



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2015 Volume II: Explaining Character in Shakespeare

To Thine Own self Be True: the Uncovering the Hamlet in You

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This unit should be prepared for Eleventh and Twelfth graders. It focuses on William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and thus can be used to discuss Character and Plot within a play. In this particular Unit, students will read the play and dissect various characters in hopes of finding traits, both negative and positive, that are found also, within the personal lives of students. The goal of this unit is to show how Shakespeare is still relevant to this time, and to engage students in the process by which Shakespeare uses these characters to develop the plot of the play. Students will use social media as a way of following along, enhancing understanding, and establishing a realistic connection between themselves and the characters. Facebook will be the primary site used as a forum to discuss events that have taken place in the play. Students will also create a movie trailer that advertises key concepts or events shown in the previous Act. A close reading of the text is very necessary for overall understanding and effective questioning in order to continue that understanding. Assessments are given at the will of the teacher utilizing this unit. This unit follows the Common Core State Standards.

(Developed for English IV and AP English Literature, grade 12; recommended for English III and IV, grades 11-12)

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