



SHAKESPEARE LIVES IN SCHOOLS

TEACHER RESOURCE PACK



www.shakespearelives.org

[#ShakespeareLives](https://twitter.com/ShakespeareLives)

This Shakespeare Lives schools' pack has been created by the British Council and the Royal Shakespeare Company to mark the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death in 2016.

It explores Shakespeare as a writer who still speaks for all people and nations, addressing big questions and themes about the human experience and what it means to be a citizen in the 21st century. This pack encourages teachers and pupils to engage with some of the issues, themes and ideas in Shakespeare's plays, and to explore the ways they remain relevant and current in our lives today, wherever we are in the world.

Shakespeare's plays have been staged many times since they were written over 400 years ago and there are still so many different ways of interpreting his work; each interpretation will draw out different themes and ideas and we hope you enjoy exploring the ones we have developed in this pack.



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THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

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PARTNERS



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‘Shakespeare is a playwright for the whole world and this British Council schools’ pack, produced in partnership with the Royal Shakespeare Company, will help young people in the UK and overseas to broaden their horizons. Through this new resource, young people can explore the vibrant world of Shakespeare’s plays and discover new insights into his work through themes that are as relevant to us today as they were 400 years ago.’

Sir Ciarán Devane, Chief Executive,
British Council

‘At the RSC we believe that Shakespeare’s work belongs to everyone and that it is an important part of our shared cultural inheritance: an inheritance that all pupils should have access to. By exploring some of the key themes and ideas that occur throughout Shakespeare’s work we hope this resource will enable your pupils to discover the relevance of Shakespeare’s work to their lives today, helping us develop a deeper understanding of ourselves, each other and the world we live in.’

Gregory Doran, Artistic Director,
Royal Shakespeare Company

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The British Council is the United Kingdom’s international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create international opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries and build trust between them worldwide.



The RSC’s purpose is to create the finest experience of Shakespeare in performance and share that work with the widest audience in Stratford-upon-Avon, London, across the UK, and around the world. We place a special emphasis on sharing the inheritance of Shakespeare’s work with children and young people, encouraging a lifelong relationship with Shakespeare and live theatre.

HOW TO USE THIS PACK

This pack is designed to help teachers around the world to bring Shakespeare's plays to life and encourage learning across the curriculum. It is split into five key themes: **Leadership and power, Family and relationships, Identity and equality, Fate and destiny and Justice and rules.**

Within each themed section you will find a wide range of activities for pupils aged 7-14. These can be adapted to suit the age of the children you are teaching and used as starting points in individual lessons or as elements of a cross-curricular project, which could be carried out with a partner school overseas.

Throughout the pack you will also find notes for teachers with exploratory questions, learning foci, suggestions of activities and discussion points, play excerpts, curriculum links and references to citizenship skills and outlooks. When using the play excerpts, you may find it useful to increase the size of the font when you copy it, to make it easier for your pupils to read.

You can also find additional content and play excerpts at <https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/classroom-resources/list/shakespeare-lives> where you can download more copies of the pack in English and Welsh.

Many of the ideas and activities can be explored in a traditional classroom setting. Some of them will require desks to be pushed to one side or a larger space, as they are inspired by the rehearsal room practice of RSC actors and directors.

If you are new to using theatre-based approaches in the classroom or new to applying them to Shakespeare's plays, you may find it useful to work through the ideas in the final section of the pack. This final section focuses on **Julius Caesar**, but many of the activities outlined here can be adapted for use in other parts of the resource.

Try looking at Shakespeare's plays in different ways. Watch a film adaptation or read the play translated into your own language; use any approach that makes Shakespeare accessible to your students.

Remember, Shakespeare wrote for the stage – his plays are designed to be performed and shared with an audience. If we simply read them, we can miss out on a large part of their appeal and interest. We encourage you to share this pack with your partner school, use it as a starting point to plan your own lessons and start exploring the world through Shakespeare.

After you have tried out some of the activities, share a Shakespeare-inspired performance with your community. This could be an entire play, a speech, or a piece of creative writing by students in response to your exploration of the themes. Think of ways to involve your partner school in this activity.

There are also lots of ideas on how to celebrate and explore Shakespeare's plays in your school and local community on the RSC website: www.rsc.org.uk/education, including a specially produced set of resources to help you stage your own production of **A Midsummer Night's Dream**.

KEY

Look out for these icons highlighting key information. They help easy navigation around this document.



Key questions



Resources required



Explore



Worksheets to print



Notes

TOP TIPS FOR EXPLORING SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

The following tips have been developed by the RSC, drawing on years of rehearsal room and performance experience. For a more detailed look at how these and other approaches can be developed more fully in one particular play, please see the 'Introduction to using theatre-based approaches' section.

1 STUDENTS AS DETECTIVES

Whilst studying Shakespeare, encourage pupils to think like a detective. The clues are all there in the language but they have to get pieced together bit by bit. Reading the text in more than one way will really help pupils to explore some of these clues. For example, asking pupils to read a scene back to back in pairs, in a whisper, will

draw out something very different from a read through where you ask pupils to keep walking as they read and stress all the words connected to a theme, such as family or power. Don't be afraid to read an extract with pupils in three or four different ways; each time they will understand something new.

2 ENGAGING STARTER ACTIVITIES TO EXPLORE THE MAJOR THEMES

Games are infinitely flexible and can be adapted to suit the needs of practically any text you are working on. If we play 'Grandma's Footsteps', creeping up behind a person who is 'on,' the class member at the front can be King Duncan. When they turn and point at one of their classmates moving towards them they can be the

conscience of Macbeth saying aloud something that Macbeth might be thinking as he moves towards King Duncan's chamber. Alternatively, the 'on' person could be Prospero and their classmates could be Caliban saying '**This island's mine**' if they are caught moving towards their leader.

3 CREATE IMAGES OF CHARACTERS

Get pupils into small groups of three to five to create images that allow the whole class to explore key characters. For example, asking them to create still images or freeze frames of: 'A king and his subjects,' 'Three witches meeting' or 'Soldiers returning from battle' allows you to introduce key characters and

situations in the early part of the play. You can also ask groups to create images in response to specific lines of text and see how different pupils interpret them: '**Brave Macbeth, well he deserves that name**' or '**Unseamed him from the nave to th'chops**'.

4 SET TIME LIMITS

Give groups ten seconds to create a still image. This is long enough for them to complete the task, but short enough to mean that children invariably won't mind who

they are working with. It can also be a good challenge to ask groups to work without speaking.

5 ENCOURAGE PUPILS TO MAKE INTERPRETATIVE CHOICES

Remember that every play is a mixture of fact and interpretation. For example, in **Macbeth** three women tell Macbeth he will one day be king but how they might appear, disappear, move and speak on a stage is up to you to interpret.

Pupils can make interpretative choices about staging, design and meaning. No one knows what Macbeth should look like, or what the ghost of Banquo looks like.

There is even a choice to be made about whether the ghost of Banquo appears on stage or not. If you think he should appear on stage, the audience can see inside Macbeth's head and sympathise with him, if you don't, the audience sees how disturbed Macbeth must appear to his guests.

6 FEED IN SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE TO ROOT THE WORK IN A REAL WORLD CONTEXT

When pupils understand, for example, that many people in an English audience believed that the fairy audience could be a spiteful one and that Midsummer's Eve was potentially a dangerous time of year when a portal opened up between the human and fairy world, their

work on **Macbeth** and **A Midsummer Night's Dream** can take on a new meaning. Our challenge today is bringing Shakespeare's work alive in such a way that it has the same powerful impact on audiences now as it did 400 years ago.

7 USE THE ORIGINAL TEXT BUT DON'T BE AFRAID TO EDIT IT

We know that children are intrigued by the beauty and texture of Shakespeare's language and they don't mind not understanding all of it – in fact, that's part of the joy. It's an exciting challenge to explore the meaning of unusual words and phrases. But do edit the text into manageably-sized chunks. For example, pull out ten lines

of text that track the story arc of a particularly interesting scene or soliloquy, allow the children to get confident with these and then add more text in or find out what happens next by moving onto a new section of the play.

8 EXPLORE THE LANGUAGE TOGETHER

Remember that editors often disagree about what words and phrases mean so it is always more interesting to start with the sound of a word and think what it might mean as opposed to immediately solving the mystery by looking it up in the footnotes.

'Peace-parted', 'Pick-purse', 'Malignant thing' or lines like 'You cram these words into mine ears against/The stomach of my senses' are great phrases to explore and unlock the meaning together.



ACT ONE

LEADERSHIP

AND POWER

Are leaders born or made ?

Objectives

To explore the qualities of strong leadership and effective speech-making through Shakespeare's plays and modern examples. To read, perform and talk about lines, scenes and speeches from Shakespeare's plays.

Curriculum links

English, Drama, Citizenship, Personal, Social and Health Education, Politics.

Citizenship skills and outlooks

Communicating, collaborating, creative and critical thinking.

Resources required

Large open space for practical work, large pieces of paper and pens, internet access, digital cameras, copies of the play excerpts and Barack Obama's speech.



LEARNING FOCUS

Leadership qualities, persuasive speech-making and rhetoric.

There is a further in-depth exploration of leadership and power in **Julius Caesar** using theatre-based approaches at the end of the pack for those who wish to examine this theme or play in greater detail. You could use these approaches either before, after or as part of the following sequence of work.

INTRODUCTION

Think about a leader in your school, town or country. What skills do they have that make them good leaders? How do they earn and keep their power?

Invite pupils to think about their responses to these questions. Can they think of any examples of rulers from the past or present who have been 'made' and any who have been 'born'?

Shakespeare's plays are full of characters who are born into power, have lost power or are trying to achieve it. What kind of leaders are these Shakespearean characters? What kind of actions are they taking to try and attain or keep power?

WARM UP ACTIVITIES

? KEY QUESTIONS

What impact does a leader have on you?

How would you behave around them?

How would you greet your Head Teacher or Head of State if they entered this room now?

Shakespeare's plays often open with a situation where the normal order is disrupted and where rulers and leaders are changing. This means that the other characters often have to change their behaviour very quickly to impress the new ruler and keep themselves safe.

- Invite pupils to move freely around an open space.
- Appoint one pupil to be the leader. You may want to call them 'king' or 'queen' depending on the play you are going to be looking at, and give them a crown to wear.

- As the leader moves around the space, ask the rest of the group to react to them in the way you think you should to a new leader. Explain that this person has just become their leader so they don't yet know what their leadership will be like. How will they react to the new leader?
- Pause the movement and question the new leader: What kind of behaviour did they like? What annoyed them? From their responses, establish three new 'rules' for the room. The rules might be, for example, that the leader likes to be bowed to but that they don't like people smiling too much and they don't like people coming too close to them or touching them.
- Allow pupils to act on these rules and to change their reactions to the leader, seeing how the room changes.
- Repeat this again, starting from the beginning, but with a different leader encouraging them to think about different rules.
- Reflect with pupils on what it felt like to have to adapt and change. How easy was it to work out what the new leader liked? What was it like to be in that period of crossover between leaders?

This activity is a good way to introduce the idea of leadership style and influence. With Shakespeare's **Richard II** or **Henry IV Part I**, for example, this can be a great way of encouraging pupils to think about what happens when rulers change and their courts have to adapt to new leadership.

