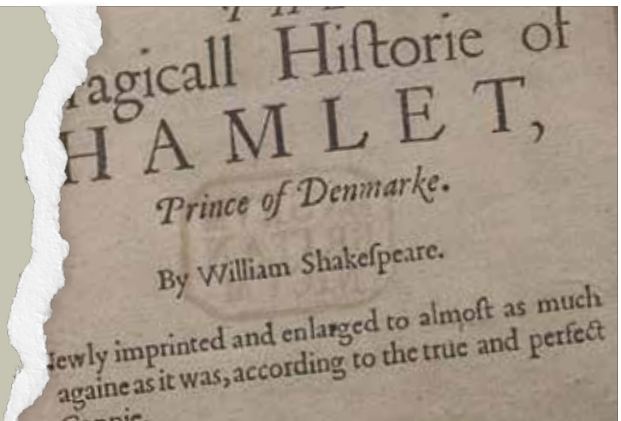


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The Play



Hamlet is one of William Shakespeare's most admired and performed tragedies. As with most of Shakespeare's stories, it is based on previous, similar accounts which the playwright developed in his own unique style. Read the text below to find out how Shakespeare got the idea for the story and when he wrote it.

Hamlet

The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark by William Shakespeare was probably written and first performed at the beginning of the 1600s, most likely in 1602. It is set in Denmark in the late Middle Ages. Scholars presume that the script was written in 1600 or 1601 and put on stage in 1601 or 1602. There is an earlier mention of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* by a certain Gabriel Harvey, which bears the date 1598, but its validity has been questioned. *Hamlet* is a revenge tragedy, which means it is dark and, at times, violent.

Ireland and Denmark

Hamlet, like all of Shakespeare's works, is not an original. First records of the story are in a history of Denmark called *Gesta Danorum (The Deeds of the Danes)*, compiled by Saxo Grammaticus (Saxo the learned), a Danish historian, between 1185 and 1222. One of the tales it contains is called *Vita Amlethi (The Life of Amleth)* and it merges different older plays and sagas into a single story. The book was written in such elegant Latin that Saxo earned himself the name 'Grammaticus'. Doctor Lisa Collinson of the University of Aberdeen in Scotland, an expert in old Nordic languages, now believes that the original story came from Ireland, after she found an 8th or 9th century Irish story about Admlithi of Eire. She thinks the story travelled from Ireland to Denmark and became absorbed into Danish legend.

In 1570, a French author called François de Belleforest translated the Danish story into French, added his own ideas and included it in his collection of *Histoires Tragiques*. Then, in 1589 and in 1596, references appear to a play about Hamlet and the ghost which "cries revenge", a bloody tragedy perhaps written by Thomas Kyd and often referred to as the *Ur-Hamlet*. It is, however, an entry in the 'Register of the Stationers' Company' in 1602 saying that the Lord Chamberlain's Men had recently performed *Hamlet*, which allows scholars to date the Shakespeare version of the play to the beginning of the 1600s.

Hamlet today

Since then, *Hamlet* has been performed innumerable times and, more recently, made into several classic films. The opening line of Hamlet's famous speech, "*To be or not to be, that is the question*", is one of the most well-known quotations worldwide.

- 1 Read the text on pages 10 and 11.
Complete the table with information in chronological order.

	DATE	TITLE	AUTHOR	NOTES
1	8th or 9th century			An Irish story which may have travelled to Denmark and become the basis for <i>Amlethi</i>
2		<i>Vita Amlethi</i>		
3			François de Belleforest	
4		<i>Hamlet?</i> (<i>Ur-Hamlet</i>)		An earlier, bloody, revenge tragedy
5				First mention of a performance in 1602

- 2  Use the table and some of the following expressions to retell the history of the different versions of *Hamlet*.



First Then Next After that Subsequently Finally

Speaking impersonally

One way to speak about literature or history impersonally is by using the passive voice.

- 3 Find examples of the passive in the text and **highlight** them.
- 4 Rewrite the sentences you have highlighted in the active form as in the example:
e.g.: *Hamlet* was written at the beginning of the 1600s.
William Shakespeare wrote Hamlet at the beginning of the 1600s.

PRODUCE

- 5   Now listen to these sentences based on the text and write them in the passive form.

