

# Hamlet's Defining Romantic Characteristics Essay

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To reach a difficult goal, it is necessary to face many arduous obstacles. An example of one of these obstacles would be to make the right decision. Making that decision, however, becomes much more difficult when one's characteristics get in the way. In Shakespeare's Hamlet, the protagonist's Romantic characteristics of overthinking without acting, overpowering emotions, and isolation cloud his sense of judgement, bringing about his downfall.

To begin, [Hamlet](#)'s pensiveness leads him onto the path of his own demise. Hamlet always spends his time thinking; whether it be about his father's untimely death, his mother's incestuous marriage, or the revenge he plans for Claudius. However, this creates a fatal problem for him. Firstly, when he is not pursuing or thinking about revenge, he often wastes his time just thinking. This can be seen in his infamous speech, where he spends much time contemplating suicide. He ponders:

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,  
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
And by opposing end them (3, 1, 57-60).

If Hamlet were to stop overthinking things and simply take action, he would have more

time to enact revenge. Even so, he still does not act. Instead, Hamlet continues to brew over the possibilities, and even realizes that he is “thinking too precisely on th’event” (4, 4, 41). However, even when he is presented with the perfect opportunity for revenge, Hamlet’s pensiveness and hesitation causes him to lose this opportunity. At first, he is confident in his plan, but he then thinks, and realizes that “this is hire and salary, not revenge” (3, 3, 79). Because of his hesitation, he lets Claudius go, not knowing that “[Claudius’s] words fly up, [his]...

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...(5, 1, 236-238). Subsequently, this upsets Laertes, thus fueling his dislike for Hamlet even more. Laertes is more tempted to murder him, and Hamlet could have evaded this by simply sharing his sadness with others instead of believing his is alone. In essence, Hamlet’s alienation is a large reason why his sense of judgement is blurred, which is the cause of his ultimate demise.

To conclude, Hamlet’s defining Romantic characteristics of being pensive, emotional and alienated are responsible for his clouded judgement, which eventually leads to his downfall. His characteristics define who he is as a Romantic hero, but when they overpower his judgment and instinct, disaster occurs. While one’s characteristics are important, one is nothing without a sense of judgement.

#### Works Cited

Shakespeare, William. Hamlet. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Print.

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