

January 5, 2014

Dear Mom/Dad of British Literature Student:

I am about to make an unusual request. I would like to ask you to do a bit of homework this weekend. Don't worry -- this is not being graded!

As you may or may not know, we are beginning to read *Hamlet* in our British Literature class. Early in the play a father (Polonius) offers advice to his son (Laertes), who is about to leave home for France. He tells him, among other things, to never borrow or lend money, to be very careful in his choice of friends, to listen well to the opinions of others but to speak his own sparingly, to avoid wasting his money on flashy clothes, and, above all, to always follow his heart.

I would like to offer you the same opportunity to share your thoughts with your own child as they prepare to leave home. How do you feel about this moment in time? Are there values you would like them to remember as they head off into the world? Are there lessons you have learned in life that you wish to impart to them? In short, do you have any advice for them?

My purpose here is twofold: to personalize their experience of the play and to give you a chance to remind them of the lessons you have been trying to teach them over the last eighteen years. Please seal your letters in an envelope and give it to your student to bring to class on Monday. The letter will be opened in Monday's class. (Students will not be forced to reveal the contents of the letter under any circumstances. This is a letter between you and your child. Should they wish to share their reactions, however, they will be encouraged to do so).

Thank you very much, in advance, for your participation in what I hope will be a special moment for your child.

Sincerely,

Michelle Senter