The Main Characters

- 1 Look at the people and read the texts.
Highlight the words referring to **relationships or role** and those referring to **personality** in two different colours.
- 2 Focus on the words referring to character. Decide if the characters are
 - complex human beings.
 - simple, mono-dimensional caricatures.

The Danish Royal Family



The ghost is the spirit of Hamlet's dead father, King Hamlet, who ruled Denmark until very recently. He is a restless and tortured spirit who haunts Elsinore Castle in Denmark.



King Claudius is Hamlet's uncle and the new king of Denmark after the death of Hamlet's father. He is ruthless and self-important but he is also passionately in love with his new wife. He can appear diplomatic and benevolent when it suits him. On rare occasions he shows signs of guilt.



Queen Gertrude is Hamlet's mother. She was the wife of King Hamlet until his death and she is now the wife of the new king, Claudius. She is passionate yet fragile. She is easily swayed by the men in her life and does not have a strong character. She is a devoted wife but also a concerned mother.

Polonius's Family



Polonius is the king's counsellor and Lord Chamberlain (head of the Royal Palace), and the father of Laertes and Ophelia. He is verbose and enjoys giving advice. At times, he does not seem very clever but rather pompous, pedantic and short-sighted.



Laertes is a dutiful son to Polonius and an affectionate brother to Ophelia. He is also hot-headed and arrogant. He enjoys his freedom and is a man of action.



Ophelia is Polonius's daughter. She is sweet and sensitive but also submissive to her father and her brother. She does not decide things for herself and is willing to let others guide her. She is very fragile and vulnerable.

VOCABULARY

3 Find the correct prepositions to complete these sentences, as in the example below.

e.g. *Horatio believes in Hamlet.*

- a Claudius is passionately love with Gertrude.
- b Gertrude is easily swayed ... the men in her life.
- c Laertes is dutiful his father whereas Ophelia is submissive him.
- d Hamlet is disgusted ... his uncle.
- e Hamlet's university friends are not loyal ... him.



Hamlet is the Prince of Denmark. He is the son of the late King Hamlet and Gertrude, and nephew of King Claudius. Hamlet is a thinker rather than a doer. He is reflective and indecisive, clever and melancholic, hesitant yet impulsive. He is also angry and bitter, and disgusted by his uncle and mother.

Hamlet's Friends



Horatio is a good friend to Hamlet. He is loyal, wise and always truthful. He gives Hamlet good advice and always supports him and believes in him.



Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are university friends of Hamlet's. They seem like good friends but they are easily 'bought' and do not remain loyal to Hamlet.

Other Characters



The players are a group of travelling actors who come to Elsinore Castle to perform.



The guards, Marcellus and Bernardo, are soldiers who guard the castle and act as watchmen on the castle ramparts.



1 Read the text. Use the notes on the right.

HAMLET'S FIRST SOLILOQUY

ACT I SCENE II

HAMLET

- 1 O, that this too too solid flesh would melt
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! God!
- 5 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!
- 10 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 betem the winds of
heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
- 15 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!--
A little month, or ere those shoes were old
- 20 With which she follow'd my poor father's
body,
Like Niobe, all tears:--why she, even she--
O, God! a beast, that wants discourse of
reason,
Would have mourn'd longer--married with
my uncle,
My father's brother, but no more like my
father
- 25 Than I to Hercules: within a month:
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
She married. O, most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not nor it cannot come to good:
But break, my heart; for I must hold my
tongue.

Hamlet says he wishes he could die, or that it wasn't against his religion to commit suicide.

He says life doesn't seem worth living.

He compares the world around him to a garden which is overgrown with weeds, taken over by disgusting plants.

He cannot believe how things have turned out: his father died just two months ago, perhaps less.

He was an excellent king: much better than his brother (Claudius). He was loving to and protective of his wife. Hamlet says it is hard to think about the past. He recalls how his mother seemed so in love with his father but then, in less than a month...

Hamlet says he cannot bear to think about it and that women are weak creatures. His mother married his uncle less than a month after his father's funeral at which she cried so many tears. He thinks that even an animal would have mourned for a longer time.

