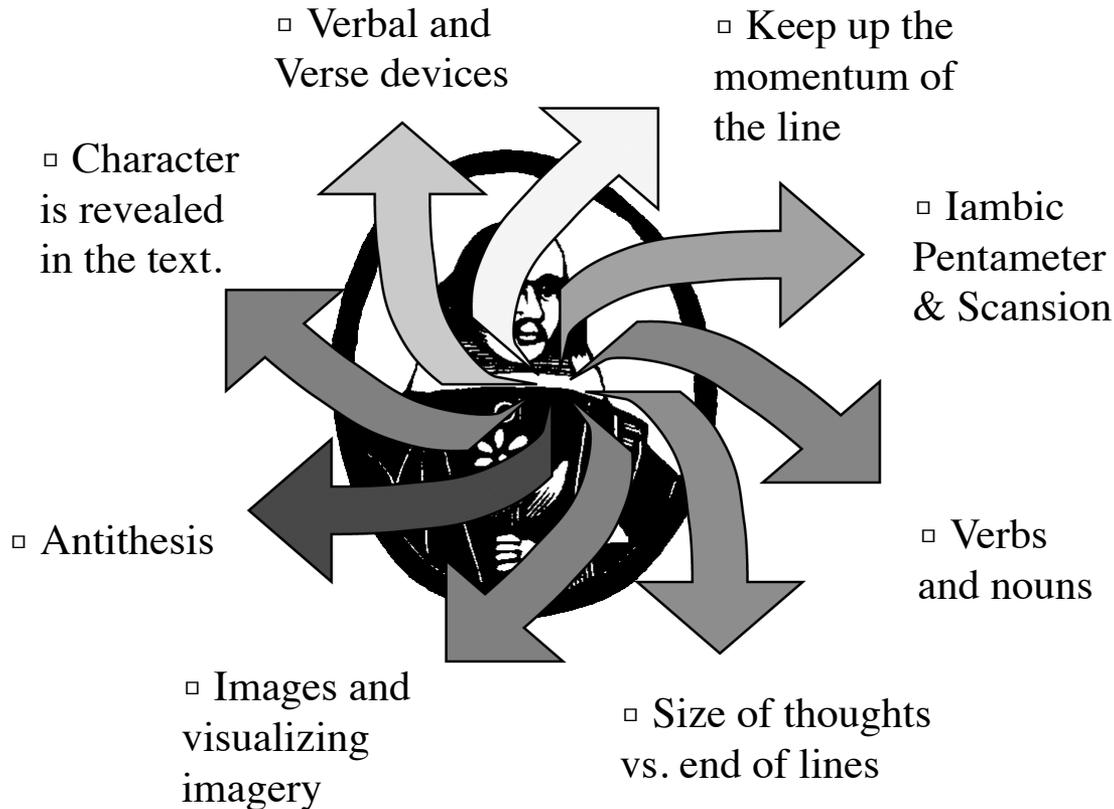


ACTING SHAKESPEARE A CHECKLIST

This Shakespeare performance overview consists of elements and devices to remember and consider while preparing your performance. They are covered in the chapter.



ALWAYS KEEP IN MIND

Why does this specific character

- **chose to say these specific words,**
- **in this specific order,**
- **at this specific moment,**
- **in this specific place,**
- **to these specific people?**

AND AVOID SHAKESPEARELAND

Or the Shakespeare police will take you to Shakespeare Jail!

◇ SHAKESPEARE WORDSHOP ◇

*“You must be able to say twelve lines of Shakespeare
verse on one breath.”* - Sir Tyrone Guthrie

“You must breathe at the end of every line.” - John Barton

So who do you believe?

Acting Is
Action

Chapter

20

Vocabulary

These key words or phrases (underlined the first time they are used in the text) are essential to understanding the material in this chapter. You should make them part of your theatrical vocabulary and use them in your work.

Canon	iambic pentameter	scansion	antithesis
blank verse	meter	stressed/unstressed	foot

Introduction

Shakespeare is the most-performed dramatist of all time. He wrote thirty-seven plays in the twenty-nine years, between 1584 and 1613, which are acted worldwide. It’s an old theatre axiom that says: “If you can act Shakespeare, you can act anything.”

In this “hands-on” participatory workshop you will be taken through a series of exercises in graduated steps. These steps could culminate in a performance of a play, scene presentation or scene work, or a department Shakespeare competition (which for us is the first step in the English-Speaking Union Shakespeare monologue and sonnet competition) or playing of The Shakespeare Game. This section is full of things to *do*, which will lead to “full body” acting of Shakespeare.⁶⁹ *“By my body’s action, teach my mind.”* -Shakespeare.

About the exercises

Many of the first exercises require no preparation, just get up on your feet and try. Later, others will require you to memorize a section of Shakespearean text, a line, a section, a monologue, a sonnet, to use in a series of various exercises.

It is essential that the words be memorized precisely as written, with no paraphrases or simplifications. But, even before you know the meaning of all the words or how to pronounce them, *GO AHEAD AND MEMORIZE THE WORDS ANYWAY*. Feel free to stumble around a bit with the language. Often the meaning and pronunciation will come out of what you will learn in the exercise. The learning will be as much by doing as by any other form of investigation.⁷⁰

Teaching Shakespeare

The philosophy for teaching Shakespeare to the college or secondary school student-actor is deceptively simple.⁷¹ It is based on these three basic principles:

1. The words are not in the way; the words *are* the way.

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD! Therefore, start with the word! The lessons and exercises build gradually in difficulty from simple, single words and lines, to short speeches, to monologues, to more difficult scenes, giving student-actors confidence that they need to “own” Shakespeare. Don’t be impatient. The single lines will be hard enough— at first anyway. When you can understand them with confidence, you will be ready to move along.

⁶⁹ Drawn from many sources and credited where possible.

⁷⁰ Thanks to Robert Cohen for phrasing this idea so well.

⁷¹ This philosophy is shared by many authors and teachers of Shakespeare.

2. Shakespeare's genius is in the language.

Studying the plot is secondary to living with his language. We all know that Romeo and Juliet die! An energetic, focused, full-body exploration of key passages in a play is more engaging and ultimately more instructive and rewarding than a study of an entire play.

3. Shakespeare was intended to be acted.

GET THE WORDS IN YOUR MOUTH! It is often said while American children are taught to *read* Shakespeare, English children are taught to *speak* it. If Shakespeare were indeed intended to be acted, it follows that reading Shakespeare is a poor substitute for “owning” Shakespeare through presentation (of even a short selection of his work).

Appreciation of Shakespeare is a full-body experience. We offer a great range of activities to get you working while “on your feet” rather than at your desk. Playing in Shakespeare means living in a very different world from the one you inhabit. This is about “acting in Shakespeare,” not “Shakespearean-style acting.”

Don't worry, you will even get comfortable with the language the actor uses to talk about Shakespeare's tools and techniques. These words might seem, at first, similar to trying to understand a foreign language. I often apologize to new students for having to use such strange sounding phrases and words, as “iambic pentameter,” “scansion,” “antithesis,” “caesura,” “apostrophe,” “anastrophe,” “elision,” “enjambment,” and “trochee.” Enough, you get the point! Even pronouncing these words is difficult. I apologize here that “iambic pentameter” was not simply called “heart beat” or some other phrases instead. But, keep in mind as you work that the *definitions and meanings* of these strange sounding words are much easier to understand than the words used to describe them.

1. The words are not in the way; the words *are* the way.

Introduction

“Zounds! Perchance thou hast felt like a common recreant when asked to anatomize a Shakespeare play. Anon, thou shalt toss of that coil, and with great dispatch, avoid feeling like a fustian caitiff.” One of the first problems a student-actor faces in working with Shakespeare is the unfamiliar words, the strange constructions, and the new words and phrases created by Shakespeare. Shakespeare invented more words than most people even know. Seriously, there's at least 1,500 different words and phrases that don't appear anywhere prior to the Bard of Avon putting them on paper. When he got stuck trying to think of a word, the man just made his own up. It's kind of like what rappers do today.⁷² Shakespeare changed words, invented words, and borrowed words from other languages. He even used nouns as verbs for dramatic effect. In *Measure for Measure*, for example, a character remarks that Angelo “dukes it well,” referring to the forceful way in which Angelo handles the duties of the absent Duke of Vienna. Shakespeare also used verbs in both their modern form — for example the word “has” — and in their older form — “hath.” In the same way, Shakespeare used both modern pronouns, such as “you,” and older pronouns, such as “thee” or “thou.”

Some of Shakespeare's words may be unfamiliar or confusing to modern readers, theatergoers, and actors. His vocabulary for the most part resembles modern English, but he employed many words that are no longer used. You may also be puzzled by familiar words that had additional or different meanings in Shakespeare's time. In *Othello*, for example, Iago raises a “shrewd doubt” about Desdemona's faithfulness. In this case, “shrewd” means “serious” or “grave,” not its modern meaning, “clever.” Most editions of Shakespeare's plays include notes that define such words, but more of this later.

History

Elizabethan England was predominantly an aural and verbal society. People were accustomed to listening. Most actors were illiterate. Less than 50% of Shakespeare's audience would have been able to read or write. Actors who could not read had to learn parts by ear. Actors who could read were given little rolls of

⁷² For more Words and Phrases Coined by Shakespeare go to <http://www.pathguy.com/shakeswo.htm>

paper with their cues and lines written on them, what we call today a “side.” A contemporary “side” includes only your characters lines and the relevant abbreviated “cue” for it. (With the rise of the copy machine they are not much used today.) The Elizabethan rolls could be worked through the fingers of one hand, leaving the other free for “business” as the actor rehearsed.⁷³

- The first English dictionary was published in 1604, near the end of Shakespeare’s writing career, a *Table Alphabeticall* of “hard words.”
- More than 10,000 words— fully a quarter of the words in English at the time— were created during Shakespeare’s lifetime. Shakespeare was not only writing plays; he was helping to create the modern English language.
- Shakespeare used 26,000 completely different words in his work.
- An Elizabethan teenager used *daily* 2,100 words. Today, an average American uses 900 words in a *lifetime*.

Unfamiliar words— Word choice & character

It is not merely a matter of adopting a “Shakespearean style.” There is *no* such thing as a Shakespearean style.⁷⁴ Romeo must *choose* to speak elaborately to Juliet on purpose. Romeo doesn’t speak like this because it is “Shakespeare,” but because he longs to impress Juliet. The content of his speech informs us of this, but so does its form.

You have to ask yourself “Why do I speak this way?” “Why do I use these words, these verbal devices?” Look at the verbal devices and think about how and why you could/would choose them as a character.

You must find a *reason* why you would use a more difficult word than you usual would. You will learn to choose and reach for new words while acting them, just as your character does, and probably as Shakespeare did while writing them.

Unfamiliar words, whose meaning the actor must first look up in a footnote or dictionary, should not be rattled off simply as a synonym for the more common word or expression, but should be performed as an effort to reach for richer and more precise language. Actors playing unfamiliar words must also play the character creating or *choosing* such means of expression.

Since words are important in Shakespeare, we must know what the words mean, very specifically. All characters use language with specificity. Remember our chant: “Always keep in mind, why does this specific character choose to say these specific words, in this specific order, at this specific moment, in this specific place, to these specific people?”⁷⁵

We must personally understand the meanings of obscure words, archaic words⁷⁶, arcane words⁷⁷, and his unique use and forms of words, such as contractions. Some editions of Shakespeare’s works will provide meanings for obscure words along with the text, some of these definitions are limited to one sentence, some are very extensive, as long as one page in length. You can’t always trust them though. Frankly, some are misleading. Eventually you’ll want to check some of these obscure words out in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (your local college, high school, or public library should have the OED in print or on CD-ROM), it will help you understand usage in Shakespeare’s time.⁷⁸ It will pay off in specificity.

⁷³ One such roll is still in existence at Dulwich College, England.

⁷⁴ Shakespeare’s plays are now professionally presented in every imaginable form, from Kabuki to Commedia, from Epic to Absurd, from Circus Act to Street Theatre. See the exercise “Shakespeare in Style” for more.

⁷⁵ Thanks again to Louis Fantasia, Director of the Teaching Shakespeare Through Performance Institute at the International Shakespeare Globe Centre, London, who beat this into my head.

⁷⁶ archaic: ancient, antiquated, old-fashioned, dated, that has ceased to be used, or, in other words it simply means “old.”

⁷⁷ arcane: obscure, cryptic, mysterious, ungraspable, incomprehensible, unexaminable.

⁷⁸ Simpson, J. A. and E. S. C. Weiner, *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, 1989.

This doesn't just mean inserting "thees" and "thous" all over the place, or adding to every word "eth."

The two following sections of this chapter, the "Glossary of Common Archaic Words, Verb Forms, Elisions and Contractions," and the section entitled "A Note on Shakespeare's Grammar Form" are not intended to be read or understood in one reading. They are here as reference sources.

GLOSSARY OF COMMON ARCHAIC WORDS, VERB FORMS, ELISIONS AND CONTRACTIONS ⁷⁹

Here are some commonly used ARCHAIC ENGLISH WORDS:

alack: an interjection expressing sorrow

alas: an interjection expressing sorrow or pity

anon: soon, shortly

ay: yes

bid: (1) ask; (2) command; (3) invite

his/her: its

hither: to this place, here, on or toward this place

lest: for fear that

methinks: I think

mine: my

oft: often

perchance: perhaps

prithiee: actual meaning "I pray to thee" or in other words "you"

spake: spoke

thence: from there

thine: your, yours

thither: to that place, to or toward

wherein: in which

whither: where, to what place

whiles: while

whilst: while

withal: with it; with them

ye: you

yon (person, place or thing): that (person, place or thing) over there, or yonder

yonder: over there; or, that (person, place or thing) over there

ARCHAIC PERSONAL PRONOUNS

These pronouns are used to connote intimacy or to address a peer or a social inferior:

thee: you (singular only; used as the object of a sentence or clause), as in "to you"

thine: yours (singular only; also used in place of thy before words beginning with vowels)

thou: you (singular only; used as the subject of a sentence or clause)

thy/thyself: your (singular only), yourself

ARCHAIC VERB FORMS

The following conjugations are used in conjunction with thou:

art: are (second person singular only)

dost: do (second person singular only)

doth: does

hast: have or has

hath: has

wast: were (second person singular, past tense)

wert: were (second person singular, past or past subjunctive tense)

⁷⁹ From: *Speak the Speech! Shakespeare's Monologues Illuminated, An Actor's Tool Kit* by Rhona Silverbush and Sami Plotkin. Faber and Faber, Inc., 2002.

wilt: will (you, they)

And — *est* or — *st* used as a suffix with verbs to form the second person singular indicative (e.g., *mayst*, *canst*, *didst*, *carriest*).

You will often find the words *art thou* used to mean “you are” rather than “are you.” i.e., as part of a statement rather than a question.

