

# What Is Claudius's True Purpose For Sending Hamlet To England?.

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In William Shakespeare's tragedy Hamlet, one of the most intriguing and debated moments occurs when King Claudius decides to send Hamlet to England. While on the surface this act may appear to be a strategic diplomatic move or a simple attempt to get rid of a troublesome prince, a closer examination reveals deeper motives rooted in political intrigue, personal safety, and the manipulation of circumstances to serve Claudius's ultimate goals. Understanding Claudius's true purpose for sending Hamlet to England requires exploring both the immediate context and the broader themes of power, deception, and morality that permeate the play.

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## Contextual Background: Why Hamlet's Presence Was a Threat

### The Political Landscape of Denmark

Denmark under Claudius's rule is a fragile monarchy. Hamlet's behavior and his descent into madness pose a threat to the stability of Claudius's reign. Hamlet's growing suspicion and his obsession with revenge threaten to expose Claudius's guilt in the murder of King Hamlet, which could destabilize the throne.

### Hamlet's Increasing Unpredictability

Hamlet's erratic actions and threats to confront Claudius directly make him a liability. Claudius fears that Hamlet may reveal his secret or challenge his authority, leading to a potential uprising or loss of control.

### The Ghost's Revelation and Its Ramifications

The ghost's revelation that Claudius murdered King Hamlet intensifies the danger. Hamlet's quest for revenge becomes a moral and political dilemma, and Claudius seeks to eliminate the threat discreetly.

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# Claudius's Strategic Motivations for Sending Hamlet to England

## 1. Eliminating a Political Threat

One of the primary reasons Claudius sends Hamlet away is to remove him as a threat to his reign. By sending Hamlet to England, Claudius hopes to:

- Isolate Hamlet from Denmark's political scene.
- Reduce his influence and prevent him from rallying supporters.
- Delay or derail Hamlet's plans to challenge or expose him.

## 2. Protecting His Own Safety

Claudius recognizes that Hamlet's behavior is increasingly unpredictable and dangerous. Sending him abroad:

- Keeps Hamlet away from the Danish court where he could act impulsively.
- Reduces the risk of assassination or rebellion instigated by Hamlet's actions.

## 3. Manipulating Hamlet's Fate

Claudius's plan to send Hamlet to England is also a calculated move to:

- Put Hamlet in a foreign land where he is vulnerable.
- Use the political environment of England to their advantage, possibly involving external forces or alliances to secure Hamlet's downfall.

## 4. Securing Political Alliances

Sending Hamlet to England might also serve as a diplomatic move, strengthening Claudius's alliances or appeasing England's monarchy by demonstrating loyalty or submission, while secretly plotting Hamlet's demise.

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# The Role of the Letter and the Plan to Kill Hamlet

## The Poisoned Letter

Claudius's plan involves writing a letter to the King of England, instructing him to execute Hamlet upon arrival. The letter is a key element in Claudius's scheme, as it:

- Provides a legal justification for Hamlet's execution.
- Shields Claudius from suspicion, as the letter appears to be an official order.

## **Executing the Plan**

The plan involves:

- Hamlet's arrival in England.
- The execution of Hamlet upon arrival, as per Claudius's instructions.
- The subsequent seizure of Hamlet's belongings and the retrieval of the body.

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## **Unintended Consequences and Hamlet's Return**

### **The Failure of the Plan**

Hamlet discovers the plot when he finds the letter and intervenes, leading to:

- The accidental death of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, who carry the letter.
- Hamlet's return to Denmark, which complicates Claudius's plans.

### **Hamlet's Revenge and the Final Confrontation**

The return of Hamlet sets the stage for the play's climax, where:

- Hamlet confronts Claudius.
- The cycle of revenge culminates in multiple deaths, including Claudius himself.

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## **Deeper Themes: Power, Deception, and Morality**

### **Claudius's Use of Deception**

Claudius's decision to send Hamlet away is rooted in deception—not only in his initial murder of King Hamlet but also in his manipulative tactics to maintain power. Sending Hamlet to England is part of his larger strategy to conceal his guilt and neutralize threats.

## **Morality and Corruption**

The act of plotting Hamlet's death abroad reflects the corrupt moral fabric of Claudius's rule. It underscores the play's exploration of:

- The corrupting influence of power.
- The moral dilemmas faced by characters caught in political machinations.

