

## Chapter 1 : Characters in Hamlet - Wikipedia

*King Claudius is a fictional character and the primary antagonist of William Shakespeare's tragedy [www.nxgvision.com](http://www.nxgvision.com) is the brother to King Hamlet, second husband to Gertrude and uncle and later stepfather to Prince Hamlet.*

Denmark has a long-standing feud with neighbouring Norway, in which King Hamlet slew King Fortinbras of Norway in a battle some years ago. After the ghost appears again, the three vow to tell Prince Hamlet what they have witnessed. As the court gathers the next day, while King Claudius and Queen Gertrude discuss affairs of state with their elderly adviser Polonius, Hamlet looks on glumly. Claudius also scolds Hamlet for continuing to grieve over his father, and forbids him to return to his schooling in Wittenberg. Learning of the ghost from Horatio, Hamlet resolves to see it himself. Horatio, Hamlet, and the ghost Artist: That night on the rampart, the ghost appears to Hamlet, telling the prince that he was murdered by Claudius and demanding that Hamlet avenge him. Hamlet agrees and the ghost vanishes. The prince confides to Horatio and the sentries that from now on he plans to "put an antic disposition on", or act as though he has gone mad, and forces them to swear to keep his plans for revenge secret. Act II[ edit ] Soon thereafter, Ophelia rushes to her father, telling him that Hamlet arrived at her door the prior night half-undressed and behaving erratically. As he enters to do so, the king and queen finish welcoming Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, two student acquaintances of Hamlet, to Elsinore. Additional news requires that Polonius wait to be heard: The forces that Fortinbras had conscripted to march against Denmark will instead be sent against Poland, though they will pass through Danish territory to get there. Hamlet feigns madness but subtly insults Polonius all the while. When Rosencrantz and Guildenstern arrive, Hamlet greets his "friends" warmly, but quickly discerns that they are spies. Hamlet becomes bitter, admitting that he is upset at his situation but refusing to give the true reason why, instead commenting on " what a piece of work " humanity is. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern tell Hamlet that they have brought along a troupe of actors that they met while traveling to Elsinore. Hamlet, after welcoming the actors and dismissing his friends-turned-spies, asks them to deliver a soliloquy about the death of King Priam and Queen Hecuba at the climax of the Trojan War. His reaction convinces Claudius that Hamlet is not mad for love. Shortly thereafter, the court assembles to watch the play Hamlet has commissioned. After seeing the Player King murdered by his rival pouring poison in his ear, Claudius abruptly rises and runs from the room: Hamlet mistakenly stabs Polonius Artist: Coke Smyth, 19th century. Gertrude summons Hamlet to her room to demand an explanation. Meanwhile, Claudius talks to himself about the impossibility of repenting, since he still has possession of his ill-gotten goods: He sinks to his knees. Polonius, spying on the conversation from behind a tapestry, calls for help as Gertrude, believing Hamlet wants to kill her, calls out for help herself. Hamlet, believing it is Claudius, stabs wildly, killing Polonius, but pulls aside the curtain and sees his mistake. Claudius switches tactics, proposing a fencing match between Laertes and Hamlet to settle their differences. Laertes will be given a poison-tipped foil, and Claudius will offer Hamlet poisoned wine as a congratulation if that fails. Gertrude interrupts to report that Ophelia has drowned, though it is unclear whether it was suicide or an accident exacerbated by her madness. Act V[ edit ] Horatio has received a letter from Hamlet, explaining that the prince escaped by negotiating with pirates who attempted to attack his England-bound ship, and the friends reunite offstage. Hamlet picks up the skull, saying "alas, poor Yorick" as he contemplates mortality. Hamlet and Horatio initially hide, but when Hamlet realizes that Ophelia is the one being buried, he reveals himself, proclaiming his love for her. A foppish courtier, Osric, interrupts the conversation to deliver the fencing challenge to Hamlet. Hamlet does well at first, leading the match by two hits to none, and Gertrude raises a toast to him using the poisoned glass of wine Claudius had set aside for Hamlet. Claudius tries to stop her, but is too late: Laertes slashes Hamlet with his poisoned blade. In the ensuing scuffle, they switch weapons and Hamlet wounds Laertes with his own poisoned sword. Gertrude collapses and, claiming she has been poisoned, dies. Hamlet rushes at Claudius and kills him. As the poison takes effect, Hamlet, hearing that Fortinbras is marching through the area, names the Norwegian prince as his successor. Horatio promises to recount the full story of what happened, and Fortinbras, seeing the entire Danish royal family dead, takes the crown for himself, and orders a military funeral to honour Hamlet.