OTHER, UNUSUAL CONJUGATIONS

be: is (used in place of both *am* and *are*)

As well as — *eth*, — *th*, or — *ith* used as a suffix with verbs to form the third person singular indicative (e.g., *maketh*, *thinketh*, *doth*, *hath*, *saith*).

Also, Shakespeare made more frequent use of the emphatic form than we do today, using such phrases as *didst go*, *does make*, and *doth speak*, where we would simply use *went*, *makes*, or *speaks*.

COMMON ELISIONS (or often shorten words)

e'er: ever

'em: them

o'er: over

ta'en: taken

'tis: it is

Verbs ending in — *en* often drop the E sound (e.g., *stol'n* for “stolen”).

Verbs ending in — *est* often drop the E sound (e.g., *know'st* for “knowest”).

COMMON CONTRACTIONS

i' th': in the

o' th': of the

thou' dst: thou shouldst or thou wouldst

'tis: it is

'twas: it was

'twere: it were

Words followed by *it* are often contracted with *'t* (e.g., *is't* for “is it”; *on't* for “on it”);

Words that follow *to* (most often words beginning with vowels) are sometimes contracted with *t'* (e.g., *t'assume* for “to assume”; *t'make* for “to make”).

A NOTE ON SHAKESPEARE'S GRAMMAR FORM

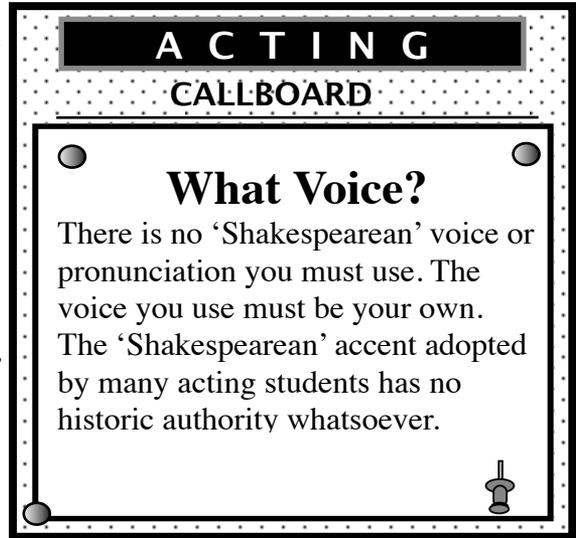
In order to read Shakespeare and other pre-modern writings with full comprehension, you need to be sure you understand a few now-obsolete grammatical features of English. The chief one is the use of the second person singular. In Shakespeare's day the distinction between the second person singular and the second person plural was very much alive.

So first you need to grasp the grammatical forms. Next you need to become more aware of their connotations. You will find it helpful to draw on any knowledge you have of Spanish, French, or German—languages which retain a similar set of connotations for the second person singular. For an extended essay on these forms go to Seamus Cooney's: http://homepages.wmich.edu/~cooneys/tchg/lit/adv/shak_gram.html. (Page posted on 9/15/1996, revised slightly 2/13/1999), and *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*, ed. David Crystal (CUP: 1995), p. 71.

What voice?

Don't you have to be "British" to perform Shakespeare? No! Remember, the British have no more claim on Shakespeare than you do. The spoken language of Shakespeare's England is as far removed from the spoken language of today's British, as is the spoken language of America. As a matter of fact, it is believed by most experts that the closest approximation to Elizabethan diction today is English as spoken by natives of the Appalachian mountains of the Eastern United States. The Elizabethan's accent was more like that of the present day educated and articulate American, according to Hugh Morrison. *ACTING SKILLS*. (Second Edition) A & C Black, London, 1998.

Stage diction— as well as dialects— must always be motivated from within the character, and never glided over as a "convention of the time."



ACCENT MARKS: An accent mark over an 'e' like this 'é' in the suffix— such as in the word "movéd" makes the word three beats (mov ED)— or an extra beat of iambic— not two syllables (moved). How would you pronounce the word "perfuméd?" This is known as 'syllabifying.' "Burnish'd" has an apostrophe instead of an 'é' showing that you don't syllabify.

— BUT OVERALL REMEMBER THIS —

As quote in Melvyn Bragg's book, *The Adventure of English*, John Barton, the popular master teacher of Shakespeare performance, director, and cofounder of the Royal Shakespeare Company, made a stunningly simple point about Shakespeare's language: "**It's the monosyllables that are the bedrock and life of the language.** And I believe that is so with Shakespeare. The high words, the high phrases he sets up to then bring them down to the simple ones which explain them. Like 'making the multitudinous seas incarnadine, making the green one red.' First there is the high language, then the specific clear definition. At the heart of Shakespeare, listening to it for acting, the great lines, often the most poetic, are the monosyllables. Deep feeling probably comes out in monosyllables. He teemed with word invention but in some way the living power of the language comes from the interplay of the two."

So let's get started with the first exercise. Let's have some fun!

WARPED *Mike Cavanaugh*



EXERCISE: “YOU ARE QUOTING SHAKESPEARE” 80

Instructions

Get out a pencil, get ON YOUR FEET. Start reading *aloud* the following passage. The passage will be memorized over the course of rehearsal. This is an exercise in oral interpretation, articulation, choral, and solo reading. This is used as a vocal exercise at the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC.) ⁸¹

If you cannot understand my argument, and declare ‘*It’s Greek to me*’, you are quoting Shakespeare.

If you claim to be *more sinned against than sinning*, you are quoting Shakespeare.

If you recall your *salad days*, you are quoting Shakespeare.

If you act *more in sorrow than anger*, if your *wish is father to the thought*, 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*, if you have *knitted your brows*, *made a virtue of necessity*, insisted on *fair play* or *slept not one wink*, [*stood on ceremony*, *danced attendance on your lord and master*, *laughed yourself into stitches*,] had *short shrift*, *cold comfort* or *too much of a good thing*, if you have *seen better days* or lived in a *fool’s paradise*, why, be that as it may, *the more fool you*, for it is a *foregone conclusion* that you are (*as good luck would have it*) quoting Shakespeare.

[If you think it is *early days* and clear out *bag and baggage*, if you think *it is high time*, and that *that is the long and short of it*, if you believe that *the game is up*, and that *truth will out*, even if it involves your own *flesh and blood*, if you *lie low* till *the crack of doom* because you suspect *foul play*, if you have *teeth set on edge at one fell swoop*, *without rhyme or reason*, then *to give the devil his due* if the *truth were known* for surely you have a *tongue in your head*, you are quoting Shakespeare.]

Even if you bid me *good riddance* and *send me packing*, if you wish I was *dead as a doornail*, if you think I am an *eyesore*, a *laughing stock*, the *devil incarnate*, a *stony-hearted villain*, *bloody-minded* or a *blinking idiot*, then - *by Jove! O Lord! Tut, tut!*

*For goodness’ sake! What the dickens! But me no buts!*⁸² *It’s all one to me*, for you are quoting Shakespeare.

⁸⁰ If you wish to use a shorter version you can delete the lines in [BRACKETS], or edit out any sections you wish.

⁸¹ From: *The Shakespeare Revue* (originally from *Enthusiasms* -1983 by Bernard Levin).

⁸² “But me no Buts!” was not coined by Shakespeare but in 1709 by Susanna Centlivre in the play *The Busie Body*.

Introduction

A little background on how we insult each other. First, we know the words we use to insult each other change almost daily, but the foundation has remained the same throughout time. This is another reinforcement of the fact that a human's nature hasn't changed, only society around them.

What do we— and the Elizabethans— use as a basis for insulting each other? Here is a short list of the categories: (1) a person's heritage, his family, his up bringing, his parentage, (2) a person's hygiene, appearance and sexual abilities, his cleanliness, his looks, his popularity, the way he dress, etc., (3) a person's intelligence, (4) a person's socioeconomic level, his class and wealth, his greed, (5) a person's overindulgence, his size, his drinking, (6) a person's bravery or cowardice, or insecurities, or (7) a combination of a number of the above elements. Consider these insult categories when you do the SHAKESPEAREAN INSULTS exercise that follows.

Relationship clues: Thee and thou and the like.

The following material is cover in much more detail in the earlier section of this chapter, "A Note on Shakespeare's Grammar Form."

Thou art's and *canst thou's* often have a plot purpose you can put to use. In Shakespeare's day there was no absolute rule on when to use *thou* and when to use *you*. One used *you* to address someone more formally and *thee* and *thou* to suggest less rigidity.

THOU: If you are talking to a family member, a friend, a lover, use *thou*. *Thou*, first of all, is intimate: the pronoun of lovers.

Juliet (to Romeo):	"if thou dost love . . ."	"so thou wilt woo . . ."
	"lest that thy love . . ."	"I joy in thee . . ."
	"I give thee mine . . ."	"give it thee again . . ."

REMEMBER this when you do the exercise: SHAKESPEAREAN COMPLIMENTS later.

But— *Thou* can also be used to intensify a verbal assault, particularly to someone lower than you on the social scale.

"You lie, you lie."
 "I say thou liest, Camillo, and I hate thee."

It is also customary in "talking down," as a master talking to a servant.

". . . if thou 'thou'st' him some thrice, it shall not be amiss."

REMEMBER this when you do the exercise: SHAKESPEAREAN INSULTS.

YOU: If you are talking to your boss, an elder, royalty, or strangers who appear to be your equal, use *you*. Generally speaking use *you* to anyone whom you'd address as "Sir" or "Ma'am." The rule here is that at every point in which such pronoun forms appear, a character is making a choice whether to use a more or less formal approach.

HINT: These physical equivalents might help.⁸⁴

- *You* would be a handshake.
- *Thee* would be a hug or a slap on the back, depending on to whom it is delivered.
 A commoner using *thee* to a king does not indicate intimacy but disrespect.
 A child using *thee* to a parent would indicate a lack of respect.

You look for character and relationship clues, especially in the use of personal pronouns. Again, REMEMBER this as you do the next series of exercises.

⁸³ For more on Shakespeare's insults check out the books: *Thy Father is a Gorbellied Codpiece, Create over 100,000 of Your Own Shakespearean Insults* by Barry Kraft, Smithmark Publishers, 1998. ISBN: 0-7651-9148-2, and *Shakespeare's Insults: Educating Your Wit* by Wayne F. Hill & Cynthia J. Ottchen. Three Rivers Press, 1995. ISBN: 0-5178-8539-5.

⁸⁴ From Daw, p. 93

EXERCISE: SHAKESPEAREAN INSULTS

Introduction

Find yourself tempted to say **** and damn too often? The Shakespearean equivalents are more fun and don't make parents with children glare at you in restaurants. You could say fie, or you could swear by God's teeth or wounds.

In THE TAMING OF THE SHREW (4.1.144) Shakespeare wrote: "*You whoreson beetle-headed, flapear'd knave!*" Can you do better? "*Out of my path, thou Spongy Rat-Faced Foot Licker!*"

Instructions

Combineth one word or phrase from each of the columns that follow and addeth "thou" to the beginning and thou shalt have the perfect insult to fling at the wretched fools of the opposing team. What do you think is the meaning of thy strong words? Let thyself go. Mix and match to find that perfect barb from the Bard! Fill out the **SHAKESPEARE INSULTS WORKSHEET** on the **ACTING IS ACTION – Web Pages**  and memorize your choice. Two adjectives and a noun minimum per curse please.

FOR YOUR WORKSHEET ASSIGNMENT GO TO

<http://sfsotatheatre.org/>

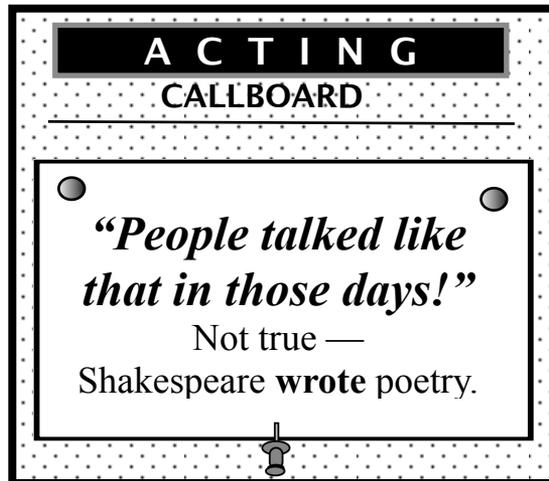
click on:

ACTING IS ACTION – Web Pages 

and click on:

 **WORKSHEET: SHAKESPEAREAN INSULTS**

Duplicate as needed for your use.



Column A

1.artless
 2.bawdy
 3.beslubbering
 4.bootless
 5.brazen
 6.churlish
 7.clouted
 8.cockeyed
 9.craven
 10.currish
 11.dankish
 12.dissembling
 13.distempered
 14.droning
 15.errant
 16.fawning
 17.fitful
 18.fobbing
 19.frothy
 20.froward
 21.gleeking
 22.gnarling
 23.goatish
 24.gorbellied
 25.greasy
 26.grizzled
 27.haughty
 28.hideous
 29.impertinent
 30.infectious
 31.jaded
 32.jarring
 33.knavish
 34.lewd
 35.loggerheaded
 36.lumpish
 37.mammering

Column B

base-court
 bat-fowling
 beef-witted
 beetle-headed
 boil-brained
 bunch-backed
 clapper-clawed
 clay-brained
 common-kissing
 crook-pated
 dismal-dreaming
 dizzy-eyed
 dog-hearted
 dread-bolted
 earth-vexing
 elf-skinned
 empty-hearted
 evil-eyed
 eye-offending
 fat-kidneyed
 fen-sucked
 flap-mouthed
 fly-bitten
 folly-fallen
 fool-born
 full-gorged
 guts-griping
 half-faced
 hasty-witted
 heavy-headed
 hedge-born
 hell-hated
 horn-mad
 idle-headed
 ill-breeding
 ill-composed
 ill-nurtured

Column C

apple-john
 baggage
 barnacle
 bladder
 boar-pig
 bugbear
 bum-bailey
 canker-blossom
 clack-dish
 clotpole
 codpiece
 coxcomb
 crutch
 cutpurse
 death-token
 dewberry
 dogfish
 egg-shell
 flap-dragon
 flax-wench
 flirt-gill
 foot-licker
 fustilarian
 giglet
 gudgeon
 gull-catcher
 haggard
 harpy
 hedge-pig
 hempseed
 horn-beast
 hugger-mugger
 jack-a-nape
 jolthead
 lewdster
 maggot-pie
 Malignancy



MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING



EXERCISE: SHAKESPEAREAN COMPLIMENTS ⁸⁵

Instructions

On the **SHAKESPEARE COMPLIMENTS WORKSHEET** on the **ACTING IS ACTION – Web Pages** ⁸⁶ mix and match the three columns below to create the perfect *bon mot* for your beloved.⁸⁶

