

El Rancho Unified School District
English Language Arts

Grade Level: 12th	Text Title: <i>Hamlet</i> Hamlet Theme: Madness	
Text-Dependent Questions: (Background): Obfuscating insanity —uh, faking madness to throw people off—is one of the oldest tricks in the book. In <i>Hamlet</i> , Shakespeare takes it up a notch: does Hamlet truly go "mad," or is the cuckoo-talk, like the play itself, all an act? And if madness is a form of theatricality (maybe with some " method " in it, as Polonius says) —does that mean that all actors are crazy? 1) What does Hamlet mean when he says he's going to put on an "antic disposition" (1.3.28)? Why does Hamlet play the role of an "antic"? What's purpose does it serve? 2) We know that Hamlet says he's going to pretend to be insane. Is there textual evidence in the play that Hamlet actually does descend into madness? 3) What is the difference between Hamlet's madness and Ophelia's? Is there a marked difference in their behavior and speech? 4) What causes Ophelia to go mad? What purpose does her madness serve in the play? What textual evidence would you use to support your claim?		Academic Vocabulary: Antic disposition Obfuscate Madness Insanity Deception
Performance Tasks: (see next page)		Essential Skills:

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Performance Tasks:

- 1) In one paragraph, explain Hamlet’s motives for pretending to be mad. How does he use this for his advantage?
- 2) Give textual evidence from the play that Hamlet actually descends into madness?
- 3) Students will complete a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting Hamlet and Ophelia’s madness. Transfer this information into two paragraphs. Describe any marked differences in their behavior and speech?
- 4) What contributes to Ophelia’s madness? Cite 3 examples from the play that contribute to her madness. Transfer this into one paragraph.

Essential Skills:

*Students will be able to analyze Hamlet’s “antic disposition”

*Students will be able to find textual evidence from the play that supports or rejects the idea that Hamlet pretends to be mad, but eventually descends into madness by the play’s end

*Students will be able to note the similarities and differences between Hamlet and Ophelia’s madness

*Students will understand and explain Ophelia’s madness

Common Core State Standards:

Reading Literature 12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Writing 12.1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis ...using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Writing 12.10: Write routinely over extended times frames...and shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.