For many of Shakespeare's plays, the opening scenes will often reveal a state of change and uncertainty like this. You could also adapt this activity so that you focus more on how it feels to be the leader, giving the pupils playing the leaders different characteristics which allow you to introduce characters, like Oberon and Titania in **A Midsummer Night's Dream** or Cleopatra in **Antony and Cleopatra**.

EXPLORING CITIZENSHIP THEMES, SKILLS AND OUTLOOKS

? KEY QUESTIONS

What are the qualities of a good leader?

How do impressions of a leader change over time?

Organise pupils into a line down the centre of the classroom. Read out a list of actions by leaders in Shakespeare's plays. Ask the students to step forward if they think this is likely to be the action of a good leader and back if it is likely to be the action of an unfit leader. Compare where students are standing at the end of the activity and ask some of the students to explain their decisions.

Macbeth: Killed the king in order to become the new ruler.

Henry V: Encouraged his troops into battle and to fight bravely.

Henry IV: Took the crown from an unfair and disliked ruler.

Richard II: Used money from his subjects to buy himself expensive things.

(You can add in examples from characters in the play/s you are studying.)

Ask each group to draw a large picture to show what they think a good leader looks like. Around the outside of the picture invite them to write the knowledge, skills and attributes that they think a great leader should possess. Should they be a good organiser, an inspiring speaker or a ruthless soldier?

Once they have done this, ask them to compare their results with other groups in the class. How do they differ? Decide what they think are the three most important character traits of a good leader – are they different to the qualities of a good person?

IN DEPTH ANALYSIS – RHETORIC

? KEY QUESTIONS

How do leaders use language to persuade people to follow them?

Rhetoric is the art of persuasive speech-making. The main purpose of rhetoric is to persuade people to follow your ideas. Effective leaders often use the following persuasive techniques in their speeches:

- Repetition.
- The rule of three (repeating something three times for emphasis).
- Questions.
- Lists.
- Opposites (or antithesis).

The traditional ordering of the arguments in a speech, according to Aristotle, are: ethos, logos, pathos.

Ethos – This is an appeal to the listener based on the character of the speaker. The tone of the speech should establish the speaker's virtue and moral worth. You should listen to me because... I have a good reputation and authority; I entertain you and appear to know what I am talking about.

Logos – An appeal based on logic or reason. The argument is demonstrated by examples and maxims. You should listen to me because... of the incontrovertible facts.

Pathos – An appeal based on emotion, often associated with suffering or sympathy and the emotions induced in the audience. You should listen to me because... here is a problem and this is how the problem affects you personally. Arguments involving pathos often use metaphor or simile to allow the audience to make an emotional connection with an abstract notion.

Watch productions of rousing speeches from leaders in Shakespeare's plays – such as Brutus's speech in **Julius Caesar Act 3 Scene 2**, and Henry V's speech in **Henry V Act 3 Scene 1**.

Ask the students to identify the qualities of persuasive rhetoric used in these excerpts. What impression does the class get of the leader? How does the language suggest this?

EXPLORING A SPEECH

Activities that will help your pupils to explore Shakespeare's language further are **Choral Reading** and **Punctuation Shift** where they read the passage aloud walking around the space and changing direction each time they reach a punctuation mark.

This can open up discussions about a character's state of mind. For example, if they are changing direction a lot and seem restless what does this reveal about the leader? You can see an example of how this might work with **Julius Caesar** on pages 60 and 61, but it can be used with any text.

Encourage your pupils to try writing a version of one of the speeches you have looked at in modern day English or in your own language. Does it have the same effect?



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APPLY YOUR LEARNING – CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Share a copy of Barack Obama's New Hampshire Primary speech, from the US presidential campaign in 2008, with your pupils (give written and video versions). Ask your pupils to identify any of the rhetorical features and language of persuasion they noted in the Shakespearean language. Why and how is the speech persuasive?

Ask your pupils to compare this with the version made by artist will.i.am (video available on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjXyqcx-mYY>)

Who might this version appeal to? Discuss how politicians can engage with younger people in the 21st century? Is rhetoric still important?

AND FINALLY...

? KEY QUESTIONS

Return to the original provocation: Are leaders born or made? Discuss this as a class. Have their opinions changed?

How can you be a good leader in your community? What skills do you need? Perhaps watch the British Council film which shows a school partnership where pupils make a difference to their schools in Scotland and South Africa through their involvement as young leaders: <https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/classroom-resources/commonwealth-class/bbc-films>

Ask the pupils to use what they have learned to write a speech or plan a script for a music video to persuade people to get actively involved in plans to improve aspects of their school or community.

PARTNER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

- Exchange and compare your portraits of leaders. Are the characteristics similar or different in both schools?
- Share examples of leaders making rousing speeches from both countries and across the world.
- Exchange your speeches, films and ideas for effective leadership in your communities with your partner school.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Henry V Act 3 Scene 1

Henry V Once more unto the **breach**, dear friends,
once more,
Or close the wall up with our English dead.
In peace there's nothing so becomes a man
As modest stillness and humility,
But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of the tiger:
Stiffen the sinews, conjure up **the blood**.
Disguise fair nature with **hard-favoured** rage,
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect:
Let it pry through the **portage** of the head
Like the brass cannon, let the brow **o'erwhelm** it
As fearfully as doth a **galled** rock
O'erhang and **jutty** his **confounded** base,
Swilled with the wild and wasteful ocean.
I see you stand like greyhounds in the **slips**,
Straining upon the start. The game's afoot:
Follow your spirit, and upon this charge
Cry 'God for Harry, England, and Saint George!'



© RSC. Photo by Ellie Kurtz.

! OVERVIEW

In **Act 3 Scene 1** of **Henry V**, the young King Henry rallies his troops to go bravely into battle and fight for England against the French.

✍ NOTES

breach: a gap in defensive walls

the blood: heat, courage and ferocity

hard-favoured: ugly, terrible or terrifying

portage: a porthole

o'erwhelm: overhang or project over

galled: battered

jutty: jut out over

confounded: ruined

slips: leashes designed for quick release

Julius Caesar Act 3 Scene 2

! OVERVIEW

In Act 3 Scene 2 of Julius Caesar, Brutus tries to persuade the crowd he was justified in leading a conspiracy to kill Caesar.

Brutus Romans, countrymen, and **lovers**, hear me for my **cause**, and be silent, that you may hear. Believe me **for** mine honour, and have respect to mine honour, that you may believe. **Censure** me in your wisdom and awake your **senses**, that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Caesar's, to him I say, that Brutus's love to Caesar was no less than his. If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer: not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more. Had you rather Caesar were living, and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all free men? As Caesar loved me, I weep for him: as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it: as he was valiant, I honour him: but, as he was ambitious, I slew him. There is tears for his love; joy for his fortune; honour for his valour; and death for his ambition. Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so **rude** that would not be a Roman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so **vile** that will not love his country? If any, speak, for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.

📖 NOTES

lovers: friends

cause: grounds for action/explanation/
subject of concern

for: because of

censure: judge

senses: minds, wits

rude: uncivilised

vile: lowly, contemptible, offensive

Other examples of well known speeches in audio and text can be found at:

<http://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/series/greatspeeches>

Barack Obama's New Hampshire Primary speech 2008

When we have faced down impossible odds, when we've been told we're not ready or that we shouldn't try or that we can't, generations of Americans have responded with a simple creed that sums up the spirit of a people: Yes, we can. Yes, we can. Yes, we can.

It was a creed written into the founding documents that declared the destiny of a nation: Yes, we can.

It was whispered by slaves and abolitionists as they blazed a trail towards freedom through the darkest of nights: Yes, we can.

It was sung by immigrants as they struck out from distant shores and pioneers who pushed westward against an unforgiving wilderness: Yes, we can.

It was the call of workers who organized, women who reached for the ballot, a president who chose the moon as our new frontier, and a king who took us to the mountaintop and pointed the way to the promised land: Yes, we can, to justice and equality.

Yes, we can, to opportunity and prosperity. Yes, we can heal this nation. Yes, we can repair this world. Yes, we can.

And so, tomorrow, as we take the campaign south and west, as we learn that the struggles of the textile workers in Spartanburg are not so different than the plight of the dishwasher in Las Vegas, that the hopes of the little girl who goes to the crumbling school in Dillon are the same as the dreams of the boy who learns on the streets of L.A., we will remember that there is something happening in America, that we are not as divided as our politics suggest, that we are one people, we are one nation.

And, together, we will begin the next great chapter in the American story, with three words that will ring from coast to coast, from sea to shining sea: Yes, we can.

ACT TWO

FAMILY AND

RELATIONSHIPS

Do parents always know best ?

Objectives

To consider relationships between parents and children portrayed in Shakespeare's plays and their resonance to a modern audience. To expand and develop pupils' writing styles.

Curriculum links

English, Personal, Social and Health Education, Drama, Art and Design.

Citizenship skills and outlooks

Communicating, collaborating, creative thinking, developing empathy.

Resources required

Large open space for practical work, scrap paper, activity sheet with still images, large pieces of paper and pens, digital cameras, copies of text sheets and internet access.



LEARNING FOCUS

Exploring family relationships in Shakespeare's plays. Writing in different styles and the use of soliloquies.

INTRODUCTION

Relationships are an important theme in many of Shakespeare's plays, especially family relationships.

Discuss the kinds of relationships that feature in the play you are exploring. Are they parent-child relationships, friendships or romantic relationships? Are they working well or problematic? Which do you think are more interesting to explore as a writer and an audience?



WARM UP ACTIVITIES

- Invite pupils to move freely around an open space.
- Encourage them to make eye contact with other people as they move around the space, smiling at them and acknowledging them without speaking.
- Ask pupils to develop this by greeting people they pass as if they are:
 - really old friends.
 - siblings who dislike each other.
 - a family friend or neighbour.

This can be a good way to introduce the idea of different relationships and how they can be conveyed physically. These different options could be extended or adapted depending on the particular text you are using. For instance, in **Hamlet** you might introduce the idea of mother and son, or with **King Lear** – a dutiful daughter.

Encourage them to then use **Imaging** to create still images in pairs to portray the following relationships:

- A father threatening his daughter for wanting to marry a man he disapproves of.
- Two lovers meeting in secret.
- Someone defending a friend in a fight.
- A father banishing his daughter because he claims she does not love him enough.
- A couple arguing over whether one has cheated.

Invite students to look at some of the images, particularly if there are common themes or similarities between one group's interpretation and another's.

Discuss what happens when there are disagreements between characters? How does this affect their relationship?

This activity can also be extended by asking pupils to create a freeze frame – or photograph – of a group of characters. As they create their image ask them to consider where each character is positioned and how they can demonstrate their relationships in the play. If you want to look at relationships within a particular family or group, provide pupils with the relevant character profiles.

EXPLORING CITIZENSHIP THEMES, SKILLS AND VALUES

? KEY QUESTION

What kind of relationships can you identify in your life?

Ask your pupils to draw a mind map showing all the relationships in their lives – starting with family and then including friends, other pupils, neighbours, teachers and so forth. Discuss these maps as a class – which relationships do your pupils think are the most important to them?

What are some of the challenges in these important relationships? Do you ever have any disagreements or conflicts with the key people involved? How do you resolve them?

Share the exploratory question 'Do parents always know best?' with your pupils. Ask them to imagine that the room is a spectrum and to move to the left of the room if they agree with the question and to the right if they disagree. Ask one or two of the pupils to explain their positioning.

