

## ***Hamlet***

### Act II Activities

#### **“Emotional range”**

Hamlet appears at line 165 in Scene ii. Follow him through the scene and list ten words to show the range of emotional he experiences. Link each of your “mood” words to a line in the script. Draw a chart or graph to portray Hamlet’s mood swings.

#### **“Catastrophe”**

Imagine all Shakespeare’s work was lost, except two lines from Act II. Which two lines would you hope were saved? Why?

#### **“There’s a Method to his Madness”**

Complete the following chart showing how Hamlet puts on an “antic disposition” with Ophelia and Polonius and how each character reacts to his behavior.

Hamlet’s antic behavior toward Ophelia:

Ophelia’s reaction:

Hamlet’s antic behavior toward Polonius:

Polonius’s reaction:

- a) Why does Hamlet engage in this pretend madness in the first place?
- b) How do the King and Queen react to Hamlet’s actions?
- c) Why does Polonius say in Act II, Scene ii, “Though this be madness, yet there is method in ‘t.’”?
- d) Why doesn’t Hamlet play this madness game with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern?

#### **“What a piece of work is man!”**

1. What does Hamlet tell R & G about why he thinks they came?
2. Is Hamlet cooperative with his friends? How do you know?
3. What does Hamlet ask the players to perform?

#### **“The play’s the thing....”**

1. Why is Hamlet angry at himself at the end of the scene?
2. What is Hamlet’s plan? What line sums up his plan?
3. Is his plan necessarily a good one? Why or why not?
4. How is the theme of appearance vs. reality used in this scene?