

Hamlet – To Be or Not To Be

(Adapted for Grade 6 – modern English)

Characters:

- **Hamlet** – The Prince of Denmark.
 - **Ophelia** – A young noblewoman who cares for Hamlet.
 - **Polonius** – Ophelia's father (optional or silent role).
 - **Narrator (optional)** – For short scene introductions.
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Scene: The Castle of Elsinore

[A quiet room in the royal castle. Hamlet enters alone, deep in thought.]

Narrator (optional):

Prince Hamlet is sad and angry.
His father, the old king, has died.
His mother married his uncle — who is now king.
Hamlet feels lost and betrayed.

Hamlet (slowly, thinking aloud):

To be, or not to be — that's the question.
Is it better to live... or to die?

To suffer life's troubles —
the unfairness, the pain, the sadness —
or to end it all and find peace in sleep?

To die... to sleep... maybe to dream.
Ah, but there's the problem!
What dreams might come after death?
That's what makes us afraid.

[He paces slowly.]

We could escape pain —
but we don't know what waits after.
So, we keep living,
even when life feels like a storm we can't escape.

People would end their suffering —
if only they weren't so afraid of the unknown.
Fear makes us weak.
Our thoughts make us cowards.

[He stops, looks up.]

So, we stay alive,
even when our hearts are tired,
and our courage fades.

[He sighs deeply.]

Now, here comes Ophelia...
I'll try to sound cheerful.

[Enter Ophelia, holding a small book or flower.]

Ophelia:
My lord, I have some things you gave me once.
I'd like to return them.

Hamlet:
Ha! Did I give you those?

Ophelia:
You did, my lord —
and with words so sweet they made the gifts seem richer.
But now, the sweetness is gone.

Hamlet (sadly):
I did love you once.

Ophelia (hurt):
You made me believe you did.

Hamlet (angrily):
You should not have believed me.
We are all dishonest — all of us!
Go to a convent, Ophelia.
Stay pure. Stay away from lies and broken hearts.

Ophelia (crying):
Oh, what a noble mind is here destroyed!

You once were gentle —
now your heart is full of madness.

[Ophelia exits, weeping.]

Hamlet (alone again):

Heaven help me.

Everything feels twisted and false.

Something is wrong — deeply wrong —
in the state of Denmark.

[He looks upward, then slowly exits.]