You might want to develop their discussion by considering why it might be important for children to listen to adults. Can they think of examples when children want to do things differently from their parents' wishes? Who is right?

You can develop these discussions further by asking the group to discuss the following questions:

- How do you resolve conflicts when you have disagreements?
- How can effective communication help to sort out difficulties and problems in family relationships?

Be aware that discussions of this kind may be potentially sensitive for some of the pupils in your class.



EXPLORING CHARACTER RELATIONSHIPS

For ways to explore characters and their relationships you can use **Sculpting – creating images with body shapes. You can see an example of how this might work with **Julius Caesar** on page 58, but it can be used with any text.**



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IN DEPTH ANALYSIS – RELATIONSHIPS AND SOLILOQUIES

? KEY QUESTION

How does Shakespeare convey a character's thoughts about their relationships and emotions in his plays?

Conflict between parents and children is a recurrent theme across many of Shakespeare's plays. The way that characters communicate with each other is very important to how their relationships develop and how they understand one another.

Show a video clip from **Romeo and Juliet Act 3 Scene 5** to the class, or read the text in groups of three.

! CONTEXT

During *Romeo and Juliet*, Juliet chooses to marry Romeo without her family's knowledge as they expect her to marry Paris.

In this scene her father is unaware that she has already married Romeo and expects Juliet to be pleased about the news of her impending marriage to the husband he has chosen for her.

Similarly, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Hermia wants to marry Lysander but her father wants her to marry Demetrius. Her father asks the Duke to make Hermia marry Demetrius, so Hermia runs away with Lysander.

Some of the conflicts that appear in **Romeo and Juliet** and other plays are caused by characters wanting independence and freedom, and issues around communication – issues that seem very familiar to us. What advice would you give to the parents and children in the play you are studying?

Provide each pupil with a copy of **Activity Sheet 1** with photographs of scenes from productions of Shakespeare's plays featuring fathers and daughters. Ask your pupils to add speech and thought bubbles to the images, showing what the characters might be saying and thinking in each picture in their own words.

Organise pupils into small groups. Share the example soliloquies and context boxes from **Romeo and Juliet** and **Richard III**. Invite the group to choose one. Ask them to read through the text, discuss and jot down what they think the character is feeling and thinking and what actions they would like to take.

Use this to discuss as a class how Shakespeare uses the soliloquy device to reveal a character's thoughts, feelings and intended actions? You may also want to divide up the lines in the speech and invite pupils to create images for each of them. This can help to give pupils a sense of the imagery being used, and also the feeling and emotion beneath the text.

Challenge each group to work together to create a soliloquy in modern language where a father or child from a Shakespeare play displays their thoughts and feelings about their situation and reveals what they would like to say and do.

SOLILOQUIES ARE OFTEN USED BY SHAKESPEARE TO SHOW A CHARACTER'S INNERMOST THOUGHTS

A soliloquy is a speech delivered by a single character, not directed at another character on stage. Sometimes these speeches will be directed at the audience, at other times they can reveal a character's inner thoughts. Soliloquies can help the audience understand the intentions of the character but can also sometimes be used to mislead them. Perhaps the best-known opening line to a Shakespearean soliloquy is 'To be or not to be' from *Hamlet*.

Q EXPLORING SOLILOQUIES

An activity that will help you to explore a soliloquy as part of a scene study is *Whispered Reading*. You can see an example of how this might work with *Julius Caesar* on page 59, but it can be used with any text.

APPLY YOUR LEARNING – CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Encourage your pupils to continue working in their groups and discuss how you could apply the family and relationship dilemmas in a play you are studying to a modern day setting. Discuss where and how this might take place and then ask them to rewrite the scene in the style of a modern soap opera script. Perhaps show a clip from a popular soap opera or other television programme as inspiration.

Remind them to set the relationship dilemmas in a modern family, include stage directions, and that this would be aired during family viewing times, so the language used would need to be appropriate for this audience. Finally, ask them to make sure that they conclude the scene with a dramatic cliff-hanger! Perform or film their scene to share with the rest of the class.

AND FINALLY...

- Have their thoughts on the original provocative question changed? Do parents always know best?
- What skills and qualities can help to maintain good relationships with friends and families?
- Research the plots of other Shakespearean plays that feature characters having problematic relationships with their parents. Do they all end in tragedy?

PARTNER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

- Upload the mind maps from the first exercise onto your shared space and compare with those created by your partner school. Discuss similarities and differences between them.
- Exchange soliloquies, soap opera scripts and performances with your partner school.



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Romeo and Juliet Act 3 Scene 5

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**!

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

Capulet And why, my lady wisdom? Hold your tongue.

To Nurse

Good Prudence. **Smatter** with your gossips, go.

Nurse I speak no treason.

Lord Capulet O, **God-gi-good e'en**.

Nurse May not one speak?

Lord 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.

Lord 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 matched: and having now provided

A gentleman of noble parentage,

Of fair **demesnes**, youthful and nobly allied

Stuffed, as they say, with honourable **parts**,

Proportioned as one's thoughts 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 an 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,

An 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*



OVERVIEW

In Act 3 Scene 5 of **Romeo and Juliet**, Juliet's father has just told her that she has to marry Paris that same week, but both she and the audience know that she is already married to Romeo.



NOTES

itch: to beat you

hilding: immoral woman or girl

rate: berate, scold

smatter: chatter, talk ignorantly

God... e'en: go away (literally, good evening)

gravity: words of wisdom

bowl: cup to drink from

God's bread: an oath referring to the bread used in the Christian sacrament of Communion

still: always

demesnes: lands

parts: qualities

puling: whining

mammet: doll/very weak person

in... tender: when fortune makes her an offer

pardon: the sense now shifts from 'excuse, forgive' to 'give permission to leave'

advise: consider

be forsworn: break my word

ACTIVITY SHEET 1



RESOURCES

- Pencils
- Pens

Add thought and speech bubbles to show what you think these fathers and daughters might be thinking and saying.



EXAMPLE SOLILOQUIES

Romeo and Juliet Act 2 Scene 2

(Enter Juliet above)

Romeo But, soft, what light through yonder window breaks?

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.

Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,

Who is already sick and pale with grief,

That thou her maid art far more fair than she:

Be not her **maid**, since she is envious:

Her **vestal livery** is but sick and green

And none but fools do wear it, cast it off.

It is my lady, O, it is my love!

O, that she knew she were!

She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that?

Her eye discourses: I will answer it.

I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:

Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,

Having some business, do entreat her eyes

To twinkle in their **spheres** till they return.

What if her eyes were there, they in her head?

The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,

As daylight doth a lamp, her eyes in heaven

Would through the airy region stream so bright

That birds would sing and think it were not night.

See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!

O, that I were a glove upon that hand,

That I might touch that cheek!

! OVERVIEW

In Act 2 Scene 2 of **Romeo and Juliet**, Romeo has broken into the Capulet house so that he can see Juliet again after meeting her for the first time at her father's ball that night. He spies her in the window.

📖 NOTES

maid: devoted follower (of Diana, Roman goddess of the moon and chastity)

vestal livery: virginal clothing

spheres: orbits, stars and planets were thought to be contained within transparent concentric spheres that rotated around the Earth



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Richard III Act 1 Scene 1

King Richard III

Now is the winter of our discontent
Made glorious summer by this **son of York**:
And all the clouds that **loured** upon our house
In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.
Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths,
Our bruised **arms** hung up **for** monuments,
Our stern **alarums** changed to merry meetings,
Our **dreadful** marches to delightful **measures**.
Grim-visaged war hath smoothed his wrinkled **front**,
And now, instead of mounting **barbed** steeds
To fright the souls of **fearful** adversaries,
He **capers** nimbly in a lady's chamber
To the lascivious **pleasing** of a lute.
But I, that am not shaped for **sportive** tricks,
Nor made to **court an amorous looking-glass**:
I, that am **rudely stamped**, and **want** love's majesty
To strut before a **wanton ambling** nymph:
I, that am **curtailed** of this fair proportion,
Cheated of **feature** by **dissembling** nature,
Deformed, unfinished, **sent before my time**
Into this breathing world, scarce half **made up**,
And that so lamely and **unfashionable**
That dogs bark at me as I **halt** by them —
Why, I, in this weak **piping** time of peace,
Have no delight to pass away the time,
Unless to see my shadow in the sun
And **descant** on mine own deformity.
And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,
To **entertain** these fair well-spoken days.
I am **determined** to prove a villain
And hate the idle pleasures of these days.
Plots have I laid, **inductions** dangerous,
By drunken prophecies, libels and dreams,
To set my brother Clarence and the king
In deadly hate the one against the other.
And if King Edward be as true and just
As I am **subtle**, false and treacherous,
This day should Clarence closely be **mewed up**,
About a prophecy, which says that '**G**'
Of Edward's heirs the murderer shall be.
Dive, thoughts, down to my soul: here Clarence
comes.—



OVERVIEW

In this opening soliloquy, Richard describes how peace has come to England after civil war. His older brother Edward is king but he will not join the celebrations. He describes himself as 'rudely stamped', 'deformed' and 'unfinished'. He vows to become a villain and win the throne for himself, turning his family members against each other. To achieve this, Richard has started scheming against his brother Clarence, planting rumours to make Edward suspicious of Clarence.



NOTES

son of York: King Edward IV. His father was Duke of York

loured: frowned threateningly

arms: armour, weapons

for: as

alarums: calls to arms/sudden attacks

dreadful: fearsome, inspiring dread

measures: stately dances

front: forehead

barbed: armoured

fearful: frightened (or possibly 'frightening')

capers: dances with leaping movements

pleasing: attraction, delight

sportive: pleasurable/amorous

court... looking-glass: gaze lovingly at myself in a mirror

rudely stamped: crudely formed, roughly printed with an image

want: lack

wanton: flirtatious, lascivious

ambling: sauntering, walking with rolling gait

curtailed: deprived, cut short

feature: a pleasing shape

dissembling: cheating, deceitful

sent... time: i.e. born prematurely

made up: fully formed

unfashionable: odd-looking, inelegant/poorly shaped

halt: limp

piping: shrill, weak

descant: improvise variations on (musical term), i.e. ponder

entertain: pass enjoyably

determined: resolved/destined

inductions: initial steps, preparations

subtle: cunning, sly false dishonest, disloyal

mewed up: imprisoned, cooped up (like a caged bird of prey)

about: as a result of

'G': Clarence's first name is George

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Clips to watch can be found online at

<https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/classroom-resources/list/shakespeare-lives>

ACT THREE

IDENTITY

AND EQUALITY

Are all people born equal ?

Objectives

To consider what defines who we are and examine issues related to identity, equality and diversity. To explore Shakespeare's use of language and how many of his words and idioms have become embedded into the language we speak today.

Curriculum links

English, Personal, Social and Health Education, Citizenship, Art and Design.

Citizenship skills and outlooks

Communicating, collaborating, creative thinking, developing empathy.

Resources required

Large open space for practical work, scrap paper, copies of newspapers, internet access, text extracts, work sheets, scissors and envelopes.



LEARNING FOCUS

Exploring issues around identity and treating people with respect. Investigating how Shakespeare's language is still used today.

