Hamlet Learning Modules - Student Handouts

# Module 1: Introduction to Hamlet & the Adaptation

## Learning Objectives

- Understand the background of Shakespeare’s Hamlet.

- Explore how Oscar Redding’s adaptation differs from traditional productions.

- Recognize how setting, style, and perspective shape audience interpretation.

## Content Summary

- Overview of Shakespeare’s original text and historical context.

- Introduction to A Poor Theatre Company’s modern adaptation.

- Filming style influences: Dogme 95, French New Wave, Experimental Theatre.

## Activities

- Group discussion: compare theatre, film of a play, and film adaptations.

- Research task: investigate another Shakespeare adaptation (e.g., Baz Luhrmann’s Romeo + Juliet).

## Assessment

Short reflection: How does a modern adaptation affect your understanding of Shakespeare?

# Module 2: Plot & Character Journey

## Learning Objectives

- Trace the five-act structure of Hamlet.

- Analyze major characters and motivations.

- Explore themes of revenge, corruption, madness, and mortality.

## Content Summary

- Act-by-act breakdown of key events.

- Character conflicts and development.

- Ophelia’s descent and Hamlet’s moral dilemma.

## Activities

- Storyboard Hamlet’s emotional arc.

- Role play: act out a key scene.

## Assessment

Essay: Is Hamlet truly mad, or only pretending?

# Module 3: Soliloquies & Shakespeare’s Language

## Learning Objectives

- Understand the function of soliloquies in drama.

- Analyze Hamlet’s soliloquies for themes and tone.

- Explore modern re-interpretations of Shakespearean language.

## Content Summary

- Definition and challenges of performing soliloquies.

- ‘To be or not to be’ as a turning point.

- Language as a window into Hamlet’s psyche.

## Activities

- Performance exercise: recite soliloquies in different tones.

- Rewrite: transform a soliloquy into modern English.

## Assessment

Comparative essay: How do soliloquies reveal Hamlet’s conflict?

# Module 4: Film as Interpretation

## Learning Objectives

- Examine the film’s stylistic choices.

- Explore how perspective shapes storytelling.

- Compare stage vs. screen as mediums of performance.

## Content Summary

- Use of Melbourne cityscape as Elsinore.

- Soundscape and lighting as characters.

- Handheld camera and long takes as narrative devices.

## Activities

- Scene analysis: camera and sound effects.

- Debate: Is film better than theatre for Hamlet’s turmoil?

## Assessment

Critical film review: assess strengths and weaknesses.

# Module 5: Themes & Contemporary Relevance

## Learning Objectives

- Identify timeless themes in Hamlet.

- Explore why Hamlet resonates with modern audiences.

- Connect Shakespeare’s themes to today’s issues.

## Content Summary

- Corruption, revenge, and existential questioning.

- Modern parallels: politics, family, mental health.

- Critical reception of Redding’s film.

## Activities

- Discussion: Which Hamlet theme feels most relevant today?

- Creative project: design a modern re-staging.

## Assessment

Essay: Why does Hamlet endure across cultures and centuries?

# Module 6: Creative & Performance Responses

## Learning Objectives

- Apply interpretive choices to Shakespeare’s text.

- Experiment with staging, direction, and adaptation.

- Reflect on how creative choices change meaning.

## Content Summary

- Directorial choices in staging.

- Creative rewriting and translation.

- Student performance engagement.

## Activities

- Group performance: re-stage a key scene.

- Rewrite activity: update a soliloquy into rap or spoken word.

## Assessment

Performance portfolio: record a soliloquy/scene with reflection.