Sources of Hamlet A facsimile of *Gesta Danorum* by Saxo Grammaticus , which contains the legend of Amleth Hamlet-like legends are so widely found for example in Italy, Spain, Scandinavia, Byzantium, and Arabia that the core "hero-as-fool" theme is possibly Indo-European in origin. The first is the anonymous Scandinavian Saga of Hrolf Kraki. Possibly written by Thomas Kyd or even William Shakespeare, the Ur-Hamlet would have existed by , and would have incorporated a ghost. Consequently, there is no direct evidence that Kyd wrote it, nor any evidence that the play was not an early version of Hamlet by Shakespeare himself. This latter ideaâ€”placing Hamlet far earlier than the generally accepted date, with a much longer period of developmentâ€”has attracted some support. Whether Shakespeare took these from Belleforest directly or from the hypothetical Ur-Hamlet remains unclear. Conventional wisdom holds that Hamlet is too obviously connected to legend, and the name Hamnet was quite popular at the time. He notes that the name of Hamnet Sadler, the Stratford neighbour after whom Hamnet was named, was often written as Hamlet Sadler and that, in the loose orthography of the time, the names were virtually interchangeable. Chamberleyne his servantes ". Hamlet is not among them, suggesting that it had not yet been written. As Hamlet was very popular, Bernard Lott, the series editor of *New Swan*, believes it "unlikely that he [Meres] would have overlooked Other scholars consider this inconclusive. In the booksellers Nicholas Ling and John Trundell published, and Valentine Simmes printed, the so-called " bad " first quarto. Q1 contains just over half of the text of the later second quarto. In Nicholas Ling published, and James Roberts printed, the second quarto. Each text contains material that the other lacks, with many minor differences in wording: Some contemporary scholarship, however, discounts this approach, instead considering "an authentic Hamlet an unrealisable ideal. Colin Burrow has argued that "most of us should read a text that is made up by conflating all three versions Scholars immediately identified apparent deficiencies in Q1, which was instrumental in the development of the concept of a Shakespearean " bad quarto ". The major deficiency of Q1 is in the language: It is suggested by Irace that Q1 is an abridged version intended especially for travelling productions, thus the question of length may be considered as separate from issues of poor textual quality. Irace, in her introduction to Q1, wrote that "I have avoided as many other alterations as possible, because the differences Before then, he was either mad, or not; either a hero, or not; with no in-betweens. Dramatic structure[ edit ] Hamlet departed from contemporary dramatic convention in several ways. The play is full of seeming discontinuities and irregularities of action, except in the "bad" quarto. At one point, as in the Gravedigger scene, [a] Hamlet seems resolved to kill Claudius: The Riverside edition constitutes 4, lines totaling 29, words, typically requiring over four hours to stage. This work specifically advises royal retainers to amuse their masters with inventive language. Osric and Polonius, especially, seem to respect this injunction. He uses highly developed metaphors, stichomythia , and in nine memorable words deploys both anaphora and asyndeton: Hamlet interrupts himself, vocalising either disgust or agreement with himself, and embellishing his own words. He has difficulty expressing himself directly and instead blunts the thrust of his thought with wordplay. It is not until late in the play, after his experience with the pirates, that Hamlet is able to articulate his feelings freely. Written at a time of religious upheaval, and in the wake of the English Reformation , the play is alternately Catholic or piously medieval and Protestant or consciously modern. The ghost describes himself as being in purgatory , and as dying without last rites. Some scholars have observed that revenge tragedies come from Catholic countries like Italy and Spain, where the revenge tragedies present contradictions of motives, since according to Catholic doctrine the duty to God and family precedes civil justice. Dialogue refers explicitly to Wittenberg , where Hamlet, Horatio, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern attend university, implying where Martin Luther in first proposed his 95 theses and thereby initiated the Protestant Reformation. Thomas de Leu , fl. Hamlet is often perceived as a philosophical character, expounding ideas that are now described as relativist , existentialist , and sceptical. For example, he expresses a subjectivistic idea when he says to Rosencrantz: Hamlet reflects the contemporary scepticism promoted by the French Renaissance humanist Michel de Montaigne. In the first half of the 20th century, when psychoanalysis was at the height of its influence, its concepts were applied to Hamlet, notably by Sigmund Freud , Ernest Jones , and Jacques Lacan , and these studies influenced theatrical productions. Ophelia is overwhelmed by having her unfulfilled love for him so abruptly terminated and drifts into the oblivion of insanity. Lacan postulated that the human psyche is

