



SHAKESPEARE REDUX RESOURCE GUIDE

By William Shakespeare and Seamus Fera

This play was originally commissioned by the Arts Umbrella Theatre, Music, & Film department, performed by the Junior and Senior Theatre Troupes and Dramaturgy by Paul Moniz de Sá, Artistic Director of Theatre, Music, & Film

Credits

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Sewit Haile	Voice, Student, Lady Anne, Contestant
Lucy Jeffrey	Voice, Singer, Juliet 2, Viola, Contestant
Chinen Kaneko	Voice, Puck, Contestant
Ruby Klein	Voice, Trestle, Student-Director
Molly Makepeace	Voice, Director, Host, Olivia
Gemma Martin	Voice, Hermia, Contestant
Ava Nikolakis	Voice, Berkeley, Contestant, Troilus
Sahba Sabour	Voice, Muse, Contestant
Gus Setala-Gay	Voice, Demetrius, Contestant
Oliver Stevenson	Voice, Mentee, Contestant, Fabian
Kamil Whaley-Kalaora	Voice, Gloucester, Contestant, Student- Actor
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Hello! And welcome to the Resource Guide for Shakespeare's Redux by William Shakespeare and Seamus Fera. We hope that you are able to use this film for multiple uses- education, thought provocation and, most importantly, as entertainment. To help support your use of the film, we have created this resource guide. We hope that this will help you understand the point of view of this piece as well as the original source material. Most importantly, we are able to portray our excitement and love of Shakespeare to you all. Enjoy!

SYNOPSIS

This is not a narrative story as you are familiar with. There is not an evident beginning, middle and end. Instead, it is a patchwork of scenes, thoughts and moments centralized around the works of William Shakespeare. Throughout the piece we hear the inner thoughts and opinions of a group of students as they navigate the sometimes difficult, yet always beautiful text of Shakespeare.

List of Scenes

Prologue

“O for a Muse of Fire” Monologue from the Beginning of Henry V

A Midsummer Night's Dream Excerpt of Act 3, Scene 2

“O pardon me” Monologue from Act 3, Scene 1 of Julius Caesar

Richard III Act 1, Scene 2

Much Ado About Shakespeare Game Show

Troilus and Cressida Act 3, Scene 2

Thoughts on Shakespeare, Othello and Race

“Gallop Apace you Fiery Footed Steeds” Monologue from Act 3, Scene 2 of Romeo and Juliet

Twelfth Night Excerpt from Act 1 Scene 5

Macbeth Act 2, Scene 2

Epilogue



PROLOGUE

Before you watch

In the prologue, the students discuss how they feel about Shakespeare. Before you watch the prologue, do this exercise to stimulate the thoughts of the students.

- A) Primary Level: Write down a list of anything and everything you know about William Shakespeare.
- B) Secondary Level: Write a short diary entry about how Shakespeare makes you feel. You can include personal experiences, facts about him or just your sense of who/what he is.

As you watch, ask yourself which opinions do you agree with or disagree with? Do you see yourself in any of these characters?

Glossary

Bard- an archaic term for a poet who recites/writes epic verse

Comedy- A play which ends in a marriage/happily. Shakespeare would often use twins, mistaken identities, letters, cross dressing and songs in his comedies.

History- A play which deals with a historical event from British history. Often inspired by a book called Holinshed's Chronicles.

Iambic Pentameter- a poetic foot consisting of one unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable. The main form in which Shakespeare wrote. Follows the natural heartbeat.

Playwright- Someone who writes a play. The term wright refers to a labourer.

Thee- archaic version of "you" as singular object of a verb or preposition

Thine- archaic version of "yours"

Thou- archaic version of "you" as the singular subject of a verb

Tragedy- A play which has a sad ending. Often the protagonist dies. In Shakespearean tragedies, order is often restored with a new order coming into power.

Trochee- a poetic foot consisting of one stressed syllable followed by unstressed syllable



O FOR A MUSE OF FIRE

Summary

A Grade 12 student is rehearsing alone for her theatre school audition when the Muse of Fire descends to help her understand the nuance and rhythm of Shakespeare's most famous prologue.

This scene was designed as an introduction to understanding the purpose of the iambic pentameter rhythm. Iambic pentameter is a typical rhythm of Elizabethan theatre. Oftentimes, people think it is complicated and archaic. The reality is we are surrounded by this rhythm all the time. It replicates the natural rhythm of a human heart beat.