He describes his uncle as being the opposite of his father and says the speed with which his mother entered into this incestuous relationship is shameful and that it is not a good thing and no good will come of it. He says his heart will break because he cannot talk openly about his feelings.

Understand and Analyse

UNDERSTAND

1 Number the following in the correct order.

- a Hamlet speaks about his father.
- b Hamlet speaks about his mother.
- c Hamlet speaks about his life and the state of the world.

2 Read the sentences and decide if they are true or false.

- a Hamlet is so distraught that he is almost suicidal. True / False
- b He thinks his mother should have waited two months before remarrying. True / False
- c He says that his father was both a great king and a good husband. True / False
- d He says that Claudius is very different from his father. True / False
- e He thinks that women are usually strong but that his mother is weak. True / False
- g He says that if he tells anyone about this, it will break his heart. True / False

ANALYSE

3 What comparisons does Hamlet make? Match the items below.

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| a <input type="checkbox"/> the world | 1 a satyr |
| b <input type="checkbox"/> King Hamlet | 2 Hercules |
| c <input type="checkbox"/> King Claudius | 3 an unweeded garden |
| d <input type="checkbox"/> Queen Gertrude | 4 Hyperion |
| e <input type="checkbox"/> Prince Hamlet | 5 Niobe |

4 Find out more about each comparison and discuss them in pairs, as in the example.

- a He compares the world to an unweeded garden *to show how nothing is being taken care of, nothing is in order, and how, when that happens, unnatural and ugly things occur.*

THINK

5 One of the main themes of *Hamlet* is political corruption. Which of the comparisons underlines the idea of a corrupted state? Give reasons for your answer.

PRODUCE

6 Go to *Hamlet* online and do the gapfill activity. Use your answers to the exercises above to help you.

Vocabulary Building

“weary, stale, flat and unprofitable”

Descriptive adjectives using *and*

- Look at the examples. When do we usually use ‘and’ with adjectives?
 - *Her desk was new and expensive.*
 - *Her desk was new, large and expensive.*
 - *She sat at her new, expensive desk.*
 - *She sat at her new, large, expensive desk.*
- Make sentences with and sentences without ‘and’ for these nouns and adjectives.
 - actor (tall-dark-handsome)
 - sports car (small-red-Italian)
 - garden (colourful-small-overgrown)
 - vase (large-antique-Chinese)
 - boots (new-shiny-brown)

Descriptive adjectives – order

- Look at the example. Say what the adjectives tell you (*opinion, size, shape, age, colour, origin, material, purpose*).

She had a fantastic, expensive, big, new, red and black, English, carbon fiber racing bike

- Look at the order of the adjectives in Exercise 3. Now make sentences by putting the adjectives below in the correct order.
 - I was over the moon when he gave me a/an (*gold, beautiful, engagement*) ring.
.....
 - What is that (*Japanese, old, ugly, black, big*) car doing parked on my driveway?
.....
 - I need a (*bus, new, London, monthly*) pass.
.....
 - He bought a/an (*Italian, grey, elegant, silk, new*) tie to wear with his new suit.
.....
 - If you want to cut the meat, you'll have to have a (*carving, decent, steel*) knife.
.....

CULTURE

Elizabethan Theatre



- 1 The first theatres were built in England during the Elizabethan Age. Look at the drawing on page 21 and think about the following, then read the text and check.

Where do you think actors

- got changed?
- kept their costumes and props?
- made surprise entrances onto the stage?

The first theatres

Up until 1576, when London's first purpose-built theatre was constructed, plays had been performed in inn yards or on stages which were temporarily erected for the event. However, drama was very popular during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I and it made sense for theatre companies to have their own buildings where they could rehearse and perform... and make money. So in 1576 'The Theatre' opened in Shoreditch, London, followed by The Curtain (1577), The Rose (1587), The Swan (1595) and The Globe (1599). Shakespeare was an actor at The Theatre but then he and his group of players built their own theatre, The Globe, on the south bank of the River Thames. Most theatres, or playhouses as they were also known, were built on the south bank as that area was outside the city limits – theatres had a bad reputation and were places where diseases, like the plague, easily spread, so they were discouraged and eventually banned from the city. Theatres, or playhouses, were typically oval in shape and open to the sky in the centre. They opened during the day to make the most of natural light. When evening fell, candles were lit but, since theatres were made of wood and thatch, fires were often a risk.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 1648, not long after Shakespeare died, the Puritans who controlled parliament at that time ordered all theatres to be demolished, all actors to be caught and whipped and all theatre-goers to be fined five shillings!