determined by structures of language and that the linguistic structures of Hamlet shed light on human desire. Eliot, who preferred Coriolanus to Hamlet, or so he said. Who can believe Eliot, when he exposes his own Hamlet Complex by declaring the play to be an aesthetic failure? Rothman suggests that "it was the other way around: Hamlet helped Freud understand, and perhaps even invent, psychoanalysis". He concludes, "The Oedipus complex is a misnomer. If Hamlet is the biological son of Claudius, that explains many things. He is angry with his mother because of her long standing affair with a man Hamlet hates, and Hamlet must face the fact that he has been sired by the man he loathes. That point overturns T. Gontar suggests that if the reader assumes that Hamlet is not who he seems to be, the objective correlative becomes apparent. Hamlet is suicidal in the first soliloquy not because his mother quickly remarries but because of her adulterous affair with the despised Claudius which makes Hamlet his son.

### Chapter 2 : Hamlet - Wikipedia

*King Claudius is the main antagonist of William Shakespeare's play Hamlet and its film adaptations. He is the King of Denmark, known to be the brother to King Hamlet, second husband to Queen Gertrude, and uncle to Prince Hamlet (the hero of the story).*

Introduction to Claudius in Hamlet As with all the supporting characters in Hamlet, Claudius is not developed to his full potential. But Claudius is not a static character. When we first see Claudius, he strikes us an intelligent and capable ruler. Claudius knows that a change in government could ignite civil unrest, and he is afraid of possible unlawful allegiances and rebellion. Claudius has assumed the role of the chief mourner, and the people can unite behind a collective suffering. He can now concentrate on his kingly duties, and he takes immediate and decisive action by sending Cornelius and Voltimand to appease the Norwegian king. But Claudius, in private, is a very different person. The Ghost refers to him as "that incestuous, that adulterate beast" 1. Claudius represents the worst in human nature -- lust, greed, corruption, and excess. Claudius and his corrupt court bask in the pleasures of the flesh: The king doth wake tonight and takes his rouse, Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels; And as he drains his draughts of Renish down, The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out The triumph of his pledge 1. His deeds, on occasion, weigh heavy on his heart: How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience! My fault is past. But O, what form of prayer Can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul murder? He also sincerely likes Ophelia, and treats her with the kindness that she should receive from her great love, Hamlet. But even those whom Claudius cares for cannot come before his ambition and desires. He will use the grieving Laertes to whatever ends necessary, and he denies Rozencrantz and Guildenstern the knowledge of the contents of the letter to England -- knowledge that would have saved their lives, or at least made them proceed with caution. And Claudius does not stop Gertrude from drinking the poison in the goblet during the duel between Hamlet and Laertes because it will implicate him in the plot. It is clear that we are intended to see Claudius as a murderous villain, but a multi-faceted villain: He is not a monster; he is morally weak, content to trade his humanity and very soul for a few prized possessions. As the great critic Harley Granville-Barker observes: Hill and Wang, Oslo University Press,

