# Hamlet – 15-Minute One-Act Adaptation

Adapted by Ross Alton Wilmeth

## Simple Production Guide

- Scenic Elements:
 - A throne or chair (used for court and ghost scenes)
 - A cloth or sign that flips between “Castle Elsinore” and “Graveyard”
 - A skull prop (for the Yorick scene)

- Props:
 - A toy sword or dagger
 - A scroll or letter
 - A goblet or cup (for the poisoning)
 - A white sheet or cloak (for the ghost)

- Costumes:
 - Dark cloak or tunic for Hamlet
 - Royal sash or crown for Claudius
 - Shawl or gown for Gertrude and Ophelia
 - Optional: soldier’s sash or gravedigger hat

## Cast (5 Actors, No More Than 3 Roles Each)

Actor A: Hamlet / Narrator
Actor B: Claudius / Ghost of King Hamlet
Actor C: Gertrude / Gravedigger
Actor D: Ophelia / Horatio
Actor E: Laertes / Polonius / Messenger

## Scene 1 – Ghost and Grief

HAMLET / NARRATOR:
My father, the king, is dead. My uncle Claudius now wears his crown—and married my mother.

GERTRUDE:
Hamlet, be glad. All must die. Move on.

HAMLET:
Too soon, Mother.

(The GHOST appears, cloaked.)

GHOST:
I am your father’s spirit. Murdered—by your uncle.

HAMLET:
Revenge?

GHOST:
Yes. But remember—do not harm your mother.

## Scene 2 – Madness and Spying

POLONIUS:
Hamlet acts strangely. Perhaps he’s mad with love for Ophelia?

CLAUDIUS:
Watch him closely.

HAMLET:
Get thee to a nunnery!

OPHELIA:
Why do you speak so cruelly?

HAMLET (aside):
They’re all watching me… spying.

## Scene 3 – Play Within the Play

HAMLET:
We’ll catch the conscience of the king with a play.

(A brief mime: one actor poisons another in sleep.)

CLAUDIUS (rising angrily):
Enough! Lights! Stop this nonsense!

HAMLET (to audience):
Guilty conscience… confirmed.

## Scene 4 – Deaths and Decisions

HAMLET:
You’ve betrayed my father.

GERTRUDE:
Stop! You frighten me!

(POLONIUS hides. HAMLET stabs behind the curtain.)

HAMLET:
A rat!—Oh… it was Polonius.

## Scene 5 – Ophelia’s Madness and Duel

OPHELIA:
He loved me once… then killed my father… Water is peace…

LAERTES:
You’ve ruined my sister, Hamlet. Duel me!

(They duel. CLAUDIUS poisons the cup.)

GERTRUDE:
The drink! Too late…

LAERTES:
The blade is poisoned—we’re both doomed.

HAMLET:
Then justice! (He stabs CLAUDIUS.)

## Final Scene – Curtain Call

HAMLET / NARRATOR:
My story ends in blood and truth—Yet tell it all with honor and youth.

ALL TOGETHER:
Though vengeance burns and ghosts may call—In telling truth, we rise from fall.