**‘Act 3, scene 4 proves that Gertrude is just an innocent victim.’ To what extent do you agree with this statement**?

(approx. 700-1000 words)

1. Provide an overview of Gertrude’s role in the play so far in the introduction –how has the audience responded to her so far and why? Can you briefly refer to a production/performance interpretation that supports either her innocence or another part of personality? (e.g. Gregory Doran 2008/ Lyndsey Turner 2015)?
2. Evidence from the scene (and perhaps brief links to elsewhere) that suggests she is innocent; close analysis and interpretation of textual detail
3. Evidence from the scene (and perhaps brief links to elsewhere) that suggests she isn’t innocent; close analysis and interpretation of textual detail
4. Conclude – to what extent is she innocent? Is it possible to see beyond Hamlet’s condemnation of her? Is she just another female character like Ophelia who is at the mercy of men?

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**Quotes from 3.1 – is Gertrude innocent or villainous?**

**Objective: Close examination of textual material – mostly Gertrude, but may want to refer to Hamlet also as we are encouraged by Shakespeare to see her through his eyes.**

**GERTRUDE**

‘thou hast thy father much offended’

‘Come, come you answer with an idle tongue’

‘Why, how now Hamlet!’

‘Have you forgot me?’

‘I’ll set those to you that can speak’

‘What wilt thou do…Help’

‘O what a rash and bloody deed is this!’

‘As kill a king?’

‘What have I done that thou dar’st wag thy tongue/ In noise so rude against me?’

‘Ay me, what act/ That roars so loud and thunders in the index?’

‘O Hamlet, speak no more./ Thou turns’t my eyes into my soul/ And there I see such black and grieved spots/ As will leave there tinct.’

‘O speak to me no more!/ These words like daggers enter in my ears./ No more, sweet Hamlet’

‘No more!’

‘Alas he’s mad!’

‘how is’t with you/ That you do bend your eye on vacancy/ And with th’incorporal air do make discourse?...O gentle son,/ Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper/ Sprinkle cool patience. Wheron do you look?’

‘To whom do you speak?’

‘Nothing at all, yet all that is I see’ …. ‘No, nothing but ourselves’

‘This is the very coinage of your brain/ This bodiless creation ecstasy…’

‘Oh Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain’

‘I have no life to breathe what thou hast said to me’

**HAMLET**

‘your husband brother’s wife…you are my mother’

‘Leave wringing of your hands…let me wring your heart…if damned custom have not brazed it so’

Hamlet’s expectations – ‘grace and blush of modesty’ ‘rose’ ‘fair forehead’

‘Have you eyes?’

‘You cannot call it love, for at your age/ The heyday in the blood is tame, it’s humble’

‘sense/Is apoplexed’

‘hoodman blind’

‘eyes without feeling, feeling without sight’

‘Oh shame, where is thy blush?’

‘rank sweat of an enseamed bed/ Stewed in corruption’

‘Confess yourself to heaven…’

‘go not to my uncle’s bed’

‘Assume a virtue if you have it not./ That monster Custom, who all sense doth eat…’

‘For use can almost change the stamp of nature’

‘Not this…Let the bloat king tempt you to bed again…let him for a pair of reechy kisses’