



كلية: الآداب

القسم او الفرع: قسم اللغة الإنجليزية

المرحلة: الثالثة

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اسم المادة باللغة العربية: المسرحية

اسم المادة باللغة الإنكليزية: **Drama**

اسم المحاضرة السادسة باللغة العربية: الرموز الادبية في مسرحية هاملت

اسم المحاضرة السادسة باللغة الإنكليزية: **Symbols in Hamlet**

Symbols in Hamlet

Symbols are objects, characters, figures, and colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts.

Yorick's Skull

In *Hamlet*, physical objects are rarely used to represent thematic ideas. One important exception is Yorick's skull, which Hamlet discovers in the graveyard in the first scene of Act V. As Hamlet speaks to the skull and about the skull of the king's former jester, he fixates on death's inevitability and the disintegration of the body. He urges the skull to "get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favor she must come"—no one can avoid death (V.i.178–179). He traces the skull's mouth and says, "Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft," indicating his fascination with the physical consequences of death (V.i.174–175). This latter idea is an important motif throughout the play, as Hamlet frequently makes comments referring to every human body's eventual decay, noting that Polonius will be eaten by worms, that even kings are eaten by worms, and that dust from the decayed body of Alexander the Great might be used to stop a hole in a beer barrel.

Ophelia's Flowers

When Ophelia begins to act mad in Act IV scene v, she gives flowers to Claudius, Gertrude, Laertes, and keeps some for herself. She names each flower as she hands it out and makes it clear they have specific significance. She gives Laertes rosemary and pansies for "remembrance" and "thoughts," respectively. Ophelia does not state the significance behind the rest of her flowers, but they would have had cultural connotations attached to them. Gertrude receives fennel and columbines to represent her adultery. Ophelia gives Claudius and herself rue for bitterness and repentance. She also gives Claudius a daisy for innocence and love, showing her innocence is no longer with her, and neither is Hamlet. Finally, she says she would have brought violets, but they all wilted when her father died. Violets could represent faithfulness, meaning she suggests the faith or goodness of Denmark was corrupted with Polonius's murder. Conversely, violets could indicate her own virtue and modesty, implying that with Polonius's death, Ophelia has lost all adherence to the social norms of her day. Although Ophelia is perceived to be insane by the other characters, her particular choices of flowers give accurate and stinging reproaches to each of them, indicating she may not be as mad as she seems.

Just two scenes later, Ophelia drowns bedecked in flowers as she would have been at her wedding or her funeral. However, Ophelia does not get a wedding because Hamlet spurns her, and her funeral is not allowed the proper ceremonial attention because her death is ruled as a suicide. The flowers she wears, just like the flowers she gives away, are a reproach as well as a symbol of innocence. They heighten the tragedy of the play by reminding the other characters and the audience that Ophelia should have been a young girl, perhaps a bride, and certainly celebrated in death. They are a poignant reminder of all that is taken from her, and from Denmark, by the delay and perversion of justice.

Hamlet's Clothing

Hamlet's black clothing symbolizes his grief over his father's death. Just mere months after King Hamlet's passing, Claudius and Gertrude feel Hamlet casts unnecessary gloom on the palace, so they ask him to cheer up, or at the very least change out of his dark clothes. Hamlet refuses, saying that his clothes only represent a small part of his true grief. Hamlet makes it clear from the beginning that what he wears is a direct insight into his state of mind.

Perhaps more accurately, Hamlet uses his clothes to create an impression of his state of mind. He is genuinely in a state of grief throughout the play, and that grief serves to set him apart from the rest of the palace who have accepted Claudius as king and move forward. Hamlet rebels by continuing to express his grief and thereby remind the palace who once sat on the throne.

In Act II scene i, Hamlet changes his clothes to create a very different idea of his mental state. Ophelia tells Polonius that Hamlet showed up to her room in a state of disarray and partial undress. She describes the way Hamlet grabbed her, stared wildly at her, and left, leaving her confused and frightened. This scene comes just after Hamlet tells Horatio his plan to avenge his father includes acting as if he has lost his mind to disguise his true intentions. Hamlet's actions in Ophelia's room certainly make him look unbalanced, but Ophelia first notices something is wrong by the disheveled state of his clothes. Once again, Hamlet uses his wardrobe to send a message about his internal state.

The play leaves ambiguity about Hamlet's sanity, whether he is merely acting or if he genuinely loses touch with reality. Similarly, his clothes serve the dual function of representing Hamlet's choice to represent himself a certain way and giving an actual reflection of his mind. He does mourn his father's death, and he makes a show of that mourning. He puts on the costume of a man out of his wits, and he seems to really lose his grip on his sanity.