INTRODUCTION

Our identity is made up of different characteristics, some of which will develop and change over time and with experience. Many of Shakespeare's plays explore this issue. He uses mistaken identity and disguise as a plot device, shows us that people are not always what they appear to be, and examines the inequalities that exist between people from different classes, genders and religions.

? KEY QUESTIONS

How do we define ourselves and what makes us who we are?

WARM UP ACTIVITIES

- Invite pupils to move freely around an open space.
- Challenge pupils to stop moving and then start again without any spoken command or instruction. Allow them to try this several times, emphasising that no one person should be the 'leader', but that they should move together and work as a team.
- Explain to pupils that their teams are going to change, and ask them to continue moving, but when you call for them to stop you want them to arrange themselves into various groups without speaking.
- Start by asking them to group themselves by a specific number and then develop this so that they are forming groups that are linked by a physical attribute such as hair or eye colour.
- You might want to do this again, but focusing on non-physical attributes such as birth month. Reflect with pupils on which groupings were easier to move into and why that might be.

This activity is a great way to introduce the question of what it feels like to be grouped within society for example, by outward appearance, and will also open up discussions about how much easier it is to collect into groups this way. For some people there might be comfort in knowing instantly where you fit in. Others might feel uncomfortable or uncertain, or as though they are missing out. You can always extend this by allowing one group freedom of movement while the others have to remain still and explore how this impacts on their reactions.

Challenge pupils to suggest what identity means to them and make a list of different characteristics that make up people's identities. These may include gender, faith, position in the family, job, hobbies, race, age, eye colour and so forth.

The comedian Eddie Izzard has described himself on Twitter as: **'I'm a British European, I think like an American & I was born in an Arabic country. A supporter of charity. Runner. Political campaigner. Fashion icon. Human.'**

Ask your pupils to describe their own identity in 140 characters or less on large sheets of paper.

You could then display these short descriptions along with photographs of your pupils or create a word cloud of your class's identity by feeding all their text into Wordle at www.wordle.net. The 'clouds' produced will give greater importance to the words that appear most frequently. You could also go on to create similar short descriptions of the identity of characters from a Shakespearean play they know well.



EXPLORING CITIZENSHIP THEMES, SKILLS AND VALUES

? KEY QUESTIONS

What different roles and identities do we take on?

Our sense of identity can also be related to our feelings of belonging to particular groups and communities. In **The Merchant of Venice**, Shylock is seen as a father, a member of the Jewish community and a moneylender. In **Romeo and Juliet**, Juliet is a Capulet, daughter and young wife. What communities or groups do you associate with other Shakespearean characters?

Focusing on a particular play, ask your pupils to create an illustrated mind map of the different groups that characters from the play belong to. Are there any groups that the characters are excluded from? How does that affect them? How does disguise contribute to their sense of identity? In **Twelfth Night**, Viola has to disguise herself as a man in order to survive the new court that she finds herself in. This happens in a number of Shakespeare's plays. In what ways do people hide their true identity today? Why do they do this?



Discuss moral issues relating to identity and equality such as the representation of women, status or religion that students have encountered in the Shakespeare play they are studying. The same themes continue to reverberate in modern life. Give out copies of national or local newspapers. Ask your pupils to find contemporary news stories that are still concerned with the same issues related to identity and equality 400 years after Shakespeare was writing.



IN DEPTH ANALYSIS – RESPECT AND EMOTIVE LANGUAGE

Watch a clip and read together the excerpt from **Act 1 Scene 3** of **The Merchant of Venice**, which reveals the cruel treatment Shylock has experienced on the streets of Venice because of his identity as a Jew. Discuss the meaning behind the lines and the motivation of each character involved.

Then look at Shylock's famous speech from **Act 3 Scene 1** that eloquently argues that all people are equal. Discuss why the images contained in this passage are so powerful. You could also ask pupils to look at specific lines and create physical images to represent them, reflecting on any similarities or differences in their choices. Do they think Shylock is wrong to seek revenge when the money cannot be paid back?



EXPLORING CHARACTER MOTIVATIONS

Imaging can be a great way of exploring motivations at pivotal moments. Here the activity looks at the meaning behind the lines and the motivations of each character, which can be adapted to help pupils think about Shylock's feelings and respond to the way he is treated by others in The Merchant of Venice. You can see an example of how this might work with Julius Caesar on page 55 as part of a series of activities, but it can be used with any text.

Alternatively show your pupils a copy of Viola and Duke Orsino's dialogue about love in **Act 2 Scene 4** of **Twelfth Night**. Try reading it in pairs standing back to back. How does the fact that Viola is disguised as a man change the conversation? What does the audience understand from her emotional speech that Orsino cannot? How does this change the impact of the language?



EXPLORING DIALOGUE

You can see an example of this and other Scene Studies using Julius Caesar on page 59, but it can be used with any text.



APPLY YOUR LEARNING – CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Quoting Shakespeare

The famous images and phrases contained in these speeches are some of many new words and phrases attributed to Shakespeare that are still in common usage today. Some of his most well-known sayings and phrases can be seen in the following passage by the writer Bernard Levin:

'If your lost property has **vanished into thin air**, you are quoting Shakespeare. If you have ever refused to **budge an inch** or suffered from **green eyed jealousy**, if you have played **fast and loose**, if you have been **tongue tied, a tower of strength, hoodwinked** or **in a pickle** you are quoting Shakespeare... if you think it is **high time** and that is the **long and short of it**, if you believe the **game is up** and that **truth will out**, even if it involves your own **flesh and blood** you are quoting Shakespeare.'

How many of these phrases do your pupils recognise? Cut up the examples of some well-known Shakespearean idioms on **Activity Sheet 2**. Ask your pupils to work in pairs to match the beginning and the end of these famous quotations. Try writing some simple explanations of these phrases for your partner school. Do they have equivalent sayings or idioms in their own language?

For home learning ask your pupils to collect some favourite Shakespearean quotations from their families, teachers, friends or neighbours. These may be things that they themselves learned at school. Ask them to find out about the play and scene that these quotations come from and then copy out and illustrate in a media of their choice to make a beautiful illustrated book of Shakespearean quotations.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Encourage your pupils to write a **Biopoem**. This is a simple poem or self-portrait in words that follows a predictable pattern. Encourage them to include imaginative and interesting details about their identity and what makes them unique using the following pattern:

- First name.
- Relationships in your life: 'Relative of...' or 'friend of...'
- Three character traits.
- Three things you love e.g. fan of... chocolate, windy walks on the beach, theatre.
- Three important memories.
- Three groups you belong to e.g. footballer, guitarist and runner.
- Three accomplishments.
- Three hopes or wishes.
- Home (location): 'Resident of...' or 'attends ... school'.
- Surname.

Then try writing a Biopoem about a Shakespeare character they know well.

Your pupils could also work in small groups to devise the plot of a short story about a person who is treated differently in some way. How could/should the issues be resolved? Present these short stories to the rest of the class.





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AND FINALLY...

? KEY QUESTIONS

Do you think we now live in a more equal society than Shakespeare? Explain why.

What else could be done to promote equality of opportunity for all?

In 2010, the Equality Act was passed by Parliament in the UK to bring together over 100 laws into a single Act to protect individuals from unfair treatment and promote a fair and more equal society for all. Encourage your pupils to research other measures that have been taken in your country to promote equality such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed by 193 countries in September 2015.

PARTNER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

- Compare your individual descriptions and class word clouds with that of your partner school class.
- Create an illustrated book of your class's favourite Shakespeare quotations and exchange them with your partner school quoting the play, act and scene where they are found.
- Investigate the life and works of major writers from your partner school country who also wrote on similar themes.



GLOSSARY

Wordle: a tool for generating word clouds from text. The clouds give greater prominence to words that appear more frequently in the source text.

Biopoem: Biopoems follow a specific 11-line format. Writers can use these poems to better understand an historical figure, a fictional character, or themselves.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Merchant of Venice

Act 1 Scene 3

Shylock Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have **rated** me
About my moneys and my usances.
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
For **sufferance** is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog
And spit upon my Jewish **gabardine**,
And all for **use** of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help.
Go to, then. You come to me and you say
Shylock, we would have moneys' – you say so,
You that did **void** your **rheum** upon my beard.
And **foot** me as you spurn a **stranger cur**
Over your threshold. Moneys is your **suit**.
What should I say to you? Should I not say,
'Hath a dog money? Is it possible
A cur should lend three thousand ducats?' Or
Shall I bend low and in a **bondman's key**,
With **bated** breath and whisp'ring humbleness,
Say this: 'Fair sir, you spat on me on Wednesday last;
You **spurned** me such a day; another time
You called me dog, and for these courtesies
I'll lend you thus much moneys?'



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! OVERVIEW

In Act 1 Scene 3 of *The Merchant of Venice*, Antonio, a merchant, has requested money from Shylock who is a Jewish moneylender. In this speech Shylock responds to his latest request.

✍ NOTES

rated: berated, reproached (puns on rate)

sufferance: endurance

gabardine: loose cloak or coat

use: employment (puns on sense of 'financial interest')

Go to: expression of impatient dismissal

void: discharge, empty

rheum: spit

foot: kick/reject

stranger cur: unknown dog

suit: request

bondman's key: servant's tone

bated: subdued

spurned: despise/reject

The Merchant of Venice

Act 3 Scene 1

Shylock I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, **dimensions**, senses, **affections**, **passions**? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian is? If you prick us do we not bleed? If you tickle us do we not laugh? If you poison us do we not die? And if you wrong us shall we not revenge?



© RSC. Photo by Hugo Glendinning.

! OVERVIEW

In Act 3 Scene 1 of *The Merchant of Venice*, **Shylock is explaining to two Christians that he is serious about the terms of his loan to Antonio, and that all people experience the same emotions, including the desire for revenge.**

✍ NOTES

dimensions: parts of the body

affections: emotions/love

passions: powerful emotions

Twelfth Night

Act 2 Scene 4

Viola Ay, but I know—

Orsino What dost thou know?

Viola Too well what love women to men may owe:

In faith, they are as true of heart as we.

My father had a daughter loved a man,

As it might be, perhaps, were I a woman,

I should your lordship.

Orsino And what's her **history**?

Viola A blank, my lord. She never told her love,

But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,

Feed on her **damask** cheek: she pined in thought,

And with a **green and yellow** melancholy

She sat like **patience on a monument**,

Smiling at grief. Was not this love indeed?

We men may say more, swear more: but indeed

Our **shows** are more than will; for still we prove

Much in our vows, but little in our love.

! OVERVIEW

In Act 2 Scene 4 of *Twelfth Night*, Viola is dressed as a man. She has been working for Duke Orsino, who hired her as a manservant, Cesario, but has fallen in love with him.

📖 NOTES

history: story

damask: pink, like the damask rose

green and yellow: sickly, pale and sallow

patience... monument: carved figure on a memorial

shows: outwards displays



© RSC. Photo by Reg Wilson.

**RESOURCES**

- Scissors
- Envelopes
- Pens
- Paper

Photocopy and cut up the following Shakespearean quotations and place them in envelopes. Give each group an envelope and ask them to match the beginning and end of the phrase.

 All that glisters...	...is not gold
All's well that...	...ends well
Brave new...	...world
Budge an...	...inch
Eaten me out of...	...house and home
If music be the food of love...	...play on
Be all...	...and the end all
Dead as a...	...doornail
Knock knock...	...who's there
Wild goose...	...chase
Break the...	...ice
Own flesh...	...and blood

ACT

FOUR

FATE

AND

DESTINY

Do people control their own future

?

