



Welcome to Animated Shakespeare!

Why Study Shakespeare?

We think you'll find these teaching resources – created by professional theatre actors and educators – very valuable supports to your classroom explorations of Shakespeare. The following pages include lesson plans that can stand alone or be used to accompany our video series.

In each Module, you will have three or four Units that deepen students' understanding of various aspects of Shakespeare's work or a particular play. Each video is accompanied by several pages of in-class activities for teachers to prepare, as well as Class Handout sheets to reproduce for your students.

No matter which play you are studying, these activities can supplement your regular class work to enliven the text that has become so influential, not only in theatre, but in the common speech of Western society. Enjoy!

– *The team at KDOONS and WYRD Productions*

NOTE: In the following activities and handouts, you may see references to a few terms:

The First Folio: This is the common name for the collection of Shakespeare's plays, entitled 'Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies', published in 1623. This is the text favored by most professional actors, and the scenes used in the activities will come straight from the Folio. Many of the Folio plays, however, are not broken down into scenes, just five long acts. For ease of reference, therefore, we will include the standardized line numbers from modern editions of Shakespeare.

Puke Books: This term was not created by Shakespeare! We recommend each student have a small notepad – or "Puke Book" – in which she can do timed writing. Students are never forced to share this writing. They will be asked to read it over, highlight the phrase that resonates most strongly and, if they choose, share this tidbit with the class. 'Puking' allows students to personalize their experience of Shakespeare by reflecting on themes from the plays. In their Puke Books, they may discover connections between the stories and their own lives. Optional **Puke Topics** are suggested in an inset many of the Units for students' personal reflections.

MacHomer: The videos are performed by Rick Miller, creator of MacHomer (The Simpsons do Macbeth), a solo play that has been performed in 175 cities over 17 years. Prior knowledge of MacHomer is not a pre-requisite to using these videos, but the DVD and/or script are often used as additional teaching tools, and can be purchased as part of the full Outreach bundle at animatedshakespeare.com



Puke Topic

Students are given a topic, usually a reflective question that they are to consider with pen in hand. We suggest 2 - 3 minutes for students who are new to timed writing, 5 - 10 minutes for a class who is comfortable with it. Their pens are to move constantly through the timed writing period, even if just to repeat 'blah blah blah', because this movement is preferable to both the inertia of thinking and the self-critique of editing. The stream of consciousness that is produced may be ugly – like puke – but it comes whether we like it or not. Students are never forced to share this personal writing. When time is up, everyone should read over his/her own words and underline the phrase that resonates most for him/her.



Why Study Shakespeare?

Video Transcript

Why study Shakespeare?

Why was William Shakespeare voted #5 on a list of the 1000 most influential people in history?

Why are libraries stuffed with books about this guy? Why do scholars spend their entire careers debating about whether he wrote this part or that part or whether he even existed? Why is he the most performed playwright all over the world? And why do English classes continue to thrust this stuff on people who find it incredibly boring? The reason is: to make your life miserable. Actually, that's not the reason. The reason is because he's good.

In fact, he's not just good he's probably the best there ever was. One could argue that Shakespeare – more than any other writer, living or dead, writing in any other language, in any other medium – expressed more completely and fully **what it is to be HUMAN**. Our torments, our petty desires, our concerns, our struggles... the good and evil struggling within us at all times.

Shakespeare probed the depths of humanity in all its manifestations:

- Young love in *Romeo & Juliet*
- Jealousy in *Othello*
- Vaulting ambition in *Macbeth*
- Existential angst in *Hamlet*
- Loss in *King Lear*

Shakespeare helps us understand who we are. These stories, they help us live. They entertain us, they educate us and they enlighten us. They're not easy. Granted, these words weren't written for us. But if you find a way to let these words wash over you somehow, either through a really memorable performance or an amazing teacher (like the one you have!) or through our own experience, it might just change your life the way it did mine.

I remember I was 18 years old. I was sitting in my bedroom... it was summer vacation... I had a copy of *Hamlet* in front of me. I didn't go to an English school, I went to a French school, so I didn't study Shakespeare and I wanted to know what the big deal was about. So there I had *Hamlet*, and I said, "I'm going to tackle this thing". I went through it word by word, line by line, imagining it on stage and it blew me away. And it still does. It blows everyone away who reads it or sees it. This is the most profound play that's out there. And that's one of the reasons we study Shakespeare.