Before you watch

Have your students read out loud the following monologue:

O for a Muse of fire, that would ascend
The brightest heaven of invention,
A kingdom for a stage, princes to act
And monarchs to behold the swelling scene!
Then should the warlike Harry, like himself,
Assume the port of Mars; and at his heels,
Leash'd in like hounds, should famine, sword and fire
Crouch for employment. But pardon, and gentles all,
The flat unraised spirits that have dared
On this unworthy scaffold to bring forth
So great an object: can this cockpit hold
The vasty fields of France? or may we cram
Within this wooden O the very casques
That did affright the air at Agincourt?
O, pardon! since a crooked figure may
Attest in little place a million;
And let us, ciphers to this great accompt,
On your imaginary forces work.
Suppose within the girdle of these walls
Are now confined two mighty monarchies,
Whose high upreared and abutting fronts
The perilous narrow ocean parts asunder:
Piece out our imperfections with your thoughts;
Into a thousand parts divide on man,
And make imaginary puissance;
Think when we talk of horses, that you see them
Printing their proud hoofs i' the receiving earth;
For 'tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings,
Carry them here and there; jumping o'er times,



Turning the accomplishment of many years
Into an hour-glass: for the which supply,
Admit me Chorus to this history;
Who prologue-like your humble patience pray,
Gently to hear, kindly to judge, our play.

Then ask the following questions

Who do you think is speaking?

What are some of the images that are vivid or clear for you?

What doesn't make sense?

When looking at a monologue, much like this student, it is important to understand how the meter can help with comprehension. Some activities you can do are as follows:

- 1) Have the students read out segments of the text over exaggerating the rhythm of da DUH da DUH da DUH da DUH da DUH
- 2) Have them walk around the room, only stepping on the stressed syllables

It is so important to believe that iambic pentameter is not a scary and hard thing to understand. Once you start hearing the rhythm, the sense of the text will start making sense.

Quick note: When the rhythm is perfect then you know that the character is in control; when there are too many or too few syllables it means that something very emotional is happening for the character that would be worth exploring.

Words

Shakespeare invented thousands of words. Many of which we still use to this day. That being said, sometimes language changes and words fall out of use. To really understand what is going on in the text you must understand all the words. Thus the Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary was created by Alexander Schmidt. This two part volume has every word Shakespeare used and their multiple definitions. This book and it's resource can be found online at: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.03.0079>
It is a bit of an old website, but so helpful!

Glossary

Agincourt- Also known as "the Battle of Agincourt", it was a major British victory against the French during the Hundred Years War.



Chorus- Taken from the Greek theatrical practice, a chorus is the voice of the people. In Henry V, they serve as a narrator

Henry V- Henry the fifth was a Lancaster king of England. Fought many wars in France. He died at a young age leaving his infant son (Henry VI) in power which resulted in the War of the Roses.

Lexicon- A dictionary that has all the words used by Shakespeare

Mars- The Roman god of war

Muse- An ancient Greek goddess of inspiration



A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Summary

Puck has been tasked by Oberon, the king of the fairies, to cast a love spell on Demetrius so he falls in love with Helena. Instead, Puck casts the spell on Lysander who has run away with Hermia. Lysander sees Helena first and falls in love. The four lovers meet and have a big fight. Helena thinks Hermia and the boys are playing a prank and Hermia thinks her best friend has stolen her boyfriend.

Before you watch

This scene is all about love and mistaken love. Make a list of all the other stories, books, movies, etc that you can think of that have a similar structure.

While watching: This scene has a specific design aesthetic. What do you notice about what the actors are wearing? Why do you think the directors chose this look?

In Elizabethan theatre a typical theatrical device was an aside or direct address. This means that the actor talks directly to the audience. This was often done to allow the audience an inside look at the thoughts and experience of a certain character. In this scene, Puck breaks the fourth wall and has a relationship with the audience. How does that affect your perception of Puck and the others?

Abbreviations

As we learned in the “O for a Muse” scene, the rhythm of Shakespeare is five soft and five strong syllables. When reading Shakespeare sometimes you may notice words you’ve never seen before like “o’er” or “ne’er”. On first viewing, this makes it hard to understand however remember- rhythm is key! Take this line:

Hermia: If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,
Being o’er shoes in blood, plunge in the deep,
And kill me too.

With the word o’er we get a lovely perfect iambic line. However if we used the actual word “over” we would go up to 11 syllables.

Examples of abbreviations:

o’er = Over

Ne’er = never

I’ = In

I’t’h = In the

In’t = In it

gi’ = give



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Wi' = with

E'er - ever

By'r = by our

o' = of

Shakespeare's O

You hear characters often say the word 'o' for instance when Demetrius says:

Demetrius: O Helena, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!
To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?
Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show
Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!

Demetrius has just woken up and fallen in love with Helena. He is in a state of heightened passion. When characters in Shakespeare uses "O" they don't have words to express how they feel. They can be super excited or super sad or super angry. This is a gift to actors!