Objectives

To explore events and the people in our lives that can influence the decisions we make. To examine how language can be used to evoke atmosphere and mood. To encourage pupils to look at the poetic elements of Shakespeare's verse.

Curriculum links

English, Drama, Citizenship, Personal, Social and Health Education, Art and Design.

Citizenship skills and outlooks

Communicating, collaborating, creative thinking, developing empathy.

Resources required

Scissors, diamond nine sheets, musical instruments, copies of Ariel's song, magazines, glue, card, recording equipment, art materials or construction pieces, play extracts.



LEARNING FOCUS

Decision making, Shakespeare's use of poetic language and imagery.

INTRODUCTION

Some people believe that fairies, witches or unseen forces control fate and destiny. At the time when Shakespeare was writing, these were important issues of the day. King James I had written a book called **Daemonology** warning about the dangers of the supernatural. Fairies and spirits were considered dangerous, witches were thought to be able to predict the future and magic represented unseen forces in the world.

WARM UP ACTIVITIES

- Invite pupils to organise themselves into five or six lines, with an equal number in each.
- Ask them to extend their arms so that they are standing an equal width apart with their fingertips touching, so that they form barriers.
- Check that these barriers are well spaced and that you can move between them easily. On the command 'change,' ask them to turn 90 degrees with their arms still extended, creating lines that go in the opposite direction, checking these in the same way.
- Select two volunteers, one to move through the grid and one to stand on the outside of the grid. The first volunteer should try to make their way through the grid to reach the person on the outside.
- As the pupil in the grid moves towards the other volunteer, ask pupils to change direction at appropriate moments.
- Allow a few pupils the chance to feel what it is like to have their path and direction changed for them.

This activity is a great way to introduce the question of what it feels like to have a force outside of your own control forcing you to change the decisions in your life. You can also tailor this activity to a specific play, by making all the pupils in the grid pretend that they're trees and suggesting the volunteer is Helena trying to reach Demetrius, with magic controlling her environment.

Shakespeare wrote for both poetic and dramatic purposes. Watch a clip with your class and read through the opening scene of **Macbeth** and discuss how Shakespeare creates atmosphere and tension. Encourage your pupils to imagine they are entering this place. What would they see, hear and feel? How might the witches look and move? Ask them to work in small groups and jot down ideas, phrases and sketches on large sheets of paper.

Starting with the line '**When shall we three meet again / In thunder, lightning or in rain?**' ask them to build up a soundscape using body percussion and musical instruments to create an impression of the scene that reflects Shakespeare's words and ideas. After a discreet amount of time ask two pupils to act as Banquo and Macbeth to interrupt the crescendo when appropriate with the line, '**So fair and foul a day I have not seen**'.



EXPLORING OPENING SCENES

For ways to explore the setting and atmosphere in a play, using language to open up a Soundscape. You can see an example of how this might work with Julius Caesar on page 56, but it can be used with any text.

EXPLORING CITIZENSHIP THEMES, SKILLS AND VALUES

? KEY QUESTIONS

Do people control their own future?

Read Hermia's speech in **Act 1 Scene 1** of **A Midsummer Night's Dream**, and Romeo's speech in **Act 1 Scene 4** of **Romeo and Juliet**. Discuss what influences Hermia to run away, and Romeo to believe the night's events will lead to tragedy? Ask groups to create a mind map showing all the factors that influenced them to behave in a certain way. Did superstition or 'fate' play a part?

Alternatively, ask each group to choose a major decision taken by a character in a play they know well and carry out the same activity.

If you had an important decision to make about your future, what factors might influence your decision? Ask your pupils to work in groups and look at the factors listed on the activity sheet. Cut out the cards and decide which you think would have the greatest influence on your decision. Rank the cards into a **diamond nine** shape in order of importance with the most important at the top and the least important at the bottom. Gather the whole class together to discuss whether similar choices were made.



! CONTEXT

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Hermia is in love with Lysander, but her father is very angry and tells her she must marry Demetrius. Her father brings back a very old law that says a daughter must marry the person her father chooses, or else face death or live as a nun. She decides to run away with Lysander into the forest in the hopes of eloping.



IN DEPTH ANALYSIS – POETIC LANGUAGE

Shakespeare's plays are famous for their rich imagery and language. When people visited open-air theatres to see one of his plays, they mainly came to hear the play, rather than to see it. The plays were performed in the afternoon, there were limited scenery and effects, all parts were played by men and boys but the audience was transported to other countries and other worlds by the magical language of the play. Shakespeare's language is particularly vivid and atmospheric when the humans in his plays come into contact with beings or spirits from other worlds.

An example can be seen in the extract of Ariel's song from **The Tempest**. Ask your pupils to read this aloud together. Discuss the use of imagery and encourage them to identify language techniques such as rhyme, alliteration and onomatopoeia within the stanza.

! CONTEXT

In Act 1 Scene 2 of *The Tempest*, the "Fairy Spirit" Ariel is ordered by Prospero to lead the shipwrecked Ferdinand to him. He does this by singing a song. The words resonate with Ferdinand who believes his father has drowned in the shipwreck.

APPLY YOUR LEARNING

Listen carefully again to the words in Ariel's song, this time sung by a children's choir, as part of the British Council's World Voice Programme. Encourage your class to join in with the song and to picture in their mind the vivid images that the language conveys.

Invite your pupils to use pictures from magazines and words from the play to create a collage which portrays an impression of the images in the song.

British Council World Voice Shakespeare song:
<https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/classroom-resources/list/shakespeare-lives>



WHAT DOES A FAIRY OR SPIRIT LOOK LIKE?



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Examples of Shakespearean magical creatures – Derek, Frank and Ninja from Clapham Terrace Primary School.

During the period when Shakespeare was writing, fairies and spirits were thought of as strange creatures that used magic and were considered to be very dangerous. Ask your pupils to use their imaginations to design and create their own Shakespearean magical creatures in a media of their choice and give the character a name, a particular power and a secret! They could use play dough, air-dry clay, recycled materials or LEGO®/ construction kit pieces.

Invite your pupils to take photographs of their models and use computer software if available, to create an exciting backdrop from the play or use stop frame techniques to recreate a scene as an animation with sound effects and extracts from the play.

AND FINALLY...

- Return to the original question. Do people control their own future? What other factors may influence this?
- What are your pupils' hopes and dreams for the future? What knowledge, skills and attributes will they need to reach their goals?
- If one of Shakespeare's magical spirits could make one wish for your future what might it be?

PARTNER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

- Record your soundscapes and share with your partner school. Can they work out which Shakespearean scene is being portrayed?
- Both schools could learn Ariel's song from the World Voice resources and perform it together over Skype.
- Exchange mind maps and ideas from the **diamond nine** activity and photographs of collages and magical creatures.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Macbeth Act 1 Scene 1

Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches

First Witch When shall we three meet again?

In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

Second Witch When the hurly-burly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

Third Witch That will be ere the set of sun.

First Witch Where the place?

Second Witch Upon the heath.

Third Witch There to meet with Macbeth.

First Witch I come, Grey Malkin.

Second Witch Paddock calls.

Third Witch Anon.

All Fair is foul, and foul is fair:

Hover through the fog and filthy air. *Exeunt*

! OVERVIEW

In Act 1 Scene 1 of *Macbeth*, the play opens with thunder and lightning, the three Witches deciding that their next meeting will be with Macbeth.

👉 NOTES

hurly-burly: turmoil, uproar, strife

ere: before

Grey Malkin: a cat, the First Witch's familiar (a spirit in animal form that carried out evil deeds for a witch)

Paddock: the Second Witch's familiar, a toad

Anon: soon, in a moment



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? KEY QUESTIONS

Do people control their own future?

Read Romeo's speech in **Act 1 Scene 4** of **Romeo and Juliet**. Discuss what influences Romeo to believe the night's events will lead to tragedy?

Ask groups to create a mind map showing all the factors that influenced Romeo or other Shakespearean characters they know well to behave in a certain way during the play. Did superstition or 'fate' play a part?



Romeo and Juliet Act 1 Scene 4

Romeo I fear too early, for my mind **misgives**
Some consequence yet hanging in the stars
Shall bitterly begin his **fearful date**
With this night's revels and **expire** the term
Of a despised life closed in my breast
By some vile **forfeit** of untimely death.
But he that hath the steerage of my course,
Direct my suit. On, lusty gentlemen!

! OVERVIEW

In **Act 1 Scene 4** of **Romeo and Juliet**, **Romeo and his friends are heading to the feast at the Capulet house. Romeo has a sense of foreboding what the night ahead may lead to.**

✍ NOTES

misgives: fears/is full of foreboding about

fearful: fear-inspiring

date: appointed time

expire: cause to expire the agreed period for repayment (Romeo has mortgaged his life)

forfeit: penalty/loss

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Act 1 Scene 1

Hermia If then true lovers have been **ever crossed**,
It stands as an edict in destiny.

Then let us teach our **trial** patience,
Because it is a customary cross,
As due to love as thoughts and dreams and sighs,
Wishes and tears, poor **fancy's** followers.

Lysander A good **persuasion**. Therefore, hear me,
Hermia.

I have a widow aunt, a dowager
Of great revenue, and she hath no child.
From Athens is her house removed **seven leagues**,
And she **respects** me as her only son.
There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee,
And to that place the sharp Athenian law
Cannot pursue us. If thou lov'st me then,
Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night,
And in the wood, a league **without** the town,
Where I did meet thee once with Helena,
To **do observance to a morn of May**,
There will I **stay** for thee.

Hermia My good Lysander!
I swear to thee, by **Cupid's** strongest bow,
By his **best arrow with the golden head**,
By the **simplicity** of Venus's **doves**,
By that which **knitteth** souls and prospers loves,
And by that fire which burned the **Carthage queen**,
When the **false Trojan** under sail was seen,
By all the vows that ever men have broke,
In number more than ever women spoke,
In that same place thou hast appointed me,
Tomorrow truly will I meet with thee.



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! OVERVIEW

In Act 1 Scene 1 of **A Midsummer Night's Dream**, Hermia and Lysander decide to run away together after Hermia's Father, Egeus, threatens to kill her if she doesn't marry Demetrius, his choice for her.

✍ NOTES

ever crossed: always prevented from doing something

trial: experience of this trial

fancy's: love's

persuasion: opinion

seven leagues: about 21 miles

respects: considers

without: outside

do... May: i.e. celebrate May Day

stay: wait

Cupid: Roman god of love

best... head: i.e. one causing love (Cupid's lead arrows were supposed to induce loathing)

simplicity: innocence

doves: symbol of faithfulness to a person, these birds drew the goddess of love's chariot

knitteth: binds together

Carthage queen: Dido, who committed suicide on a fire when Aeneas deserted her

false Trojan: the Trojan Aeneas

ACTIVITY SHEET 3 WHAT INFLUENCES YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY?

Photocopy the Activity Sheet and give one to each group of students. Ask them to cut out the boxes and arrange them into a **diamond nine** shape to show what factors influence them when they make important decisions, with the most influential factor at the top. The bottom box has been left blank for them to add one suggestion of their own.



GLOSSARY

Diamond nine: An activity where students arrange nine items or choices into priority order, in the shape of a diamond with the most important at the top and the least important at the bottom.



