**Hamlet Debate Topics**

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| **Task:** For your final assessment in English IV, you and a partner will debate one of the controversial topics in the play. As we read, gather evidence for each topic. Ms. Horne will assign final debate topics. |

**Topics:**

1. Is Hamlet justified in seeking revenge against Claudius?
2. Is Hamlet insane or is he pretending?
3. Did Gertrude know about Claudius’s plan to kill the king?
4. Is King Hamlet’s ghost a good spirit from heaven or an evil goblin from hell?
5. Are Hamlet’s actions against Claudius justice and revenge?

**Requirements:**

* Must gather evidence for each topic, you will not know your topic or stance throughout the reading so be prepared to debate any one
* You will debate your topic with a partner
* 2 pairs will be will be assigned a topic (one group will argue the affirmative while the other argues the negative)
* Debates will follow the following format:
  + Opening Statements from each pair (3min each)
    - 1min break
  + Presentation of Arguments Team 1 (5min)
  + Questions from opposing team (2min)
  + Presentation of Argument 2 (5min)
  + Questions from opposing team (2min)
    - 5mins break
  + Rebuttals from each pair (2min each)
  + Closing Arguments (3min each)
  + Total Time: 36mins
* Final speeches must be typed and submitted electronically before debate and a hard copy needs to be submitted the day of debate
* Students will be assessed on
  + Clarity of Argument
  + Evidence
  + Use of Rhetoric
  + Presentation of Argument (speech)

**Hamlet Debate - Evidence Packet**

**Topic 1:** Is Hamlet justified in seeking revenge against Claudius?

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| Affirmative | Negative |
| The ghost’s speech of Claudius’s plan – (add evidence) | No proof besides the words of a ghost.  Even Hamlet is unsure about the ghosts intentions (see antithesis stop and write) |
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**Hamlet Debate - Evidence Packet**

**Topic 2:** Is Hamlet insane or is he pretending?

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| Insane | Pretending |
| Unstable state of mind (mother’s marriage losing his father)  Change in behavior after discussion with the ghost | 1.5.190 “an antic disposition”  Change in behavior after discussion with the ghost |
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**Hamlet Debate - Evidence Packet**

**Topic 3:** Did Gertrude know about Claudius’s plan to kill the king?

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| Affirmative | Negative |
| Ghost believes she was manipulated by Claudius (add evidence) | She moves on quickly (add evidence) |
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**Hamlet Debate - Evidence Packet**

**Topic 4:** Is King Hamlet’s ghost a good spirit from heaven or an evil goblin from hell?

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| Good Spirit | Evil Goblin |
| Does not want Gertrude to be hurt in Hamlet’s revenge plot | 1.5 If you love me you will seek revenge (from of manipulation)  A good spirt would not ask for a murder |
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**Hamlet Debate - Evidence Packet**

**Topic 5:** Are Hamlet’s actions against Claudius justice and revenge?

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| Justice  (restoration of balance, brings closure, rational) | Revenge  (pay back, express rage, hate, or spite, emotional) |
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