Trochee:

As we know, the majority of Shakespeare's verse is in iambic pentameter. When he wrote mythic or magical characters, he would shift the rhythm to be reversed- one stressed syllable followed by unstressed. This was a way to make these characters othered.

Glossary

Love in Idleness- The flower that has the love potion in it.

Oberon- The king of the fairies. Married to Titania

O'er Shoes- A way of saying "knee deep"

Robin Goodfellow- An alternative name for Puck

Woo- to flirt; to make someone love you



O PARDON ME...

Before you watch: Have a conversation. What is the most helpful way for an adult to help you figure something out? Have you ever panicked when having to perform and present? What are some techniques you used to calm yourself down?

Summary

A student discusses how they felt while experiencing performance anxiety during the first read of a play. A second student is working on a monologue and is receiving one on one coaching with their mentor.

While you watch

Shakespeare uses imagery to help convey the story. Remember back in Elizabethan England there was no CGI or special effects. During this speech, what images do you see? Can you identify and list some of the words Shakespeare uses that help create these images? Now, compare which words stood out to the iambic pentameter rhythm. Do these align? What do you notice?

Glossary

Alliteration: the occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words.

Book Work- The homework actors do before rehearsals begin. They will go through their scripts and look up words they do not know, look for their character's goals and relationships and characteristics, etc.

Given Circumstances - The "who, what, where, when, why" that actors ask themselves as they start rehearsals. This acting principle was created by Russian theatre artist Konstantin Stanislavski to help actors understand what is going on underneath the surface to explain why the character is acting the way they are.

Monologue- from the Greek "monologos" which means speaking alone. This is when a character speaks alone for a period of time. Sometimes there is another character there and other times they are alone.

Table Read- Oftentimes, the first thing during rehearsals. All actors will sit around a large table and read the script out loud.



RICHARD III

Synopsis

A student comes out and discusses how all of Shakespeare's history plays come from a certain "victor" point of view. They are not facts, but rather idealized versions of the events. Then we see two low class pallbearers discussing the machinations of the royalty as Richard, Duke of Gloucester attempts to woo Lady Anne, the widow of the prince he just killed. This all happens as she is the chief mourner at the funeral of her father in law.

Important figures

Richard, Duke of Gloucester- Later becomes Richard III. He is depicted as a gross hunchback, completely void of humanity. His disfigurement is the physicalization of his evilness. In the cycle of plays, he murders both Henry VI and his son Edward.

Lady Anne- Daughter to Warwick, known as the kingmaker. Historically she had been tied to Richard but then was married to Prince Edward while her sister was married to Richard's brother George. She was widowed and then married Richard. She became Queen of England but soon died.

Henry VI- The son of Henry V and from the Lancaster side of the Plantagenets. He became king at nine months old and suffered from mental health issues that left the power up for grabs. Married to Margaret of Anjou. In the plays he is portrayed as a weak king who relies heavily on religion and the idea of divine supremacy.

Queen Margaret- Born in Anjou (France), Margaret married Henry as a political match and soon became the brains behind the throne. She was immensely disliked because she was a foreigner. She is the character who appears in the most plays (4) and we see her journey from a young maiden to an old and embittered widow.

Prince Edward- The son of Henry and Margaret and husband to Anne. He is the heir to the throne until he is murdered by Richard in front of Margaret.

Edward IV- The eldest brother to Richard and heir to the York side of the Plantagenets. He eventually beats the Lancaster army and becomes king.

As you watch

Pay close attention to what Lady Anne says during her speech at the beginning of the scene. How does it create dramatic irony for the rest of the scene?

Humor and Tragedy

Oftentimes people think that Shakespeare wrote Tragedies, Histories and Comedies and yes, that is true. However the magic of his works is that all of his plays are filled with comedy and tragedy. Every comedy starts with a moment of intense drama. For example, Hermia being told she must either marry, become a nun, or die in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or Viola and Sebastian being separated in a shipwreck in *Twelfth Night*. The same thing can be said about the tragedies, they often start with a sense of victory or triumph- Ie Macbeth defeating the traitorous



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Macdonwald. It is the reversal of both of these fortunes that creates the dynamic and drama of the texts.

Shakespeare also loved to allow for humor to resonate through the words of his villains. As you can see in this interchange:

Gloucester: Let him thank me, that help to send him thither;
For he was fitter for that place than earth.

Lady Anne: And thou unfit for any place but hell.

Gloucester: Yes, one place else, if you will hear me name it.

Lady Anne: Some dungeon.

Gloucester: Your bed-chamber.

Yes, it is predatory and manipulative but in Elizabethan times, the witty banter and word play would have been met with huge laughter.

