

## Hamlet Act III

### **Act III, scene i**

1. a) What two courses of action is Hamlet pondering in his soliloquy?  
b) What are the disadvantages of each?  
c) What does Hamlet mean when he says, "Thus conscience does make cowards of us all"? Do you agree with him?
2. What statements or actions of Ophelia contribute to Hamlet's already negative view of women? Why does he behave so cruelly to her?
3. Do you think Ophelia is guilty of any "womanly sins" as Hamlet accuses her?
4. How do Polonius and Claudius react at the end of the scene? What action do they decide to take?

### **Act III, scene ii**

1. What kind of man does Hamlet find admirable? Does he resemble this ideal? Are there any men in the play who resemble this ideal?
2. What does Hamlet's behaviour before the play reveal about his mood? What foreshadowing is present?
3. Which lines do you think Hamlet inserted into the play?
4. How does Hamlet behave after the play? Why?

### **Act III, scene iii**

1. Is Claudius truly repentant in this scene? Explain.
2. Why does Hamlet say he spares Claudius? Is this the real reason?
3. Explain the irony of the scene.

### **Act III, scene iv**

1. What is Hamlet's purpose in his interview with his mother? Does he achieve it?
2. How guilty is Gertrude? Of what?
3. Why does the ghost reappear when he does? Why does Gertrude not see him?
4. Examine the imagery of the scene. Identify different threads of imagery and suggest the significance to the scene and the themes of the play.