

Shakespeare: HAMLET

THE LOG

While working our way through the play, you will keep a log of your "journey." Log entries will consist of such things as scene summaries; comments on the action, characters, language, themes, and the like; and your personal reactions to those elements of the play.



Record your log entries on paper separate from other notes or assignments or in a separate notebook. Write in your own voice. Interact with the play. Grades will be based on the thoroughness of your responses. "Thoroughness," by the way, does not necessarily correspond to length.

Three Rules

You are in charge of your own personal log. You will decide what to write and in what form, but we have three rules:

1. Label each entry clearly with the act and scene number(s).
2. Write three times a week, roughly seven times total.
3. Over the course of the play, respond to a variety of the components so that by the end you will have considered each component several times.

Seven Ideas

Entries: For each scene, do a minimum of *three* of the following:

1. Summarize the action of the scene.
2. Comment in a few sentences on what you think the significance of the scene might be. To find one clue, ask what the play would be like without it.
3. Ask questions about the scene. Has anything caused you confusion? Ask one of the characters in the scene a question—or ask Shakespeare or me a question.
4. Quote lines from the scene and comment on them. Choose the lines for any reason you like: because you enjoy them; because the language impresses you; because they help you understand a character, an action, a theme; because they suggest a staging technique—any reason you choose.
5. Describe your reactions to a character, action, or idea you confront in the scene.
6. Talk about the relationships characters have to one another, quoting specific words or phrases to give evidence for your opinions.
7. Write from the point of view of an actor playing one of the characters in the scene. Get inside that character's mind. Explain how the character feels about him/herself, about other characters, about the situation of the scene, or about something else.

