


Teachers' Notes by Leonie Jordan

Hamlet by Nicki Greenberg

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Recommended for ages 14+

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INTRODUCTION

Shakespeare's classic exploration of revenge, treachery and mortality is presented in a bold new visual format in this sumptuous 'staging on the page'. With three levels of dramatic action – onstage, backstage and in the characters' minds – the central themes of the play are brought into startling relief, allowing the reader to experience the full power of this timeless play.

Hamlet is suitable for ages 14+. It can be studied as:

- a core English text
- an example of the graphic novel text type
- an example of adaptation, transformation or interpretation of an original source
- a supplement to the study of the Shakespearean play

It allows students to gain an experience of:

- visual literacy
- the canon / Shakespeare
- adaptation/transformation
- dual/parallel narratives
- gender, cultural and psychoanalytical perspectives

'The finest thing about Shakespearean drama is that the work can be restaged for every generation and everywhere and in so many different ways. It has been adapted to different times and places and media, made the subject of painting and musical and comic strip. In Nicki Greenberg's version *Hamlet* is played by an inkblot with a crowquill in his scabbard. The settings sparkle; the interior of the castle has a decor of suspended clock parts, curious only until we realise that 'time is out of joint'; Polonius pops in and out of a sheet of paper as he reads Hamlet's letter to Ophelia; and Ophelia walks us physically through the botanicals so you won't need opera glasses to follow the symbolism of the flowers. Greenberg's adaptation of *The Great Gatsby* was entirely in monochrome and it's exciting this time around to see her unpack a palette of riotous colour.' - Eddie Campbell, illustrator of Alan Moore's *From Hell*

PLOT SUMMARY

The plot of Shakespeare's classic play will be familiar to most readers: something is rotten in the state of Denmark. The old king has died and his brother, Claudius, has married the queen and seized hold of the throne. Corruption, deceit and trickery abound, while the forces of Norway threaten from the north...

Burdened with the task of avenging his father's murder, the young prince Hamlet wrestles with his disgust at the baseness surrounding him, his indecision over what action to take and an overwhelming sense of the meaninglessness of life. Feigning madness as he considers his revenge, he is inevitably drawn into a deepening web of plots, ploys and plays within plays where blood is shed and innocent lives are lost.

A detailed summary of the plot can be found at the Absolute Shakespeare website:

http://absoluteshakespeare.com/guides/hamlet/summary/hamlet_summary.htm

STRUCTURE AND STYLE

Rather than taking the form of a conventional graphic novel, Nicki Greenberg's *Hamlet* can best be understood as a play 'staged on the page'. Throughout the text, the reader has the impression of watching a live performance. Photographed collages of sequins, lace, playbills, powder-puffs and feathers decorate the endpapers, giving the effect of a backstage dressing room and immediately establishing the key motifs of 'acting', pretence and trickery. The list of characters is presented as an ink-spattered play bill, while the author's acknowledgements take the form of 'Supporting Cast and Crew'. An early double page spread commands the reader to 'Shhh...', with the small white font against a solid black background evoking the darkness of a theatre before a play begins. The formal performance then starts as the previously faceless 'actor' playing Hamlet dons a mask.

In an innovative twist, the action of the play takes place in three different dimensions: on the stage, where the drama is performed; outside the frames in the imaginative realm of the mind; and backstage, where the characters are seen as actors outside of their on-stage roles. These three dimensions are not discrete but overlapping, with the interplay between them drawing out the central themes and dynamics of the text.

In the first dimension, the story unfolds in large, horizontal illustrated panels whose backdrops resemble lush, richly-coloured theatre sets. The panels offer a consistently presented view of the 'stage'. Against the luminous backdrops, a cast of impish black figures reminiscent of Rorschach inkblots play out their parts, their malleable bodies stretching and twisting, tearing and dissolving, splattering and reforming to reflect their varying emotional states. Faces are put on and taken off, with this 'masking' highlighting the crucial motif of pretence and deception.