Chapter 3 : King Claudius - Wikipedia

*Claudius and the Condition of Denmark From Hamlet, an ideal prince. Alexander W. Crawford. The second scene of the play makes it clear that it is the weak and corrupt condition of Denmark under Claudius that affords occasion for the warlike activities of Fortinbras.*

Hamlet Studies Doebler, Bettie Anne. A Grave Scene and its Audience. The Pace of Hamlet. From John Dennis to Arthur Murphy. A Twentieth Century View. The Ordering of Experience in Hamlet. The Role and Significance in Hamlet. Hamlet as an Inversion of The Courtier. Class and Morality in Hamlet. The Text, Dating and Authorship of Hamlet, The Story of O phelia. From Physics to Metaphysics. The Initiation of Ophelia: Proverbs, Characterization, and Political Idealization in Hamlet. Jimmy Porter in Look Back in Anger. The Conflict Between Fate and Grace. Interpreting the Textual and Contextual Ghost in Hamlet. Biblical Paradigms in Hamlet. Hamlet on Screen and the Crystal Image. Hamlet and the Anti-theatrical Tracts. Reading and the First Witness in Hamlet. The Commonplace and Epistemic Crisis in Hamlet. The Political Philosophy of Hamlet. Psychomachia, Ars Moriendi, Memento Mori. Aasand, Hardin and Frank Nicholas Clary. Allegory, Analogue and Allusion. Identity and Desire from Plato to Hamlet. Legend Dynamics in Hamlet. Hamlet Studies Chawla, Nishi. Playing Horatio in Q1 Hamlet. Postmodern Re visions of Hamlet. An Example of a Cultural Adaptation of Hamlet.

### Chapter 4 : SparkNotes: Hamlet: Act IV, scenes iâ€”ii

*Essay about King Claudius within Hamlet. King Claudius within Hamlet William Shakespeare produced in Hamlet a pair of quite noble characters: One is the protagonist and the other, the antagonist.*

Act IV, scenes iâ€”ii Summary: She asks to speak to the king alone. When Rosencrantz and Guildenstern exit, she tells Claudius about her encounter with Hamlet. She says that he is as mad as the sea during a violent storm; she also tells Claudius that Hamlet has killed Polonius. Aghast, the king notes that had he been concealed behind the arras, Hamlet would have killed him. Claudius wonders aloud how he will be able to handle this public crisis without damaging his hold on Denmark. He calls Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, tells them about the murder, and sends them to find Hamlet. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern appear and ask what he has done with the body. Feigning offense at being questioned, he accuses them of being spies in the service of Claudius. At last he agrees to allow Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to escort him to Claudius. Where most of the other male characters in the play, including Hamlet, King Hamlet, Laertes, and Fortinbras, are obsessed with themes of honor, moral balance, and retributive justice, Claudius is a selfish, ambitious king who is more concerned with maintaining his own power and averting political danger than achieving justice through his rule. Rather than considering that Gertrude might have been in danger, he immediately remarks that had he been in the room, he would have been in danger. Hamlet must be sent away from Denmark, he thinks, not as punishment for committing murder but because he represents a danger to Claudius. In this scene and the scenes to follow, Shakespeare creates in Claudius a convincing depiction of a conniving, ambitious politician. In this way, Claudius emerges as a figure of powerful contrast to the more forthright men in the play, including Laertes, Fortinbras, and Horatio, and the far more morally conscious Prince Hamlet. His sensitive, reflective natureâ€”the trait that constantly interfered with his ability to take revenge on Claudiusâ€”now disappears in the wake of its violent opposite: Hamlet leaps to the conclusion that Claudius is behind the arras, or else he simply lashes out thoughtlessly. Hamlet also eases his conscience with the fact that Polonius was dishonestly spying on Hamlet at the moment when he was killed. Laertes and Ophelia have lost a father, just as Hamlet himself did. Now, Hamlet hides the body. But rather than being overwhelmed with contrition, as we might expect of a hero who has committed such a terrible mistake, he seems manic, desperate, and self-righteous, especially in his condemnation of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Though Hamlet has many admirable qualities, scenes such as this one serve as powerful reminders that we are not meant to take the prince as an unqualified hero.

