or 3 passages from the play that accurately and creatively support the connection and the theme. Quotes demonstrate an insightful understanding of the plot.	Quotes 2 passages from the play that accurately support the connection and theme. Quotes demonstrate a clear understanding of the plot.	Quotes 1 or 2 passages from the play that somewhat supports the connection and theme. Quotes demonstrate a surface understanding of the plot.	Does not include quotes for support. If there is a quote, it does not connect to the theme or demonstrate understanding of the plot.
Organization	Organization of ideas is creative and clear in the paper.	Organization of ideas is clear in the paper.	Organization of ideas may be rambling or formulaic and predictable.	Organization of ideas is lacking in the paper.
Writing Conventions	Few or no errors in language conventions.	Some errors in English language conventions, but they don't interfere with understanding.	Several errors in English language conventions.	Too many errors in English language conventions.