

Hamlet

William Shakespeare

How does a skull lead Hamlet from personal memory to a claim about everyone?

TOTAL TIME

PASSAGE

30 minutes	Yorick, Alexander, and Caesar
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FIND THE ANCHOR TEXT

Use the Anchor Text Table of Contents in the Enhanced Reader to open the START anchor. Then use the dropdown to select the END anchor.

SECTION / LOCATION	Act V, Scene I
START	Alas, poor Yorick. I knew him, Horatio
END	O, that that earth which kept the world in awe should patch a wall t'expel the winter's flaw.
PASSAGE ID	sec-ham-04

THE MOVE

Follow a concrete object into an abstract argument

WHY THIS PASSAGE

Yorick's skull begins as a deeply personal object tied to Hamlet's childhood, then becomes a physical example through which he imagines Alexander and Caesar reduced to earth. The passage shows abstraction growing out of touchable evidence.

MARK

Underline the memories attached specifically to Yorick. Circle the moments when Hamlet shifts from Yorick to famous historical figures. Star the sentence where the skull becomes evidence for a claim about everyone.

NOTICE

- What does the skull mean to Hamlet before he starts thinking about Alexander and Caesar?
- Why do famous conquerors strengthen the argument rather than distract from Yorick?
- How does a single skull become evidence for a universal claim about human bodies and status?

THINK

Answer provisionally: How does a skull lead Hamlet from personal memory to a claim about everyone? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response to: How does a skull lead Hamlet from personal memory to a claim about everyone? Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and explain why.

STRONG ANSWER	Yorick's skull begins as evidence of one remembered person, then Hamlet extends the same physical fact to Alexander and Caesar. The object lets him move from private memory to the universal claim that status and achievement end in the same material fate.
EVIDENCE	Use the shift from Yorick-specific memories to imagined remains of famous rulers. Strong answers explain why famous examples enlarge the claim.
WATCH FOR	Do not stop at 'the skull symbolizes death.' The lesson is about how one object becomes the basis for an abstract argument about everyone.
SOLO	Read the exact passage independently.
SUPPORTED	Use narration and sentence highlighting while reading the same passage.
LISTENING	Listen to the exact passage; visual following is optional. Same question and evidence demand.

STUDENT PAGE · SAME PASSAGE, SAME THINKING

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How does a skull lead Hamlet from personal memory to a claim about everyone?

START ANCHOR	Alas, poor Yorick. I knew him, Horatio
END ANCHOR	O, that that earth which kept the world in awe should patch a wall t'expel the winter's flaw.

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OPEN THE MARKED PASSAGE IN TUMBLELIT

SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration + highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the exact passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. MARK - Underline the memories attached specifically to Yorick. Circle the moments when Hamlet shifts from Yorick to famous historical figures. Star the sentence where the skull becomes evidence for a claim about everyone.
2. NOTICE - What does the skull mean to Hamlet before he starts thinking about Alexander and Caesar? Why do famous conquerors strengthen the argument rather than distract from Yorick? How does a single skull become evidence for a universal claim about human bodies and status?
3. THINK - Answer provisionally: How does a skull lead Hamlet from personal memory to a claim about everyone?
4. WRITE - Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.

Use evidence from the assigned passage. Show what you noticed and how the text supports your interpretation.