During key scenes in the play, the multiple panel structure often gives way to just a single frame on each page. This device, used most commonly during Hamlet's soliloquies, has the effect of a close-up or spotlight, intensifying the characters' emotions and existential dilemmas. It also gives increased prominence to the backdrops, which often serve a symbolic, as well as aesthetic function: for instance, many of Claudius' speeches are performed against a lurid green background stippled with bubbles, visually linking him to the key motif of poison. Cogs and clockwork mechanisms are also a recurring symbol, highlighting the notion of time being 'out of joint', as well as the elaborate machinations and manipulations underpinning the play.

The second sphere of action – the black space around the coloured frames - represents the non-literal realm of the psyche. The ghost of old King Hamlet occupies this space, drawing Hamlet out of the corporeal world of the frames and into the realm of the mind. This space often contains swirling white line drawings depicting the interior events of the play – the emotional turmoil, anxieties, fears and delusions of the characters. On occasions, this black space intrudes into, or even swallows up, the frames, as the characters' inner worlds become more compelling. For instance, silhouetted Venus flytraps snap away at Ophelia from the borders as she is harangued by both Hamlet and Polonius, and the seeds of her madness are planted. During Hamlet's soliloquies the black space becomes particularly dominant as both he and the audience are swept along by the fervour of his cogitations.

This second sphere is also a site for visually representing some of the key imagery of the play: for example, thistles, dandelions and morning glory frequently obtrude into Hamlet's scenes, reinforcing his jaded perception of the world as a 'rank garden gone to seed.' It also allows Greenberg to depict many of the events which are described or alluded to by the characters, but don't take place on stage. For example, Horatio's account of the battle with Norway or his hushed description of the night 'the sheeted dead did squeak and gibber in the Roman

streets'. Through this structural device, then, the text goes beyond what can ordinarily be presented on a stage while retaining many of the forms and boundaries of a theatre.

The third dimension of action comprises a parallel narrative taking place backstage, where the actors are seen shrugging off their on-stage roles and behaving like 'ordinary' people recognisable to the audience. Collaged spangles, feathers and other dressing room paraphernalia further enforce this notion of playacting. Sequentially, the backstage episodes are interspersed between each scene, adding suspense and allowing the author to draw out resonances between the grand, tragic drama unfolding on stage and the smaller, more personal, drama occurring backstage. They also echo the concept of the 'play within a play', one of the key dramatic conceits in *Hamlet*.

The downtrodden, forlorn-looking props man is at the centre of these scenes while, in an inversion of the stage, the main actors play less central roles. The props man is initially seen spying on the actress who plays Ophelia as she prepares in her dressing room, presumably in love with her. Ignored by the actress, jeered at by the arrogant Hamlet actor and taken for granted by the rest of the cast, he suffers silently, unaware that the conniving Polonius-figure is observing all from the peripheries. The props man is subtly manipulated by Polonius, and like Hamlet, begins to plot his vengeance.

The reader moves seamlessly between the three textual dimensions, often experiencing two or even three of them simultaneously, and losing awareness of the boundaries between them. This interplay culminates at the end of the book, where the backstage and on-stage worlds come into startling collision when the props man sidles into the action in the minor role of Osric, handing over a real poisoned sword for the duel with Laertes. Hamlet's death in the final scene is also the death of the actor playing his part, and as in the original play, this revenge brings little satisfaction or closure. Both props man and audience are physically left in the dark as the curtain comes down on the final scene, followed by a black double page spread. Through the dual narrative structure then, Greenberg is able to highlight many of the universal themes explored by Shakespeare - love, revenge, corruption and mortality – as well as stepping outside of the play's parameters to comment on its continued relevance to audiences today.

LANGUAGE

Greenberg's adaptation of this timeless tale preserves the authenticity of the original Shakespearean language, not altering or updating the dialogue. Instead, the actors' expressions and gestures, the placement of speech bubbles, and the visual depictions of poetic imagery help readers to interpret the text.