Protagonist Vs. Antagonist

These terms are crucial when breaking down the structure of a plot. Oftentimes it is simplified to good guy and bad guy but, by definition the Protagonist is “the main figure of a story” and an Antagonist is “a character in opposition to the central character”.

Shakespeare’s greatest characters- Othello, Richard III, Iago, Lady Macbeth, Portia- are not one dimensional in their qualities. They are a complicated melting pot of good and evil intentions.

After you watch

What do you think Richard did in order to manipulate Lady Anne into agreeing to marry him?
Is Richard a likeable protagonist?

Glossary

Lancaster- A cadet branch of the family that came to power when Henry, Duke of Bolingbroke took the throne (Henry IV). This branch descended from a son of Edward III

Plague- A deadly disease that would reappear frequently throughout Medieval and Renaissance history causing millions of deaths.

Plantagenets- The royal house of England that ruled from 1154-1485. Practically all of Shakespeare’s history plays explore the dynamics of these kings and their surrounding court.

Propaganda- The dissemination of information to sway public opinion. Often used for political or nationalistic reasons.

Usurping- the act of taking political power by force



War of the Roses- A war that started in 1455 and ended in 1487. This is the ongoing war around succession between the two fractions of the royal house of Plantagenets. Each faction had a rose in their family's crest. Red for Lancaster and White for York. The war finally ended when Henry, Duke of Richmond (Red Rose) married Elizabeth of York (White Rose) thus creating the Tudor dynasty.

Winston Churchill- A British Prime Minister from the early 20th century

York- A cadet branch of the family that came to power when Edward, Duke of York, usurped the throne from Henry VI. This branch descended from a son of Edward III



MUCH ADO ABOUT SHAKESPEARE

Synopsis

A student lists all of the play names in alphabetical order. Then, four teams of students compete on the show *Much Ado About Shakespeare* to win a trip to The Globe Theatre

Glossary

Globe Theatre- The open air theatre that many of Shakespeare's plays premiered at. It is located in Southwark, London. Originally constructed in 1599 from timber taken from a former playhouse, it burned down in 1613 and was reconstructed the following year. It was shut down during the reign of puritanism in 1642. In 1997 it was rebuilt and you can still see plays there to this day. There was an inherent social structure built into the audience. The poor, the groundlings, stood at the base of the stage in the pit. There were then benches for the merchants slightly raised and on the balcony level were cushioned seats for the nobility.

The Mechanicals- Refers to the clowns of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* who put on the play within the play at the end. Their name is a reference to the fact that they were laborers.

The Three Witches- Refers to the supernatural characters who appear in *Macbeth*. They are also referred to as Weird Sisters. James I of England loved the supernatural so Shakespeare included these characters to gain favour.

Yellow Stockings- Refers to a scene in *Twelfth Night* where Malvolio, the uptight butler, is tricked into wearing yellow stockings with black crossed garters in order to woo his boss, Olivia. This is the main comedic moment of the play and spoofs fashion trends of the elite.

After you watch

After you watch, create your own game show with facts you learned during your unit and play it with your class.



TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

Before you watch

In small groups talk about a time you saw something that changed your life. This could be a performance, a sports game, a painting, etc. Try to describe the exact moment it happened to you.

Synopsis

A student describes watching a production of *Hamlet* and being swept away by the beauty of the production and language. Then two beings, Question and Answer, watch as prince Troilus of Troy and Cressida have their first meeting in the garden of her uncle Pandarus.

What to know

Troilus and Cressida is one of Shakespeare's least produced and favored plays. It is very long and has two distinct stories- the Greek soldiers figuring out how to get Achilles to rejoin the fight and Troilus and Cressida's love affair. In current times, it has been seen as highly problematic in its portrayal of Cressida. One moment she is confessing her never ending love to Troilus, then, after she is traded by the Greeks, she agrees to be the paramour of Diomedes. Speeches are long and grandiose and the ending does not have a nice resolution. It is very much a "problem play". However, if you look deeper this play is rich with interesting examples of typical Elizabethan oration and very complex and human characters. Cressida is a brilliant example of how women had to navigate survival in a patriarchal and misogynist world.

Why this scene

When people think of teen romance, they immediately go to *Romeo and Juliet*. There is no doubt that the famous balcony scene is a masterclass in beautiful language. However, this scene between Troilus and Cressida is more authentic to teenage emotions and ideology around love. These characters stumble, pause and jump from thought to thought. They both believe that love will triumph without hardship. Eventually both characters reckon with this improbability and end up alone.