RESOURCES

- Scissors
- Pens
- Paper



Views of parents or carers

Faith

The media

Views of extended family

School and teachers

Views of friends

Social media

Role models

ACT FIVE

JUSTICE

AND RULES

Would there be chaos without rules ?

Objectives

To explore why we need good rules, laws and justice for an ordered society and to examine the use of blank verse/iambic pentameter in Shakespeare's plays.

Curriculum links

English, Drama, History, Personal, Social and Health Education, Citizenship.

Citizenship skills and outlooks

Communicating, collaborating, creative and critical thinking.

Resources required

Internet access, play extracts, art materials.

LEARNING FOCUS

The importance of rules and responsibilities.
Blank verse and iambic pentameter.

INTRODUCTION

Rules, justice and mercy are recurring themes in Shakespeare's plays. Even the fairy world of **A Midsummer Night's Dream** has rules. What would societies be like if there were no rules?

? KEY QUESTIONS

What might happen in your school if there were no rules to follow?

Who do you think should make these rules?



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WARM UP ACTIVITY

- Appoint one volunteer to stand away from the rest of the group and line the rest of the pupils up behind them, at the opposite side of the room.
- Challenge pupils to creep up behind the volunteer, making as little noise as possible, with the aim of crossing the room and reaching the volunteer.
- If the volunteer hears any noise they should turn around. Anyone they catch moving will then have to sit out of the game.
- Introduce the idea that if anyone is caught out, the consequence now is that they will all need to go back to the starting line again. The first person to reach the volunteer will be named the winner.
- Reflect with pupils on how it felt to be judged 'out' under the new rule? Was this fair?
- Select two or three pupils to step out of the game and become rule makers. Ask them to create a new consequence each for people who are caught out, or for the rest of the pupils.
- Discuss with pupils, after playing with the new rules, whether or not this felt like a just system. What were their problems with it? What worked about that system? For example, they may mention that the new rule makers had at least experienced what it was like to be part of the game. Does the fact that they had been removed from it have an impact on the consequences they imposed?

This activity can be an interesting way of encouraging pupils to think about justice and consequences, and also who should make laws and rules. If you wanted to introduce the play or plays you are studying at this point you can adapt the activity to include consequences from the text.

EXPLORING CITIZENSHIP THEMES, SKILLS AND VALUES

? KEY QUESTIONS

Is it OK to break some rules?

Ask your pupils how they can tell if a rule is for a good reason. Give an example of a good rule and a bad rule. For example, 'Boys are allowed into dinner first.' Is this a bad rule? Why?

Have you ever been in a situation where you are tempted to break a rule and do something that you knew was wrong because you wanted something very badly? Provide your pupils with a series of moral dilemmas linked to characters 'breaking the rules' in Shakespeare's plays. For example:

- What would you do to get something you really wanted? (**Macbeth, Measure for Measure**).
- Is it ever just to seek revenge? (**Hamlet** and **The Merchant of Venice**).
- Is it ever justifiable to overthrow the leader of a country by force? (**Julius Caesar**).
- Should you ever trick someone to get what you want? (**A Midsummer Night's Dream, Twelfth Night, All's Well That Ends Well**).

Read **Act 2 Scene 3** of **Macbeth** aloud with your class in unison. Here, Lennox describes the weather the night that King Duncan is murdered by Macbeth.

In Shakespeare's time it was believed that the king was chosen by God, so killing a king was a terrible sin and would disrupt the entire order of the world. How does Lennox's speech suggest that Macbeth has caused chaos by breaking the rules?

Ask your class to each pick a character that has broken a rule in one of Shakespeare's plays. Create a 'mock court' in your classroom and put a student on trial as their chosen character. Ask them to defend their decisions and actions in the play. Then ask your class to decide if they have justified breaking the rules. Make sure to involve all the class, for example some could act as jurors or character witnesses.



Q EXPLORING DEBATE

For further explanation on how to look at justice and **Improvise in Context**, using the example of **Julius Caesar**, see page 61. This can be used with any text.



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IN DEPTH ANALYSIS – BLANK VERSE IAMBIC PENTAMETER

Shakespeare wrote either in blank verse, rhymed verse or prose. Blank verse or unrhymed iambic pentameter consists of five stresses, one stress on, one stress off and gives a rhythm to many of the lines in Shakespeare's plays.

Practise some simple call and response clapping and stamping rhythms such as stamp clap stamp clap stamp clap stamp clap to a steady pulse. Change the leader of the group and the rhythm several times. Then encourage the pupils to clap and stamp their feet to the rhythm of blank verse: Di Dum Di Dum Di Dum Di Dum Di Dum (ten beats). Explain to pupils that this way of writing is called iambic pentameter and, as well as having a total of ten syllables in a line, it's also a rhythm and a way of speaking. The beat behind the words is often described as being 'like a heartbeat,' with five stressed syllables and five soft ones.

Invite pupils to place their hands over their hearts and tap out five heartbeats together as a group. You can see this being done in the RSC video on teaching iambic pentameter at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Qv-sjQHgZ8

Keep the rhythm going as you read short examples from well-known Shakespearean speeches such as: Portia's famous speech about the quality of mercy from **Act 4 Scene 1** of **The Merchant of Venice**:

**The quality of mercy is not strained
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven**

Or the **Prologue** from **Romeo and Juliet**:

**Two households, both alike in dignity,
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene**

Note which words in particular are stressed and discuss the effect the rhythm has on the meaning of the words and the play you are studying.

APPLY YOUR LEARNING – CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES



A new artwork by Hew Locke called **Jurors** is sited at Runnymede in Surrey, where the Magna Carta was signed. It consists of 12 chairs carved with traditional and modern symbols of justice from around the world. These include images of keys and scales as well as a picture of a class of children learning about the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, and Cornelia Sorabji – the first female lawyer in India. Look at pictures of some of these chairs and ask your class to work in groups to find out more about the struggles for justice depicted.

Ask your class to work in groups and design their own 'juror's chair' – what images, symbols and quotations would they include?

A film with further details about how the artwork was made can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yD12u-ehyvE>

AND FINALLY...

Ask your class to examine the question again: Do you think there would there be chaos without rules? What are their thoughts?

Why is it particularly important to have rules in school? Look again at your class and school rules. Do you think they are they 'good' rules? Who decides them?

Ask your class to agree the top five rules to make your school or class a happy and safe place to be.



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PARTNER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

- Discuss the outcomes of the court scenes in both schools.
- Exchange films of your court scenes and photographs of your chair designs with your partner school.
- Compare your top five school rules.



GLOSSARY

Iambic pentameter: The verse rhythm most frequently used in Shakespeare's plays. It consists of five iambic feet. Each foot is made up of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable creating the rhythm – de DUM, de DUM, de DUM, de DUM, de DUM.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Macbeth

Act 2 Scene 3

Lennox The night has been **unruly**. Where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down, and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams of death,
And **prophesying** with **accents terrible**
Of **dire combustion** and confused **events**
New hatched to th' woeful time: the **obscure bird**
Clamoured the **livelong** night. Some say, the earth
Was feverous and did shake.



! OVERVIEW

In **Act 2 Scene 3 of Macbeth**, **Lennox and Macduff** – who are both **Thanes in King Duncan's court** – go to see the **king only to be stopped by Macbeth**. **The king is later found dead.**

✍ NOTES

unruly: disordered, turbulent

lamentings: cries of grief

prophesying: foretelling/preaching/
uttering solemnly

accents terrible: terrifying utterances

dire combustion: dreadful confusion/
dangerous tumult

events: outcomes

new hatched to: newly born as offspring/
to/newly born into

obscure bird: the owl, bird of darkness

livelong: long-lasting

The Merchant of Venice

Act 4 Scene 1

! OVERVIEW

In Act 4 Scene 1 of *The Merchant of Venice*, Portia in disguise as a male lawyer, Balthazar, defends Antonio in front of the court, against Shylock's justice.

Portia The quality of mercy is not **strained**,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is **twice blest**;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest, it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown.
His sceptre **shows** the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the **dread** and fear of kings.
But mercy is above this **sceptred sway**,
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show **likest** God's
When mercy **seasons justice**.

📖 NOTES

strained: forced, artificial; also perhaps filtered/distilled (setting up rain imagery)

twice blest: bestows a double blessing

shows: represents

dread: reverence/awe

sceptred sway: royal government

likest: most like

seasons: modifies

justice: God's justice (if he did not show mercy to humankind)

Romeo and Juliet

Prologue

! OVERVIEW

In the Prologue of *Romeo and Juliet*, the dispute between the Montague and Capulet families is introduced and the story of the play established.

Chorus Two households, both alike in **dignity**,
In fair **Verona**, where we lay our scene,
From **ancient** grudge break to new **mutiny**,
Where **civil** blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the **fatal** loins of these two foes
A pair of **star-crossed** lovers **take their life**,
Whose **misadventured** piteous overthrows;
Do with their death bury their parents' strife.

📖 NOTES

dignity: social status/worth

Verona: a city in northern Italy

ancient: long-standing

mutiny: discord

civil: of citizens (plays on the sense of 'civilized')

fatal: fateful/deadly

star-crossed: thwarted by fate (the malign influence of a star or planet)

take their life: take something from their life (with sinister play on the sense of 'commit suicide')

misadventured: unfortunate

AN

INTRODUCTION

TO

USING

THEATRE-BASED

APPROACHES

Aims

To develop knowledge and understanding of theatre-based approaches to Shakespeare and how to apply them in the classroom. To further explore the themes of leadership and power in **Julius Caesar** through active theatre-based approaches.

Curriculum links

English, Personal, Social and Health Education, Drama, Citizenship.

Citizenship skills and outlooks

Communicating, collaborating, creative thinking, developing empathy.

Resources required

Large open space for practical work, copies of scene and speech extracts, character profiles, text scraps and the story in 20 minutes. You can find the speeches in this section and the additional materials online at <https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/classroom-resources/list/shakespeare-lives>



INTRODUCTION

Throughout the **Shakespeare Lives** schools' pack you will have found many ideas and approaches that are inspired by the way actors and directors work at the Royal Shakespeare Company. If you are new to theatre-based approaches or want to use more of these kinds of techniques to explore Shakespeare's plays, then the following sequence is designed for you.

The RSC see direct parallels between teaching and learning in the classroom and the way that plays are developed in the theatre. The process of rehearsing a play is collaborative. As a group, the actors and director will make choices about the interpretation of plot, characters, themes and language of the play. They also explore the key themes and dilemmas that are present in the text.

The following sequence of work offers a detailed exploration of the theme of leadership and power for older pupils, through close study of **Julius Caesar**. However, the activities and ideas can be applied to other plays and any of the key themes explored throughout this pack. As in the rehearsal rooms, the work in this section focuses on:

- **Establishing the world.**
- **Telling the story.**
- **Discovering the characters.**
- **Exploring the language.**

This section also acts as a glossary for all the activity terms in the theme sections. So if you are unsure how any of them work you can find them explained fully here.



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1 ESTABLISHING THE WORLD OF THE PLAY

WARM UP ACTIVITIES

! OVERVIEW

In this activity pupils will get a sense of what it feels like to live with a secret, to think about the consequences of acting against a ruler and what might drive a person to do that.



When an RSC acting company starts exploring a key theme in Shakespeare's work, it's important for them to establish the world in which a story is taking place.