Column A

- 1.airy
- 2.amorous
- 3.balmy
- 4.bespiced
- 5.beteeming
- 6.blazoning
- 7.bonny
- 8.brisky
- 9.budding
- 10.candied
- 11.celestial
- 12.chafeless
- 13.courtly
- 14.dainty
- 15.daisied
- 16.damasked
- 17.enchanted
- 18.engilded
- 19.fettled
- 20.honeysuckle
- 21.jovial
- 22.leavened
- 23.mannerly
- 24.meek
- 25.nonpareil
- 26.orbed
- 27.palmy
- 28.posied
- 29.replenished
- 30.sightly
- 31.silken
- 32.verdant
- 33.sphery
- 34.sterling
- 35.sturdy
- 36.taffeta
- 37.tenderful
- 38.virginal
- 39.virtuous
- 40.worthy

Column B

- 1.all-hallown
- 2.alms-deed
- 3.brother-love
- 4.burly-boned
- 5.cheek-roses
- 6.crow-flowered
- 7.choice-drawn
- 8.deed-achieving
- 9.eagle-sighted
- 10.ear-kissing
- 11.ear-bussing
- 12.even-preached
- 13.face-royal
- 14.fairy-gold
- 15.fertile-fresh
- 16.full-acorned
- 17.gallant-springing
- 18.heaven-hued
- 19.honey-bagged
- 20.leaping-time
- 21.love-springing
- 22.life-rendering
- 23.May-morn
- 24.nose-herb
- 25.parti-coloured
- 26.proud-pied
- 27.right-drawn
- 28.silver-shedding
- 29.smoothy-pated
- 30.softly-sprighted
- 31.sweet-seasoned
- 32.tender-smelling
- 33.thrice-crowned
- 34.tiger-footed
- 35.top-gallant
- 36.truest-mannered
- 37.weeping-ripe
- 38.well-breathed
- 39.well-favoured
- 40.young-eyed

Column C

- 1.aglet-baby
- 2.argosy
- 3.bawcock
- 4.bodykins
- 5.bona-roba
- 6.bully rook
- 7.chuck
- 8.coach-fellow
- 9.crystal-button
- 10.cuckoo-bud
- 11.dewberry
- 12.eglantine
- 13.flax-wench
- 14.fondling
- 15.gamester
- 16.handy-dandy
- 17.heartling
- 18.homager
- 19.juvenal
- 20.kicksy-wicksy
- 21.kid-fox
- 22.lambkin
- 23.madonna
- 24.nicety
- 25.nymph
- 26.pew-fellow
- 27.pittikins
- 28.prizer
- 29.primrose
- 30.rarity
- 31.ringlet
- 32.shoulder-clapper
- 33.sweet-meat
- 34.thunder-maker
- 35.time-pleaser
- 36.turtle-dove
- 37.wafer-cake
- 38.whiffler
- 39.wit-snapper
- 40.velvet-guard

⁸⁵ From: *Shakespeare Magazine*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall 1996 by J. Maguire, Center Grove (IN) High School

⁸⁶ From French *bon mot* (“good word”). A clever saying, phrase or witticism, often in dialogue.

Instructions

The following “Insulting Conversation” is taken from many of his actual works. Read the series of insulting lines, and savor the sound of those words. One way to do this is to divide the class in half and have students form two lines. When each student is facing someone from the other line, read the conversation chorally, alternate sides with each line and try to say the lines loud, angrily, and together. Continue the exercise by having each pair of A and B partners in the line each do two lines of dialogue as the scene travels down the line a pair at a time. You may finish the exercise series by selecting partners and prepare the conversation as a complete scene.

A: Thou damned and luxurious mountain goat.

B: Let’s meet as little as we can.

A: More of your conversation would infect my brain.

B: Away! Thou art poison to my blood.

A: Why, thou clay-brained guts, thou knotty-pated fool, thou whoreson obscene greasy tallow-catch.

B: Hang yourself, you muddy conger, hang yourself!

A: Thou sodden-witted lord! Thou hast no more brain than I have in mine elbows.

B: Go forward, and be choked with thy ambition!

A: Teeth hadst thou in thy head when thou wast born to signify thou came to bite the world.

B: Your heart is crammed with arrogancy, spleen and pride.

A: Thou art a boil, a plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle in my corrupted blood

B: There is not yet so ugly a fiend of hell as thou shall be.

A: Ah, you whoreson loggerhead! You were born to do me shame.

B: Come, you are a tedious fool.

A: Beg that thou may have leave to hang thyself.

B: Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit; for I am sick when I do look on thee.

A: Vile worm, thou wast o'erlook'd even in thy birth.

B: Go thou and fill another room in hell.

A: Heaven truly knows that thou are as false as hell.

B: Thou lump of foul deformity.

A: Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death.

B: Away, you three-inch fool.

A: Hang cur! hang, you whoreson, insolent noisemaker.

B: Would thou wert clean enough to spit upon!

A: Go to, you're a dry fool; I'll no more of you.

B: Go rot!

⁸⁷ by Michael LoMonico, Associate Director of Education for The English-Speaking Union of the U. S., founder and editor of Shakespeare Magazine (now defunct), past director of the Folger Library’s Teaching Shakespeare Institutes.

Instructions

Here is another one. Shakespeare produces fifty different instances of just one insult, ‘knave’ in his plays. Melvyn Bragg in *The Adventure of English* has set a few of them out as dialogue, as a long insulting rally. Rehearse this dialogue with a friend as you walk.

A: Foul knave!

Z: Lousy knave!

A: Beastly knave!

Z: Scurvy railing knave!

A: Gorbellied knave!

Z: Bacon-fed knave!

A: Wrangling knave!

Z: Base notorious knave!

A: Arrant malmsey-nose knave!

Z: Poor cuckoldly knave!

A: Stubborn ancient knave!

Z: Pestilent complete knave!

A: Counterfeit cowardly knave!

Z: Rascally yea-forsooth knave!

A: Foul-mouthed and calumnious knave!

Z: The lyingest knave in Christendom!

A: Rascally, scald, beggarly, lousy, pragging knave!

Z: Whoreson, beetle-headed, flap-ear'd knave!

A: Base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy, worsted-stocking knave; a lily-livered, action-taking knave; a whoreson, glass-gazing, superserviceable, finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave; one that wouldst be a bawd, in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pandar, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch! Pah!

EXERCISE: SHAKESPEAREAN OPEN SCENE 89

Instructions

Following the same instructions given in the Chapter 13, The Open Scene, (which you should revisit) prepare and perform the scene below assigned you and your partner(s). First, prepare and perform the contemporary version. The lines of dialogue for this version are next to the Shakespearean version. Once you have made all your decisions using the contemporary version, replace the dialogue with the Shakespearean version.

The lines in these “open scenes” have been intentionally selected to be as neutral as possible; they are completely unrevealing as to the kind of person who is saying them. Nothing in the lines particularly suggests anything about the physical, emotional, or intellectual qualities of the characters. These are a dialogue written so that they may be interpreted in many different ways depending on the wishes of the student-actors. The characters and situations will be created entirely by the student-actors. There are implied objectives and obstacles in the scenes. Through the rehearsal process the scene partners must create the following missing information. It can be from your own experiential level.

- | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| (1) plot | (4) given | (6) obstacles | (9) place |
| (2) characters | circumstances | (7) stakes | (10) beats of |
| (3) relationships | (5) objectives | (8) time | action |

All of this information MUST develop from an “on your feet” rehearsal process, not in a scene partner discussion session.

⁸⁸ Melvyn Bragg, *The Adventure of English: The Biography of a Language*, Arcade Publishing, 2006. Companion book to the TV series.

⁸⁹ For another Shakespeare Open Scene go to Robert Barton’s book, *Style for Actors*. (page 149). Mayfield Publishing, 1993. Hdbk 340 pgs.

Remember — Drama is based on conflict.

Fill in the following information as instructed. Use a pencil, print clearly. Plot out COMPLETELY all thought (subtext) and action. Fill in the below Given Circumstance created by you and your scene partner. Neatness, completeness, and clarity are a must and will be graded. On the script record the EXTERNALS on left of dialogue and record INTERNALS on right.

SHAKESPEAREAN OPEN SCENE

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

- Name: _____ ACTOR: _____
- Descriptions
- Backgrounds — What prior circumstances are relevant to the action?
- Relationship to each other

IMAGINARY CIRCUMSTANCES

- Setting
- World of the Scene — What is the scene about?)

SITUATION

- What is the Set-Up?
- Why are these people here? — Why now?

ACTION/CONFLICT

- Objectives:
- What does the character want? Why?
- What does the character do to get what he/she wants?
- What are the obstacles to getting what you want?
- What is the conflict?

SHAKESPEAREAN OPEN SCENE #1

EXTERNALS

(including Beats)

A: So please you?
B: Are you so?
A: Nay.
B: I see.
A: Ay.
B: Wherefore dost thou this?
A: 'Tis best.
B: Thou canst not mean so.
A: Truly.
B: Forbear thy ...
A: What would you? Speak again.
B: 'Tis naught.
A: What wilt thou?
B: Think not on't.
A: So be it.

INTERNALS

Thought Patterns (subtext)

(A: So?
(B: Ready?
(A: No.
(B: I see
(A: Yes.
(B: Why are you doing this?
(A: It's the best thing.
(B: You can't mean it
(A: I'm serious.
(B: You shouldn't ...
(A: What? Go on.
(B: It's nothing.
(A: What?
(B: Forget it.
(A: Okay.

SHAKESPEAREAN OPEN SCENE #2

(Three Characters)

EXTERNALS

(including Beats)

A: So please you?
B: Are you so?
C: Ay, marry.
A: Nay.
C: Ay, 'tis thus.
B: I see.
A: Ay.
B: Wherefore dost thou this?
C: Thou canst not mean so.
A: 'Tis best.
C: Look on't.
B: Thou are not so resolved.
A: Truly.
B: Forbear thy ...
A: What would you? Speak again.
C: Soft, sirrah.
B: 'Tis naught.
A: What wilt thou?
B: Think not on't.
A: So be it.
C: Thou dost speak fairly.

INTERNALS

Thought Patterns (subtext)

(A: So?
(B: Ready?
(C: Well.
(A: No.
(C: Oh, yes.
(B: I see.
(A: Yes.
(B: Why are you doing this?
(C: You can't mean it.
(A: It's the best thing.
(C: See.
(B: You can't mean it.
(A: I'm serious.
(B: You shouldn't ...
(A: What? Go on.
(C: Take it easy.
(B: It's nothing.
(A: What?
(B: Forget it.
(A: Okay.
(C: That's easy for you to say.

EXERCISE: SHAKESPEARE EXIT LINES ⁹⁰

Gotta run. Must dash. Oh, I'll just amble on. Well, if that's the way you want it. Catch you later. I'm outa here. Hit the road, Jack. Get out of my face.

There are a hundred ways to say goodbye and leave good company. In Shakespeare's plays there are ten times that amount. Here are exit lines from six comedies. Use them in this exercise to link movement to words, to imagine a situation that might have gone on before and during the line, and to enjoy a short improvisation.

Instructions

Get into pairs. Each student-actor pick one of the exit lines next, two different lines for each pair. You have 5 minutes to rehearse, to imagine the circumstances surrounding the line, to plan action to accompany the line, and to practice. You are encouraged not to hold back, to throw yourselves into the scene. You can add gestures, sounds, dance steps, acrobatics, improvised props— anything but additional words. You may alternate phrases or words or say each line in any order.

⁹⁰ From: *Shakespeare Magazine*, Vol. 1, No. 3, Spring 1997

Titania: Fairies, away! We shall chide downright if I further stay.

(A Midsummer Night's Dream (MND) II.i.144-45)

Puck: I'll put a girdle around the earth in forty minutes.

(MND II.i.175)

Helena: I'll follow thee and make a heaven of hell, / To die upon the hand I love so well.

(MND II.i.243-44)

Oberon: And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

(MND II.i.266)

Puck: I go, I go, look how I go, / Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow.

(MND III.ii.159-60)

Lysander: Nay, I'll go with thee, cheek by jowl.

(MND III.ii.338-39)

Theseus: Sweet friends, to bed. / In nightly revels and new jollity.

(MND 5.i.370)

Portia: Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before. / Whiles we shut the gate upon one wooer, / another knocks at the door.

(Merchant of Venice (MV) I.ii.132-34)

Jessica: I will make fast the doors, and gild myself / With some more ducats, and be with you straight.

(MV II.v.48-49)

Benedick: O God, sir, here's a dish I love not. I cannot endure my Lady Tongue.

(Much Ado About Nothing (MAAN) II.i.274-75)

Benedick: Go comfort your cousin. I must say / She is dead; and so farewell.

(MAAN IV.i.334-36)

Benedick: I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes, and moreover I will go with thee to thy uncle's.

(MAAN V.ii.102-04)

Celia: Now go [we in] content To liberty, and not to banishment.

(As You Like It (AYLI) I.iii.137-38)

Duke Ferdinand: Well, push him out of doors, / And let my officers of such a nature / Make an extent upon his house and lands / Do this expediently, and turn him going.

(AYLI III.i.15-18)

Touchstone: God buy you, and God mend your voices! Come, Audrey.

(AYLI V.iii.40-41)

Olivia: Farewell, fair cruelty.

(Twelfth Night (TN) II.i.288)

Feste: He is but mad yet, madonna, and the fool shall look to the madman.

(TN I.v.137-38)

Sir Toby: Come, Come, I'll go burn some sack, 'tis too late to go to bed now. Come, knight, come, knight.

(TN II.iii.190-92)

Maria: Here comes the trout that must be caught with tickling.

(TN II.v.22)

Malvolio: I'll be reveng'd on the whole pack of you.

(TN V.i.377)

Evans: Well, I will smite his noddles. Pray you follow.

(The Merry Wives of Windsor (MWW) III.i.125)

Shallow: Well, fare you well. We shall have the freer wooing at Master Page's.

(MWW III.ii.84-85)

Host: Hue and cry, villain, go! Assist me, knight, / I am undone! Fly, run, hue and cry, villain! I am undone!

(MWW IV.v.90-91)

Mrs. Ford: The hour draws on. To the oak, to the oak!

(MWW V.iii.23-24)

Host: Farewell, my hearts. I will to my honest knight Falstaff, and drink canary with him.

(MWW III.ii.87-88)

When you are doing exercises with dialogue passages it is vital that you speak all the passages ALOUD— using your full voice in all rehearsals.