Glossary

Cressida- A character invented during the Medieval period. She is derived from a minor character of mythology named Chryseis. She is the daughter of Calchas, a seer who defected to the Greeks. She lives with her uncle Pandarus and falls in love with Troilus. Eventually she is traded to the Greeks in order to release a prisoner of war. While there, she aligns herself with

Diomedes for survival. Eventually she becomes a prostitute and dies. Cressida, during the medieval period, was perceived as the representation of a faithless lover. Now, we understand the nuances of her role within the patriarchal society.

Cupid- The Roman equivalent of Eros. The god of desire, attraction, and affection.

Hecuba- The matriarch and queen of Troy. She is the mother of 50 sons and 50 daughters. After the sack of Troy she is enslaved and chosen by Odysseus. She is spared by the gods by being turned into a dog.



Pandarus- The lecherous uncle of Cressida. His name is the root of the term “pander”. In original myths he was a warrior whereas medieval literature made him into a coward and fop. Priam: The patriarch and king of Troy. He is the father of 50 sons and 50 daughters. In myths he is slain on an altar by the son of Achilles.

Troilus: The youngest prince of Troy. In original myth his life is linked to Troy so Achilles ambushes him and murders him. During the medieval period he became a representation of chivalric (knightly) love and the myth of him and Cressida was created.

Trojan War: A mythic war between Greece and Troy. Paris of Troy fell in love and abducted Helen, wife of Menelaus. Due to an oath sworn by all the kings of Greece, they band together and sail to Troy. The war goes on for ten years as Troy has an impenetrable wall. Eventually Odysseus hatches the Trojan Horse plan and Troy and its citizens are destroyed or enslaved.

Problem Plays

Problem plays are exactly what they sound like- problems. These plays do not fit nicely into the boxes of history, tragedy or comedy. They are a selection of plays that shift drastically in tone. One moment they are hilarious and then the next scene, they are exploring complex human psychological experiences. Characters in these plays are often ambiguous and moveable. Protagonists may do terrible things in order to achieve their goals. These plays often explore moral dilemmas or social problems. These plays include:

Troilus and Cressida
All's Well That Ends Well
Measure for Measure
Merchant of Venice
Timon of Athens
Winter's Tale
Two Noble Kinsmen

It is important to understand that this is a contemporary classification. In Elizabethan times, these plays would be categorized as Tragedy or Comedy with no grey area. It is a modern sensibility of a set of values that defines these texts as problematic.

Deeper look

As discussed earlier, iambic pentameter, is the heart beat of all the characters and follow a specific rhythm. Often, we believe that that means that each line is one complete thought. As Shakespeare grew more confident in his writing, he started to use the iambic rhythm to explore deeper human turmoil and thought processes. Take a read of this monologue:

Cressida: Hard to seem won: but I was won, my lord,
With the first glance that ever--pardon me--
If I confess much, you will play the tyrant.
I love you now; but not, till now, so much
But I might master it: in faith, I lie;



My thoughts were like unbridled children, grown

Too headstrong for their mother. See, we fools!
Why have I blabb'd? who shall be true to us,
When we are so unsecret to ourselves?
But, though I loved you well, I woo'd you not;
And yet, good faith, I wish'd myself a man,
Or that we women had men's privilege
Of speaking first. Sweet, bid me hold my tongue,
For in this rapture I shall surely speak
The thing I shall repent. See, see, your silence,
Cunning in dumbness, from my weakness draws
My very soul of counsel! stop my mouth.

What do you notice about the rhythm in this monologue and also the thought process of Cressida. Are her thoughts regulated or rapidly shifting?

Now read the monologue out loud following the iambic pentameter rhythm. What makes sense? What is unclear?

Now read the monologue following the punctuation. What makes sense? What is unclear?

Now try to find the happy medium.

Inspirations

Shakespeare is a plagiarizer. That is just a fact. In fact, most playwrights of this period were. They all recycled source material. *Troilus and Cressida* was inspired by Homer's *Illiad* as well as Chaucer's epic poem *Troilus and Criseyde*. There are also potentially two other plays written around the same time exploring the same theme. It is comparable to the sheer volume of the Spider-Man films. All of the History plays are inspired by Holinshed's *Chronicles*. Some other plays are inspired by myths or Roman plays. The only two plays that are known as original plots are *The Tempest* and *Love's Labours Lost*.



THOUGHTS ON SHAKESPEARE

In a contemporary lens, Shakespeare includes many problematic moments. The protagonist in *All's Well that Ends Well*, Helena, achieves her objective of staying with Bertram by raping him. However this was a typical theatrical device called a Bed- Trick. This is a common literary device that he uses in *Measure for Measure* as well. Interestingly enough, both of these instances are directed towards the antagonists of the play- Bertram and Angelo respectively. Through these tricks, the antagonists are tricked into sleeping with the “appropriate” person.