As a theatre company, the RSC sees the 'world' of the play as being different from the setting. For example, the setting of **Julius Caesar** is Rome, but the world of the play is a society where people are questioning the right of their ruler to govern and exploring their own rights as citizens.

The following activities focus on the world of **Julius Caesar**, looking specifically at different styles of leadership and how these might affect the people who are ruled in that way.

- Ask pupils to spread themselves out. Invite them to imagine that they live in a place where they are ruled by a leader they want to remove and are planning a way to get rid of him.
- To do this they have to work with a group of other conspirators, in secret. Ask them to walk around the space, as though they were plotting this act.
- Then ask pupils to decide on a number, either 1, 2 or 3, and keep it secret.
- Explain that they should continue walking around the space. When you clap your hands they need to find another person and swap numbers, in a conspiratorial whisper.

- Explain to pupils that the number they hear will change how they react to that other person:
 - 1s will tap 2s on the shoulder.
 - 2s will tap 3s on the shoulder.
 - 3s will tap 1s on the shoulder.
- Pupils who are tapped on the shoulder should die dramatically on the floor. If they meet someone with the same number they should walk around together.
- When there are only a few players left standing reflect with them on how it made them feel not knowing what number each person they met would whisper and how they felt revealing their own. How do they think it would feel to be a conspirator who was actively trying to hurt a powerful leader? What could drive you to that point? Why might you dislike a leader that much?

This warm up activity, introducing the theme of lies and conspiracy, can be adapted to introduce the world of other plays you are studying. In **Romeo and Juliet, for example, you could use this to look at the Montagues and Capulets.**

IMAGING

! OVERVIEW

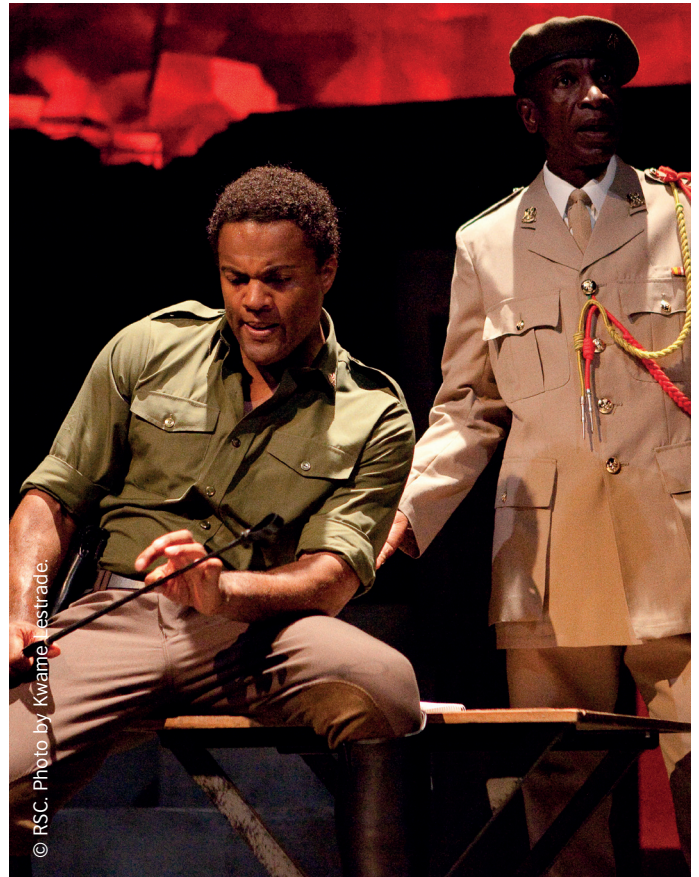
In this activity pupils will be introduced to different styles of leadership and begin to consider which is more effective as well as beginning to think about the style of leadership seen in **Julius Caesar**.

Organise pupils into small groups of five or six and invite them to create a still image of each of the following:

- a politician trying to win votes.
 - people plotting to overthrow a leader.
 - a leader who rules by force.
 - people ruling a country together.
- Invite pupils to share their images with the rest of the group and reflect on their choices.
- Discuss the similarities and differences the pupils notice in the ways they have presented people ruling together with someone ruling by force. Who do they expect to rule by force? Is this more likely to be an heir or someone who is chosen (elected) to be a ruler or leader?
- Explain to pupils that at the start of the play, Julius Caesar is the very powerful ruler of Rome. Rome has become famous as a democracy, which was governed mainly by a group of people known as the Senate, but Julius Caesar was not elected or chosen by his people and he ruled more like a king. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this?

! OVERVIEW

This imaging activity can be used to introduce key ideas and concepts in any play you are studying. For example, in **Macbeth** – to explore the relationship between Macbeth and Banquo – you could start with images of two friends sharing a secret, the two friends celebrating and then two friends who don't trust each other anymore. It is also a great way to introduce lines from the text. In **Romeo and Juliet**, for example, you could challenge pupils to think about creating a family feud or a pair of 'star-crossed lovers'.



2 TELLING THE STORY

Once an acting company have an understanding of the worlds in which a story is taking place, it is important for them to gain a collective understanding of what happens in the text itself. The director will usually spend the first part of the rehearsal process focusing on this.

The following activities will introduce pupils to the opening scene of **Julius Caesar** and the story as a whole. They will be able to identify moments in the play where opinions about Julius Caesar as a leader change and what makes this happen. Do they agree or disagree that Caesar had a right to rule his people? Do they agree with the actions of the conspirators in removing him?

SOUNDSCAPE

! OVERVIEW

In this activity pupils will get the chance to imagine the attitudes of the ordinary citizens of Rome and their thoughts about their ruler. This may be a good opportunity to ask pupils to think about whether the citizens care that Caesar wasn't picked by them. Do they think that the citizens would mind if Caesar was appointed as a king?

Before exploring the overarching story of a play it can be good to explore how the play opens, and how we are first introduced to the world of the play and its characters.

Ask pupils to sit in a circle and discuss the line:

We make holiday to see Caesar, and to rejoice in his triumph.

- Explain that this is from the opening scene. None of the main characters are there, as it opens with a cobbler and carpenter getting ready to celebrate.
- Invite pupils to think about the atmosphere in this opening scene. What are the key words in the line that tell us what is happening? What kind of place is Rome? How do these 'ordinary' men feel about Caesar?
- Encourage pupils to create the atmosphere of a party, where they are rejoicing in Caesar's triumph. Using the key words they have picked out, ask them to send the words across the circle, first as a stage whisper and then growing louder to lift the party mood, with more people joining in.
- Invite pupils to then introduce other sounds such as chanting, clapping, laughing, footsteps etc.
- Allow this soundscape to build and then ask pupils to gradually stop, reducing the noise.
- Select two pupils to play Flavius and Murellus who are like policeman in this scene. Give these pupils the following lines and ask them to interrupt the soundscape when they think they should.

Flavius Hence! Home you idle creatures, get you home! Is this a holiday?

Murellus You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things

- Explain that the citizens are stopped from celebrating by the officers of Rome. Ask the players how the citizens seem to feel about Caesar at the beginning of the play and how they feel about the authorities after being stopped?
- Ask pupils to think about why Shakespeare opens the play in this way, with these ordinary characters? Why might the reactions and feelings of Rome's citizens be important? What kind of leader is Caesar?

This soundscape activity can be used to explore the opening scene in any play you are studying. For example, in *Macbeth* you could start with the line 'when shall we three meet again/In thunder, lightning or in rain?' and build a soundscape which Banquo and Macbeth can interrupt with 'so fair and foul a day I have not seen'. In *Hamlet* or *The Tempest* it might be used to create Elsinore Castle or the storm.

THE STORY IN 20 MINUTES

! OVERVIEW

In this activity, pupils will get the chance to look at the whole play, exploring the key moments in the plot against Caesar. This may be a good opportunity to think about what responsibilities people have when they 'make' someone a ruler or leader.

- Organise pupils into small groups. Assign each group three or four of the short scenes in the **online resources**.
- Invite one pupil in each group to take on the role of a narrator, telling the story of their scene while the rest of the group act out what happens.
- Encourage groups to use the lines from the play and to include the characters mentioned in bold text.
- Allow each group time to rehearse their scenes before asking them to share them with the rest of the class, in the order they occur in the play.

- Reflect with pupils on why they think Brutus and Cassius took the risks they did? Why does Cassius encourage Brutus to join him in the conspiracy at the start and why do they think Brutus is convinced? What is he afraid of losing?
- You may want to explore the history of Rome with pupils at this point, asking them to research the history of the Republic or offering them information on how Rome was ruled before Caesar and why the Senate exists. Why might Brutus think that he has a responsibility to stop Caesar accepting a crown and becoming king? Who will become ruler after Caesar's murder? Do they have a right to rule any more than Caesar did?

If you know a play well, this storytelling activity can be used to introduce the plot in any play you are studying and is also a good way to include text from different points in the play. You can adapt the activity so that you explore the play in more stages or less stages.



3 DISCOVERING THE CHARACTERS

Once you have an overview of the world of a play and a sense of the story, it can deepen understanding to look at the characters that inhabit those worlds and explore their motivations.

The following activities will help pupils look at the different characters in the play and their views on leadership.

SCULPTING

Organise pupils into pairs and provide each pair with a different character profile from the **online resources**.

! OVERVIEW

In this activity pupils will get the chance to think about the political situation in the world of Julius Caesar and how the characters relate to each other. This may be a good opportunity to ask pupils to consider what the differences are between a ruler who was 'born' to lead and one who has been 'made' a leader.

- Using the profiles, ask one pupil to direct the other and to sculpt their partner into a pose to show what their character is like.
- Challenge pupils to develop their sculptures by including the extracts they have been given, bringing their sculpture to life to deliver the line.
- Ask pupils to listen and watch carefully as each of the animated sculptures comes to life. Ask them to then move around the space and locate other characters they think their character would be likely to team up with. This will help pupils to start thinking about the political allegiances of each character and who they might be connected to.
- Reflect with pupils on what factions, or groups, they think there are. Who might be the main threats to Caesar? Where are the women in the play?

This **sculpting** activity can be used to introduce characters in any play you are studying. It can be adapted so that characters move into a single freeze frame. In **A Midsummer Night's Dream** for example, you might create three separate freeze frames, or photographs of the court of Athens, the mechanicals and the fairies. As these worlds cross over, you might want to challenge pupils to combine their photographs.

4 EXPLORING THE LANGUAGE

Shakespeare's plays were written to be performed rather than read and exploring the language in a practical way can open up meaning for young people. The RSC believes that the language of the play should provide the starting point for all the work around a production.

The following activities or **scene studies** will explore key moments in the play, as well as staging choices. Pupils will get the chance to explore Cassius's character by examining his soliloquy from **Act 1 Scene 2** and Brutus's choices. Begin by looking at Cassius's soliloquy. You might want to read it more than once in different ways; asking pupils to emphasise the consonants and hard sounds the first time and the sibilant and 's' sounds the second time. Who do they think Cassius is speaking to?



SCENE STUDY: WHISPERED READING

! OVERVIEW

In this activity pupils will get the chance to explore Cassius's motives. This may be a good opportunity to think about why Cassius feels the need to lie to Brutus in order to get his support. Do they think there is a difference in one person challenging a ruler compared to a group?