Greenberg states: 'My adaptation uses almost all of the text of the play (bearing in mind that there is no single definitive text for *Hamlet*), and does not change, add to or modernise it. Some small sections are cut, as is common in theatre productions of this very long play. My aim is to showcase Shakespeare's wonderful language, encouraging the reader to linger on the words and enjoy them in a way that can be difficult when they are rapidly spoken in a live production.'

AUTHOR BACKGROUND

Nicki Greenberg is a writer and illustrator with a special interest in sequential art. Her first picture books, *The Digits* series, were published when she was fifteen years old. Since then, she has written a range of fiction and non-fiction titles for children, as well as spending six years adapting F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* in graphic form. She lives in Melbourne, Australia with her family, and also works as a lawyer.

Further information can be found on her website <http://www.nickigreenberg.com/> and blog <http://nickigreenberg.blogspot.com/>

AUTHOR COMMENTARY

' Everyone knows the Dane's most famous question, even if their only exposure to the play is through *The Simpsons*. But if you engage even just a little more closely with *Hamlet*, whether by reading or watching the play, you see almost immediately that it is exploding with question marks. The gloomy prince is addicted to them. To paraphrase a few of the big ones: how should we live? How should we react to the ills of the world? What are we? How do we know what is real and what is artifice, who to trust, what is good or bad, right or wrong?

When I began the preliminary work for this book, I discovered another seemingly endless well of questions bubbling and seething below the Big Ones. These are the questions that anyone directing or performing the play must tackle: how we understand the characters' relationships, their motivations, their reactions and personalities, and the context in which they live. Every gesture and inflection of an actor's performance, every nuance of lighting, positioning and timing, whether on the stage or on the page, represents a decision about who we believe the characters are and how they behave. And just as each person's response to the big thematic questions is personal and unique, so is each artist or reader's response to the infinite possible ways of interpreting and "inhabiting" the characters and the play.

I feel that it is a great privilege to work with a text as brilliant and complex and mysterious as *Hamlet*, and I found tackling these questions inspiring, thrilling, and extremely absorbing. The Dane's obsessive nature has a habit of rubbing off on the people who take on the play, and I was no exception. One probably needs a certain amount of obsession (and perhaps bloody-mindedness) to interpret, direct and perform *Hamlet* through the medium of 427 pages of illustration, so perhaps I was already that way inclined.

Performing on the page has some pretty serious restrictions compared to a stage, let alone a film. There is no sound, no actual movement, and far less nuance and precision when performing a speech or delivering a line. But the page also offers a unique dimension that "real life" doesn't, and that is composition. One of the things that I am passionate about in graphic novels is exploring those narrative devices that are unique to the medium. And composition - the layout of panels on a page - is one of the most striking. Some "storyboard-style" graphic novels just carry the reader through a series of present moments linked in a straight line, so the experience can be like a fairly dried-up version of seeing a movie. But by playing with the composition of the panels and their layout, you can give the reader a whole series of moments in space and time that work together. Even though they will be read in one main direction, the panels also form a single picture on the page, creating a particular atmosphere, with echoes, resonances and a multi-directional "conversation" between the images. The shape, size, form and positioning of the frames also contributes to that crucial thing in graphic narrative: timing.

In my *Hamlet* the layouts are based around the idea of a theatre stage, and the visual language of the theatre informs the book's structure, design and illustration style. I chose this approach not only because *Hamlet* IS a play, but because the motifs of acting, pretending, performing, "masks", and the nesting of plays within plays are central to *Hamlet*. A curtain opens onto each scene and the actors speak their parts in real time. But in the space around the panels we have the non-literal realm of the mind - imagination, fears, memory, delusions, and of course ghosts. There is a lot of interplay between the concrete and the mental realms on the page, and even the blackness around the panels becomes personified and takes a role. At the end of each scene, the reader can "flip" the stage around by turning the page, and discover a parallel (and silent) revenge tragedy being played out backstage. Plays within plays within plays invite us to return to one of *Hamlet's* fundamental questions: which side of the stage is real?