Shakespeare Verse— or Poetry and Prose

To begin with, most (but not all) of Shakespeare's dialogue is written in verse. As Homer (or any actor) could tell you, verse is, among other things, easier to remember than prose is. Moreover, verse (or prose) is easier to remember if it is highly structured; in general, the more rhetorical, the more recallable a section of dialogue. For instance:

*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.*

These are the first 32 words of a role that contains 8,826, and they are full of cues for the actor's memory. Winter leads to summer, summer to sun (son), sun to clouds and - if you live on an island - clouds to ocean; son leads to bosom. Shakespeare's images makes the whole sentence user-friendly for an actor.⁹¹

There are no rules about when the dramatists (another name for the playwright) uses prose and when poetry. It is not, as some believe, that only kings, queens, upper class (those from the city), and lovers use poetry, and that servants, comics, lower class and 'rustics' (those from the country) use prose in Shakespeare's plays. You might be surprised how often in Shakespeare's plays that he didn't use the verse form. In his plays, characters speak prose 28% of the time, and verse 72% of the time; and they choose to rhyme only 7% of the time that they speak verse. In Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, Beatrice speaks in prose until she overhears Benedict declare his love for her: then she speaks only poetry. Look at the *Chart of the Relative Proportions of Poetry and Prose in Shakespeare's Plays* at the end of this chapter to see the percentage of each play that is in verse and in prose. Shakespeare wrote one play with almost no verse in it. (Look at the *Chart* to see which play that was.)

Alternation of verse and prose, or using different rhythms are part of characterization.

"Blank verse" is poetry written in unrhymed lines of iambic pentameter. Blank verse is not written in stanza form (poetic lines in units of the same length). Instead, the poem is developed in verse paragraphs that vary in length. Blank verse is a flexible form of expression that gives the poet a choice of many variations within the metrical pattern of iambic pentameter. Because of its flexibility, blank verse is especially appropriate for narrative and dramatic poetry and other longer forms of poetry. Blank verse is sometimes confused with free verse. But free verse, unlike blank verse, has no definite meter.

RHYME, A Short Note

We all know what a rhyme is when we hear one, but find it difficult to define one

- **Rhyme** is when words sound alike. Rhyme is the similarity of the end most sounds of words.
- **Half-rhyme** is when words almost rhyme.
- **Historic rhyme:** Much more common in Shakespeare are lines that, because of changing pronunciation, once rhymed but no longer do. One of Shakespeare's favorites is *love* with *prove*. What to do about this? We usually don't try to capture historic rhymes on stage anymore, but it's your decision.

Shakespeare's Signposts:

The fundamentals of verse

The next series of exercises will deal with Shakespeare's embedded signposts, or hints on how to better understand his verse.

- The purpose of writing a speech in *verse* was not to be "poetic," but to give it a pulse that makes it easier to speak and easier to hear.⁹² Verse allows for rapid enunciation without loss of intelligibility. Shakespeare's *heightened* language allowed him to say more, and to say it more quickly. While the verse form is easy, musical

⁹¹ For more detail on this go to the article *Brush up your Shakespeare*, by Gary Taylor, The New York Times, published July 22, 1990. On line at <http://www.nytimes.com/1990/07/22/books/brush-up-your-shakespeare.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm>

⁹² Easier to hear with such devices as proper spoken rate, upward inflection, and antithesis.

and seductive to listen to at times Shakespeare’s characters can tend to sound somewhat alike— therefore the tendency to ‘Shakespeareize.’

- He uses verbal devices as ways to put extra information and extra content in the line.⁹³
- Shakespeare has a built-in support systems which aid the actor. Verse helps actors because:
 - 1) It is easier than prose to memorize and remember— trust me, it is.
 - 2) It reveals the distinct traits and powerful objectives of the character. Everything Shakespeare does with his verse has a purpose in furthering action and delineating character. Shakespeare’s characterizations are embedded in the iambic.
 - 3) It contains notes from the playwright. Stage directions arrived with the printing press, but in Shakespeare’s time they were still very rarely used in printed copies of plays. But, Shakespeare gave us many stage directions and notes on his character’s if you know where to look.

It can take a good deal of *chutzpah* to tackle the task of performing this material, to overcome, what Kurt Daw’s calls “ShakesFear.” On the other hand, many young student-actors I have found “walk in where angels fear to tread,” and jump in with both feet.

In the work in this chapter we will look at using Shakespeare’s signposts, including:

- Scansion, which reveals stresses, meaning, feeling, and proper pronunciation (in many cases)
- Punctuation— the road signs
- Upward inflection and builds, sustaining to the end of the thought and line
- Verbs and nouns
- The verbal devices and language forms (“rhetoric”) used by Shakespeare, including:
 - antithesis— most especially
 - imagery
 - alliteration and assonance
 - metaphor and simile
 - allusions
 - epithet

Shakespeare and other Elizabethan writers enjoyed using rhetoric— again, they are special literary devices that present a fact or idea in a dramatic and interesting manner. Indeed, some authors were often more concerned with how something was said than with what was actually said.

Shakespeare used many kinds of rhetorical devices that writers still use. One familiar kind is alliteration, in which the same sound is repeated in a line or group of lines of verse. When Juliet tells Romeo that “parting is such sweet sorrow,” the ‘s’ sounds of the last three words provide alliteration. Shakespeare also frequently used a rhetorical device called repetition. Hamlet’s cry against his stepfather “O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!” shows effective dramatic use of repetition. But more on this later.

Remember

The demands of Shakespeare’s text, prose/verse, imagery, symbolism, rhetoric, thought, action, and character are all interrelated and cannot be viewed in isolation. Don’t be overwhelmed or frustrated by the fact that as soon as you learn how to handle Shakespeare’s builds, you have to learn about antithesis, or alliteration. Not every selection of his text you work with will have every one of Shakespeare’s devices in it. You can learn them as you come across them in your script or as you need them.

SCANSION— LOOKING AT THE TREES

Introduction

A line of verse is but a row of sounds— “de dum de dum de dum de dum de dum.” Those simple ten sounds— which can also be called syllables or beats— is a line of iambic pentameter. (Don’t let this phrase scare you.) We call this a “regular” line.

⁹³ Formally this vast range of devices is called “rhetoric.”

Each pair of “de dums” together is called an “iamb.” This pair is also called a “foot.” The use of the term “foot” began in ancient Greece when poetic rhythms were derived from dance rhythms. This “de dum” pattern repeated five times— as shown above— is called “pentameter” (as in “Pentagon,” a five-sided building).

It is the basic rhythm, the cornerstone of Shakespeare’s verse form. It’s a kind of “time signature” for verse, like music having a 4/4 time signature. John Barton says that this rhythmic form approximates more closely than any other poetic meter the form of everyday speech in English.

- Scansion is the simple practice of checking the verse’s pulse to be sure you understand its rhythm.
- Scanning lines of verse lets the actor hear the playwright tell him what pronunciations the writer prefers.
- Scansion would be less scary if we just called it “checking the rhythm.”

Hints and facts about scansion

- SCANSION IS NOT AN EXACT SCIENCE

- *Scansion isn’t all that hard.*
- Scansion is not the “savior” of Shakespeare. It is a *tool* to help unlock the verse.
- Somehow the word has gotten out that there is a nonnegotiable *right* way to scan verse. I repeat, it is *not* a system of laws that determine exactly how verse should be spoken.
- It is not always necessary to scan every line.

- YOU DON’T SCAN PROSE SECTIONS / YOU SCAN ONLY VERSE SECTIONS

- Hint: You can tell prose on the page because it is arranged into *paragraphs* rather than into lines of poetry.
- Hint: You can tell verse on the page by looking down the left margin of the page and if every line begins with a capital, you are seeing verse.
- 75% of Shakespeare is written in iambic/blank verse. It is called “blank verse” if the lines don’t rhyme.

- You don’t *make* the lines fit the pattern; Shakespeare did that.

- The purpose of scanning is not to regularize the verse, but to understand it.
- If you encounter an oddity, relish it!
- You should accent your words the way your audience can understand them best.

- Iambic pentameter is not the only pattern.⁹⁴

The first real scansion problem arises when student-actors find many lines *don’t* fit this pattern. But, relax there are only six types of feet in English verse.

- The most common deviation from iambic is the initial trochee (or the first two syllables of the line reversed).
- The second most common variation is at the end of the line with an extra unstressed syllable, or *triple ending* (originally called a *feminine ending*).
- These two variations can be used in combination.
- The most difficult section of the line invariably **FALLS IN THE MIDDLE**.
- Hint: In order to divide a line into the right number of feet, begin by counting in two syllables from the **FRONT** of the line and then two syllables from the **END** of the line.

- The more sophisticated and subtle the character, the more Shakespeare deviates from the iambic norm.

- Scansion reveals stresses (emphasis). The amount of stress given is relative and varies from foot to foot.

- Scansion reveals meaning.

- Scansion reveals proper pronunciation (in many cases).

- Scansion reveals your character’s feelings. Ask yourself *why* lines in the speech are irregular. What do they reveal about your character’s psychology?

- Your character’s objectives are implicit in his scansion, his rhythm, and his specific choice of words.

⁹⁴ Five feet of ten syllables.

Elements of scansion— the basics

Iambic:	short-long	unstressed/stressed	˘ -	rhythm of the human heart
	“more aggressive”	masculine		
Trochee	long-short	stressed/unstressed	- ˘	rhythm of our breathing
	“graceful and placid”	feminine		out-breathing, in-breathing (longer)
	“Never,/never,/never,/never,/never./”			

A trochee is the opposite of the iambic or a reversed iambic with the first syllable having the heavier stress. It is a falling meter. It is the most common form of variation in Shakespeare’s verse. “How can I begin to read this drivell” is a line of trochaic verse.

Caesura (pronounced “si-ZHOO-ruh”) Or “short pause,” or unvoiced (two beat) rest. When verse lines are not continuous, a slight break, called a caesura, often break the line somewhere in the middle. Often this is marked by punctuation. It may occur after the second or third foot, or sometimes even after the first or fourth.

Elision Or elide. Elision is the blending of two or more sounds into one sound. “I am” becomes “I’m”; “to us” becomes “tus.” “Fire,” “flower,” “prayer,” and “riot”— and many other words— have all been pronounced as both single syllable and double syllable words. It is a syllable given little or no stress, used to keep the rhythmical meter of the line. You elide a syllable by slurring or gliding over it as you speak it. Such as “fiery,” all three syllables are not pronounced because it is not intended to dominant the meter.

Enjamed Or enjambement. Run-on effect when one line runs into the next. Especially when lines have a *triple ending* (a line with the fifth foot’s last syllable unstressed or “feminine” ending). Several lines may be enjamed to form a larger rhythmic unit. It carries the tone into the next line, keeping the sound of the piece alive. Enjamed lines are opposite of end-stopped lines.

See the Glossary at the end of this chapter for the other types of verse feet.

Marking scansion

Stressed syllable:	a downslash (`) or a straight line (¯) over the syllable
Unstressed syllable:	a dipped arc (˘) over the syllable
Divided feet:	by a single vertical line (/), if needed to divide a word of more than one syllable.
Caesura:	can be marked with a double vertical line (//) or carat (^).
Irregular line	Place an asterisk (*) in the left margin next to any irregular lines. (Lines not in regular iambic pentameter.)

Side Coaching

Scansion markings can be combined with your script scoring markings.

SCRIPT SCORING MARKINGS

Full stops or end-stop punctuation (ends of sentences as indicated by periods, exclamation points, or question marks) can be marked with either three vertical lines (///) or ‘railroad tracks’ with a circle (⊕)

Short pauses or commas (,)

Operative words are emphasized with an underlined.

Begin to identify operative words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs; ie., the ‘big’ words— don’t worry about the ‘little’ words at this stage of the game).

Carry-over lines or line ends with no stops can be marked with an arrow (→)

You mark carry-over lines on your speech so that you begin to see the flow of the verse lines.

Also see Chapter 5: VOCAL SCORING for a complete explanation of script scoring markings.

ALWAYS REMEMBER: Sense must take precedence over rhythmic stressing.

 **EXERCISE: SHAKESPEARE SCANSION GAME** 95

What is Iambic Pentameter?

Materials Needed

This scansion sheet, 10 student volunteers, five chairs or stools placed across area in row with space for five people to stand between each.

10 students volunteers will be put in a row across the front of the class area. The 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th students sit or kneel, the 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th student stand between each seated student (1st student sits, 10th student stands). You will see a large scansion mark a “~” or “-” on the back of every other of the sheets handed to the row so 1st sitting student has “~”, and 2nd standing student has “-”, and alternate a “~” and “-” till the end of the line.

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** 5
That thou her maid art far more fair than she.

.....
Romeo: **It is my lady; O, it is my love!** 10
O that she knew she were!
She speaks, yet she says nothing. What of that?

.....
Romeo: **See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!**
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek! 25

Juliet: **Ay me!**

Romeo: **She speaks!**

Romeo: That I might touch that cheek!

Juliet: Ay me!

Romeo: She speaks!

⁹⁵ From Paul Barnes, formally of the PCPA.

OTHER INDICATORS

THE SHARED LINE (also called HALF-LINE)

They are divided lines that usually call for quick, overlapping delivery. As a general rule, shared lines are paced without pause.

Lady Macbeth:	And dash'd the brains out had I so sworn as you	
	Have done to this.	} 4 beats
Macbeth:	If we should fail?	} 4 beats
Lady Macbeth:	We fail	} 2 beats

THE INCOMPLETE LINE

The incomplete line is marked by silent beats that complete the pentameter, the equivalent of the beats/syllables missing. Shakespeare is more apt to write a partial line for one character, and start fresh with a complete line for the other character when wishing to indicate a pause.

Iago:	But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er	
	Who dotes, yet doubts, suspects, yet strongly loves!	
Othello:	O misery!	
Iago:	Poor and content is rich and rich enough,	
	But riches is as poor as winter	
	To him that ever fears he shall be poor.	

Iago:	In Venice they do let heaven see the pranks	
	They dare not show their husbands; their best conscience	
	Is not to leave't undone, but keep't unknown.	
Othello:	Dost thou say so?	
Iago:	She did deceive her father, marrying you;	

EMBEDDED STAGE DIRECTIONS

Shakespeare has placed the implied stage direction *within* the text. Actors must learn to read Shakespeare's stage directions implicit in the dialogue. One character's stage directions are often buried in other character's lines.

Romeo:	He jests at scars that never felt a wound.	
	But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?	
	She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that?	
	Her eye discourses; I will answer it.	
	See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!	
	O, that I were a glove upon that hand,	
	That I might touch that cheek!	

SHORT LINES

By altering the length of a line, playwrights send messages to actors. Short lines suggest pause. Shortening a line encourages the actor to find silent time in the line to accommodate the missing measures. These are also usually a map to staging and physical action. In *MACBETH*, I-ii-35, there is a short line that probably indicates that they are waiting for Macbeth to leave the stage before they continue talking.

