

# MAJOR EVENTS

## WHAT YOU WILL SEE ON STAGE

### 1. Murder Most Foul

Two night watchmen have seen a ghost on the ramparts of the castle at Elsinore; the ghost resembles the dead king, Hamlet's father. When Hamlet goes to see the Ghost for himself, the Ghost reveals that he was murdered by Claudius and demands that Hamlet seek revenge.

### 3. Trifling of His Favour

Meanwhile, Ophelia's brother Laertes is preparing to return to France. He warns Ophelia to be wary of the attention Hamlet has been showing her. Their father, Polonius, bids Laertes farewell, and forbids Ophelia to have anything more to do with Hamlet.

### 5. False Friends

Unsettled by Hamlet's sudden madness, Claudius enlists Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to spy on him and find out why he's behaving so strangely. Hamlet sees through their deceit; to distract him, they tell him a troupe of travelling actors are approaching the castle.

### 2. Antic Disposition

Hamlet's mother Gertrude has married his uncle Claudius, the accused murderer, and they continue to reign in Denmark. In order to safely investigate the Ghost's accusation, Hamlet decides to put on an "antic disposition" - he will pretend to be crazy. He cannot take revenge on the new king without first gathering proof.

### 4. Your Noble Son is Mad

A terrified Ophelia brings news to Polonius - Hamlet has been behaving very strangely. Convinced that her obedient rejection of Hamlet has driven him crazy, Polonius tells the King and Queen as much; they conspire to spy on Hamlet and Ophelia. The encounter is bitter, and Hamlet tells Ophelia she should never have believed that he loved her.

### 6. The Play's the Thing

Hamlet decides to stage a play in which a murderer kills the king and marries the queen; Claudius's reaction will be a clue to his guilt or innocence. When the play comes to the king's death, Claudius storms from the room, which Hamlet takes as evidence of his guilt.

## 7. Try What Repentance Can

IN the aftermath of the play, Claudius is consumed by guilt and kneels to pray. Hamlet considers killing him in this vulnerable moment, but killing him mid-prayer will only send him to Heaven; best to wait for a better opportunity.

## 9. Painting of a Sorrow

Her father dead, Ophelia goes mad with grief and drowns. Claudius, determined to kill Hamlet, convinces a newly returned Laertes to avenge his father and sister by duelling with Hamlet and killing him with a poisoned blade. As a backup, they will also poison Hamlet's wine. Just in case.



## 8. What Wilt Thou Do? Though Wilt Not Murder Me?

Hamlet is summoned to Gertrude's room to account for his actions. A vicious argument between mother and son ensues and Polonius, hidden behind a curtain and fearing for the Queen's safety, calls for help. Hamlet thinks the hidden figure is Claudius and takes his chance, killing Polonius. Hearing of the death, Claudius, fearing for his safety, orders Hamlet immediately to England.

## 10. Revenge and Death

Hamlet agrees to duel with Laertes. In the confusion of the duel, Gertrude toasts her son; mistakenly drinking the poisoned wine, she dies. Hamlet is stabbed with the poisoned sword, in the scuffle Laertes is wounded with the same blade; as he dies, he reveals Claudius's plot and asks Hamlet's forgiveness. Hamlet kills Claudius using the poisoned blade and poisoned wine; he himself is overcome by his wounds and orders Horatio, the only survivor, to tell his story. Hamlet dies. "The rest is silence."