### Chapter 5 : Claudius and the Condition of Denmark

- *Shakespeare's Presentation Of Claudius In Hamlet* 'Hamlet' opens with the death of Old King Hamlet, Father of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. The new king, Claudius, brother of the previous king has married Gertrude, the dead man's widow and has taken the throne.

Villain analysis Claudius is undoubtedly considered the main villain in Hamlet, due to the murder of the King. However, Shakespeare has made his character a lot more nuanced. His actions after his initial villainous crime are representations of his ability to manipulate, showing his intelligence rather than his villainy. This argument is supported by a possible interpretation of the fact that the killing of the Old King may have been justifiable, and beneficial for the country. The King also shows signs of affection and empathy, causing one to rethink their assumption about him as a villain. When one sees his character not in the presence or being talked about by Hamlet or the Old King, there are many instances where he is capable of evoking sympathy from the audience. It also makes the situation less personal, as the listing of people causes the audience to momentarily forget about the old King, making him just seem one of many. Therefore in that era, Claudius would be despised by everyone watching. There is a chance he had firm belief in himself to rule Denmark better, as his level of intelligence is a proven trait of his. This level of intelligence again, may bring him across as a villain as his intentions are not moral, especially when he attempts to manipulate Laertes in order to kill Hamlet by playing his weakness against himself. This shows his ability to manipulate the exact way for each individual. It may seem villainous, however, one can also interpret that as having a high level of intelligence, which may be essential to the running of Denmark. One gets a bias view of Claudius, mainly through Hamlet and the Ghost; whom he has directly wronged. This portrays him to be villainous but one needs to consider the perceptual bias Hamlet has of Claudius. Claudius has the empathy to understand the loyalty of Laertes, regardless of his intentions. One may even suggest that he is choosing to abuse women, as they are powerless against him. Claudius, compared to Hamlet; respects both women and protects them, regardless of his heinous crimes is not completely immoral. Hamlet abused his mother, Ophelia, and was showing strong signs of madness; hence another instance where we are never shown enough about Claudius; lacking the soliloquy to decide which way is more likely. As his soliloquy is a pivotal point of the play, where we see why he is not a complete villain, and conjures the most sympathy for him. One must also consider that due to him being alone, there is a high chance that his true feelings about his crimes are finally heard. Claudius, uses strong imagery and a variance of sentence structure to show his mental state as well as strong emotions about his actions. This shows the audience that he is aware of the gravity of his crime, that its stench has reached the gods and Claudius laments that fact. All of these work together, in order that the audience is moved by him; and although this does not make him a less of a villain, it does mean that one can feel sorry for him.

**Chapter 6 : Claudius Character Analysis | Hamlet | 1,word Sample Essays**

*Claudius is undoubtedly considered the main villain in Hamlet, due to the murder of the King. However, Shakespeare has made his character a lot more nuanced. His actions after his initial villainous crime are representations of his ability to manipulate, showing his intelligence rather than his villainy.*

