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grammar, style, and proofreading exercises

**The Grammar Dog Guide to
The Tragedy of
Hamlet
by William Shakespeare**

**All exercises use sentences from the play.
Includes over 250 multiple choice questions.**

About Grammartdog

Grammartdog was founded in 2001 by Mary Jane McKinney, a high school English teacher and dedicated grammarian. She and other experienced English teachers in both high school and college regard grammar and style as the key to unlocking the essence of an author.

Their philosophy, that grammar and literature are best understood when learned together, led to the formation of Grammartdog.com, a means of sharing knowledge about the structure and patterns of language unique to specific authors. These patterns are what make a great book *a great book*. The arduous task of analyzing works for grammar and style has yielded a unique product, guaranteed to enlighten the reader of literary classics.

Grammartdog's strategy is to put the author's words under the microscope. The result yields an increased appreciation of the art of writing and awareness of the importance and power of language.



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THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET by William Shakespeare – Grammar and Style
All exercises use sentences from the play.

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SAMPLE EXERCISES - THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET by William Shakespeare

EXERCISE 5 COMPLEMENTS

Identify the complements in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

d.o. = direct object

i.o. = indirect object

p.n. = predicate nominative

o.p. = object of preposition

p.a. = predicate adjective

ACT I

- ___ 1. Sit down awhile; and let us once again assail your ears, that are so fortified against our story, what we have two nights seen.
- ___ 2. Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.
- ___ 3. How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable seem to me all the uses of this world!

EXERCISE 6 PHRASES

Identify the phrases in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

par = participial

ger = gerund

inf = infinitive

appos = appositive

prep = prepositional

ACT I

- ___ 1. Well, good night. If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus, the rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.
- ___ 2. Therefore I have entreated him along with us to watch the minutes of this night, that if again this apparition come, he may approve our eyes and speak to it.
- ___ 3. It faded on the crowing of the cock.

EXERCISE 9 STYLE: FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Identify the figurative language in the following sentences. Label underlined words:

p = personification

s = simile

m = metaphor

h = hyperbole

ACT I

- ___ 1. And then it started like a guilty thing upon a fearful summons.
- ___ 2. But look, the morn, in russet mantle clad, walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill.
- ___ 3. But, good my brother, do not, as some ungracious pastors do, show me the steep and thorny way to heaven, whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine, himself the primrose path of dalliance treads and reck not his own rede.

SAMPLE EXERCISES - THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET by William Shakespeare

EXERCISE 12 STYLE: ALLUSIONS

Identify the allusions in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

a. history b. mythology c. religion d. literature e. folklore/superstition

ACT I

- ___1. In the most high and palmy state of Rome, a little ere the mightiest Julius fell, the graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead did squeak and gibber . . .
- ___2. . . . and duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed that roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf, wouldst thou not stir in this.
- ___3. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio, and much offense too.

EXERCISE 13 STYLE: LITERARY ANALYSIS – SELECTED PASSAGE 1

Read the following passage the first time through for meaning.

Hamlet. To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them. To die: to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: aye, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns

That patient merit of th' unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
No traveler returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pitch and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry
And lose the name of action. Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd. (III, i, 64-98)

Read the passage a second time, marking figurative language, sensory imagery, poetic devices, and any other patterns of diction and rhetoric, then answer the questions below.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 To be, or not to be: that is the question: | 19 That patient merit of th' unworthy takes, |
| 2 Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer | 20 When he himself might his quietus make |
| 3 The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, | 21 With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear, |
| 4 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles, | 22 To grunt and sweat under a weary life, |

SAMPLE EXERCISES - THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET by William Shakespeare

- 5 And by opposing end them. To die: to sleep;
6 No more; and by a sleep to say we end
7 The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
8 That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
9 Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
10 To sleep: perchance to dream: aye, there's the rub;
11 For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
12 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
13 Must give us pause: there's the respect
14 That makes calamity of so long life;
15 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
16 Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
17 The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
18 The insolence of office, and the spurns
- 23 But that the dread of something after death,
24 The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
25 No traveler returns, puzzles the will,
26 And makes us rather bear those ills we have
27 Than fly to others that we know not of?
28 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
29 And thus the native hue of resolution
30 Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
31 And enterprises of great pitch and moment
32 With this regard their currents turn awry
33 And lose the name of action. Soft you now!
34 The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons
35 Be all my sins remember'd.

- ___1. ALL of the following diction is used in the passage EXCEPT . . .
- a. infinitive phrases
 - b. participial phrases
 - c. rhetorical questions
 - d. parallel imagery
- ___2. ALL of the following imagery is parallel in meaning EXCEPT . . .
- a. slings and arrows
 - b. take arms against
 - c. whips and scorns
 - d. grunt and sweat
- ___3. ALL of the following contrasts are depicted in the passage EXCEPT . . .
- a. bad luck – good luck
 - b. opposition – submission
 - c. bravery – cowardice
 - d. death -- life