

**A summary of the story**

Act 3 Scene 1

Claudius and Polonius prepare to spy on Hamlet to find out if his love for Ophelia is the cause of his madness. Claudius hints at his guilt in an aside.

Hamlet's fourth soliloquy:

Ophelia speaks to Hamlet (watched by Claudius and Polonius). Hamlet seems very cruel to Ophelia in this scene – firstly saying he loved her once and then denying it.

Claudius suspects Hamlet is not mad and decides to send him to England. Polonius thinks this is a good idea and also suggests that he spy on Hamlet when he meets with his mother.

Act 3 Scene 2

Hamlet talks to the actors and gives advice about acting. Before the play begins Hamlet is offensive to Ophelia (using sexual innuendo). The play is acted out and Claudius reacts by leaving, shouting, 'Give me some light. Away!' Polonius arrives to tell Hamlet his mother wishes to speak to him.

Act 3 Scene 3

Polonius tells Claudius he is off to spy on Hamlet and Gertrude. On his knees Claudius confesses the murder of his brother.

# Hamlet

Act 3 Scene 4	
Act 4 Scene 1	Gertrude tells Claudius that Hamlet has killed Polonius. Claudius decides to send Hamlet away from Denmark.
Act 4 Scene 2	Rosencrantz and Guildenstern question Hamlet about the location of Polonius's body but his replies bewilder them.
Act 4 Scene 3	Hamlet tells Claudius where Polonius's body is hidden. Claudius tells Hamlet he is being sent to England. Claudius reveals to the audience he has written letters ordering Hamlet's execution in England.
Act 4 Scene 4	Fortinbras asks Claudius for permission to pass through Danish territory.
	Hamlet's fifth soliloquy:
Act 4 Scene 5	Gertrude and Claudius meet with Ophelia but Ophelia has gone mad. Laertes arrives, demanding to know what happened to his father.
Act 4 Scene 6	Hamlet sends a letter to Horatio: he was captured in a sea battle but has done a deal with the pirates and is back in Denmark. He has sent a letter to the king.
Act 4 Scene 7	Claudius tells Laertes that Hamlet killed Polonius. A messenger arrives with Hamlet's letter. Laertes is glad to have the opportunity to be revenged on Hamlet. Claudius proposes the duel to Laertes – one of the swords will not be blunt. Laertes says he will poison the sharpened foil. Claudius proposes to poison Hamlet's drink. Gertrude arrives to tell of Ophelia's death by drowning.