

The end of the play

1. Remember that Hamlet did not seem at all perturbed that he had killed Polonius. Look at Hamlet's report to Horatio (on page 219) about the trick he has played so that Guildenstern and Rosencrantz will be executed instead of him. Write down the two lines which show Hamlet thinks they deserve what happens to them.
2. How might you use the quotation above, or a reference to it, in your coursework essay?
3. On page 221 Hamlet offers four reasons why he wants revenge. List the reasons and explain whether or not you think these reasons have stayed the same throughout the play.
4. Look at Hamlet's lines about fighting Laertes in the duel on page 227, lines 193-196. What is different about Hamlet's attitude here from earlier in the play? Think back to the 'To be or not to be' soliloquy in Act 3 Scene 1.
5. In what way might you use the information you have found for question 4 in your essay?
6. Once the duel has started (on page 231) at what point do you think Hamlet becomes motivated and angry?
7. How might you use the above evidence in your essay?
8. After all Hamlet's procrastination and hesitation what is it that finally prompts him to kill the king?
9. As Hamlet forces the king to drink the poisoned drink he says something. In what way is this similar to what Hamlet has been calling Claudius through the play (but never to his face)?
10. What are Hamlet's last words? How might you use this information in your essay?

Remember the essay question:

How does Shakespeare reveal Hamlet's state of mind, character and problems to the audience, with particular reference to the soliloquies we have studied?