Claudius and the Condition of Denmark From Hamlet, an ideal prince. The second scene of the play makes it clear that it is the weak and corrupt condition of Denmark under Claudius that affords occasion for the warlike activities of Fortinbras. From the beginning of the play Hamlet has had suspicions, which are gradually confirmed as the plot develops, that Claudius has exerted a very evil influence upon the country. The later development shows that Hamlet has rightly divined the true inwardness of the situation. Claudius himself is fully cognizant of the state of affairs, and from his lips we get the true explanation. He discloses the fact that young Fortinbras has no such wholesome fear and respect for him as he had for the late king, and makes the damaging admission that: Importing the surrender of those lands Lost by his father. Claudius further remarks that he has written to Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras, imploring him to restrain the fiery temper of his nephew, and now dispatches two courtiers to the same end. Only by weakly supplicating Norway is Claudius able to keep peace with his neighbor and prevent an invasion. This weakness is in great contrast to the days of the elder Hamlet, when the Danish royal power was feared and respected, both at home and abroad. There is no doubt that Claudius was a thoroughly bad man. The ghost speaks of him as one "whose natural gifts were poor to those of mine! And Hamlet, comparing him to his father in his later interview with his mother, calls him: Yet Claudius, though a villain, was capable of quick and effective action. He was clever enough to leave no traces of his crime when he killed his brother, and he showed dispatch and skill in quickly bringing about the election of himself as the next king before Hamlet could return from the university. Gradually there is disclosed in the play considerable evidence of a general corruption and weakening of the state under the example and influence of Claudius. Hamlet is conscious of it on his return from the university, and the king readily admits his dissipations. The king had led the way in dissipation and debauchery, and in his first interview with Hamlet promises elaborate festivities I. In the same scene Hamlet refers to these habits, and satirically tells his friend Horatio: Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels; And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down. The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out The triumph of his pledge. To the virtuous mind of Hamlet one of the worst features of this debauchery is that it has destroyed their reputation among nations, and the fair name of Denmark has suffered irreparable loss: Then he moralizes upon the baneful influence of "some vicious mole of nature" that corrupts the whole being, until such men "Shall in the general censure take corruption From that particular fault. This condition of corruption impresses both Hamlet and his friends almost from the outset. When the ghost has vanished after his appearance to Hamlet and others, Marcellus at once recognizes its relation to the country, and says, "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark" I. After the ghost has revealed to him the matter and the manner of his murder, Hamlet at once sees that the crime is not a mere matter between him and Claudius, but that it has engendered a bad condition of affairs in the state and that it is imperative upon him to set himself to the task of reparation: That ever I was born to set it right! A little later in his great soliloquy, referring to his grievous troubles and sufferings, he calls them "The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" III. No doubt he is thinking not only of the foul murder of his father, but of the times that are out of joint and that he must try to set right. There has been a feeling from the first that the coming of the ghost has had to do with affairs of state. Horatio, who has just come from Wittenberg when Marcellus and others report to him of seeing the ghost, volunteers the idea that "This bodes some strange eruption to our state" I. Horatio knows nothing of the murder and yet he thinks the ghost has to do with affairs of state. When he sees the ghost, he thinks of three possible reasons for his appearance. Taken in connection with what he has just said of the impending danger from young Fortinbras, it seems to indicate a feeling that all is not well with Denmark. Hamlet, however, is the only one who fully comprehends the actual truth. How to cite this article: Hamlet, an ideal prince, and other essays in Shakesporean interpretation:

### Chapter 7 : Hamlet Claudius - [www.nxgvision.com](http://www.nxgvision.com)

*Hamlet's Villain, King Claudius In the drama Hamlet Shakespeare has concocted a multi-dimensional character in the person of King Claudius. It is the intent of this essay to analyze and probe all the various aspects of this curious personality.*

### Chapter 8 : Hamlet's Claudius: Villain analysis " SchoolWorkHelper

*Claudius - The King of Denmark, Hamlet's uncle, and the play's villain of the play, Claudius is a calculating, ambitious politician, driven by his sexual appetites and his lust for power, but he occasionally shows signs of guilt and human feeling"his love for Gertrude, for instance, seems sincere.*

### Chapter 9 : Hamlet and Death: A Recasting of the Play Within the Player

*The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, often shortened to Hamlet (/ ˈ ɛ̃ h ˈ ɔː m l ɛ ɪ t /), is a tragedy written by William Shakespeare at an uncertain date between and Set in Denmark, the play dramatises the revenge Prince Hamlet is called to wreak upon his uncle, Claudius, by the ghost of Hamlet's father, King Ham.*