Instructions

Players sit comfortably in a circle and hold a conversation by passing sentences around. Each sentence must scan as an iambic pentameter, but it must be every day speech (completely prosaic) in its content. For example:

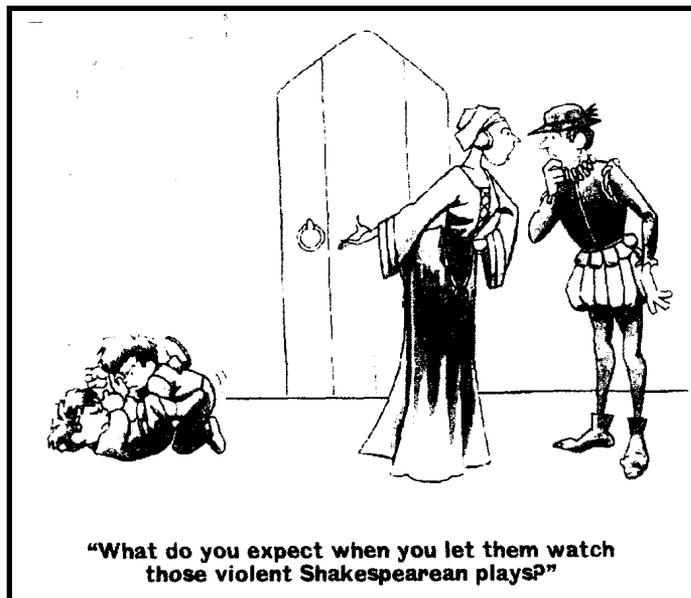
- A: How would you like another cup of tea.
 - B: Why yes. That's very kind of you to ask.
 - C: I take mine black so don't add any milk.
 - D: Where did you spend last Summer? At the beach?
- And so on.

Objective

As the exercise continues, players will get more comfortable with the ease of speaking the verse, and more sophisticated in their use of it, in sharing lines and continuing thought patterns.



In this calligraphic portrait, the letters in SHAKESPEARE form the likeness of his face. Can you find them?



⁹⁶ Harrop and Epstein, *Acting with Style*.

“Doing Shakespeare taught me that the actor must stop getting in his own way.”

- Ralph Fiennes

2. Shakespeare’s genius is in the language.

SPEAKING VERSE— FOUR SIMPLE STARTING POINTS

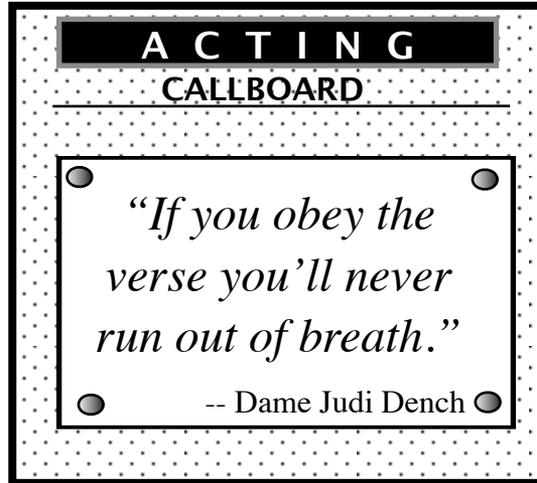
Looking at THE FOREST

1. Read to the end of the line.

- Watch the punctuation. Punctuation, as in modern dialogue, has the an effect on pace. (Remember the words tempo and pace are often used interchangeably.)

Try taking a quick breath at every comma and a full breath on a colon or semicolon; pause only at periods or other forms of full stops.

- Lines don’t end at the end of the verse line, but at the end of the “thought.”
- Group the lines into larger patterns (THE FOREST).
- In Shakespeare the thinking is on the line, in other words, during the line. This is done by the characters thinking while they are speaking. Shakespeare didn’t have many “thought pauses.” (SEE the section: Shakespeare vs. Stanislavski.)



- Regularity of the iambic pentameter can put the ear and the mind to sleep. We are not encouraging you to speak Shakespeare in a mind-numbing singsong. The line does NOT read:

To be,
or not
to be.
That
is the question

It reads: To be, or not to be. That is the question

2. Verse should be spoken faster than prose. Speed & tempo

- The action presses on swiftly -- the “two hours traffic.”
- Our comfort zone is too slow for Shakespearean performance. If it feels just a little too fast, just slightly out of your control, then it is right. Speed up just until you feel you are on the edge of too fast.

Today, a typical performance speed is 17 lines in one minute.

In modern speech, we speak at the equivalent of 700 iambic pentameter lines per hour, but most actors find Shakespeare works best at 1000 lines per hour.

3. Keep the energy going at the end of the line.⁹⁷ Rising inflection at the end of lines.

Modern speech, especially in the mouths of young students, often tends to be downward in inflection or trail off at the end (“end-drop” syndrome”). We swallow the ends of our lines. Verse is much more active; the beat moves it onward and upward (with the energy of its highly compact imagery).

In sooth, I know not why I am so sad.

Downward inflection dismisses the listener’s attention.

4. BREATHE! You’ve got to breathe.

Shakespeare’s most famous advice to players— an observation on acting anything— in *Hamlet*: “Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue.” (This line is, oddly enough, in prose, not poetry.)

⁹⁷ This could be considered part of Number 1: Read to the end of the line. But we will look at it separately.

Remember

REMEMBER this when you do the Exercises: UPWARD INFLECTION & BUILDS

3. Shakespeare was intended to be acted.

Introduction

Now we are ready to look at your character, be it in a monologue, sonnet, scene, or an entire play. We will see how text reveals character.

If you have been getting on your feet for all of the earlier exercises, you will now need to select and memorize a monologue, scene or sonnet which will be needed for most of the following exercises. A monologue, scene, or sonnet all work equally as well. I prefer to start with both a monologue and a sonnet. These could also lead to an in-class or school-wide Shakespeare contest.

The English-Speaking Union of the United States (national offices in New York) has a yearly contest for high school students which you might want to look into. There are regional offices in almost every state or large city. They hold regional contests and provide contest rules and a list of suggested monologues.

The Contest

Here are few notes from the English-Speaking Union regarding their competition.

The purpose of the competition is to develop students' understanding of Shakespeare and his universality and to help them communicate that understanding. Students should be encouraged to bring Shakespeare to life in their own way and to express his words with feeling, understanding, and clarity. Gesture and movement, if utilized, should be completely natural.

Teachers should keep in mind that the objective of the Shakespeare Competition is to provide the format for a curriculum-based program benefiting entire classes rather than an after-school activity in which a few students participate. From our past experiences, we have learned that school competitions held in general assembly engender the most enthusiasm.

In order to qualify for The English-Speaking Union's Branch Competition, a school must first hold its own competition involving no fewer than 3 students.

Teachers are asked not to coach individual students for the school contest. Classes or demonstrations may be given to all participants as a group exercise and should be encouraged.

*Each student must memorize and present a monologue. **The monologue must not exceed 20 lines.** Also, the winners of the school contests must memorize a sonnet from Shakespeare's 154 sonnet cycle for the English-Speaking Union Branch Competition.*

Students may not affect another accent. They should not wear costumes or use any props, including chairs.

Introductions to the monologue should be limited to two sentences. The student must give his/her name and identify the selection. A second sentence setting the piece in the context of the play may be added but is not required.

You may be required to select a monologue from a list provided by The English-Speaking Union. Also remember that actors research their roles: it would be a rare thing to pull off a great monologue performance without knowing the character who is speaking, inside and out. That means knowing the entire play well.

Think about the following questions:

- ◇ What is this particular speech about?
- ◇ What decisions and discoveries is the character making?
- ◇ How does the character feel about these?
- ◇ What is the character's mood at the beginning of the speech?
- ◇ Has it changed by the end? If so, how does it change through the scene?
- ◇ What action results?

Remember, too, that even if the speech you choose doesn't rhyme, there is still poetry in the way the words are put together. Pay attention to it! Performance involves your mind and emotions just as much as your voice and body.

In-class competition rules

Here is the procedure that the School of the Arts follows : The Theatre Department teachers and artists select 12 to 15 students (approximately four from each grade level) to compete in an evening On-Campus competition. Three guest judges select the four students to participate in the Regional E-S U competition.⁹⁸ If selected the student goes on to the National competition. This is held on the nearest weekend to Shakespeare's traditional Birthday (April 23) in New York City.

- Selections must be **memorized**, as no notes or manuscripts are permitted.
- The monologue should be from approximately **20 to 30 lines** and must not exceed 40 lines.
- The monologue selection **must be in verse**, not prose.
- Students should identify themselves by their name and should provide the title of the play, the name of the character, and the number of the sonnet. No other introductory remarks are allowed.
- The sonnet may be presented before or after the monologue.
- THE SONNET: Think about the following questions:
 - ◇ What is the major theme? (Does it revolve around joy? hope? despair? anger? love? hate? something else?)
 - ◇ How is that theme developed?
 - ◇ What is the turning point of the sonnet?
 - ◇ What is its mood, or contrast of moods?
 - ◇ What conclusions do you draw from it, and want to express?
- Do not wear costumes, costume pieces, or use any props, including chairs.
- It is suggested that all selections be taken from *The Riverside Shakespeare*, published by Houghton Mifflin Company.

UNIT GRADE: As usual you will be graded not on winning or losing, but on how hard you try (home preparation, participation on in-class exercises, work habits, et cetera). This unit is approximately one third of the semester grade. This is a major part of the semester final and will also help determine class placement for the spring semester.

ABSENTEE POLICY: If you miss your slot in the in-class competition round (your final presentation for the Shakespeare unit) because of a legitimate excused absence (with a note from your parent/guardian presented on your return to class) your presentation will be slotted after the last student has presented. If you have a legitimate absence for all of the three days you will be allowed to present your pieces for your unit grade, but cannot be considered for a slot in the on-campus competition. Arrangement will be made so that all instructors can see your pieces performed. Selection of the students to enter the final round must be made by the end of class on the last in-class day as scheduled.

⁹⁸ One of the pleasant additions to our evening contest is the presentation of Queen Elizabeth I to the proceedings. She appears in full regalia, with Ladies in Waiting in attendance, to a trumpet fanfare, and presides over the proceedings. (This idea was "borrowed" from Regina Cate, director of the California State University at Hayward High School Shakespeare contest. Kurt Daw has a exercise that his students at Kennesaw State University, Atlanta, do entitled "Sonnet for a Sovereign" which also has the Queen in attendance.) This seems a little hokey at first, but the students like it. I have found my students love to create "traditions." Do it once, and it's a "tradition" that must be continued. One of the fallacies of today's teenager in society is that they don't care about 'anything', when in reality, they care about 'everything!'

Shakespeare vs. Stanislavski
— supertext vs. subtext

The results of the development of the Stanislavski “system” or “method” was a major change in the direction of Shakespearean actor training.⁹⁹ Shakespeare is not Stanislavski, but nevertheless, to be theatrically extravagant without an inner truthfulness is not desired. ACTION, AS THEY SAY, PRECEDES UTTERANCE.

Shakespeare and Stanislavski *can* be reconciled, if both Shakespeare and his use of what I call supertext (thought above the line) and Stanislavski and his use of subtext (thought behind the line) are not misinterpreted as they have been for many years. Supertext, as I call it, is when the characters thinking while they are speaking. They think and speak at the same time. Michael Langham, the late Artistic Director of both the Guthrie Theatre (1971-1977) and the Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Canada (1956-1967), and Director of the Juilliard Theatre School (1979-1982, and 1987-1992), called this “living thought.” The actor Christopher Plummer believes that when a young actor tries to “break up the line” to make it sound more believable and contemporary, and therefore doesn’t follow the music of the line and doesn’t think on the line, actually does the reverse and makes it sound “old fashioned.” Therefore, a major pitfall you should try to avoid is the modern acting habit of taking “thought” pauses before speaking (think of a soap opera). Another pitfall is the modern tendency to act “between the lines” (say a few words and then pause to let the emotion catch up). Again, this is avoided by the characters thinking while they are speaking (supertext). The challenge, and the joy, of Shakespeare is acting “on the line.” This is not automatically easy to do. Shakespeare does not stop to examine character; he displays it in action while the character is speaking.

- Misunderstanding 1: There is no place called “SHAKESPEARELAND!” It is not a place. Things don’t happen only in Shakespeare’s plays. These are real people in real relationships and real situations. These are specific relationships that occur— rich with supertext and subtext— even if the people involved are set in a historical period. Their relationships are specific, they are not generalized or broad. Shakespeare’s characters are not types or abstractions, but real people, however fantastic their situation may be. If you live in “SHAKESPEARELAND” then someone might just report you to the “SHAKESPEARE POLICE.”
- Misunderstanding 2: All “good” Shakespearean actors have to have “British” accents.
- Misunderstanding 3: Stanislavski is about mumbling and repeating words or lines to appear natural.
- Misunderstanding 4: Shakespeare, on the other hand, is all vocal attitudinizing and over-elaboration.
- Misunderstanding 5: Shakespeare didn’t have “subtext.”
 - Another pitfall is act beneath the lines (say the lines in an emotionally controlled way to imply there are powerful emotions being suppressed).
 - With Elizabethans, feelings and behavior were on the surface. (No Freudian subtext.)
But, if we look for subtext that isn’t there or become involved with minutiae, we are in danger of reducing the stature of the characters to our own petty size and diminishing the impact.

You cannot claim that this or that feels false or unreal to you because you yourself would feel it or say it differently.¹⁰⁰ That’s why Juliet is JULIET and not YOU.

Remember

Characters, as “real people,” often “rehearse” the calculated effects they want to achieve from others. As I walk into the class, I have planned what I am going to say to the teacher as to why I didn’t get my assignment done.

⁹⁹ Stanislavski confessed he was defeated by Shakespeare’s plays when he tried to fit them into his system. “We have created a technique and methods for the artistic interpretation of Chekhov, but we do not possess a technique for the saying of the artistic truth in the plays of Shakespeare.” (Constantin Stanislavski, *My Life in Art*.)

¹⁰⁰ Margaret Webster, *Shakespeare Without Tears*, pp. 296-97.

ASSIGNMENT: SELECTING THE MONOLOGUE

Introduction

A monologue is a section of dialogue aimed at another character or characters. WHY MONOLOGUES? A monologue lets the student-actor sample bits and pieces of many different characters and plays (both as an actor and an audience member) to get to know them better.

Instructions

ONE: Read all of the monologues allowed in the contest. Read each monologue at least four times. Don't worry about understanding every word of the entire monologue at this time, just try to understand what it is about, generally. Remember that you DO NOT have to select a monologue that is gender specific. I am not suggesting that the *characters* don't have gender, but that, at least within training exercises, it doesn't matter who plays them.

TWO: Pick your monologue. Don't worry if others are doing the same monologue, this could be an advantage.

What type of piece should I choose?

It is Kurt Daw's opinion that if you are forced to make a quick decision narrow your search to the comedies immediately. This is based on an educated guess that you don't have time to learn all the stuff going on in the histories overnight, and on the conviction that most of the overdone and astonishingly difficult material is from the tragedies.

Try not to select monologues whose text:

- Are indecipherable on their own. Example: answers a question that we do not get to hear as part of the presentation.
- Speeches that function to set up some other character's answer.
- Soliloquies or extended asides.

