

19 - THE DEATHS

Who bears responsibility for the deaths in Act 5 Scene 2?

WHAT YOU NEED

- Pieces of paper, a notebook, and something to write or draw with.
- A computer with internet connection, ready to visit [this page](#).
- A copy of Act 5 Scene 2 from Hamlet, to read either on the page or onscreen.

ACTIVITY

- Visit the RSC Learning Zone [here](#). Click on Act 5 Scene 2 to read the summary of the scene and what we learn.
- Find the place in Act 5 Scene 2 where the King, Queen and all the state enter. Read from there until Horatio's line 'And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.'
- Write a list of everything that happens in that section of the scene in the order that it happens.
- Imagine you are a lord who is a witness to this scene, and you have been asked to give a statement to the police about the deaths. Write a statement describing the deaths as you saw them.
- Ask yourself: Who bears responsibility for the deaths? Write a list of every character who you think bears some responsibility, and note why. Who does Shakespeare want us to sympathise with? Add your thoughts to your notes for each character.

EXTENSION

- Choreograph your own version of the deaths as if you were a stage fight director. It might help to draw the stage as a floor plan and create models to represent the characters and move them around. Use the lines from the text in Act 5 Scene 2 to work out where your fight moves happen.
- Once you know the shape of your fight, design a storyboard for a comic book or graphic novel. Use as many panels or frames in your storyboard as you need to show the whole sequence you've created.