Both *Titus Andronicus* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* explore rape in varying degrees. Tamora, in the former, has her sons rape and mutilate Lavinia as revenge, and Proteus in the latter threatens to rape Sylvia if she doesn't agree to marry him. Characters in *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest* also threaten rape.

It is important to look at these texts through an understanding of the values and ideologies of the period in which it was written.

OTHELLO AND RACE

As stated above, it is important that we approach these texts as they are - artifacts of the British Renaissance experience. That being said, we cannot ignore the fact that we are approaching the texts in a modern way.

The Elizabethan society had a very complex relationship with race and otherness. The average White, Renaissance citizen would have been very unaware of anything beyond their small villages, immediate country, or what they consumed in popular art. Because of that, anyone or anything that didn't fit into that mold would be considered foreign or “Other” Remember, this is around the period in which many European countries conducted long expeditions overseas to “discover new lands and peoples”. Writings or journal entries gathered from these trips fascinated people back home. Most importantly, these writings helped to establish an exoticized “Other” that was interpreted, reinterpreted, and then reinforced and reimagined through the arts.

The Renaissance ideal was to be fair and pale and darkness was the antithesis. This can be traced back to the Christian church, where darkness was associated with the fall from grace and being sent away into the darkness of the world. This historical and cultural context helps to explain Shakespeare's presentation of non-white characters at that time.

Questions

Note: There is no right answer to any of these questions!

- How do you and your lived experiences affect how you interact with Shakespeare and his works?
 - How is race re/presented in the play? What do Shakespeare's descriptions of race reveal about Renaissance notions of racial identity?
 - How are Blackness and Whiteness portrayed in the play?



- How might Shakespeare be implicated in the cultural history of blackface? What is the relationship between representation moving from page to stage?
- Is Othello a racist play, or a play about race and racism?
- Why does Shakespeare insist on the blackness of Othello? Why is Othello black or Black, and why does this matter?
- What could we do to make the texts and productions more inclusive and accessible to all lived experiences?

Please continue the research and exploration on this subject. Here is a website with some great resources

<https://shakespeareandbeyond.folger.edu/2018/02/09/books-shakespeare-race/>



GALLOP APACE, YOU FIERY-FOOTED STEEDS

Synopsis

Two students discuss the bawdiness of Shakespearean texts. Then, a director leads two actors through a dress rehearsal of the famous Juliet monologue in a modern avant-garde translated production when the text is mirrored with contemporary English.

Before you watch

Take the monologue and translate it into modern English. Make it as simple as you want. Get rid of the poetry and look at the essence of what Juliet is saying and wanting.

Juliet: Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
Towards Phoebus' lodging: such a waggoner
As Phaethon would whip you to the west,
And bring in cloudy night immediately.
Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night,
That runaway's eyes may wink and Romeo
Leap to these arms, untalk'd of and unseen.
Lovers can see to do their amorous rites
By their own beauties; or, if love be blind,
It best agrees with night. Come, civil night,
Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,
And learn me how to lose a winning match,
Play'd for a pair of stainless maidenhoods.
Hood my unmann'd blood bating in my cheeks
With thy black mantle, till strange love grown bold
Think true love acted simple modesty.
Come, night, come, Romeo, come, thou day in night;
For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night
Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.
Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-brow'd night,
Give me my Romeo; and, when he shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine
That all the world will be in love with night
And pay no worship to the garish sun.
O, I have bought the mansion of a love,
But not possess'd it, and, though I am sold,
Not yet enjoy'd: so tedious is this day
As is the night before some festival
To an impatient child that hath new robes
And may not wear them.



After you watch

Redo the previous activity focusing on what you learned about the double meanings in this text and the realities of the social structure of the time and re-write the speech as a contemporary text. This time you are freely adapting and not translating.

Glossary

Director- A theatre director or stage director is a professional in the theatre field who oversees and orchestrates the mounting of a theatre production such as a play, opera, dance, drama, musical theatre performance, etc. by unifying various endeavors and aspects of production

Double Entendre- a figure of speech which has a double meaning.

Intimacy coach- An intimacy coach specializes in how to stage scenes that might involve nudity, sexuality, sexual violence and sexual tension. It can be as clinically precise as plotting out body movements such as hand positions and eye-line.

Stage Management- Stage managers facilitate communication across all creative and technical departments; act as a right hand to the director; oversee sets, props, lights, and sound; and call all technical cues during performances



TWELFTH NIGHT

Synopsis

A student addresses the audience about her frustration with the lack of female roles in Shakespeare and the patriarchal structure of Elizabethan performance. We then move to a *Clueless* inspired scene. We meet Fabian and Maria, servants to Olivia as they gossip about the happenings in Illyria. Olivia arrives and the three veil themselves as Viola, disguised as a young man Cesario, enters to woo her for Orsino. Olivia is in mourning for her brother and father and has decided to not see a man for seven years. She is instantly attracted to the witty 'Cesario' and they begin an exchange of witty banter.