Why Study Shakespeare?

Topic Recap and Discussion Starter:

William Shakespeare:

- He is number 5 on the list of 1000 most influential people in history
- Libraries are stuffed with books about him
- Scholars spend their lives debating about him
- He is the most performed playwright all over the world

Why?

- Because he's the best there ever was.

Shakespeare expressed what it is to be human:

- Torments
- Petty desires
- Concerns and struggles
- Good and evil struggling within us



Shakespeare probed the depths of humanity:

- Love in *Romeo and Juliet*
- Jealousy in *Othello*
- Ambition in *Macbeth*
- Angst in *Hamlet*
- Loss in *King Lear*



Shakespeare helps us understand who we are.

His stories:

- Help us live
- Entertain us
- Educate us
- Enlighten us



Why Study Shakespeare?

In-Class Activities: Teacher Sheet

Activity 1: Public Faces/Private Thought

"...we must...make our Faces Vizards to our Hearts/Disguising what they are."

- Macbeth, Act III, Sc ii

(Vizards are masks!)

Objective:

To provide a creative, non-threatening avenue for exploring the darkness in our own hearts.

Introduction:

Why do actors love to play murderous Macbeth and his crazy queen?

Why do so many people read sensational tabloid stories, watch vicious reality shows, and play violent video games? Are we drawn to 'badness' more than goodness and to madness more than sanity?

Shakespeare expressed what it is to be human, that there is good and evil struggling within us at all times.

Show the class the **Yin Yang** symbol, representing shadow and light, seemingly contrary forces that are interdependent. You may want to play 'Ebony & Ivory' by Paul McCartney and Stevie Wonder, featuring the line "There is good and bad in everyone..." Ask the students about their own understanding/depictions of good and evil (Disney heroes and villains, tattoos they have designed, etc.).



Instructions:

Have students read aloud the scene between Lady Macbeth and King Duncan in front of Macbeth's castle (Act I, Sc vi, lines 11-21 – see Class Handout) then discuss the difference between each character's public graciousness and hidden private agenda.

Secondly, read from the very next scene, where Lady Macbeth reveals her true evil agenda without hiding it (ACT I, Sc. vii, lines 59-73).

To engage them in the world of the play, you may want your students to consider an equivalent from their own world (from pop culture), a TV character such as:

- *Dexter* who tries to lead a 'normal' life (job, relationships, etc.) despite being a serial killer.

- Harvey Dent/Two-Face in *Batman*, who literally shows this dichotomy on his own face.
- Serials like *Revenge* or *Pretty Little Liars* where ‘normal’ outward actions hide secret inner motives
- Storytelling tropes where the outward ‘normal’ character hides an inner monster representing that character’s animalistic instincts, like “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde”, “Teen Wolf” or “The Incredible Hulk”

Create Your Own “Two Faced” Masks

Provide strips of dry plaster for each student to cast two **masks** of their own face. Working with a partner, each student will have the experience of laying on the moistened strips as well as being the model. When dry, one will be painted as his/her public self and the other to represent his/her private life. If there is not enough time or resources for two masks per student, they could paint each half of one mask to show both their public and private faces.

This activity could also be achieved with two life-size **photos** of each student’s face, mounted on cardboard and attached to a stick. One photo could be in colour to show ‘the real you’ and the other could be black and white so that students can add their own colors and highlights (devil horns, for example), artistically representing their hidden thoughts. You could also do this as a drawing exercise, or if your class has personal computers with editing software, as an Adobe Photoshop exercise.





Activity 2: Arranged Marriage

Objective:

To demonstrate that Juliet's impossible situation – loving someone her family disapproves of, having to agree to her father's arranged marriage or to be disowned by him, contemplating and then indeed committing suicide – still exists for girls today.

Introduction:

In *Romeo & Juliet*, ACT III, Sc. v, lines 137-205, Capulet delivers an ultimatum to his daughter. She will marry Paris – his choice for her – or she will be disowned. However, Juliet has secretly married Romeo and has just spent the night with him. When she learns of her father's plan to marry her to Paris and protests, Capulet insults her and threatens to drag her to church. If she does not do as he says, she will no longer have his love, money nor home, but will have to 'beg, starve, die in the streets'.