The theatre building

The main stage took up a large area and projected out into the audience who stood or sat on three sides of it to watch the performance. The cheapest place to watch a play was in the pit. Here the audience stood or sometimes sat on the edge of the stage, in close contact with the actors. Theatre-goers with a little more money to spend sat in the galleries. The seats were made of wood so people often brought their own cushions or hired them as they came in. Behind the stage were rooms which the actors used for changing into their costumes and for making their entries and exits. Sometimes an actor would reach the stage through the stage floor or stage roof. There were, in fact, spaces under the stage and above the stage for surprise entrances and special effects. The hut at the very top of the theatre could house a cannon, also used for special effects. A flag flew from the top of the theatre when it was open.

2 Look back at the text.

- a Where did actors perform plays before theatres were built?
- b When did the first theatre open and where?
- c Which theatres is Shakespeare associated with?
- d Why were theatres open to the sky in the centre?
- e Why was the pit the cheapest place to watch a play? Think of two reasons.
- f Which seats do you think were the most expensive? Say why.
- g How did people know if a theatre was open or not?



An Elizabethan theatre building

From Reading to Performing





- 1 Before you listen, predict how the speech will be read. Use these words and add some of your own.

happily/sadly/solemnly


angrily/with a sense of frustration

slowly/fluently/wearily

- 2   Listen and see if you were right. Discuss the tone used. Try for yourself. Read the script aloud with the recording and then without. Imitate reading speed, intonation and tone.




ACTORS AND EMOTIONS

- 3  Which emotions does Hamlet need to project during this speech? Download a copy of Hamlet's speech on page 17 from *Hamlet* online. Write the feelings you want the actor to project in the margin of the speech. Discuss which facial expressions and gestures could help communicate the emotions.

ON STAGE!

One of the most challenging things for an actor is learning the ability to convey dramatic emotions. The first thing to do is think about what the character is like, how s/he usually reacts and to practise being her/him. Once you are comfortable 'in' your character, you can practise how s/he would behave in different situations, concentrating on:

- body language
- facial expression
- voice

- 4  Work with a partner, write detailed instructions for the facial expressions the actor should use to convey the emotions you have noted in the script.
- 5 Look at the photographs from different productions of the play on these pages. Describe Hamlet's facial expression in each one. How are they different?
- 6 Write instructions to match the expressions the actors have produced in these photos.
- 7 Now read the speech with the feelings and facial expressions you have discussed.



Test Yourself

HAMLET'S FIRST SOLILOQUY

1 Choose the correct options below.

- a The ghost is first seen *in the main hall / on the ramparts* of the castle by *some soldiers / Hamlet's friend Horatio*.
- b Gertrude and Claudius ask Hamlet to *return to university / remain at Elsinore*.
- c In the first part of his soliloquy, Hamlet thinks of committing *murder / suicide*, but says he can't because it *is against his religion / would make things worse*.

2 What is Hamlet describing in the following line?

“How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable...”

- a His mother and father's relationship.
- b The time he has spent at university.
- c The world and life in general.

3 In his soliloquy in Act 1 Scene II, what does Hamlet say about his father?

- a That he was a good king, even if he wasn't a perfect husband.
- b That he was kind to his wife and his son.
- c That he was an excellent king and a loving husband.

4 Hamlet says that his mother

- a seemed to love his father deeply.
- b didn't cry at her husband's funeral.
- c probably felt forced to marry Claudius.

5 Hamlet accuses his mother of being *dishonest / cruel / weak*.

6 Hamlet uses the phrase “a beast that wants discourse of reason” to refer to *his mother / Claudius / himself*.

7 Hamlet compares himself to Hercules to show

- a how strong he has to be to control his feelings.
- b the difference between his father and Claudius.

8 In which of the following quotes does Hamlet refer to the idea of a corrupted state?

- a “'tis an unweeded garden that grows to seed”
- b “As is an increase of appetite had grown / By what it fed on”
- c “O, most wicked speed, to post / With such dexterity...”