Breeches Role

We must remember that in Elizabethan England it was illegal for women to perform on the stage. It wasn't until 1660 that the first woman performed for Charles II of England. The church believed it was immoral for women to act and they could face death if they were found performing publicly. That is not to say that women didn't find ways. The nobility, including princesses and queens, would frequently perform in masques and pageants at banquets and festivals. These were often hybrids of plays and dances which were designed to show the virtue and talents of the women. The first professional actress was Margaret Hughes who debuted as Desdemona.

This law created a conundrum for playwrights because they needed female characters. Thus was birthed the boy players! Blackfriars (run by Dominican monks) was the main training place for these children. Young boys would be trained to play the female roles until their voices broke. Often these actors would then transition to male roles. This practice was very common for years and eventually was deemed as offensive by the Puritan movement.

Shakespeare often has female characters disguise themselves as men. Likely this was done, not only for humor, but to allow the boy actors to wear their own clothing. Costuming was very expensive back then and if boys could wear their own clothing, it would reduce overhead costs.

Once females were allowed to perform, the breeches roles became even more popular because it was scandalous to see women's ankles. It was a simple and effective way to draw in a male audience who would purchase tickets.

Adaptation

We already know that Shakespeare freely drew inspiration from other source material for his plays. It is no surprise that since then, others have drawn inspiration from him. Here is a list of additional resources to view or read:

Books:

Hogarth Shakespeare Series

Hag-Seed by Margaret Atwood - *The Tempest*

New Boy by Tracy Chevalier - *Othello*

A Gap of Time by Jeanette Winterson - *The Winter's Tale*

Vinegar Girl by Anne Tyler - *The Taming of the Shrew*



ARTS UMBRELLA

Shylock is my Name by Howard Jacobson - The Merchant of Venice
Macbeth by Jo Nesbø - Macbeth
Dunbar by Edward St Aubyn - King Lear

Film Adaptations:

The Lion King - Hamlet
The Lion King II: Simba's Pride - Romeo and Juliet
The Boys from Syracuse - Comedy of Errors
Ten Things I Hate About You - Taming of the Shrew
She's The Man - Twelfth Night
My Own Private Idaho - Henry IV Part 1, 2 and Henry V
O - Othello
West Side Story - Romeo and Juliet

Kenneth Branagh has a series of fantastic films of his plays including:

Hamlet
Much Ado About Nothing
Henry V
Love's Labours' Lost
As You Like It

The BBC Series "The Hollow Crown" is another great resource if you want to engage with the History Plays. They are:

Richard II
Henry IV Part 1
Henry IV Part 2
Henry V
Henry VI Part 1
Henry VI Part 2
Henry VI Part 3
Richard III

After you watch

In groups of 3-4, come up with a production concept for the play you are studying and create the directorial vision as well as the set and costume design. Have fun with it! Think about the themes and motifs in the play. You can consider time periods, or colour palettes as inspiration. Present to the class!

Glossary

Breeches role- A type of role when a female character disguises themselves as a young man and wears pants. This was very scandalous during the late Renaissance.

Cleopatra- The protagonist of *Antony and Cleopatra*. The last pharaoh of Egypt who is in love with Mark Antony. Eventually she is forced to commit suicide after he dies instead of being brought to Rome in chains.



Heroine- the principal female character in a story or dramatic work

Illyria- The setting for *Twelfth Night*. Although inspired by a geographic region of the western Balkan Peninsula, it is highly fictionalized here and is not necessarily specific.

Ingénue- an innocent or unsophisticated young woman, especially in a play or film.

In rep- When a company does multiple productions at the same time which they rotate between.

Juliet- Two characters- The protagonist of *Romeo and Juliet* who is the daughter of the Capulets who falls in love with Romeo and commits suicide after a series of misfortunes. Also a minor character in *Measure for Measure*, the lover of Claudio who is pregnant.

Portia- A central character in *The Merchant of Venice*. Her father has recently died and she must marry the man who passes a test of true love. In the latter half, she disguises herself as a male lawyer and works as defense in the case of Shylock versus Antonio. She is the one who not only convinces Shylock to give up the case but gets him to lose all his property and be forced to convert to Christianity from Judaism.

Rosalind- the protagonist of *As You Like It*. The daughter of the exiled Duke, she is exiled from the court and disguises herself as a boy, Ganymede, and escapes into the forest of Arden.