Instructions:

Ask students to read the roles of Capulet, Lady Capulet, Juliet and her Nurse. (see Class Handout)

Notice the **foreshadowing** here: Juliet makes reference to her own death ('make the Bridall bed/In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.') Later in this scene, she also suggests Romeo's death ('My Husband is on earth... By leaving earth?')



Puke Topic



Notice that Lady Capulet tries to calm her husband down but she, too, washes her hands of Juliet's unwillingness to marry Paris.

How do you feel about Capulet's family? Do they have a say in their daughter's future? Do they have the right to use her marriage to combine themselves with a desirable family? Have you known anyone who was caught in Juliet's position? What would you do in her situation?

Please be sure to include the boys in this discussion – many of them may also feel the need to please their parents with their choice of partner. This could also be an excellent opportunity to discuss same-sex relationships and the feelings of ostracism and pressure that gay and lesbian youth may feel.

Activity 3: To Be or Not To Be

Objective:

To decode Hamlet's famous speech in ACT III, Sc i, lines 55-88 (see Class Handout) in order to make it accessible to young people who are, like Hamlet himself, questioning the world around them.

Introduction:

Hamlet asks himself, is it better to be alive or dead? Is it better to have all these troubles (like a murdered father, a despised stepfather, a treacherous mother) or just end the heartache and prevent all the possible problems humans might have? Why take all the possible 'Whips and Scorns' when one can bring peace with one sharp instrument?

Hamlet wonders, though, if the burdens of life may actually be easier than the unknown troubles of the afterlife. This idea keeps him from acting (from taking his life) and instead he gets lost in his thoughts.

Instructions:

Have your class read this speech aloud 'from punctuation to punctuation' (changing readers with every comma, semicolon, question mark, etc.)

You may want to explain that each comma forces a slight pause in delivery to reflect a tiny development or shift in the character's thought process. A colon signals an explanation, that the next line should sound as if it is responding to the previous line, as in 'To be, or not to be, that is the question:' - the rest of the speech shows Hamlet's attempt to answer his own dilemma.

Help the class to understand Hamlet's list of 'Whips and Scorns' (his own pet peeves, the reasons he contemplates suicide, 'that sleep of death'.)

- The oppressor's wrong, (unfair bosses, teachers, police, bullies)
- The poor man's taunts, (insults about our socioeconomic status)
- The pangs of unrequited love, (wanting someone who doesn't want you)
- The law's delay, (trials that drag on in court before delivering 'justice')
- The insolence of office, (rude clerks, school administration, impersonal government)
- The spurns of the patient (when jobs and prizes go to unworthy people)



Puke Topic



In addition to the Instructions above, these Puke Book topic starters come from Hamlet's famous soliloquy

Pains and Put-downs

What are some pains and put-downs in your life?

Sling and Arrows

What are 5 challenges that "outrageous fortune" (i.e. life) has put in your way?

The law's delay

What injustices in the world really bother you?

The oppressor's wrong

Has anyone more powerful than you ever wronged you?

What dreams may come

What your favorite moments, people or things: things that make your life worth living?

Now write down the class's own list of **'Pains and Put-downs.'**

First, allow them to consider this topic privately in their **Puke Books**. What are the injustices that make them crazy? The things they can't stand?

Once you start to list these on the Smartboard or chalkboard, please do not force any students to contribute. This topic may bring up some very big issues for certain individuals.

In order to end this activity on a positive note, ask each student to write down five things that make life better (people they love, hobbies they enjoy, music, food, pets, nature, entertainment, moments they remember fondly.) If they are willing to share, record some of these. Write them in bold letters on posters around the room, or tuck them into their desks later on Post-it notes.

Be sure to list some of your own negatives and positives so that students can share your vulnerability and your hope.



Why Study Shakespeare?

Public faces, Private thoughts

Macbeth

Act I, Sc vi, lines 11-21

Lady Macbeth welcomes King Duncan to Macbeth's castle.

DUNCAN

See, see, our honour'd hostess!

The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you
How you shall bid God 'ild us for your pains,
And thank us for your trouble.

LADY MACBETH

All our service

In every point twice done and then done double
Were poor and single business to contend
Against those honours deep and broad wherewith
Your majesty loads our house: for those of old,
And the late dignities heap'd up to them,
We rest your hermits.

