

# Audition Packet

## Hamlet

by William Shakespeare

### **Audition Dates:**

at South, Monday February 14<sup>th</sup> 3-5:30

at North, Tuesday February 15<sup>th</sup> 3-5:30

*Sign up for one 5-minute time slot*

*On the callboard outside of room 170*

### **Callback Date:**

at South, Thursday 3pm – 6pm, February 17<sup>th</sup>

### **Production Dates:**

May 12, 13, and 14 at South

## **AUDITION REQUIREMENTS**

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Please prepare a 1-2 minute memorized Shakespearean monologue. You may choose any monologue (including those of the opposite gender) from any of Shakespeare's plays except *Hamlet*. No sonnets, please.

- Choose a piece you really love.
- Commit to your decisions.
- Know the meaning of the words.
- Don't be afraid to take risks; your performance does not need to fit within the context of the play it comes from. Make it your own.

### **On the day of your audition.**

- Arrive a few minutes before your time slot with your forms already filled out.
- Check in and have your photo taken.
- Give yourself time to stretch, warm-up your voice, and do a few tongue twisters!

### **Callbacks**

- The callback list will be available at the callboard and online by Wednesday, February 16.
- Scenes (sides) for callbacks are available with this packet.

### **Casting**

- All roles are open to both boys and girls.
- The final cast list will be posted shortly after you return from February vacation.

**Please fill this out and bring it to your audition.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Home: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Cell: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Parent E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

What role(s) are you the most interested in playing? *(All roles are open to both girls and boys)*

Are you willing to accept any role? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Are you comfortable learning choreography? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any experience in Dance, Stage Combat, or other choreographed activities.

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List all previous theatre experience (on and offstage). *(Feel free to attach a resumé if you have one)*

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If not cast, are you interested in working backstage? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Check all positions of interest:

Props: \_\_\_\_\_ Publicity: \_\_\_\_\_ Costumes: \_\_\_\_\_ Stage Crew: \_\_\_\_\_ Make-Up: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list all one-time conflicts between March 21 and May 14 (i.e. doctor's appointments, vacations, etc.). **Conflicts between April 30 and May 14 will not be accepted. Saturday rehearsals are mandatory.**

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List all weekly conflicts between March 21 and May 14 (i.e. dance class from 6-9).

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

If you have any questions about conflicts, please contact Mr. Knoedler or Mr. Brown.

Are you available for a preliminary read-thru on March 1 or 8? (*Your answer will not affect casting decisions.*) Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_

Is there anything else you would like us to know?

## CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

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**Hamlet** – Prince of Denmark. Returned home from college to attend his mother’s wedding following his father’s funeral. He is visited by his father’s ghost who tells him he must avenge his murderer, King Claudius.

**Claudius** – King of Denmark and Hamlet’s Uncle. He has cheated his way into the kingship.

**Gertrude** – Queen of Denmark and Hamlet’s mother.

**Horatio** – Hamlet’s most trusted friend

**Polonius** – A gentleman of the court and long-time advisor to the King. Father to Laertes and Ophelia.

**Laertes** – Brother to Ophelia. He is fiercely loyal to his family and an excellent swordsman.

**Ophelia** – Sister to Polonius. She is in love with Hamlet.

**Ghost** – Hamlet’s father. Murdered by Claudius. Returns to tell Hamlet to avenge his death.

**Rosencrantz** – Hamlet’s friend from college. He and Guildenstern are brought to court to cheer up Hamlet and then extract information from him.

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**Barnardo, Francisco, and Marcellus** – Court Watchmen.

**Gravedigger** – Digs Ophelia’s grave and waxes philosophy with Hamlet.

**Osric** – A gentleman of the court who admires both Hamlet and Laertes.

**Voltemand** – Messenger and gentleman of the court.

**Cornelius** – Voltemand’s sidekick.

**Messenger**

**Fortinbras** – The Prince of Norway. Hamlet’s father killed his father. He is a great leader.

**Captain** – Captain in Fortinbras’ Army

**Sailor**

**Priest**

**English Ambassador**

### *Traveling Players*

**Lead Player** – Hamlet’s acquaintance and known for his soliloquies.

**Player King** – The Good King in The Mouse Trap

**Player Queen** – The Dedicated Wife in The Mouse Trap

**Player Lucianus** – The Bad Guy in The Mouse Trap

**Young Player** – The youngest member of the troupe.

*Many roles will be doubled.*

## PLOT SUMMARY

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*Hamlet* begins on the ramparts of the Castle Elsinore in Denmark. The watchmen bring Horatio to be witness to the ghost they saw. The ghost, who resembles the recently deceased King Hamlet, appears again. When Horatio and the watchmen bring Hamlet to see the ghost, he tells Hamlet he was murdered by Claudius, and orders Hamlet to seek revenge. Hamlet, unsure about the nature of life and death, feigns madness and delays until he has proof of Claudius' guilt.

