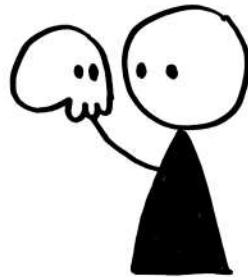


Cue Script:

Claudius, Gertrude, Hamlet,
Laertes and Polonius



Working on a scene with the help of a cue script is not only a great way to understand the historical context of rehearsing and acting in Shakespeare's time, it also forces students and actors alike to listen attentively to what the other characters are saying in order not to miss their cue. In addition, Shakespeare's plays contain very few explicit stage directions, as most of the clues are in the lines they speak. As a consequence, cue scripts are great for a two-stage exercise:



Step one: read the script together and listen out for cues; think about the characters and their relationships to each other, plus their mood (does it change over the course of the scene, or does it stay the same?)



Step two: think about inserting the stage directions – what do the characters do at which point in the scene? Do they enter the stage at some point, or do they go off? Do they need any props at any point?

Cue Script Act I, Scene 2

LAERTES

Laertes. My dread lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
To show my duty in your coronation,
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

Cue Script Act I, Scene 2

CLAUDIUS

gracious leave and pardon.

Claudius. Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?

give him leave to go.

Claudius. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at thy will!
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,--

and less than kind.

Claudius. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

and the suits of woe.

Claudius. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father.

Cue Script Act I, Scene 2

POLONIUS

What says Polonius?

Polonius. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave
By laboursome petition, and at last
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent:
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

Cue Script Act I, Scene 2

HAMLET

and my son,--
Hamlet. [Aside] A little more than kin, and less than kind.

still hang on you?
Hamlet. Not so, my lord; I am too much in the sun.

Passing through nature to eternity.
Hamlet. Ay, madam, it is common.

Why seems it so particular with thee?
Hamlet. Seems, madam! nay it is; I know not 'seems.'
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor the dejected 'havior of the visage,
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,
That can denote me truly: these indeed seem,
For they are actions that a man might play:
But I have that within which passeth show;
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

Cue Script Act I, Scene 2

GERTRUDE

too much in the sun.

Gertrude. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not for ever with thy vailed lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust:
Thou know'st 'tis common; all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

Ay, madam, it is common.

Gertrude. If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?