Viola- The protagonist of *Twelfth Night*. Twin sister of Sebastian who is believed to have died in a shipwreck. She disguises herself as a young man to keep safe while in a strange land and serves the Duke Orsino, for whom she falls in love with.



MACBETH

Synopsis

Two students discuss the struggle not with the plot of the plays but with the sheer length of it. Then we see three high school students start rehearsing for a presentation of a scene from *Macbeth* with an overenthusiastic student director and two less than excited performers.

The Curse

The Macbeth curse is a staple of theatrical lore. Myth states that a real coven of witches disapproved of the inclusion of the weird sisters as characters and so they put a curse on the play. Rumour has it that the original Lady Macbeth died suddenly and since then there have been fires, injuries, falls off of stages and even riots (Astor Place Riot, New York, 1849).

You activate the curse if you say the name “Macbeth” in a theatre while not rehearsing the text.

If you say it you must do the following:

- A) Exit the theatre
- B) Spin around three times
- C) Spit over your shoulder
- D) Knock and ask to be allowed back in

Shared Lines

Actors love shared lines! They are a great clue as to what is going on for the characters in the moment. While working on the texts, see how it feels to share the lines without a pause or allow each incomplete line to finish in silence. How does the rhythm change what is going on for the characters?

Lady Macbeth: I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.
Did not you speak?

Macbeth: When?

Lady Macbeth: Now.

Macbeth: As I descended?

Lady Macbeth: Ay.

Here is an additional video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPa2rKXDQP0>



After you watch

Take a scene from the play you are studying and get it on its feet. Make it come alive!

Glossary

King Lear- One of Shakespeare's favourite tragedies. It tells the story of a mythic aging King of

Britain who gives up his throne to favour his three daughters.

Cymbeline- One of Shakespeare's least popular and complicated problem plays. It tells the story of Princess Imogen, daughter of ancient British King Cymbeline as she navigates a wicked stepmother, missing brothers and a lover who believes she is false.

King James I- The son of Mary Queen of Scots and the heir to his cousin Elizabeth I.

Shared Lines- When two or more characters share a poetic iambic line in a dialogue.



EPILOGUE

Synopsis

The students from the Prologue come forward and reflect on the things they learned to appreciate about Shakespeare and his works. Then, a performer steps forward and performs a speech from *The Tempest*. This scene was created through conversations with people with various backgrounds.

After you watch

Break into small groups and discuss the things you like and appreciate about Shakespeare and his plays.



GROUPS OF SCENES

If you want to focus on the actor's process, we suggest you watch the following scenes:

1. O For a Muse of Fire
2. O Pardon Me...
3. Gallop Apace you fiery footed steeds...
4. Macbeth, Act 2, Scene 2

If you want to focus on scenes that explore clear iambic pentameter, we suggest you watch the following:

1. O for a Muse of Fire...
2. O Pardon Me...
3. Act 3, Scene 2 of Troilus and Cressida
4. Act 2, Scene 2 of Macbeth

If you want to focus on women in Shakespeare, we suggest you watch the following:

1. Act 1, Scene 2 of Richard III
2. Gallop Apace you fiery footed steeds...
3. Act 3, Scene 2 of Troilus and Cressida
4. Act 1, Scene 5 of Twelfth Night

If you want to focus on dramatic irony in Shakespeare, we suggest you watch the following:

1. Act 1, Scene 2 of Richard III
2. Act 3, Scene 2 of Troilus and Cressida

If you want to focus on comedy in Shakespeare, we suggest the following:

1. Excerpt of Act 3, Scene 2 of A Midsummer Night's Dream
2. Excerpt from Act 1 Scene 5 of Twelfth Night

If you want to focus on tragedy in Shakespeare, we suggest the following:

1. "O pardon me" Monologue from Act 3, Scene 1 of Julius Caesar
2. Richard III Act 1, Scene 2
3. Troilus and Cressida Act 3, Scene 2
4. Macbeth Act 2, Scene 2 of Epilogue

If you want to focus on conflict and action, we suggest the following:

1. Excerpt of Act 3, Scene 2 of A Midsummer Night's Dream
2. Act 1, Scene 2 of Richard III
3. Excerpt from Act 1 Scene 5 of Twelfth Night
4. Act 2, Scene 2 of Macbeth

If you want to focus on soliloquies in Shakespeare, we suggest the following:

1. "O for a Muse of Fire" Monologue from the Beginning of Henry V
2. "O pardon me" Monologue from Act 3, Scene 1 of Julius Caesar
3. Act 1, Scene 2 of Richard III
4. "Gallop Apace you Fiery Footed Steeds" Monologue from Act 3, Scene 2 of Romeo and Juliet
5. Epilogue