

*Hamlet by William Shakespeare*  
*Recitation Project*

Assignment: Choose **one** of the following speeches from Hamlet to memorize and recite for the class. You will be graded on precise memorization as well as proper inflection and rhythm.

- Hamlet's Soliloquy (I.2.133-150+)**
- Polonius's speech to Laertes (I.3.67-86)**
- Hamlet's "To be, or not to be" speech (III.1.64-83+)**
- Gertrude's speech about Ophelia (IV.7.190-208)**

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Score \_\_\_\_\_

/50

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**Hamlet's Soliloquy (I.2.133-150+)**

O, that this too, too sullied flesh would melt,  
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew,  
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed  
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God, God,  
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable  
Seem to me all the uses of this world!  
Fie on 't, ah fie! 'Tis an unweeded garden  
That grows to seed. Things rank and gross in nature  
Possess it merely. That it should come to this:  
But two months dead—nay, not so much, not two.  
So excellent a king, that was to this  
Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother  
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven  
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth,  
Must I remember? Why, she would hang on him  
As if increase of appetite had grown  
By what it fed on. And yet, within a month  
(Let me not think on 't; frailty, thy name is woman!)...  
Married with my uncle[.]

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Score \_\_\_\_\_

/50

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**Polonius's speech to Laertes (I.3.67-86)**

And these few precepts in thy memory  
Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,  
Nor any unproportioned thought his act.  
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.  
Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
Grapple them unto thy soul with hoops of steel,  
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment  
Of each new-hatched, unfledged courage. Beware  
Of entrance to a quarrel, but, being in,  
Bear 't that th' oppose'd may be aware of thee.  
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice.  
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.  
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,  
But not expressed in fancy (rich, not gaudy),  
For the apparel oft proclaims the man,  
And they in France of the best rank and station  
Are of a most select and generous chief in that.  
Neither a borrower or a lender be,  
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,  
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.  
This above all: to thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

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Score \_\_\_\_\_

/50

**Hamlet's "To be, or not to be" speech (III.1.64-83+)**

To be or not to be—that is the question:  
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings and arrow 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 heartache and the thousand natural shocks  
That flesh is heir to—'tis a consummation  
Devoutly to be wished. To die, to sleep—  
To sleep, perchance to dream. Ay, there's the rub,  
For in that final 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 despised 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?

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Score \_\_\_\_\_

/50

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**Gertrude's speech about Ophelia (IV.7.190-208)**

There is a willow grows askant the brook  
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.  
Therewith fantastic garlands did she make  
Of crowflowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,  
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,  
But our cold maids do "dead men's fingers" call them.  
There on the pendant boughs her coronet weeds  
Clamb'ring to hang, and envious sliver broke,  
When down her weedy trophies and herself  
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,  
And mermaid-like awhile they bore her up,  
Which time she chanted snatches of old lauds,  
As on incapable of her own distress  
Or like a creature native and endued  
Unto that element. But long it could not be  
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,  
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay  
To muddy death.

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Speech</b>
Mon, 4/13		
Tues, 4/14		
Thurs, 4/16		
Fri, 4/17		
Mon, 4/20		
Tues, 4/21		
Thurs, 4/23		
Fri, 4/24		
Mon, 4/27		
Thurs, 4/30		