How I worked on *Hamlet*

Unlike most stage productions, this book was a one-person affair. I felt like I'd taken on the task of directing the play - and not just any play, but *the* most performed, written-about, analysed and revered play in history! - while also having to act all the parts, do the set design, costumes, lighting, sound (yes, in a book)... and of course the catering! I did a fair bit of reading beforehand, as I wanted to get a sense of how others had treated and interpreted *Hamlet*, and that was very helpful as a way of challenging and helping shape my own ideas about it. Those ideas remained quite fluid as I travelled deeper and deeper into the interpretation. *Hamlet*, both the play and the character, defy definitive answers. I hope that my interpretation inspires readers to get their hands dirty wrestling with their own *Hamlet* questions and that they enjoy my own exploration of it in graphic form.

Interpreting the play was the most intense and challenging aspect, but the practical work of designing the book and the characters, planning and then drawing 427 pages in full colour was pretty demanding. It took me three years from first preliminary notes to final artwork, with the final 200 pages completed in just eight months on a truly eye-bleeding schedule. Half-way into the final artwork I discovered that I was pregnant with our darling daughter Poppy, and I needed to finish the book before she arrived.

Before beginning the final artwork, I did a detailed rough draft which was pencilled and then inked with a brush-pen (a refillable brush designed for Chinese calligraphy). Part of the reason for spending the extra time inking the roughs was to gain practice with the brush-pen, which was a new tool for me. I had previously worked almost exclusively with a steel nib, and badly needed the practice!

Next I painted the eight background "sets" which are used throughout the book. This was quite a painstaking task as the sets are highly detailed. I wanted the sets to be quite surreal rather than resembling realistic halls, rooms etc. The challenge here was to construct them in such a way that perspective, while not strictly correct, would appear natural when small sections of the set appeared in individual frames on the stage. Because the stage is always seen from the point of view of a person sitting in the audience, I had to give the impression of the action taking place against a fixed, unmoving backdrop, while still keeping plenty of interest and variety by allowing the characters to move about and use the space very extensively. This was quite tricky because, for example, how do you use the upper part of the set when the characters are walking around on the floor? Fortunately I was not really bound by the laws of physics! The characters' own malleability (they are like animated ink blots who leap, fly, expand etc) and the flexible perspective of the sets means that they can use them with greater scope than real actors on a stage. However I had to be careful not to do anything that would be jarring or confusing to the reader's eye and so break the illusion.

Once the sets were done, I began the work of painting the action - the black-inked characters and their words. I painted each page as a piece, with the characters in their correct positions. Each page was then scanned, and I assembled them as double-page spreads in Photoshop. The assembly involved placing the correct sections of

background behind the characters in each frame, colouring the images in the black background outside the frames and colouring the faces of the characters in the frames. I also used a few “special effects” such as the glow on the ghost and the distortion of backgrounds in Ophelia’s mad scene.

In addition to the black ink work, there are also numerous coloured “props” - mostly larger-than-life plants and flowers - which are used throughout the book. These are all hand-painted with acrylic ink and then scanned and positioned using Photoshop.

One of the most playful and enjoyable aspects of doing this book was the collage. I have always loved traditional cut-and-paste collage, but with my scanner I was able to incorporate all kinds of two- and three-dimensional objects, mostly in the backstage realm: rolls of sequins, an old powder compact, the binding of old books, silk scarves and of course the theatre curtain. This is constructed from a Thai silk skirt belonging to my Nana!

