Keep track of what you learn about these major characters:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hamlet</th>
<th>Ophelia</th>
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<tr>
<td>King Claudius</td>
<td>Polonius</td>
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<tr>
<td>Queen Gertrude</td>
<td>Horatio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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| Setting                   | Time and place of the story’s action  
Also includes ideas, customs, values, and beliefs                                                                                                                                                    |
| Protagonist               | The main character- not ALWAYS the “good” guy                                                                                                                                                    |
| Antagonist                | The character in conflict with the main character- not ALWAYS the “bad” guy                                                                                                                             |
| Point of view             | **First person:** narrator is a character in the story, referred to as “I”  
**Third person limited:** narrator reveals thoughts of only one character  
**Third person omniscient:** narrator knows all about the story’s events and reveals the thoughts of all characters |
| Theme                     | Central idea or message of a story, often a perception about life or human nature                                                                                                                         |
| Plot                      | Sequence of story’s events, often created through conflict                                                                                                                                                |
| Internal conflict         | Struggle between person vs. self                                                                                                                                                            |
| External conflict         | Struggle between person vs. person, person vs. nature, person vs. society, person vs. technology                                                                                                        |
| Direct characterization   | The author directly states a character’s traits                                                                                                                                                           |
| Indirect characterization | The author provides clues about a character based on what a character does and says                                                                                                                     |
| Imagery                   | Descriptive language used to create word pictures for the reader using details of sight, sound, taste, touch, smell, or movement                                                                      |
| Symbolism                 | A concrete object, scene, or action that has deeper significance and often connected to an important idea of theme in a work                                                                              |
| Metaphor                  | A comparison of two unlike objects without the use of like or as                                                                                                                                       |
| Simile                    | A comparison of two unlike objects using the word like or as                                                                                                                                              |
| Personification           | Giving human attributes and/or feelings to an idea or thing as if it were human                                                                                                                          |
| Author’s purpose          | Authors write for many reasons: to inform, to entertain, to persuade                                                                                                                                     |
| Style                     | Style in literature is the literary element that describes the ways that the author uses words — the author’s word choice, sentence structure, figurative language, and sentence arrangement all work together to establish mood, images, and meaning in the text. Style describes how the author describes events, objects, and ideas. |
| Tone                      | The author’s attitude towards a subject in the work                                                                                                                                                       |
| Repetition                | repeating a point to emphasize its importance                                                                                                                                                            |
| Dramatic Irony            | A situation in a narrative in which the reader knows something about present or future circumstances that the character does not know. The character acts in a way we recognize to be grossly inappropriate to the actual circumstances, or the character anticipates a particular outcome that unfolds itself in an unintentional way. |
| Foil                      | A secondary character whose situation often parallels that of the main character. The behavior/response/character contrasts with that of the main character, throwing light on that particular character’s specific temperament. |
| Foreshadowing             | This is a literary technique that introduces an apparently irrelevant element early in the story; its significance becomes clear later in the play.                                                                 |
| Monologue                 | A speech by a single character without another character’s response. The character however, is speaking to someone else or even a group of people.                                                                 |
| Soliloquy                 | A speech meant to be heard by the audience but not by other characters on the stage (as opposed to a monologue which addresses someone who does not respond). In a soliloquy only the audience can hear the private thoughts of the characters. |
| Tragedy                   | A type of drama in which the characters experience reversal of fortune, usually for the worse. In tragedy, suffering awaits many of the characters, especially the hero.                                          |
| Tragic Hero               | A privileged, exalted character of high repute, who, by virtue of a tragic flaw and/or fate, suffers a fall from a higher station in life into suffering.                                                       |
| Tragic Flaw               | A weakness or limitation of character resulting in the fall of the tragic hero.                                                                                                                           |
Act I Vocabulary

Usurp (v.): to seize and take control without authority and possibly with force   1.1.54
Portentous (adj) portend (v.): of momentous or ominous significance   1.1.121
Malicious (adj): intentionally harmful; spiteful   1.1.60
Mirth (n.): great merriment; joy   1.1.12
Dirge (n.): a funeral song or tune, expressing mourning of the dead   1.1.12
Valiant (adj) Valor (n.): boldly courageous; brave   1.1.25
Perilous (adj) Peril (n.): involving or full of grave risk   1.1.11
Pious (n.): having or showing or expressing reverence for a deity (god)   1.1.33
Virtuous (adj) Virtue (n.): conforming to moral and ethical principles   1.1.192
Disposition (n.): natural mental and emotional outlook or mood; characteristic attitude   1.1.192

Act I Scene 1 (I.1)

Summary: 1.1: On the guard’s platform at Elsinore, Horatio waits with Barnardo and Marcellus to question a ghost that has twice appeared. The Ghost, in the form of the late King Hamlet of Denmark, appears but will not speak. Horatio decides to tell his fellow student, Prince Hamlet, about the Ghost’s appearance.