9 At the end of the soliloquy, Hamlet decides that he must

- a hide his true feelings.
- b confide in someone.
- c try to accept the situation.

▶ / 13 marks

VOCABULARY BUILDING

10 Put the adjectives in the correct order to complete the sentences.

- a He was wearing *blue / running / expensive* shoes.
- b She found a *black and white / little / cute* kitten.
- c Don't wear that *old / dirty / green* pullover!
- d Did you make these *chocolate / little / delicious* biscuits?
- e He gave me a cup of *English / black / breakfast / strong* tea.
- f Julie bought two *multi-coloured / long / cotton / lovely / Indian* skirts.

11 In some of the following sentences the word 'and' is missing. Insert it where necessary.

- a He gave her some beautiful, red roses.
- b The dog came home dirty, wet, smelly.
- c Jane's hair is long, brown, curly, like her mum's.
- d That film was long, complicated, boring.
- e It was a beautiful, clear, sunny day, so we went for a walk.

▶ / 11 marks

CULTURE - ELIZABETHAN THEATRE

12 Choose the correct alternative to complete each statement.

- a The first theatres in London were built in the *early / late* 1500s.
- b The first theatre in London was called The *Theatre / Rose / Globe*.
- c Theatres were built *in the city centre / outside the city*.
- d Elizabethan theatres were typically *round / oval / square*.
- e The hut, which could house a cannon, was usually at the *top / back* of the theatre.
- f The cheapest way to see a play was from the *pit / gallery*.

▶ / 6 marks

▶ TOTAL / 30 marks

Exam Practice

F B2 FIRST ENGLISH TEST: READING AND USE OF ENGLISH PART 2

TIP: Read the whole sentence before deciding which word goes in each space. Often the words after the space are as important as those before it.

For questions 1 – 8, read the text below and think of the word which best fits each gap. Use only one word in each gap. There is an example at the beginning.

Example: (0) *to*

SAM WANAMAKER'S DREAM

When, in 1950, American actor and Shakespeare enthusiast, Sam Wanamaker went to work in England, he was keen **(0)**..... visit the site of the original Globe Theatre. However, **(1)**..... of a memorial to the Bard's playhouse, he found only a dirty plaque on the side of an old building. Shocked, Wanamaker decided that he would rebuild the Globe **(2)**..... close as possible to the original site. He set **(3)**..... the Shakespeare Globe Trust, and, **(4)**..... opposition from the local council and scepticism among his theatre colleagues, he succeeded **(5)**..... raising over \$10 million. He even spent a lot of his own earnings **(6)**..... the project.

Building work on the theatre started in 1993. Unfortunately, Wanamaker died before it was completed. The Shakespeare Globe Trust **(7)**..... on with the project and, finally, in June 1997, the new Globe Theatre was opened by the Queen. **(8)**..... then, it has become one of London's most popular tourist attractions.

F B2 FIRST ENGLISH TEST: READING AND USE OF ENGLISH PART 4

TIP: Contracted forms (ex. don't, I'm, we'll) count as two words.

For questions 1 – 6, complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between two and five words, including the word given.

Example:

- 0 *There were over fifty people in the race.*

PART

More THAN FIFTY PEOPLE TOOK PART in the race.

- 1 I haven't been feeling very well for a week now.

WEATHER

I've been feeling a for a week now.

- 2 It looks like Jim has taken the car.

APPEARS

Jim the car.

- 3 I love the fact that I don't have to get up early in the holidays.

HAVING

I love early in the holidays.

- 4 The children can hardly wait to see Grandma next week.

LOOKING

The children are really Grandma next week.

- 5 Our dog was looked after by a neighbour while we were away.

CARE

A neighbour our dog while we were away.

- 6 Hamlet only decided what to do after thinking for a long time.

MAKE

It took Hamlet a long time mind about what to do.

Exam Practice

F B2 FIRST ENGLISH TEST: READING AND USE OF ENGLISH PART 7

TIP: As you read, underline or highlight the parts of the text that correspond to the questions to make it easier for you to check your answers.

You are going to read an article in which four people talk about accidents they had. For questions 1-10, choose from the people (A-D). The people may be chosen more than once.