Claudius and Gertrude hire a pair of Hamlet's friends, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, to find out why he's acting strange. When Polonius suggests that Hamlet may be heartbroken for Ophelia, Claudius agrees to spy on them but afterwards decides that is not the reason for his madness. A group of traveling actors arrives in Elsinore and Hamlet comes up with the idea to have them perform a scene about a man murdering a king to test Claudius' reaction. Meanwhile, Polonius plans with Gertrude to spy on her while she confronts Hamlet about his madness.

The court attends the performance of the players and when the moment of the murder plays, Claudius leaps up and leaves the room. Hamlet is on the way to his mother's when he discovers Claudius in prayer. He wants to kill Claudius but believes he will go to heaven so decides to wait. By the end of his failed prayer, Claudius decides to get Hamlet out of the way by sending him to England.

Hamlet goes to his mother's room where Polonius is hiding behind a tapestry. Hearing a noise, Hamlet believes it is the king and stabs him. Hamlet is sent to England with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Unknown to anyone, Claudius gives sealed orders to them telling England to kill Hamlet.

Ophelia goes mad and drowns. Laertes returns to Denmark to revenge his father's murder. When the king receives a letter from Hamlet saying that he has returned, Claudius and Laertes plan his murder. Laertes will fence with Hamlet using a poisoned blade. As a backup plan, the king decides to poison a goblet of wine.

Hamlet returns and duels with Laertes. Laertes cuts Hamlet with the poisoned blade. Hamlet switches the blades and cuts Laertes. Gertrude unknowingly drinks the poisoned wine and dies. Laertes dies. Hamlet kills Claudius and then dies.

Fortinbras enters with ambassadors from England to close the play.

## **THEATRE INK CASTING POLICY**

Both student and staff Directors always strive to cast fairly, with the guiding objective of assembling the overall cast that will best serve the directorial vision for the show. This requires many hours of careful analysis by the Directors and Mr. Brown, who take their responsibility in this area very seriously. Mr. Brown watches every audition and participates as a mediator and guide through every casting process.

Theatre Ink casting decisions are not based on seniority (grade level in school), or years of participation in the program. This is a firm programmatic value arrived at after years of assembling casts, and seeing the exciting results that come from having students collaborate across the grade spectrum from freshman to senior, each cast solely on his or her fit for a given role as revealed through a rigorous and thoughtful audition process.

Auditioning for a show can be competitive and sometimes daunting. In keeping with the program's emphasis on theatre as a vehicle for learning and individual development, Mr. Brown is available to coach and support students as they seek to improve their speaking, presentation, and performance skills through the audition process.

### **DIVERSITY**

**Theatre Ink values and celebrates diversity of all kinds. Encouraging diversity of participation is an overall goal of the program. Theatre Ink actively encourages all students to participate in productions as members of cast or crew. All students who audition are considered equally in an inclusive environment and in accordance with Theatre Ink casting principles. Theatre Ink hopes to be a reflection not only of the varied backgrounds and experiences of Newton North's staff and students but also of diverse world cultures, life experiences, and theatrical traditions. By carefully selecting a range of different shows each year we strive to tell theatrical stories that represent the richness of our world while offering a wide range of opportunities for all students.**

### **On Casting**

**Casting is a very complex process.** In the end, the Directors must choose the students who best fit the roles in many dimensions, both by the individual skills they present in audition, but also in the dynamics that develop between actors who will be creating the driving energy of the show in scenes together. Such dynamics are a large part of what is explored in the "Callback" round of auditions. For students, auditioning is an exciting, yet difficult, process that can bring about greater success, whether cast in the production or not. The more a student auditions, the better they will become, especially if they seek and receive feedback and guidance. The feeling of "rejection" over not getting cast seems disappointing at first, but we strongly urge you to encourage your child to get right back to work as soon as possible so they can sharpen their skills for a future audition. In theatre, as in life, all of us

experience both disappointment and success. Our goal is to teach our students how to deal with both, so when they leave Newton North High School they will be well prepared to navigate their way toward success in a complex world.

**To Parents:**

Due to the large audition pool Theatre Ink shows typically experience, your child's audition does not guarantee him or her a role in the show. If your child is not cast (and also if he or she is cast), we strongly suggest that (s)he meet with the Directors and/or Mr. Brown to obtain valuable feedback while it is freshly in mind, in order to further develop skills for future auditions.

While disappointment for some is an inevitable part of the experience in any competitive tryout situation, be it an academic, athletic or artistic pursuit, one of the hallmarks of Theatre Ink is that **there are many other ways to get involved** working on the production if you are not cast in an on-stage role. These include technical crew (set design and construction, lights, sound) working with Mr. Barrington-Haber, Theatre Ink's Technical Director; or on the many other teams, such as props, costumes, publicity and makeup. There are also opportunities to be a student producer or stage manager, which you can discuss with Mr. Brown or the Directors. If slots of interest are not available in the current show, please consider looking into such opportunities in an upcoming show. The wide range of types of shows, and the large number (11-12 per year) is designed to make as many theatre arts opportunities available to as many students as is feasible within the resources provided by the Newton Public Schools. We also strongly encourage each student to take a Theatre Arts and Speech class -- offered as an elective to all grade levels -- and go to Improv Club during X-blocks. These theatre education experiences will further enhance your child's skills in these areas and give them more confidence for the audition process. The wonderful spirit of camaraderie and collaboration that develops during shows is equally shared by on- and off-stage participants. Talking to students who have worked in various roles and jobs will confirm this for your student. Keep an open mind, and seek out a new experience!