The term soliloquy and monologue are not interchangeable. In performance the soliloquy, or a character speaking directly to the audience, or "thinking aloud" about their situation, is a device or theatrical convention (nonrealistic moments), looks very different from the monologue, and should be approached at a later time.

How long should my piece be?

It is suggested that most beginning Shakespeareans choose pieces of 15 to 25 lines the first time out. Do not choose pieces that are too long for your first attempts. The E-S U currently allows monologues of only 20 lines. If you have a two-minute time limit it dictates that the piece should be no longer than 30 lines.

Editing & cutting text

While training it is better to struggle with making the original words and ideas clear than to "fix" them. Legitimate reasons to alter or cut a script do exist. But be certain the fault is not in yourself. A little minor editing may be employed to remove or reassign snippets of dialogue from other speakers. In a play for performance, however, it is not uncommon for a director to do some editing.

Which text edition to use?

Most of the Shakespeare you've read has been "edited" and "improved" for modern readers, not for actors. In fact, over the past four hundred years, editors have respelled the text, re-punctuated the text, even changed the words in the text, especially in the really popular plays like *Romeo and Juliet*. More on this later.

In a poll of many professional Shakespearean practitioners the hands down favorite among the complete collected works (called a canon) is the *Riverside Shakespeare, Collected Works*. now in its second edition. Coming in second is both the *Arden Shakespeare Collected Works* and the *Norton Shakespeare Collected Works*. There is less consensus about the plays published in single title volumes. Although most favored is the Arden editions (also with extensive quality notes gathered at the bottom of each page). The Penguin Shakespeare (the

Pelican Shakespeare is the same edition) is used and recommended by the English Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC). The 1986 Oxford Shakespeare editors have paid great attention to the theatrical viability of the text, or how it plays on stage. The Oxford also serves as the basis for the 1997 Norton Shakespeare collected works. The Folger-Washington Squire Press editions (with notes facing each page of text) has very few supporters.

All of these volumes are based on the editors study of Shakespeare’s original “quartos” and “folios.” What is a “quarto”? What is a “folio”? The terms “quarto” and “folio” refer to how the full sheets of paper from the Elizabethan printing press were folded to create the size of a book. “Quarto”-size books are approximately five by seven inches. They are printed on full sheets of paper and folded twice (into quarters— thus “quarto”). Eighteen of Shakespeare’s plays were published during his lifetime in quarto versions. “Folio” refers to plays printed on large sheets of paper which are folded only once. “Folio” books are roughly twice as large as “quartos.” In 1623, the collected plays of Shakespeare were published in what is now called the first “folio” edition.

Remember

Remember, that someone *edited* the text. Someone used their experience and judgment. Most contemporary editors have a tendency to overpunctuate Shakespeare’s original text. See the Exercise: REPUNCTUATE FOR BREATH for an example of three different punctuated editions.

Sources for further study

For finding a monologue the following two books of listings will be helpful as a sources for monologue selection:¹⁰¹

- Richard O. Bell and Joan Kuder Bell. *Auditions and Scenes from Shakespeare*. Theatre Directories, 1994. Listings with short descriptions, types, and timings.
- Kurt Daw and Julia Matthew. *A Guide to Scenes and Monologues from Shakespeare and his Contemporaries*. Heinemann, 1998. With over three hundred suggestions.

ASSIGNMENT: PREPARING YOUR TEXT

Copying your scripts

You must print out all assigned text, monologues, sonnets, or scenes in **LARGE TYPE LIKE THIS** (14 point font) so that you can read the words easily. Make approximately ten copies for various exercises ¹⁰². Double space the text, so that markings can be inserted above each line, such as “scansion” and “script scoring.” Text should be free of any editor’s notes or glossary. You will need a clean copy for all of the following exercises:

- Noun and Verb underline exercise
- Remove punctuation exercise
- Scansion exercise
- Antithesis mapping exercise
- Vocal scoring
- Rehearsal notes
- “Like — I mean” exercise

Methods you can use are:

Photocopying: You can use the cut, paste, and enlarge method.

Computer: You can use the formatting capabilities of a computer (font size at least 14 point)

¹⁰¹ A list of monologue books containing Shakespeare selections can be found at Sfsotatheatre.org and click on **ACTING IS ACTION – Web Pages** and **AN ACTOR’S BOOKSHELF**.

¹⁰² Idea from Michael Tolaydo “Three-Dimensional Shakespeare” in *Shakespeare Set Free, Teaching Romeo and Juliet, etc.*

Scanned Method: Scan your favorite edition into the computer and format. (Warning: A thorough check must be made of the outcome. What OCR programs make of Shakespeare's words at times will shock you, especially hyphenated words.)

On-line Method: See the section "The Complete works of Shakespeare on the Net" for a listing of sites from which you can download your selection. (Warning: the text, especially punctuation, can vary greatly in these versions.) The biggest advantage an electronic version holds is the ability to print it out in large type sizes, but you spend the time you save correcting the text and punctuation.

CD Rom Method: There are 2 or 3 versions of collected or select works of Shakespeare on disc, including Norton and Shakespeare-On-Disc. (Warning: again, the text, especially punctuation, can vary greatly in these versions.)

Instructions

1. Consult the Control Text (in our case *The Riverside Shakespeare*) and other text for:

- Punctuation variations
- Spelling variations
- Accented words variations
- Word variations
- Other differences

Change your master copy to reflect these changes.

2. Make a master copy of your selection in:

- Large print size
- Double-spaced
- Removed editor's notes and word definitions

Duplicate this master at least ten times for various exercises.

3. The last step is research and performance history:

• After you have done *all* your initial work and made your *own* discoveries (What do YOU think that unfamiliar word means in that particular context?) you can look at the notes in several different Shakespeare editions for ideas concerning your selection. Get a well-edited text of the play and study the meaning of unfamiliar words. The Arden and individual Oxford editions are particularly good for this.¹⁰³

Write down your top three discoveries from research.

- Also look at the various glossaries, lexicons, and directories, especially:
 - C. T. Onions (enlarged and revised by Robert D. Eagleson), *A Shakespeare Glossary*. Oxford, 1986. (for years called simply "Onions")
 - Eric Partridge, *Shakespeare's Bawdy*. Routledge. 1968 (3rd Ed.).
 - Alexander Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*. Dover (3rd ed. in 2 volumes, revised and enlarges by Gregor Sarrazin, 1902), 1971.
- Should or should not a student-actor read about historical performances or view the available audio and filmed versions of their selection? Ask your teacher.

MEMORIZING SHAKESPEARE

Introduction

You must solidly commit to memory your selections. Always be prepared to work on your feet in class **without** script in hand. As I stated earlier, but it bears repeating, it is essential that the words be memorized precisely as written, with no paraphrases or simplifications. But, even before you know the meaning of all the words or how to pronounce them, **GO AHEAD AND MEMORIZE THE WORDS ANYWAY.**

Shakespeare's work is full of AIDS that make them much easier to remember than is originally anticipated. You will find EVERY LINE of Shakespeare DIRECTLY motivated by the line before it (the thought before). It may take some search but it's there. It also takes time to search out all the underlying

¹⁰³ Daws

structure (the thought and logic of the character) of the speech. But when you do you will find it is thoughtfully and logically put together.¹⁰⁴

NOTE: Most memory problems are with the subtle ties connecting ideas that fill in the gaps between them, not with the words that complete an idea, nor are they with the words that compose the next idea. I know a student-actor will “go up” when he has not found as of yet these subtle connections (ties) between these ideas.

Instructions

Try walking as you memorize. Head in one direction on the first line. When you reach a change of thought, change direction. Create patterns on the floor— begin tracing squares and triangles on the floor with your walking. First, just get the speech “in your body.”



EXERCISE: REPUNCTUATE FOR BREATH. 105

Introduction

Don't trust the editors! Modern editors, for all sorts of reasons, tend to over-punctuate Shakespeare. Here is a very simple example of three punctuations of the same speech (from Louis Fantasia) from *ANTONY & CLEOPATRA*, where Caesar August hears the news of Marc Antony's death, (even though the two have been at war) he says:

CAESAR: Look you sad friends,
The gods rebuke me, but it is tidings
To wash the eyes of kings. (First Folio, 1623)

CAESAR: Look you, sad friends,
The gods rebuke me, but it is tidings
To wash the eyes of kings. (Third Folio, 1663)

CAESAR: Look you sad, friends?
The gods rebuke me, but it is a tidings
To wash the eyes of kings. (Arden, 1954)

Try these aloud. Do you see how the punctuation changes the meaning, reading, and therefore the staging of the line? This sort of thing goes on all the time in Shakespeare, with editors changing punctuation as they see fit.

Instructions

First, make a photocopy of your text. This time use white liquid correction fluid and blot out all the punctuation. That's right, all of it. Now work through the nouns and verbs; leave the adjectives and adverbs alone; play the "I/thou" and "I/it" relationships; and punctuate only when and where you need to breathe. Don't, for the moment, worry whether the punctuation should be a comma, semi-colon or period; just see if you need a long pause, short pause, or no pause at all for sense, meaning and breath.

¹⁰⁴ Thanks to Dews p. 65 for phrasing it so well.

¹⁰⁵ From Louis Fantasia. “One of the reasons I prefer the Arden editions is that they print the alternative readings in the notes at the bottom of each page and you can see most of your options.”

EXERCISE: PARAPHRASING

Instructions

What about exercises built around paraphrasing? Paraphrasing is restating or rewording, often in simpler language, of a sentence or paragraph. Paraphrasing is an excellent way to make sure you're understanding what you're saying, although paraphrasing is not an exact science. The rules of paraphrasing are that the paraphrasing must cover *all* of the ideas in the speech, and in the *same order* they are in the play. Paraphrasing is also helpful with Shakespeare's common use of reverse sentence structure, such as:

"A glooming peace this morning with it brings." (Romeo & Juliet)

Which would paraphrase to simply:

"This morning brings with it a glooming peace."

Below are some lines from Shakespeare's plays, written in Early Modern English. On the lines below each quote, paraphrase (translate) each sentence into Modern English, as we might speak it today.¹⁰⁶

"Give me thy hand, 'tis late; farewell, good night." Romeo & Juliet, III, 3

"Safe may'st thou wander, safe return again!" Cymbeline, III, 5

"What is best, that best I wish in thee." Troilus & Cressida, II, 2

"Have more than thou showest; speak less than thou knowest; lend less than thou owest." King Lear, I, 4

"This above all: to thine own self be true." Hamlet, Act I, Sc.3

A NOTE ON SOLILOQUIES

There are four categories of soliloquies:

1. Introspective or contemplative: in which focus is inward.
2. More actively reflective: basically persons of action who are being troubled by a conscience. The images will be placed in space.
3. To the audience: the most direct form.
4. Objective correlative: more of an apostrophe - the skull of Yorick.

It is always more dramatic for an actor to make his decisions *onstage* during a soliloquy.

ASSIGNMENT: SHAKESPEARE PEER PERFORMANCE CRITIQUE

Instructions

Following the same criteria used for the monologue presentations presented earlier in the book (Chapter 14) you will view your fellow classmates Shakespeare monologue and/or sonnet presentations and write a critique on each. Use as a guide the "SHAKESPEARE MONOLOGUE/SONNET WRITTEN CRITIQUE CRITERIA" on page 243. You should use it as a reference tool— looking at it frequently as you write your critiques.

¹⁰⁶ A lesson plan by Jan Madden. From: In Search of Shakespeare, PBS Web site, Shakespeare in the Classroom, Lesson Plans. web site: <http://www.pbs.org/shakespeare/educators/>

BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

- A student ORDER OF PERFORMANCE list will be handed out.
- Instructions and a SHAKESPEARE MONOLOGUE/SONNET WRITTEN CRITIQUE CRITERIA will be handed out and discussed. A sample of the criteria is on page 243.
- A blank critique tablet is handed out. The reviewer's name (you) is written on the cardboard backing ONLY.

DURING THE PERFORMANCES

- Time will be given between each performance for critiques to be written. Be thoughtful and consider each performance using the SHAKESPEARE MONOLOGUE/SONNET WRITTEN CRITIQUE CRITERIA as a reminder of the things to consider (a checklist).
- Use one tablet page for each person performing. As you write your critiques leave no blank sheets.
- These will be graded for thoughtfulness and clarity, and following assignment instructions.

AFTER THE PERFORMANCES

- After the last student performs critique tablets will be handed in for grading.
- Critique tablets will be returned to the class. Students of class will separate all critique sheets and create a stack for each student who performed. These will be distributed to each student who performed.

ASSIGNMENT: PEER CRITIQUE OVERVIEW

Instructions

- At the instruction of the teacher, students will read all of their own individual critique sheets. They will sort and organize the critiques by placing in various stacks the similar types of comments— “needs work on articulation,” etc.
- As an out of class assignment students will summarize the responses and create a one-page PEER CRITIQUE OVERVIEW in paragraph form and handed in for grading. This should include a summary of your peer critiques— this may be done in percentages or raw numbers: “20 of the 50 students stated that I looked nervous during my introduction.” It should include positive statements— areas in which they believed you excelled— and areas in which they believe you need improvement. Also, it should include your thoughts on their opinions. It should be typed.