Which person

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| admits the accident was his fault? | 1 |
| lost consciousness as a result of his accident? | 2 |
| hasn't yet returned to work since the accident? | 3 |
| says having the accident has taught him a lesson? | 4 |
| had a problem with well-meaning friends? | 5 |
| says it took longer to recover than he expected? | 6 |
| emphasises the dangers of not following medical advice? | 7 |
| has benefited from a consequence of his injury? | 8 |
| jokes about the possible long-term effects of his injury? | 9 |
| lost a valuable work opportunity because of his injury? | 10 |

Accidents will happen

Four people describe accidents in which they were injured and how they recovered.

A: Paul, teacher

When I came off my mountain bike, crazy as it sounds, I actually passed out. Only for a second or two, but enough to cause my friends to call an ambulance. They thought I'd banged my head, but after checking me the doctor said it was just a sprained ankle and it was probably the shock of the pain that caused me to faint. I must say I didn't really believe it when the doctor told me I wouldn't be able to walk for a couple of weeks. In the end, I'll have had almost three weeks off in all. Before the accident, I'd been working too hard and having a good rest was exactly what I needed both physically and mentally. All the same, I'm looking forward to getting back to school.

C: Ahmed, student

It was all due to my own stupidity. I mean, I hadn't had the motorbike that long and I shouldn't have been going so fast, but I was late for my part-time job at the supermarket. Anyway, when the car pulled out in front of me, I hit it and flew through the air. I banged my head when I hit the ground, and if it hadn't been for the helmet, maybe I wouldn't be here now. Amazingly, I didn't lose consciousness, nor was I confused or anything, which the doctors say is a good sign. So, there's a good chance that I haven't killed too many brain cells. But, if I have, at least I'll have an excuse for failing my exams next month!

B: Damien, actor

I broke my arm in a skiing accident. Or rather an out-of-control snowboarder broke it for me – just my luck! At the time, I was rehearsing for a part in a play which would have really helped my career, but obviously I couldn't go on stage with my arm in a plaster. I just hope I'll get another chance of a job like that in the not too distant future. Luckily, a broken arm doesn't affect my radio work, so I'm going on with that for now. My agent says the moral is, don't go in for dangerous sports when you've got something important coming up! Well, I'm not going to forget that in a hurry! And I hadn't realised how many practical problems having a broken arm can create. If it hadn't been for my friends, I don't know how I would have managed.

D: Michael, writer

I hurt my knee while I was teaching my daughter to ice-skate. A couple of weeks later it was still hurting, so my doctor recommended having an operation, and that's what I did. I've always believed in doing what the doctors say. Otherwise, you may end up making things a lot worse and it will take even longer to get better. As I'm a writer working mainly from home, it hasn't had much effect on my ability to work. However, I hadn't realised how much I would miss being able to drive. Friends have been really kind and drop in to keep me company, although I must say, at one point, I was finding it hard to concentrate with all the interruptions.

Exam Practice

F B2 FIRST ENGLISH TEST: LISTENING PART 1

TIP: Before you listen, read the questions and the options and underline the keywords. This will help you identify the relevant information while listening.

You will hear people talking in eight different situations. You will hear each recording twice.

For questions 1 – 8, choose the best answer (A, B or C).

- 1 You hear two students talking about a café.
What does the boy say about Gino's Café?
A the food is quite cheap
B it's the best café in town
C the service is usually quite fast

- 2 You hear a student talking about choosing between two universities.
What did he base his final decision on?
A the campus facilities
B the size of the city
C the course content

- 3 You hear two students talking about their school computer laboratory.
What does the boy say about the laboratory?
A there aren't enough computers
B some of the computers don't work
C nobody ever updates the software

- 4 You hear a woman talking about an injury to her arm.
What treatment is she having now?
A she's doing some exercises
B she's applying ice-packs
C she's wearing a plaster

- 5 You hear two school friends talking about an ex-classmate.
What do they agree about her?
A she's usually quite talkative
B she used to be nervous
C she probably can't act
- 6 You hear a man and a woman discussing a television documentary.
What did the woman find annoying?
A the camera work
B the presenter's voice
C the background music
- 7 You hear an actor talking about the first time she acted in a play.
How did she feel during the performance?
A encouraged by the presence of her family
B worried in case she forgot her lines
C uncomfortable in her costume
- 8 You hear a teacher giving advice about writing an essay in an English exam.
What's the main point he's making?
A you'll save time if you plan your essay before you start writing it
B you'll lose marks if you don't stay within the word limit
C the language you use is more important than the ideas you express

Exam Practice

F B2 FIRST ENGLISH TEST: WRITING PART 2

TIP: Before you start to write, make a plan to organise your ideas into clear paragraphs.

