



Paideia Seminar Lesson Plan



Text:

Polonius' Speech, from "Hamlet" by William Shakespeare

Grade/Subject

HS / ELA



Ideas, Values:

Advice, Wisdom, Language, Relationships



Pre-Seminar Content



Launch Activity:

Discuss how it feels to work on a puzzle. Perhaps have a challenging jigsaw puzzle in the classroom the week prior and invite students to work on it as they wish. Discuss: What is important to do/ remember to solve a puzzle? Note that in a similar way, figuring out what a reading means can be like working on a puzzle. For this seminar, we'll work together on figuring out what this excerpt from Shakespeare means.



Inspectional Read:

Take a look at this text and particularly the punctuation. Notice ; ; . ! Read aloud. Number every five lines, e.g. "See thou character" is 5; "Grapple..." 10; "Give every..." 15; "And they..." 20; "This above..." 25. Read aloud again.

Background Information:

Share that this speech is within a larger story (see graphic at end of plan that you could share/ refer to in doing the summary). This piece occurs before Laertes will leave for college, and Polonius is his father.

Vocabulary:

Help participants discover through context, or provide meanings for archaic forms or otherwise unfamiliar words.

Text words: *stay'd, hatch'd, express'd, oft, canst*

Academic words: *precepts, unproportioned, vulgar, unfledged, censure, gaudy, husbandry*

Analytical Read:

Read the selection aloud a third time and have participants use highlighters to mark 4-5 phrases/ sentences that give advice from father to son.



Pre-Seminar Process

-  Define and state purpose for Paideia Seminar.
-  Describe the responsibilities of facilitator and participants.
-  Have participants set a Personal Goal.
-  Agree on a Group Goal.



Seminar Questions

Opening (Identify main ideas from the text.):

- ❖ What piece of advice do you think is most helpful? (round-robin response)
- ❖ Why do you think the piece of advice you mentioned is most helpful? (spontaneous discussion)

Core (Analyze textual details.):

- ❖ Take a look back at line 8: "Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar"? How would you explain this advice in modern language?
- ❖ What do you think Polonius means when he says "give thy thoughts no tongue, Nor any unproportioned thought his act?"
- ❖ Based on the advice Polonius gives, how do you think he feels about his son, Laertes? (Refer to the text)
- ❖ Polonius ends his speech with these famous words "This above all: to thine ownself be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man." What do you think he means by this? Do you agree?

Closing (Personalize and apply the ideas.):

- ❖ What piece of advice would you give to Polonius (a parent or adult)?

Post-Seminar Process

- ★ Have participants do a written self-assessment of their personal participation goal.
- ★ Do a group assessment of the social and intellectual goals of seminar.
- ★ Note reminders for next seminar.



Post-Seminar Content

- ★ *Transition to Writing:*

Spend two minutes jotting down good ideas that you heard, read or thought during seminar.

- ★ *Writing Task:*

After reading Polonius' speech from Hamlet in which he gives advice to Laertes, and out discussion, create a billboard sign that includes three pieces of advice for adults.

(LDC Task#: 22)



- ★ *Brainstorm:*

In partner pairs of students, have participants discuss the writing task and what it is asking. Share initial ideas about what you might include.

 *Structure the Writing:*

Ask students to identify three topics for the billboard.

 *First Draft:*

Challenge all to create the messages of advice for adults.

 *Collaborative Revision:*

In partner groups, have students share their respective billboard notes and make additions or revisions based on comments and suggestions received.

 *Edit:*

Have students make edits for clarity.

 *Publish:*

Create a billboard poster or e-doc to include all students' work as one whole billboard. Post as a class wall or website and invite parents and adults to view the work.

This Paideia Lesson Plan was created by:

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Organization: National Paideia Center



From *Hamlet* (Polonius to Laertes)

Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame!

The wind sits in the should of your sail, And you are stay'd for:

There; my blessing with thee!

And these few precepts in thy memory

See thou character.

Give thy thoughts no tongue,

Nor any unproportioned thought his act.

Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.

Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,

Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;

But do not dull thy palm with entertainment

Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade.

Beware Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,

Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee,

Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice;

Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.

Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,

But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;

For the apparel oft proclaims the man,

And they in France of the best rank and station

Are of a most select and generous chief in that.

Neither a borrower nor a lender be;

For loan off loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all: to thine ownself be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell: my blessing season this in thee!

Retrieved from: <http://www.shmoop.com/hamlet/summary.html>

Hamlet

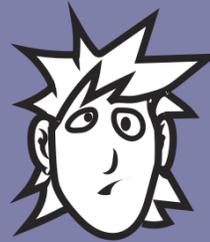
Here's how this bloodbath goes down:



- 1 Ghost**
A ghost is seen flying around the walls of Elsinore Castle.



- 2 Revenge**
The ghost says he's Hamlet's dad and that he was poisoned. He then asks Hamlet to avenge him.



- 3 Crazy**
Hamlet begins to act crazy. No one is sure if it's real or just an act.



- 4 Theater**
Hamlet puts on a play to determine if his ghost dad was telling the truth.



- 5 Woops**
Hamlet kills Ophelia's dad by mistake. Enraged, Ophelia's brother wants a duel.



- 6 Note**
Hamlet finds a letter written by his "friends" with instructions to murder him (Hamlet).



- 7 Duel**
At the duel, Hamlet, Claudius, and Laertes all die from the same poisoned sword.

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