ASSIGNMENT: PEER CRITIQUES— MY PORTFOLIO

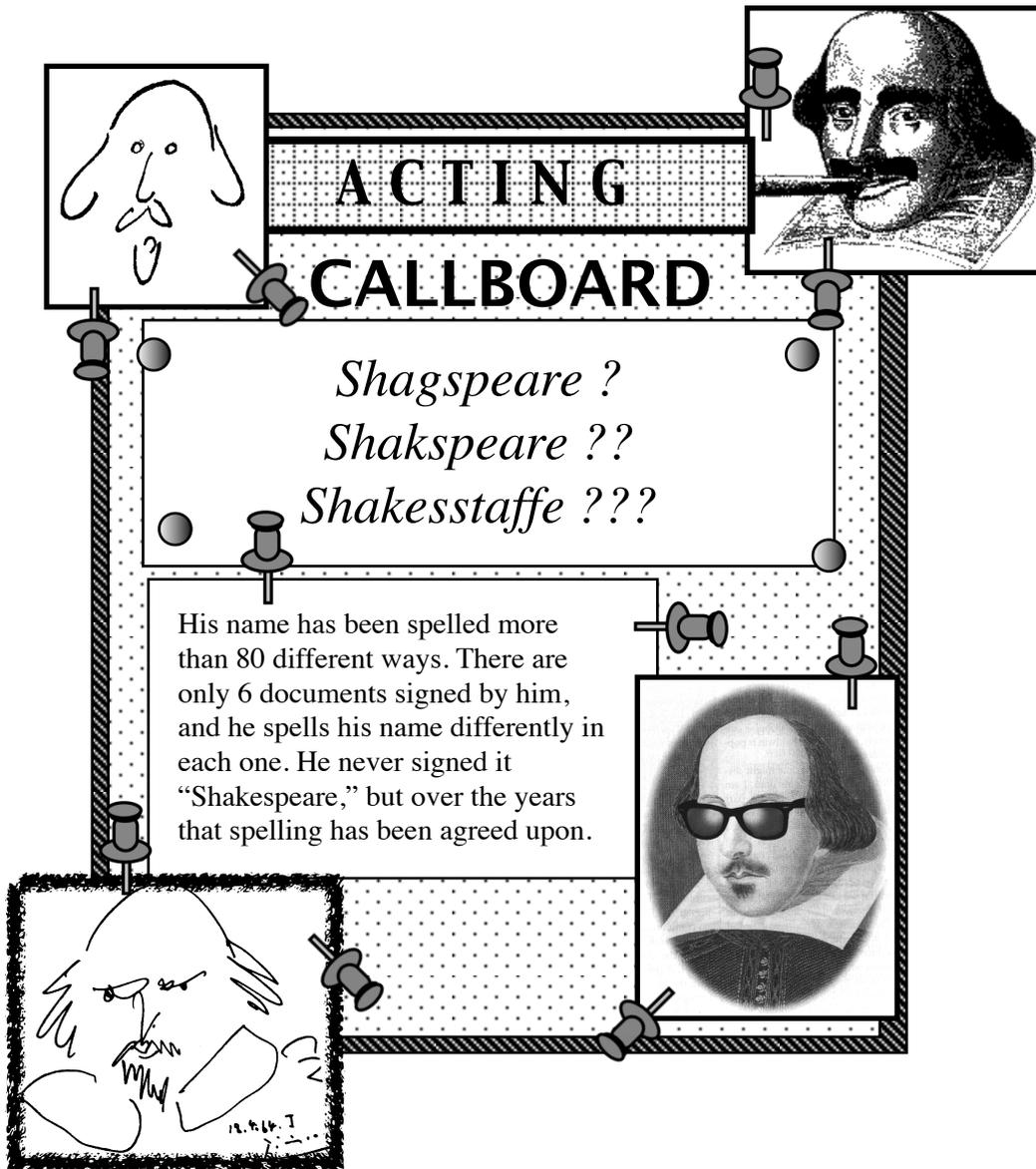
Instructions

- At the instruction of the teacher, you will select FIFTEEN critiques of your monologue, scene, or play presentations and place them in your Department portfolio. Those selected should reflect the overall impression of all of the student's critiques. The selection should include critiques that are both positive and have “needs to improve” comments.
- On return of the PEER CRITIQUE OVERVIEW place it in your Department Portfolio along with the FIFTEEN critiques, and a copy of the SHAKESPEARE MONOLOGUE/SONNET WRITTEN CRITIQUE CRITERIA.

ASSIGNMENT: PEER PERFORMANCE CRITIQUE PROCEDURE— A SPECIAL NOTE

Instructions

After the last student performs, before your critique tablets are turned into the teacher, you will gather into your class groups— Advanced Class, Intermediate Class, and Basic Class, or grade levels: Seniors, Juniors, Sophomores, Freshman, as instructed by the teacher— in separate areas of the room and as a group select by voting the five students from EACH group (other than your own class, from which you will not select) to perform in the next round of competitions. First, select a facilitator and vote tabulator to write down your progressive votes and final vote (to be turned in when your selection is completed).



BIZARRO Piraro



UPWARD INFLECTION & BUILDS

UPWARD INFLECTION

Introduction

As I stated earlier, modern speech, especially in the mouths of young students, often tends to be downward in inflection or trail off at the end (“end-drop” syndrome). Verse is much more active; the beat moves it onward and upward. The following exercises will help keep the energy going at the end of the line by using upward or rising inflection. It combats contemporary trail off or “end-drop” syndrome (swallowing ends of lines).

EXERCISE: LINE END BALL TOSS ¹⁰⁷

Materials Needed

Memorized short piece of Shakespeare. A number of balls, either large soft beach balls, soccer balls, basket balls, or soft ball baseballs. A space with a high ceiling (a gym or a theatre stage will work, or outside).

Instructions

All students stand in a large circle, some distance apart. One at a time each student speaks one line of their speech. As the end of the line is reached they throw the ball up in air toward another student (lobbing the ball underhand) with the “swing” of the inflection. The “receiving” student starts her line as the ball is traveling towards her, catches it, and swing it upwards during the last words of her line. With each line building to the last word.

Alternate Version

Kick or punch the air as you say the last word of each line. Notice the extra life or energy you get!

Warning

This is not: speak line, finish line, and toss, or speak line, throw ball on last word only, but a smooth flow through all of the line. Don’t break it up too much.

EXERCISE: SHAKESPEARE BASKETBALL ¹⁰⁸

Materials Needed

Memorized piece of Shakespeare. Basketball. Mark out a basketball court in the space— any size will do. To be played after “Line End Upward Inflection - Dialogue Ball Toss.”

Instructions

Two teams have one speech each or all may have individual pieces memorized. The teams play a game of basketball, and each time a player has the ball he or she begins a line of the text, and ends it as the ball is passed or a shot is taken. The rhythm of the line should be determined by the running, passing, or shooting. A whole physical range of vocal dynamics can be explored with hard passes, faking opponents, touch shots, three-pointer, dunks, etc. When a pass is received the player must pick up and continue the line.

¹⁰⁷ Introduced by Ms. Leslie McCauley, former Artist-in-Residence, SOTA Theatre Department.

¹⁰⁸ Called “Body Language 4” by Harrop and Epstein in *Acting with Style*.

EXERCISE: SHARK ISLAND 1 109

Materials Needed

Draw a chalk circle in the middle of your exercise space. The circle should be just large enough to accommodate all the players with a one-foot margin all around.

Introduction

This exercise is very physical. It may be played as vigorously as the ensemble of players wish, however, you must always bear in mind that physical contact is not the purpose of the game but the necessary means to the achievement of the objective.

Instructions

The players all stand within the circle. They are castaways on an island, with just enough water for ONE person. The sea around is full of sharks. Players must try to jostle and push each other off the island. The game continues until just one player is left standing in the circle.

Elaboration on the game: All the people pushed into the sea become sharks and from outside the circle try to pull the remaining castaways into the sea.

Objective

Warm-up for Shark Island 2

EXERCISE: SHARK ISLAND 2— ADD SHAKESPEARE

Materials Needed

Draw a chalk circle somewhat larger than for the first exercise. All players inside the circle should have learned a passage of Shakespeare.¹¹⁰

Introduction

Again, this exercise is very physical. It may be played as vigorously as the ensemble of players wish, but you must always bear in mind that physical contact is not the purpose of the game but the necessary means to the achievement of the objective. You do not necessarily have to do Shark Island 1 before this exercise.

Instructions

Players try to jostle each other out of the circle with chests or shoulders— no arm pushing this time— while all are reciting the speech.

Objective

The voice becomes jostled with the body and will be pushed into and come from interesting places. Also, the dynamics of the speech will be felt physically.

¹⁰⁹ John Harrop and Sabin R. Epstein, *Acting with Style*.

¹¹⁰ Although any passage will do, one of Shakespeare's more active soliloquies works best - any of the chorus speeches from Henry V work well.

EXERCISE: BUILD #5

Instructions

Lists are also built upward. Practice the following list and its build.

Petruchio: Nay, look not big, nor stamp, nor stare, nor fret;
I will be master of what is mine own.
She is my goods, my chattels; she is my house,
My household stuff, my field, my barn,
My horse, my ox, my ass, my anything.

If we believe that Shakespeare's most important information he wishes to deliver to us (the actor and the audience), and also the most important thought of the character, is placed at the end of each of his speeches (and we do!). Therefore the most important words in this speech are "my anything," and not the words— as most young student-actors would like to believe— "my ass." Also, the reason a young actor might emphasize "my ass" is obvious, it's something of a "dirty" word. These type of words young actor-students always like to make the operative words of any monologue or scene they select. They also like to select monologues or scenes with "dirty" words in them.

Remember

Builds do not go on forever; they are punctuated by cutbacks and topped off by platforms.

EXERCISE: DON'T BE SKIMPY WITH YOUR "Os" 116

Instructions

Think of them literally as a secret code to break: blank spaces left in the text for you to fill in for yourself with a sound. Try all the ways of saying 'O' you can think of; the possibilities are endless. What are you conveying with:

O! let the hours be short
Till fields and blows and groans applaud our sport! (*Henry IV, pt. 1, I.iii.302*)
or
O Harry! thou hast robbed me of my youth! (*Henry IV, pt. 1, V.iv.77*)
or
O! I could prophesy (*Henry IV, pt. 1, V.iv.83*)
or
Macduff: Your royal father's murdered.
Malcolm: O! by whom? (*Macbeth, II.iii.107*)

When you are doing exercises with dialogue passages it is vital that you speak all the passages ALOUD— using your full voice in all rehearsals.

NO IFS, ANDS, OR BUTS

Introduction

We should not only pay attention and search out Shakespeare's "Os," for his secret codes, but I add to that now also look out for his "buts." Many times Shakespeare will develop a passage dealing with a particular idea or subject and then we'll see a "but." That "but" is usually a clue that he is about to change his direction or thought. "She is beautiful and I love her, BUT ..." (here comes the change.)

¹¹⁶ J.W. Aykord. *Performing Shakespeare*.

Introduction

VERB: A word which expresses action, existence, or occurrence: as, *take, be, and appear*. Verbs are divided into two classes— *transitive* and *intransitive*. When the action which a verb signifies affects the object in some way, the verb is said to be *transitive*; thus, in *I strike the man*, the action of striking affects the object, *man*. When a verb merely denotes a state of being or feeling the action is passive, and the verb is then said to be *intransitive*; thus, in *water flows*, the action of flowing is passive; it does not affect anything save the subject, consequently, *flows* is an intransitive verb. An intransitive verb is most simply defined as a verb that does not take an object. **ONLY VERBS ARE ACTABLE.**

NOUN: The thing or person that does the action. A noun is the name of any person, place, or thing, of anything which can see, hear, feel, or touch, or anything of which we can have any idea or notion. There are two classes of nouns— *proper* and *common*. A *proper noun* is the name of any particular person, place, or thing, or of a particular group of persons, places, or things. A common noun is the name of any one of a class or group: as, *man, dog, hill*. Included in common nouns are *collective nouns*: as, *army, crowd, family*. A *pronoun* replaces a noun or other pronoun. A *direct object* is the receiver of the action of the verb. The *subject* is the thing or person that does the action.

Since most importantly we want to know **WHAT** happened and **WHO** did it, the most important part of the sentence is the verb and the noun. Shakespeare’s plays are filled with action. Active verbs are the words that show action. The best ones show specific actions. You can not only ‘walk’ across a room, but you can ‘stroll’ or ‘dash’ or glide’ or dance’ or ‘float.’

Push the verbs. Verbs are action words. Plays are about actions. Push the verbs and you will move the action of the play forward! This also tends to make the monologues move more quickly! One of the things we’re working towards is the sense of a longer breath supporting a longer line resulting from a longer thought. You don’t think word by word, why should you act word by word? These words receives emphasis through a simple iamb. The iamb’s accent tells us **WHAT** happened.

Also, examine the vowels sounds as they give you an indicator of the tempo of the speech. Some speeches will have a lot of long vowel sounds, others short.

Make the nouns sound like what they mean. Image precedes language, why does Macbeth choose to say ‘dagger’, and not hatchet, stiletto, pen knife or broadsword at that moment? Why does Juliet say ‘steeds’ instead of horses, ponies, nags or mules? Because it is what each sees at that particular moment. That noun is the only word they can choose to describe and create that image. A trochee would tell us **WHO** (the noun) did it.

Leave the adjectives & adverbs alone. There’s no need to gild the lilly. Shakespeare was quite capable of embellishing his own images. What you need to do is to tell the story! Take for example the famous typing test sentence: "The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog". Now, which makes more sense to you: "The quick brown 'over the lazy"; or "The fox jumped over the dog"?

The natural English accent tends to also automatically subordinate the adjective to the noun. Adjectives are less important than the words they modify and should be stressed only to contrast one noun with another. English places the more important word after the less important word: “walk fast,” “is hard,” “on stage.”

Focusing on subject, object, and verb increases intelligibility while at the same time enlivening the verse.

¹¹⁷ With a bow to Louis Fantasia, Director of the Teaching Shakespeare Through Performance Institute at the International Shakespeare Globe Centre, London, and later in his book, *Instant Shakespeare*, Ivan R. Dee, 2002, and Paul Kuritz, *Fundamental Acting*, Applause Books, 1998, and Hugh Morrison, *Acting Skills*, A & C Black, 1998. In their book *How to Speak Shakespeare*, Santa Monica Press, 2001, Cal Pritner and Louis Colaianni call the emphasis on verbs and nouns, syncopations.

EXERCISE: SCORING VERBS AND NOUNS

Instructions

Using a clean copy of your monologue, scene, or sonnet note the simple subject, verb, and object by putting a double line under all of the verbs that you find and a single line under all of the nouns you find. Perform your selection placing the most emphasis on the verbs and secondly on the nouns. Do not just “hit” harder the words you are emphasizing, but also search for the reason that these are the more important words for your character. Let the other words take care of themselves.

Speak your selection stressing only the simple subjects, verbs and objects in each sentence. Hurry through the rest of the words.

EXERCISE: SINGLE SENTENCE VERSION— VERBS AND NOUNS

Instructions

Take the underlined simple subjects, verbs, and objects of the above exercise and create a single simple sentence version.

Example

When in disgrace with Fortune and men's eyes
I all alone BEWEEP MY outcast STATE
AND TROUBLE deaf HEAVEN with my bootless cries
AND LOOK UPON MYSELF AND CURSE MY FATE
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope
Featur'd like him, like him with friends possess'd
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope
With what I most enjoy contented least
YET in these thoughts myself almost despising
Haply I THINK ON THEE AND THEN MY STATE
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth SINGS HYMNS at heaven's gate
For thy sweet love rememb'ed such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

The single simple sentence version of the sonnet would be:

“I BEWEEP MY STATE AND TROUBLE HEAVEN AND LOOK UPON MYSELF AND CURSE MY FATE, YET I THINK ON THEE AND THEN MY STATE SINGS HYMNS.”

“WHO’S ON FIRST” NOUNS & THE EPITHET

Introduction

Abbott: Well, let's see, we have on the bags, Who's on first, What's on second. I don't Know is on third ...

Costello: That's what I want to find out.

Abbott: I say Who's on first. What's on second. I Don't Know's on third.

Costello: Who's on first?

Abbott: That's right!

Playing the “I/you” relationships, or “Who’s on first?” In Shakespeare’s work the person or thing your character is making referring to in a particular passage or sentence can change a number of times in that same passage. One of the first keys to understanding Shakespeare is determining who you are talking to and who— or what— you are talking about?