**GET INVOLVED!**

**If you and/or your child are not satisfied with the casting decision** and wish to inquire as to the reasons for it, the first step is for the student to meet with the show's Directors. If further discussion is desired, the student should then meet with Mr. Brown. If, after those meetings, you and/or your child do not feel you received valuable feedback or information you are satisfied with, you are then encouraged to make a joint parent/student appointment with Mr. Brown. Please be assured that a student's future participation in Theatre Ink will not be jeopardized in any way by seeking to have concerns addressed according to this established process.

Student signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_



**Theatre In Production Agreement**  
*(Please read and fill out the following Theatre Ink Agreement)*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to the following terms in this agreement and promise to abide by the conditions and expectations set forth by my director, choreographers, music director, technical director, producer and fellow cast and crew members. I will dedicate myself as a true team member to this production process in order to present a show that we as a cast, crew and production team will be proud of.

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**1. All actors, technical stage crewmembers and musicians should have fun working on this production as collaborative artists.** We expect a positive attitude, open communication, and ownership from beginning to end.

**2. All actors, technical stage crewmembers and musicians must be in good academic standing to participate in and remain in this production.** *All actors, technical stage crewmembers and musicians are expected to be in school during the day in order to participate in rehearsals and performances after-school. It is also required that a progress report be completely filled out every two weeks and returned to Mr. Brown via your stage manager. You will not be allowed to attend rehearsal if this is not turned in on time.*

**3. All participants must be passing a minimum of 20 credits each marking period or they will be removed from the process when the report card is issued.**  
*N's in a class do not count as passing.*

**4. All actors, technical stage crewmembers and musicians must be on time to all scheduled rehearsals and technical crew duties.**  
*If late for three rehearsals you may be cut from the production.*

**5. All actors, technical stage crewmembers and musicians must be present at all scheduled rehearsals.** Rehearsals will generally be Monday through Friday from 3:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Some weekend rehearsals may be requested in advance.  
*If you have three unexcused absences from rehearsal may be cut from the production.*

**Please Note:**

*In order to be excused you must have a legitimate note as to why. A valid excuse could be an illness, death in the family, etc. It is also important to turn in all notes to the director, and notify them directly in advance if you cannot make any rehearsal. In case of emergency, you must call 617-559-6306 and leave a message.*

***Communication is the key to good relationships during a production.***

**6. All actors, technical stage crewmembers and musicians will keep the rehearsal spaces, stage, dressing rooms and costume room clean throughout the rehearsal and performance process.**

*There will be no food or drink allowed on the stage at anytime. Water Only!*

**7. All actors, technical stage crewmembers and musicians are responsible for their props and costumes.** If props or costumes are damaged or lost while in your possession, you are responsible for the replacement cost.

**8. All actors, technical stage crewmembers and musicians will use the rehearsal process productively.** Actors who are waiting to work on stage should be memorizing lines, reviewing blocking, dances, music, or reading materials related to the production.

*Remember: you are a student first, so you must stay current with your class assignments. We strongly encourage you to do homework at rehearsal if there is time.*

*Please bring snacks and water in case you are hungry.*

**9. All actors, technical stage crewmembers and musicians must stay in the rehearsal area during a rehearsal unless given permission to leave.** Your presence may be called upon at anytime while you are at rehearsal.

**10. All actors, technical stage crew and musicians must be supportive of each other's roles in this production.** It is important to communicate with one another in a respectful manner. Whether on stage or offstage, all roles in this production are equally important.

**11. All actors will complete 8 technical theatre shop/stage crew hours during the rehearsal process.** This may include painting, set construction, lighting, costumes, props, or other related areas as designated by the technical director or producer.

**12. All actors, technical stage crew members and musicians are required to take part in a full stage strike directed by the technical director, Michael Barrington-Haber, on the Monday and Tuesday (if necessary), after the production.** All cast and crew will remain until the strike is complete and the stage, costume room, dressing rooms, music rooms and shop is cleared and cleaned. *Any cast, crew member or musician who misses strike will not be allowed to work on the next show unless they put in the hours they missed with the technical director.*

*The spirit of this agreement is to ensure that all actors, technical stage crewmembers and musicians are treated fairly as creative, collaborative artists who are working towards the same goal. Mr. Adam Brown, Director of Theatre Ink; Mr. Michael Barrington-Haber, Technical Director, and your Directors will enforce this agreement to the best of their ability in the spirit of a high quality theatrical production process.*

**This production can be an incredible experience if the entire cast, crew, musicians and production staff work together, create together and have fun together!**

Actor/crew/musician signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_