Write an answer to one of the questions 1 – 3 in this part. Write your answer in 140 – 190 words in an appropriate style.

1 You have received a letter from your English-speaking pen friend.

You said that you are involved in preparing for the school play. Can you tell me more about it? What play is it and what exactly is your role? What sort of preparations are you making? Are you enjoying it? Or is it really difficult?

Write soon,
Tina

Write your **letter**.

2 Your class has been to see a production of *Hamlet* at the theatre and your teacher has asked you to write a review of the performance for the school magazine. Your review should include information on the play, the quality of the acting and the costumes.

Write your **review**.

3 Your class has had a discussion about the characters in William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Now your teacher has given you this essay for homework:

Which character do you find the most interesting in *Hamlet*, and why?

Write your **essay**.

F B2  **FIRST ENGLISH TEST: SPEAKING PART 3**

TIP: Develop each idea before moving on to the next one.

Task for Candidates A and B:
1 Discuss the question below in pairs.

the same interests/hobbies loyalty similar social background

**In what ways are these things important
in a relationship between friends?**

male/female similar ages living close to each other

2 Decide which two of these are the most important.
F B2  **FIRST ENGLISH TEST: SPEAKING PART 3**

TIP: Give reasons for your opinions and any relevant examples from your own experience.

Questions for Candidate A:

Which is more important: friends or family? (Why?)

Do you think the importance of friendships change as people get older?

(In what ways?)

Questions for Candidate B:

Is it better to have lots of friends or just one or two close friends? (Why?)

What are the advantages and disadvantages of making new friends online?

Shakespeare Wordbank

Character The characters are the people in a story, play or poem.

Context The situation (social, historical, biographical and geographical) in which a text is written.

Dialogue The words that the characters say to each other. Other types of speech include *monologue* (when only one character speaks) or *soliloquy* (when a character speaks alone and reflects on his/her feelings).

Drama A literary genre which begins as a written text but which is meant for performance. A single piece of drama is known as 'play'.

Figures of speech Phrases and expressions that use words in a figurative way. The most common figures of speech include *metaphor* (when something with similar characteristics is used to describe the original), *simile* (when something with similar characteristics is compared to the original, using 'as' or 'like').

Form How a poem or piece of writing appears on the page.

Genre A type of literature. For example, drama is a literary genre.

Performance When a script is acted out on stage, on screen or on the radio.

Play A piece of drama. The author of a play is called *playwright* or *dramatist*. Plays can be divided into acts, and acts can be subdivided into scenes. A scene usually covers a single event in a single setting.

Poem Piece of writing with the words arranged in separate lines, often using rhyme, and chosen for the ideas they suggest and sounds they create.

Rhyme Same sounds usually at the end of lines (rhyme-time). Rhymes can create patterns and these patterns are often indicated by using the letters of the alphabet (A, B, C, etc.) to mark rhyming words. The pattern generated is called the 'rhyme scheme'.

Sonnet A type of poem of which the earliest examples were Italian. Petrarch established the form with his *Canzoniere* (1366-1374) influencing poets worldwide.

Stage directions In a play, they are the instructions and information given by the playwright which accompany the dialogue. They are usually in italics to distinguish them from the dialogue. They can give information about the characters, their physical appearance and their feelings and behaviour as well as their actions, movements, facial expressions and gestures.

Story(line) In drama, the storyline is the main events given in chronological order.

Theme The central idea of a work, usually expressed in abstract terms, such as 'evil', 'love', etc.

Tragedy Tragedy is a type of drama that focusses on human suffering and its consequences. In tragedies the initial situation is characterized by fortune and harmony but it is undone by misfortunes and eventual disaster.