IN THE CLASSROOM

Activities and Discussion Questions

1. Pre-reading activity. Research the following questions:
 - (a) What is a graphic novel?
 - (b) How is reading a graphic novel similar to and different from reading a play script? How can you tell when one scene finishes and another begins? How does the reader know who is talking and in what order? How is the passing of time marked?
 - (c) Compose a short piece of dialogue in script form. Recreate this in a one page graphic novel style. How has the text altered? What have you learnt from this process?
2. Pre-reading activity: journal writing. Use the questions below as a stimulus to reflect on the concept of adaptation/transformation (it may be useful to look at **worksheet 1** first.) After studying *Hamlet*, revisit your reflections and see if your ideas have altered.
 - How is an adaptation/transformation of a text similar and different to the original?
 - What might motivate people to adapt an existing text rather than producing an original piece of work? Or *is* an adaptation an original piece of work?
 - Is an adaptation necessarily inferior to, or subordinate to, an original text? Should it be viewed as ‘less creative’ than an original work?
 - Who really ‘owns’ an adaptation – the author, or the author of the initial text?
 - Can adaptation be viewed as a type of plagiarism? Why or why not?
 - To what extent does an author have the right to change or alter an original text in an adaptation? What if the original author doesn’t like an adaptation of their work?
3. *Hamlet* is a text intended to be viewed on stage rather than read. In what ways is reading this graphic novel similar to watching a performance?
4. In most graphic novels and comics, there is a white border around the panels called the ‘gutter’. According to comic expert Scott McCloud, ‘the gutter plays host to much of the magic and mystery’ of comics: ‘Here in the limbo of the gutter, human imagination takes two separate images and transforms them into a single idea.’ How has Greenberg amended the traditional gutter/frame format in her composition? What function does framing, and the space beyond the frames, serve in *Hamlet*?
5. Why do you think Greenberg decided to depict her characters as animated black inkblot-style figures rather than humans? In what ways do the characters’ bodies change or metamorphose throughout the text? What does each of these changes suggest about the characters’ feelings or their interactions with others? What is the significance of the characters putting on and removing their ‘faces’ throughout the book?

6. In an interview on the Radio National Book Show, Greenberg revealed that she had little liking for the character of Gertrude, but was extremely sympathetic towards Ophelia.
(<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/bookshow/stories/2010/3036969.htm>) How is this attitude conveyed in the text?
7. Analyse Greenberg's representation of individual characters, discussing their personality traits, appearance, what ideas Greenberg is trying to convey through their appearance and her attitude towards them (see **worksheet 2**.)
8. Choose a character from another novel, play or film and draw/represent them as Nicki Greenberg might. Explain why you have represented them in this way.
9. Choose three key scenes from the text and describe the visual techniques used by Greenberg in these scenes (see **worksheet 3**). Use this information to write an extended response analysing how Greenberg's use of visual techniques and illustrative style reflects her interpretation of the play.
10. Explain how Greenberg's transformation of *Hamlet* emphasises the following themes:
- Revenge
 - Corruption/Decay/Poison
 - Manipulation/Intrigue
 - Madness/Insanity
 - Deception/Appearance vs Reality
 - Death/Mortality
 - Love/Desire
11. Locate examples of the following symbolic objects or backgrounds in the text. For each, find a quote relating to it and explain what it might represent. Also include any additional symbols or motifs that you find.
- Cogs/clock mechanisms
 - Weeds
 - Masks
 - Flowers
 - Blood
 - Green bubbles
 - Pen/Quill
12. Working individually or in groups, scan key panels from the graphic novel and place them into an electronic presentation. Choose music to accompany the events and characters shown in the scenes. Present your work to the class and explain the choices made.
13. Write a review of Nicki Greenberg's *Hamlet*. You may want to use an existing review as a scaffold (see 'Further Resources'.) Ensure your opinion and evaluation of the text is embedded in the description (ie. it is not simply a recount of the text followed by a rating.) Some aspects of the text that could be discussed in your review include:
- adaptation of the original text/intertextual elements
 - graphic novel format
 - characterisation
 - illustrative style (medium, colour, shape, line/vectors, texture, medium, composition, proxemics, size etc)
 - intended audience
 - possible readings or interpretations of the text
 - themes, messages and values communicated
 - comparisons with similar books
 - what the text assumes that the reader knows
 - things that are implied but not said directly