Macbeth

ACT I, Sc vii, lines 59-73

Lady Macbeth is trying to convince her husband Macbeth to murder King Duncan in his sleep.

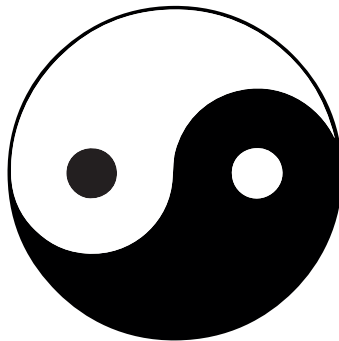
MACBETH

If we should fail?

LADY MACBETH

We fail!

But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep--
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him--his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassail so convince
That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
A limbeck only: when in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell?





Why Study Shakespeare?

Arranged Marriage

Romeo and Juliet

ACT III, Sc. v, lines 137-205

The day after she has secretly married Romeo, Juliet learns of her parents' plan to marry her to Paris.

CAPULET

How now, wife!

Have you deliver'd to her our decree?

LADY CAPULET

Ay, sir; but she will none, she gives you thanks.

I would the fool were married to her grave!

CAPULET

Soft! take me with you, take me with you, wife.

How! will she none? doth she not give us thanks?

Is she not proud? doth she not count her blest,

Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought

So worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?

JULIET

Not proud, you have; but thankful, that you have:

Proud can I never be of what I hate;

But thankful even for hate, that is meant love.

CAPULET

How now, how now, chop-logic! What is this?

'Proud,' and 'I thank you,' and 'I thank you not;'

And yet 'not proud,' mistress minion, you,

Thank me no thankings, nor, proud me no prouds,

But fettle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next,

To go with Paris to Saint Peter's Church,

Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.

Out, you green-sickness carrion! out, you baggage!

You tallow-face!

LADY CAPULET

Fie, fie! what, are you mad?

JULIET

Good father, I beseech you on my knees,

Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

Capulet

Hang thee, young baggage! disobedient wretch!

I tell thee what: get thee to church o' Thursday,

Or never after look me in the face:

Speak not, reply not, do not answer me;

My fingers itch. Wife, we scarce thought us blest

That God had lent us but this only child;

But now I see this one is one too much,

And that we have a curse in having her:

Out on her, hilding!

NURSE

God in heaven bless her!

You are to blame, my lord, to rate her so.

CAPULET

And why, my lady wisdom? hold your tongue,

Good prudence; smatter with your gossips, go.

NURSE

I speak no treason.

CAPULET

O, God ye god-den.

NURSE

May not one speak?



Why Study Shakespeare? Arranged Marriage

CAPULET

Peace, you mumbling fool!
Utter your gravity o'er a gossip's bowl;
For here we need it not.

LADY CAPULET

You are too hot.

CAPULET

God's bread! it makes me mad:
Day, night, hour, tide, time, work, play,
Alone, in company, still my care hath been
To have her match'd: and having now provided
A gentleman of noble parentage,
Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly train'd,
Stuff'd, as they say, with honourable parts,
Proportion'd as one's thought would wish a man;
And then to have a wretched puling fool,
A whining mammet, in her fortune's tender,
To answer 'I'll not wed; I cannot love,
I am too young; I pray you, pardon me.'
But, as you will not wed, I'll pardon you:
Graze where you will you shall not house with me:
Look to't, think on't, I do not use to jest.
Thursday is near; lay hand on heart, advise:
An you be mine, I'll give you to my friend;
And you be not, hang, beg, starve, die in
the streets,
For, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee,
Nor what is mine shall never do thee good:
Trust to't, bethink you; I'll not be forsworn.
Exit

JULIET

Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,

That sees into the bottom of my grief?
O, sweet my mother, cast me not away!
Delay this marriage for a month, a week;
Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed
In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.

LADY CAPULET

Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word:
Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee.

Exit

JULIET

O God!--O nurse, how shall this be prevented?



Why Study Shakespeare?

To Be or Not To Be

Hamlet

ACT III, Sc i, lines 55-88

Hamlet considers the difficulty of living in his situation (His mother is now married to the man who murdered his father.)

And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.--

HAMLET

To be, or not to be: that is the question:
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? To die: to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;