## **Hamlet's Revenge and Moral Justice**

While Claudius seeks to eliminate Hamlet to secure his throne, Hamlet's quest for justice is driven by moral righteousness. The clash between these motives highlights the play's central themes of justice, morality, and the consequences of revenge.

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## **Conclusion: Clarifying Claudius's True Purpose**

In summary, Claudius's true purpose for sending Hamlet to England is multifaceted. Primarily, it is a strategic move to:

- Remove Hamlet as a threat to his reign.
- Protect his own safety by removing an unpredictable prince.
- Use external political circumstances to facilitate Hamlet's demise.
- Conceal his guilt and maintain the illusion of legitimacy.

However, the plan ultimately fails due to Hamlet's cunning and the unforeseen developments, leading to the tragic downfall of all involved. Claudius's decision reflects his manipulative and treacherous nature, embodying the play's exploration of corruption, deception, and the destructive pursuit of power.

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Keywords: Claudius, Hamlet, sending Hamlet to England, political manipulation, revenge plot, Shakespeare, Danish monarchy, deception, power, morality, play analysis, Hamlet's exile, Claudius's motives, poisoned letter, political intrigue

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What was Claudius's main motivation for sending Hamlet to England?**

Claudius's primary motivation was to eliminate Hamlet as a threat, fearing he might expose his guilt or seek revenge, so he devised a plan to have Hamlet

killed abroad.

## **Was Claudius's decision to send Hamlet to England purely strategic or driven by personal motives?**

While strategically aimed at removing Hamlet, Claudius's decision was also influenced by his personal desire to maintain his throne and suppress any potential uprising or suspicion.

## **Did Claudius have any ulterior motives behind sending Hamlet to England besides killing him?**

Yes, some interpret that Claudius wanted to rid himself of Hamlet to prevent him from disrupting his rule and possibly to buy time to consolidate power or plan further actions.

## **How does Claudius's plan to send Hamlet to England reflect his overall political strategies?**

It demonstrates Claudius's manipulative and cunning nature, using deception and strategic moves to eliminate threats and secure his position as king.

## **What role does the letter sent with Hamlet to England play in Claudius's true purpose?**

The letter orders Hamlet's execution, revealing that Claudius's true purpose was to have Hamlet killed, not just exiled or sent away.

## **Was Claudius successful in his plan to send Hamlet to England?**

Partially; while Hamlet was indeed sent to England and nearly executed, Hamlet's escape and return ultimately thwarted Claudius's plans.

## **How does Claudius's sending Hamlet to England reveal his character and leadership style?**

It shows Claudius as manipulative, ruthless, and willing to use treacherous tactics to maintain power, reflecting a leadership style rooted in deception and self-interest.

## **Additional Resources**

What Is Claudius's True Purpose For Sending Hamlet To England?

In William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, one of the most debated questions among scholars and audiences alike is: What is Claudius's true purpose for sending Hamlet to England? At first glance, this action may seem like a strategic move to remove a potentially dangerous Prince who suspects his uncle's guilt. However, upon closer examination, it reveals layers of political cunning, personal manipulation, and hidden motives. Understanding Claudius's true purpose provides deeper insight into his character and the play's complex web of deception and ambition.

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## The Context Behind Hamlet's Journey to England

Before delving into Claudius's motives, it's crucial to understand the circumstances surrounding Hamlet's departure. Hamlet's behavior becomes increasingly erratic following the ghost's revelation that Claudius murdered King Hamlet to seize the throne. Hamlet's suspicions grow, and he begins to act out in ways that threaten Claudius's hold on power.

Claudius, aware of Hamlet's mounting suspicion and the danger it poses, devises a plan to send Hamlet away under the guise of a diplomatic mission to England. This move serves multiple purposes, but its underlying aim is rooted in maintaining his grip on the Danish throne while eliminating the threat Hamlet represents.

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## Claudius's Official Reason for Sending Hamlet to England

Initially, Claudius's official explanation appears benign and diplomatic:

- **Maintaining Political Alliances:** Claudius claims that sending Hamlet to England is a way to strengthen diplomatic ties and demonstrate Denmark's importance on the international stage.
- **Managing Hamlet's Behavior:** He suggests that the journey will help Hamlet "cool his spirits" and perhaps gain perspective, especially given Hamlet's recent erratic behavior.