- the author's context (background, previous work etc)
 - strengths and weaknesses of the text
14. Select a play, novel or poem with which you are familiar and present a section of it in graphic novel format. Try to incorporate some of the visual techniques Greenberg uses in *Hamlet*. For instance, variations in framing, utilising the space outside the panels, collage medium, symbolism, intertextuality/allusion, consistent point-of-view etc
 15. Nicki Greenberg's *Hamlet* features a backstage parallel narrative which highlights many of the key themes of the play. Create your own narrative to complement a play or novel that you have previously studied. Explain how you would intersperse your narrative through the original text, and the themes, characteristics or ideas you are attempting to bring forward.
 16. Have a class debate over one of the following topics:
 - The graphic novel is a legitimate art form for the interpretation of Shakespeare.
 - Graphic novels help make Shakespeare relevant to modern teenagers.
 17. Create a puppet show based on a section of Nicki Greenberg's *Hamlet*. Consider the appearance and movement of the puppets, positioning, delivery of lines, backdrops, props, and music. Present this to the class for peer review.
 18. Read the original Shakespearean play, or view a film or stage production of *Hamlet*. In your opinion, which experience was more satisfying and why? Were there particular advantages and disadvantages to each format? How was each interpretation affected by the text type?
 19. Divide students into groups. Have one group perform a scene from the original play script, and another group use the graphic novel as the source of their performance. After watching the performances, discuss the similarities and differences that emerged.
 20. Write a comparative essay OR draw a Venn diagram showing the similarities and differences between Nicki Greenberg's *Hamlet* and the original text.

Additional Activities for Senior Students

1. The character of Hamlet has been interpreted in a variety of ways: a tragic hero, an 'everyman', a delusional madman, a spoiled adolescent, an oedipal wreck, a cowardly procrastinator... Read a range of essays analysing the character of Hamlet (those by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Goethe, William Richardson, A. Bradley, Freud and Eliot would be particularly valuable.)
 - (a) Which interpretation is most similar to Greenberg's? Which is closest to your own opinion of the character? How difficult is it for you to separate Greenberg's perspective from your own?
 - (b) Host a panel discussion on Greenberg's interpretation of *Hamlet* with students taking on the roles of these critics/essayists.
2. Write a response to one of the following questions (adapted from previous HSC exams):
 - a) In what ways does Greenberg draw you into the world of *Hamlet*?
 - b) What aspects of Nicki Greenberg's *Hamlet* had the greatest impact on you? In your response, you should reflect on both the ideas and narrative/artistic techniques used in the text.
 - c) Identify a key scene in Nicki Greenberg's *Hamlet*. Analyse the ways in which this scene reflects both the ideas and characteristics of the texts as a whole. Present this as a speech or an online resource.
 - d) On the basis of the distinctive features of Nicki Greenberg's *Hamlet*, argue for its inclusion in a 'Top Books' list.
3. A psychoanalytic reading of a text focuses on the conscious and unconscious fears and desires of the characters or author. How could Nicki Greenberg's *Hamlet* be interpreted from this perspective? (Think particularly about the 'mental realm' of the characters signified by the black space outside the frames.)

4. In the modernist poem, 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock', T.S. Eliot makes an intertextual reference to Hamlet, writing: 'No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;/ Am an attendant lord, one that will do / To swell a progress, start a scene or two...' Read this poem. How might it relate to the backstage drama presented in Greenberg's *Hamlet*? Do you think Greenberg may have been influenced by this poem?
5. Working in groups of five (one moderator and four panellists), produce a vodcast or podcast in the style of 'First Tuesday Bookclub' (view the episode on graphic novels for inspiration: <http://www.abc.net.au/tv/firsttuesday/s2815885.htm>) Discuss various responses to/ interpretations of Nicki Greenberg's *Hamlet* adopting some of the following roles:
 - conservative Shakespearean scholar
 - modern teenager
 - teacher
 - artist
 - stage actor or director
 - university student studying the play
 - feminist scholar
 - Marxist scholar
 - psychoanalyst/Freudian theorist (perhaps even Freud himself!)