- Organise pupils into groups of three and ask them to look at Cassius's soliloquy and translate each of the lines into modern English together, working out what Cassius is saying in each line.
 - **You may want to divide the lines between the groups to make this more manageable, agreeing on a whole class translation.**
- Ask one of the pupils in the group to sit on a chair and play Cassius. Then, ask the other two to stand on either side of Cassius. The pupil on the right should whisper Shakespeare's lines into Cassius's ear and the pupil on the left should then whisper their translation into the other ear. Ask the groups to rotate the roles until each of them has played Cassius.
- Reflect with pupils on what parts of the speech stood out for them.
- Invite pupils to stand in a circle and ask a volunteer to come into the middle. Encourage pupils, as a collective director, to suggest how Cassius might look and behave, inviting the volunteer to take on those character traits and behaviours and re-read the speech.
- Ask pupils to reflect on what motivates Cassius. Do they think he is honourable? Why does he think it's so important that he convince Brutus that Caesar wants to be a king? Did whispering the speech reveal anything? Is his dilemma something Cassius is proud of?

This exploration of a soliloquy can be used to explore speeches in any play you are studying. Whispered reading is great way of looking at a soliloquy as it helps to think about what is happening in someone's head. For example, in *Othello*, Iago's soliloquies open up his motivations and move the plot forward.

Having looked at the story of the play, ask pupils to think about Brutus and his choices. Which do they think are the crucial, pivotal, moments for his character? Why are these moments so dramatic?

From these activities pupils will get the chance to think about staging and interpretation. This may be a good opportunity to think about why Portia is excluded from Brutus's secrets and why this frustrates her. In this play, it is a group of men who rise up against Caesar. Is this a good way to 'make' a new leader or should all groups in society be involved?

SCENE STUDY: BACK TO BACK READING

Arrange pupils into pairs and provide each pair with the edited copy of **Act 2 Scene 1** where Portia confronts Brutus about what he is considering doing.

- Invite pupils to read through the script standing back to back.
- Reflect with pupils on what the conversation feels like. How is Brutus feeling? What does Portia suspect?

SCENE STUDY: AS IF

- Encourage pupils to read the scene again, thinking about how the characters deliver the lines. Ask each pair to play the scene as if:
 - Portia is talking to Brutus like he's a small child.
 - Brutus is annoyed with Portia.
- Allow pupils to experiment with these interpretations, before sharing some of them with the class. Reflect on which interpretation felt more realistic. How do they think Brutus and Portia both feel in this scene? Why? Does it change?

These scene studies can be used to look at any duologue in the play you are studying, to gain a better understanding of relationships and think about the staging.

CHARACTER MOTIVATIONS

! OVERVIEW

In this activity pupils will get the chance to explore and question the motives of the conspirators, thinking not only about staging but also why characters act the way they do in the play. This may be a good opportunity to consider if it would have been different had Caesar been 'born' to lead. Do they think it makes a difference if power is inherited?

Ask pupils to think about which moments are the most pivotal in the play. Explain that they are going to focus on the assassination of Caesar.

- Organise pupils into a large circle, an object representing a dagger in the centre and nominate one pupil to represent Caesar and to kneel by the dagger.
- Provide each pupil in the circle with one of the text scraps in the resources and ask them to think about what reason they give for killing Caesar.
- Ask pupils to read their line and then lay it on the floor somewhere inside the circle. They should lay it close to Caesar if they think that their reason is rational and near the outside edge if they think it's less reasonable.
- Reflect with pupils on which characters seem to have the most reasonable motives and question why that might be.

IMAGING

- Divide the group into two halves. Explain that one half will be the actors/statues the others will be the directors/sculptors and that they are going to create a tableau of the assassination of Caesar.
- Assign each pupil a character and arrange them into groups with all of the characters represented. Each group should also have two directors.
- Invite the directors to move the characters one by one and place them into a scene showing the assassination of Caesar. Ask them to think about how they can convey each character's attitudes and feelings.
- Allow each group an opportunity to share their tableau with the rest of the class. Pupils should be able to question the directors about their choices.
- Encourage the directors to change things about their tableau while they are showing it, if their opinions change or they think they can make things clearer.

This activity can be used to explore pivotal moments or choices in any play you are studying. For example, in *Macbeth* you could use a dagger and explore how close or far away from it Macbeth is as he struggles with whether or not to kill Duncan.

CHORAL READING

! OVERVIEW

In this activity pupils will be able to look at the language used by the two speakers and compare these, as well as their arguments. This may be a good opportunity to consider why Mark Antony's argument for Caesar wins over the support of the public of Rome; do they think that he is right that Caesar should not have been murdered because he was 'ambitious'? Would it be different if he had not been murdered?

- Organise pupils into two groups. Give one group Mark Antony's speech and the other Brutus's speech. (If you have a small group then you could choose to all focus on Mark Antony's speech).
- Explain that these speeches are both delivered at Caesar's funeral. Both men attempt to convince the people of Rome that their view is correct.

PUNCTUATION SHIFT

- Invite the groups to read their speeches aloud while walking around the space as they read aloud, changing direction each time they reach a punctuation mark. Are there many changes in direction? What does it tell you about the state of the speaker?
- Challenge pupils to create a set of gestures or signs to represent each of the rhetorical features listed in the **online resources**. For example, they might punch the air when repetition is used.
- Invite pupils to read the text again, all together as a group in a **choral reading**, using their gestures alongside the speech. What does this show them about the speech?
- Ask one volunteer to stand on a chair in the centre of the group and read the whole speech. The rest of the group, acting as the crowd or mob, should then shout every time they think the speaker offers a clear argument.
- Repeat this for the other speech, so that pupils can compare Mark Antony with Brutus. Who did they cheer most? Who seemed most convincing?
- Discuss with pupils why they think Mark Antony succeeds in convincing the people. What does Mark Antony's speech do so successfully?

This activity can be used to explore text in any play you are studying. A punctuation shift, for example, will give pupils a feel for the pace and mindset of any character. In *Henry IV Part I*, for example, comparing Prince Hal's speech in *Act 1 Scene 2* and Hotspur's speech in *Act 2 Scene 3* using just this technique can give a real insight into how different they are; one being calm and collected and changing direction much less. **Choral reading can also be used to look at speeches in different texts.**

IMPROVISING IN CONTEXT

! OVERVIEW

In this activity pupils will be able to explore rhetorical devices further, as well as to consolidate what they have learned about the arguments for and against Caesar's murder. This may be a good opportunity for pupils to think about what the consequences might have been had Brutus and the conspirators done nothing. Is there a point at which people have a responsibility to step in and question a leader? Is this the same if they are born to lead or if they are made a leader?

- Ask two volunteers to play Tribunes and judge whether Caesar's death was justified, and who is most persuasive.
- Divide the rest of the class into three groups, A, B and C. Each group should be given a character to represent: Cassius, Brutus or Mark Antony.
- Explain that each group (A, B and C) needs to persuade the tribunal of their point of view using rhetorical techniques. Remind the students of the rules of ethos, logos and pathos in the **online resources**.
- Ask each group to choose one pupil to be the voice of the character. The other pupils in the group can whisper ideas and arguments to the speaker as they are talking. This shares the responsibility of the argument.
- Allow each group to present their case to the two Tribunes while they ask questions. You can begin the activity using the introduction in the **online resources**.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Cassius's speech Act 1 Scene 2 extract

Well, Brutus, thou art noble: yet I see
Thy honorable **mettle** may be **wrought**
From **that it is disposed**: therefore it is **meet**
That noble minds keep ever with **their likes**,
For **who** so firm that cannot be seduced?
Caesar doth **bear me hard**, but he loves Brutus.
If I were Brutus now and he were Cassius,
He should not humor me. I will this night,
In **several hands**, in at his windows throw,
As if they came from several citizens,
Writings all **tending** to the great opinion
That Rome holds of his name – wherein **obscurely**
Caesar's ambition shall be **glanced** at.
And after this let Caesar **seat him sure**,
For we will shake him, or worse days endure.

NOTES

mettle: spirit, disposition (puns on 'metal')

wrought: manipulated

that...disposed: its usual inclination/its natural disposition

meet: right or fitting

their likes: those like them

who: who is

bear me hard: tolerate me grudgingly, dislike me

he...me: Brutus would not be able to sway my views (as I do his)/Caesar would still not be able to entice me

several hands: different styles of handwriting

tending to: concerning

obscurely: covertly, subtly

glanced: hinted

seat him sure: seat himself most securely (in the chair of power), i.e. 'take great care'

Portia and Brutus scene study Act 2 Scene 1 extract

Portia Brutus, my lord.

Brutus Portia, what **mean you**? Wherefore rise you now?

Portia You suddenly arose, and walked about,
Musing, and sighing, with your **arms a-cross**:
Make me acquainted with your cause of grief.

Brutus I am not well in health, and that is all.

Portia Is Brutus sick?

You have some sick offence within your mind.

Brutus You are a true and honourable wife,

As dear to me as are the **ruddy drops**

That visit my sad heart.

Portia If this were true, then should I know this secret.

Tell me your counsels, I will not disclose 'em.

Brutus Oh ye gods!

Render me worthy of this noble wife!

Portia, go in awhile,

And **by and by**, all the

Charactery of my sad brows: I will **construe** to thee.

Portia Thou has some suit to Caesar hast thou not?

Brutus That I have, if it will please Caesar to hear me.

Portia O Brutus! The heavens speed thee in thy
Enterprise.

NOTES

mean you: are you doing

arms a-cross: conventional gesture of melancholy or introspection

ruddy drops: blood

by and by: imminently

construe: explain



Mark Antony's speech Act 3 Scene 2

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.
The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft **interred** with their bones.
So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus
Hath told you Caesar was ambitious;
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
And grievously hath Caesar **answered** it.
Here, under **leave** of Brutus and the rest
(For Brutus is an honourable man;
So are they all, all honourable men),
Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.
He was my friend, faithful and just to me,
But Brutus says he was ambitious,
And Brutus is an honourable man.
He hath brought many captives home to Rome,
Whose ransoms did the **general coffers** fill.
Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?
When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept:
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff.
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,
And Brutus is an honourable man.
You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,
And sure he is an honourable man.
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
But here I am to speak what I do know.
You all did love him once, not without cause.
What cause withholds you, then, to mourn for him?
O judgment, thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason! Bear with me;
My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,
And I must pause till it come back to me.

NOTES

interred: buried
answered: paid for
leave: permission
general coffers: public treasury

Brutus's speech Act 3 Scene 2

Romans, countrymen, and **lovers**, hear me for my **cause**, and be silent that you may hear. Believe me **for** mine honour, and have respect to mine honour that you may believe. **Censure** me in your wisdom, and awake your **senses** that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Caesar's, to him I say that Brutus's love to Caesar was no less than his. If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer: not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more. Had you rather Caesar were living, and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all freemen? As Caesar loved me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honour him; but, as he was ambitious, I slew him. There is tears for his love, joy for his fortune, honour for his valour, and death for his ambition. Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak, for him have I offended. Who is here so **rude** that would not be a Roman? If any, speak, for him have I offended. Who is here so **vile** that will not love his country? If any, speak, for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.

NOTES

lovers: friends
cause: grounds for action/explanation
for: because of
censure: judge
senses: minds, wits
rude: uncivilized
vile: lowly, contemptible



ENCORE

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