These reasons are plausible on the surface but are, in reality, smokescreens masking his true intentions.

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## Unveiling Claudius's Hidden Motives

### 1. Eliminating Hamlet as a Threat

The most pressing concern for Claudius is Hamlet's unpredictable behavior and his suspicion of Claudius's guilt. Hamlet's growing suspicion could lead to dangerous revelations or even violence against Claudius. By removing Hamlet from Denmark, Claudius aims to:

- Reduce the immediate threat Hamlet poses by removing him from the court's proximity.
- Delay any potential confrontation that could threaten his kingship.

## 2. Using England as a Political Tool

Claudius's plan involves leveraging England's political landscape:

- Sending Hamlet with secret orders to be executed upon arrival, a plan orchestrated with King George of England.
- Creating a plausible cover for Hamlet's disappearance, avoiding suspicion among Denmark's noble class.

## 3. Personal Manipulation and Control

Claudius's actions reveal his manipulative nature:

- Testing Hamlet's resolve: Sending Hamlet away is also a way to see if he can be easily controlled or if he will act against him.
- Diverting Hamlet's focus: By removing Hamlet from the Danish court, Claudius hopes to diminish his influence and prevent him from rallying supporters.

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## The Role of the Letters to England

In the play, Claudius prepares and sends two letters to England:

- One contains instructions for Hamlet's execution upon arrival.
- The other is a secret message to the English king, encouraging him to carry out the plan.

This dual correspondence underscores Claudius's intent to eliminate Hamlet swiftly and discreetly. Shakespeare emphasizes this with the scene where the letters are delivered to Hamlet, who later discovers and destroys them, thwarting Claudius's plan.

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## The Ambiguity and Irony of Claudius's Motives

While Claudius appears to be acting out of political self-preservation, there are layers of irony and ambiguity:

- His concern for Hamlet's threat is genuine, but so is his desire to secure his throne. The two motives intertwine, revealing a character driven by paranoia and ambition.
- Claudius's manipulation of others (such as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern) to spy on Hamlet shows his deep desire to control every situation.
- His willingness to kill Hamlet if necessary demonstrates his ruthless

pursuit of power, even at the cost of morality.

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### What Does This Reveal About Claudius's Character?

Claudius's decision to send Hamlet to England exposes key aspects of his personality:

- Political savvy: He understands the importance of plausible deniability and uses diplomatic channels to mask his true motives.
- Manipulativeness: He expertly uses deception, such as the forged letters, to serve his ends.
- Paranoia and ruthlessness: His fear of losing power leads him to consider lethal measures, exemplified by the plan to have Hamlet executed.
- Insecurity: Despite his kingly demeanor, Claudius's actions reveal a man insecure about his hold on the throne and willing to go to great lengths to maintain it.

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### The Broader Themes and Implications

Claudius's true purpose for sending Hamlet to England ties into larger themes within Hamlet:

- Corruption and Moral Decay: Claudius's manipulations and murderous ascent to power exemplify the corrupting influence of unchecked ambition.
- Deception and Appearance versus Reality: His outward politeness masks deadly intent, reflecting the play's exploration of appearances hiding true motives.
- Power and Paranoia: Claudius's actions underscore how fear of losing power can lead to destructive decisions.

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### Conclusion

What is Claudius's true purpose for sending Hamlet to England? It's a strategic move rooted in a combination of political calculation, personal paranoia, and ruthless ambition. While publicly justified as diplomacy and concern for Hamlet's wellbeing, secretly, Claudius seeks to eliminate Hamlet as a threat to his throne. This act exemplifies his manipulative nature and the play's exploration of corruption, deception, and the corrupting influence of power. Understanding this motive enriches our interpretation of Claudius as a complex antagonist whose actions drive much of the play's tragic tension.

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Summary List: Claudius's True Purpose for Sending Hamlet to England

- To eliminate Hamlet as a threat to his throne
- To delay potential confrontations or revelations about his guilt
- To use England's political influence to his advantage
- To maintain control and manipulate the situation behind the scenes
- To ensure Hamlet's potential execution or removal from Denmark

By analyzing Claudius's motives in this light, we see a character driven by a dangerous combination of ambition, insecurity, and cunning—an essential element in the tragic fabric of Hamlet.

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