WORKSHEETS

Worksheet 1: Comparison of Adaptations and Original Texts

Original	Adaptation
Primary text	Secondary text
Direct from author to audience	From author via interpreter to audience
Audience is able to see or read the text for themselves and potentially form their own judgement of characters and events.	Text has been selected and interpreted by intermediary and thus reflects their particular context and agenda. Interpreter overlays the meanings that they see in the text.
Composed at an earlier date	Transformed /adapted at a later date
Makes use of the communication technology available at the time	May make use of communication technology or forms not available at the time of the original
May have a limited or specialised audience	Potentially opens up the text for new or different audiences
Usually the text would not have a cultural status while in composition, possibly only gaining stature or prestige after its publication.	The text may have gained status or prestige after its original publication, possibly becoming well-known, famous, a 'classic' or entering the canon.

Worksheet 2: Character Analysis Table

Character	Personality/Character Traits	Description of Appearance	Significance of Appearance	Greenberg's attitude to character
Hamlet				
Gertrude				
Claudius				
Ophelia				
Polonius				
Horatio				
Laertes				
Rosencrantz & Guildenstern				
Young Fortinbras				
Osric				
Ghost/King Hamlet				
Gravedigger				

Worksheet 3: Analysis of Visual Techniques

Visual Element	Act: Scene:	Act: Scene:	Act: Scene:
Objects What objects and characters can you see?			
Body language / characterisation What facial expressions, gestures, use of space can you see? Are there any props or costumes?			
Size What size are the objects/characters in relation to each other?			
Setting/Background Where is the scene set? What does the background look like?			
Colours What are the predominant colours used?			
Light Is the picture bright or dark? Is it the same all over?			
Framing What sort of framing devices have been used?			
Positioning/Proxemics Where are objects in relation to each other? Are they in the fore, middle or background etc.			
'Shot'/Perspective What type of 'shot' has been used: close-up, medium, long, establishing etc.? What angle are we seeing the scene from? (bird's-eye, high angle, eyelevel etc)			
Lines and vectors Where do lines in the picture lead the eye?			
Symbolism Are there any symbolic objects or motifs? What might they represent?			

FURTHER RESOURCES

Information on teaching with graphic novels and links to additional resources and articles

<http://www.allenandunwin.com/default.aspx?page=598>

Reviews of Nicki Greenberg's *Hamlet*:

The Australian - <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/arts/something-blotted-in-the-state-of-denmark/story-e6frg8n6-1225954270487>

Sydney Morning Herald <http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/books/hamlet-reborn-as-a-blot-on-the-bards-copybook-20100924-15qg3.html>

Behind the Critical Curtain Blog - <http://cameronwoodhead.com/archives/hamlet-by-nicki-greenberg-book-review/>

Nicki Greenberg on *Hamlet* and graphic novels

Greenberg writes about the creation of the text:

<http://www.readings.com.au/news/the-story-of-my-book-nicki-greenberg-on-hamlet>

In conversation with Shaun Tan:

<http://wheelercentre.com/videos/video/hamlet-a-graphic-tale/>

On the Radio National Bookshow:

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/bookshow/stories/2010/3036969.htm>

In a panel discussion of graphic novels on 'First Tuesday Book Club':

<http://www.abc.net.au/tv/firsttuesday/s2815885.htm>

Greenberg's website: <http://www.nickigreenberg.com/>

Greenberg's blog: <http://nickigreenberg.blogspot.com/>

Online resources for Shakespeare's *Hamlet*

Absolute Shakespeare - <http://absoluteshakespeare.com/>

'Enterprises of Great Pitch and Moment': Using the Internet to Teach *Hamlet* -

<http://www.shakespearemag.com/fall96/hamlet.asp>

Folger Shakespeare Library - <http://www.folger.edu/template.cfm?cid=2782>

National Arts Centre Study Guide - http://artsalive.ca/pdf/eth/activities/hamlet_guide.pdf

Royal Shakespeare Company Resource Library - <http://www.rsc.org.uk/education/secondary/resource-library.aspx>

Web English Teacher - <http://www.webenglishteacher.com/hamlet.html>