1. The guards mention that Horatio does not believe that there is a ghost – (Horatio says ‘tis but our fantasy / And will not let belief take hold of him” (1.1.28-29).
   a. What does this show about Horatio’s character?

   b. After witnessing the ghost, how does Horatio’s opinion change? Provide at least one quotation to support.

   c. What impact does this choice to have Horatio confirm the ghost’s reality have on the audience?

2. Describe the current state of Denmark.

3. Describe how the ghost portends the future of Denmark. Use quotes.
**Act I Scene 2 (1.ii)**

**Summary:** In an audience chamber in Elsinore, Claudius, the new king of Denmark, holds court. After thanking his courtiers for their recent support, he dispatches ambassadors to Norway to halt a threatened attack from Fortinbras. He gives Laertes permission to return to France but denies Hamlet’s request to return to the university in Wittenberg. Hamlet, mourning for his father’s death, is left alone to vent his despair at what he regards as his mother’s all too hasty marriage to his uncle, Claudius. The audience learns that the marriage took place “within a month” of the former king’s death. Horatio, Barnardo, and Marcellus arrive and tell Hamlet about the Ghost. Hamlet makes plans to join them that night.

4. Describe three character traits of King Claudius – provide a supporting quotation for each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character Trait and Description</th>
<th>Supporting quotation (with Act.Scene.Line)</th>
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5. Describe Hamlet’s emotional state lately. What accounts for this? Be specific – use quotes if applicable.

6. Consider the King’s speech to Hamlet beginning at 1.2.90. What is being revealed about the King’s character? Do you think the King is **virtuous** or **malicious** based on his words to Hamlet? How do you think Hamlet would be responding in his mind?

7. Consider Hamlet’s first soliloquy (1.2.133).
   a. What is he contemplating?

   b. What is preventing him from taking action?

   c. What is revealed to be the true source of Hamlet’s anger/depression? Provide a quotation for support.
Summary: In Polonius’s chambers, Laertes says good-bye to his sister, Ophelia, and tells her not to trust Hamlet’s promises of love. Polonius joins them, sends Laertes off, then echoes Laertes’s warnings to Ophelia, finally ordering her not to see Hamlet again.

8. In this scene, both Laertes and Polonius make a point to give specific advice to Ophelia regarding her relationship with Hamlet. Carefully consider their choice of words and tone. Are Polonius and Laertes looking out for Ophelia’s best interest? Are they being controlling or possessive? Is it jealousy? In the chart below, list a few pieces of advice given by each, and explain what you think might be motivating each person to offer this advice to Ophelia.

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<tr>
<th>Advice Given by Laertes</th>
<th>Motivation of Laertes</th>
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<tr>
<th>Advice Given by Polonius</th>
<th>Motivation of Polonius</th>
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b. How do you think this advice might be affecting Ophelia and her decisions? Why do you think so?

9. 1.3.64 – Here, Polonius offers a series of “precepts,” or rules for moral conduct, to his son Laertes who is returning to France.
   a. List a few of these precepts, in your own words.

b. Based on the kinds of rules Polonius is offering, what seems to be most important to Polonius in regards to his son’s behavior?

c. Do you think these precepts are valuable for a young person? Do you think they will help Laertes to make the right moral decisions? Why or why not?
**Act I Scene 4 (1.4)**

**Summary:** While Claudius drinks away the night, Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus are visited by the Ghost. It signals to Hamlet. Hamlet’s friends try to stop his following the Ghost, but Hamlet will not be held back.

10. Describe the setting as the Hamlet, Horatio, and the guards wait for the ghost. What time of day? What is the mood like? What impact does this have on the audience?

11. As Hamlet follows the ghost, Horatio fears that the ghost might “deprive your sovereignty of reason / And draw you [Hamlet] into madness.” (Remember this quote). Describe Hamlet’s reaction to the men trying to prevent him from following the ghost. Provide a quotation. Why do you think he reacts in this manner?

**Act I Scene 5 (1.5)**

**Summary:** The Ghost tells Hamlet a tale of horror. Saying that he is the spirit of Hamlet’s father, he demands that Hamlet avenge King Hamlet’s murder at the hands of Claudius. Hamlet, horrified, vows to “remember” and swears his friends to secrecy about what they have seen.

12. List the revelations made by the ghost to Hamlet.

13. What does the ghost of King Hamlet mean when he refers to Gertrude as his “seeming virtuous Queen” (1.5.53). What might this make the audience (and Hamlet) think?

14. What is the reason the ghost of King Hamlet gives for why he is unable to go to heaven?

15. By the end of Act I, Hamlet swears revenge for his father’s murder. He tells Horatio that from this point forward, his behavior may change – what does he say? Provide a quotation.