In literature, an *epithet* is a term used as a descriptive substitute that replaces or is added to the name of a person, like “clear-eyed Athena,” in which “clear-eyed” is the epithet, or a term used to characterize a person or thing, such as *rosy-fingered* in *rosy-fingered dawn* or *the Great* in *Catherine the Great*. It is also a term for the

name or title of a person, such as *The Great Emancipator* for Abraham Lincoln. Our national flag is a “star-spangled banner.” Distinctive epithets are found in the ancient Greek classic, *The Odyssey*: “wine-dark sea..... wave-girdled island,” “blindfolding night.”

The epithet as used by Shakespeare is the causes of much confusion in young actors. The part of the definition that gives us the most trouble is: “an adjective or descriptive phrase that substitutes for a person’s name or title.” We must understand the use of the epithet to understand who is talking about whom at this particular moment. It is especially confusing when Shakespeare uses different epithets to speak of the same person or uses a series of epithets about different people. To understand Shakespeare you must again know, “Who’s On First?” Who am I talking about?

In Shakespeare (and in the Greek authors before him) we find epithets used constantly for the Greek gods instead of their actual names, such as “god of all gods” instead of Zeus, etc.

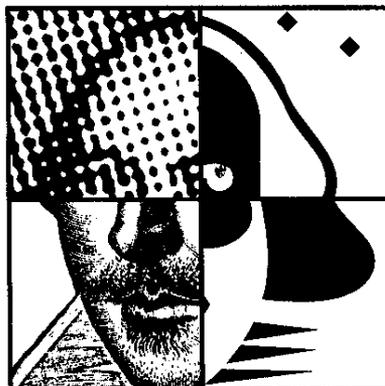
As a sidebar: all students are quite familiar with the second definition of this word: “An abusive or contemptuous word or phrase used to describe a person.” A**hole, dork, tool. Strictly speaking, an epithet need not be derogatory, but the term is commonly used as a simple synonym for *term of abuse* or *slur*.

EXERCISE: GESTURES— Pointing the way— Nouns

Instructions

The most common way of making yourself understood, or explaining yourself, or making a point, is to “illustrate” your meaning, usually by pointing and gesturing.¹¹⁸ In this exercise you will “point the way” with gesture to make it clear as to what and who you are talking about and to (the nouns), such as “sky,” “heavens,” “earth,” “grave,” “Verona,” “the King,” “woods”. Prepare your rendition to be presented in class. You will, at first, be “over pointing” the way. More on this later.

WARPED Mike Canna



¹¹⁸ “Illustrate” derives from words meaning “throw light upon.”

Introduction

I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.
 Love sought is good, but given unsought is better.
 Here’s much to do with *hate*, but more with *LOVE*.
 Arise fair *SUN*, and kill the envious *moon* .

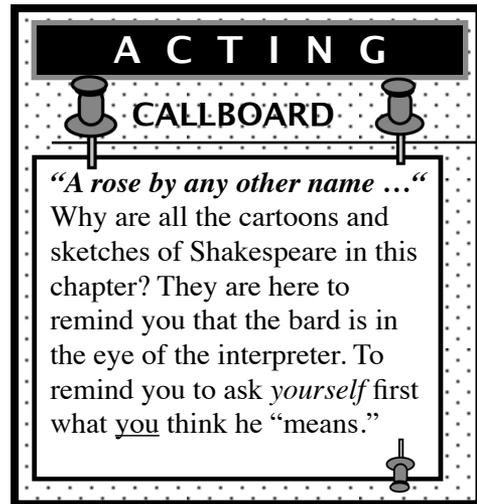
Antithesis means, essentially, defining by using opposites. “Not this, but that,” or the setting up of opposites. It is a way of making points through opposites. It is showing what “is” in direct contrast to what “is not.” In brief, it is the contrast of words and ideas, the notion that every effort or action must have an opposite, in meaning, act, place or feeling. It is the juxtaposition of contrasting ideas, often in parallel structure. The famous Shakespearean acting coach and director John Barton stated that if he had time to teach only one lesson on acting Shakespeare it would be to have the student understand the use of antithesis.

IF YOU DO NOTHING ELSE, PRACTICE THIS DEVICE. It will clarify more in Shakespeare texts than anything else you can do. Antithesis occurs again and again in Shakespeare’s dialogue.

Frequently there are many pairs of antitheses used in a single speech. In Sonnet 94 there are 18 antithetical pairs in 14 lines!

It is important to emphasize the two parts, putting stress on each. When beginning it helps to treat the two halves as items being balanced on a scale and to use equal stress and literal gestures to set them forth.

It takes a bit of discovery, the two parts of a comparison or contrast do not always sit side by side. Shakespeare was fond of splitting them apart and putting a separate clause between them. Often the antitheses are built on top of each other, in a complex escalation of oxymorons, paradoxes, contradictions, and variations.



EXERCISE: MAPPING & VISUALIZING ANTITHESES

Instructions

- On a copy of your selection, find the first thesis and circle it in colored pen.
- Find the counterpart antithesis and circle it in the same color.
- Connect the two with a line.
- Find the second antithesis pair and circle them in a different colored pen.
- Find the third antithesis pair and circle them in a third color.
- Et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

The purpose of using so many colors is to try to minimize the confusion that arises when one pair is nested inside another, as they frequently are. (See the following example.)

¹¹⁹ See: Kurt Daw, *Acting Shakespeare & his Contemporaries*. p. 22-23. Robert Cohen, *Acting in Shakespeare*. p. 25-32. Linklater, *Freeing Shakespeare’s Voice*. p. 82-92. John Barton, *Playing Shakespeare*. p. 55.

Example

KING HENRY V -- PROLOGUE -- Chorus:

O for a Muse of fire, that would ascend
The brightest heaven of invention!
A kingdom for a stage, princes to act,
And monarchs to behold the swelling scene!
Then should the warlike Harry, like himself,
Assume the port of Mars. and at his heels
(Leash'd in, like hounds) should famine, sword, and fire
Crouch for employment. But pardon, and gentles all,
The flat unraised spirits that have dar'd
On this unworthy scaffold to bring forth
So great an object. (Can this cockpit hold
The vasty fields of France? Or may we cram
Within this wooden O the very casques
That did affright the air at Agincourt?
O, pardon! since a crooked figure may
Attest in little place a million,
And let us, ciphers to this great accompt,
On your imaginary forces work.

#1A - First 8 lines -
picture of pageantry

#2A/B - Lines 9-10:
unworthy scaffold —
great object

#3A/B - Lines 10-11:
cockpit/vasty fields

#1B - Second 8 lines
- poor means
available to portray it

EXERCISE: PHYSICALIZING ANTITHESIS

Introduction

As stated earlier, it is important to emphasize the two parts, putting stress on each. When beginning it helps to treat the two halves as items being balanced on a scale and to use equal stress and literal gestures to set them forth. This exercises should start with simple antitheses (single lines) and develop using longer more complicated ones.

Instructions

Emphasize the two parts, putting equal stress on each. Use gestures to set them forth, “physicalize” the oppositions in literal “on-the-one-hand” fashion. Drive the antithesis home to make your point in the sharpest and most final way possible.

Example

Indicate the first part of the pairing (thesis) as taking place on your left, perhaps even taking a few steps or gesture in that direction. When you come to its counterpart (antithesis), walk or gesture in the opposite direction. (See what you learn.)

EXERCISE: VOCAL STRESS/EMPHASIS EXERCISE

Instructions

Both alternate words or parts of an antithesis will need some emphasis, but the preferred alternate (the one your character is favoring) will usually have the stronger stress, regardless of where it may come in the phrase. Using pitch inflection, volume, and/or increased sharpness in articulation, to emphasize the antithesis.

BURY
I come to ↗ Caesar, not to ↘ *praise* him.

EXERCISE: IMAGES AND IMAGERY

Introduction

Elizabethans called imagery ‘figures’ or ‘tropes,’ from the Greek word for ‘turns.’ Imagery is painting pictures with words. Shakespeare’s language is laden with vivid imagery. We use the phrase ‘heightened language’ to mean language rich in imagery, language which is evocative— which evoke images not only in the mind of the speaker, but the mind of the listener.

Imagery is the conjuration of a pictorial that appeals to the senses. All images are sensory images. Psychologists have identified seven kinds of mental images:

- Visual Images: sight (brightness, clarity, color, motion).
- Auditory Images: hearing.
- Olfactory Images: smell.
- Gustatory Images: taste.
- Tactile Images: Tactile: touch (temperature, texture).
- Organic Images: Awareness of heartbeat, pulse, breathing, digestion.
- Kinesthetic Images: Awareness of muscle tension and movement.

School children in Shakespeare’s England— if they went to school at all— were expected to know all rhetorical devices by name. In the Renaissance, metaphors, similes, and allegories were very well known modes of expression among educated and artistic people.

The list below contains some of the language tricks that Shakespeare used when writing. Scholars have reduced the number of types of imagery to the following top seven. In the image the thing said is called the ‘analogue’. The thing meant is called the ‘subject’.

Synecdoche— describes by substituting a part (analogue) for the whole (subject), as with "He was the King's legs" rather than "He was the King's messenger." Legs are a part (analogue) of the whole messenger (subject).

Metonymy— from the Greek for "change of name," describes by substituting a word related to subject for the subject word itself. For example, with "Friends, Romans, and countrymen, lend me your ears....," "ears" is the analogue for attention, the subject.

Simile— describes by explicitly comparing the subject with the analogue, and links the comparison with either the word "like" or the word "as." Hamlet instructs Ophelia with a series of similes: "Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow...."

Metaphor— from the Greek for "transfer or carry across," describes by directly comparing the subject with the analogue, and does not use "like" or "as." Macbeth coins a metaphor with "Life's but a walking shadow...."

Images make the mundane memorable, including the metaphor (*like* or *as*) and the simile (*is*). When Romeo says Juliet is the sun, she is that thing, rather than *like* it. (She is a simile). We see what a big deal this is! She is more than “awesome.” She is more than “the bomb.”

Personification— gives human characteristics or traits to non-human abstractions, animals, or objects. Hamlet's friend Horatio chooses a personification with "The morn in russet mantle clad, walks... "

Symbol— from the Greek "to compare," makes a word, phrase, or image represent something else. For example, Psalm Twenty-three makes the image of a shepherd represent the Lord.

Allegory— a system of symbols in narrative form. For example, Psalm Twenty-three’s narration of the relationship between the shepherd and his sheep, represents the relationship between God and the human narrator.

Allusion and Classical allusions (more on these later).

Instructions

You must evoke specific *images* in the minds of the listeners. Images need to be realized on the stage. It requires that the student-actor take the time to imagine fully what is being described, and call from your own experience a suitable example to draw on in performance. You must have a specific and concrete impulse that produces each image, each word. Practice creating images for the following passage, especially the section in *italic*.

Macbeth: Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;
And with thy bloody and invisible hand
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
Which keeps me pale! Light thickens; and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood:
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;
While night's black agents to their preys do rouse.

Instructions

First, find and identify the sensory images in your scene, monologue, or sonnet. Underline and label them, or you might want to color each type of sense image with a different color pencil, crayon, or marker.

Next, in this Substitution (AS IF— Magic If) exercise, speak your verse selection employing the technique of emotional recall (substitution) to create these images. See, smell, touch, hear, and involve the image, as you describe the image, before you say the line that it evokes. Place the images around you. Don't pretend anything. Listen until you hear. Touch until you feel. Look until you see. Wait until you sense it, before you say it.



EXERCISE: "MIND WORD REPLACEMENTS"

Instructions

Using "mind word replacements," personal images, and paraphrasing to clarify the text.

Step 1: find another word that means the same thing to you as the word or phrase in question and "think" that word as you "say" Shakespeare's actual word. Do this until you can color them both the same way. Does this clarify the word or image?

Example

"O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?"

Juliet is not asking *where* Romeo is, but *why* he has to be named "Romeo." Try this using "mind word replacements." Wherefore = why. (Also you will notice that there is not a comma after the word "thou" before "Romeo." Do not place a comma there when you rehearse it.)

Step 2: Personal images. Put yourself in an imaginary situation envisioning the character's situation. Use whatever images work for you, but don't talk about it. Keep your personal images to yourself or you will exhaust them.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ Dezseran, p 164

OTHER SHAKESPEARE LANGUAGE TRICKS

Introduction

In the Renaissance, repetition and antithesis were key architectural devices upon which to build elaborate word structures. Repetition is the deliberate echo of a specific word or phrase. Repetition of words or phrases can be in the beginning, or middle, or end of the sentence. They can also be repeated words or phrases in various parts of the speech— usually the beginning of adjacent sentences, or framing a thought or paragraph. They are like music’s repeated notes, leitmotifs, themes, and recitative.

FORMS OF REPETITION

Alliteration (meaning “lining up letters”) is the repetition or pattern created by repeating constant sounds and is used to manipulate sound. They are the repetition of initial or middle consonants in adjacent words. (near each other not necessarily right next to each other.). “Follow fast,” “many Mermaids.” It is one of Shakespeare’s main devices.

He uses the variations:

- Repetition of WORDS at the beginning of sequential sentences.
- Parison: where there is almost exact correspondence between two sentences:
Was ever woman in this humour woo’d?
Was ever woman in this humour won?
- Punning repetition: repeats a word, but with a change of meaning.
Put out the light, and then put out the light.
- Active repetition (some with Onomatopoeia)
Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds.

Instructions

Practice the following passage and its alliterations.

Now are our **b**rows **b**ound with victorious wreaths,
Our **b**ruiséd arms hung up for **m**onuments,
Our stern alarums changed to **m**erry **m**eetings
Our dreadful **m**arches to delightful **m**asures.

Instructions

Practice the following passage and its alliterations.

KING HENRY V: And tell the pleasant prince this mock of his
 Hath turn'd his balls to gun-stones; and his soul
 Shall stand sore charged for the wasteful vengeance
 That shall fly with them: for many a thousand widows
 Shall this his mock mock out of their dear husbands;
 Mock mothers from their sons, mock castles down;
 And some are yet ungotten and unborn
 That shall have cause to curse the Dauphin’s scorn.

Instructions

Practice the following passage and its alliterations. It also can be used for comic effect, as in A *Midsummer Night's Dream*:

What dreadful dole is here?
Eyes, do you see?
How can it be?
O dainty duck, oh dear!
Thy mantle good,
What, stained with blood?
Approach, ye Furies fell.
O fates, come, come
Cut thread and thrum,
Quail, crush, conclude, and quell.

Assonance is the repetition of similar vowel sounds in adjacent words, words are aligned by using similar vowel sounds within them. It is used to manipulate sound.

Is this a dagger I **see** before me,
The **handle** toward my **hand**?

Onomatopoeia are words that have something of the effect of what they are describing, or, in other words, the words whose sound echoes the sense: 'tune of flutes' has a musical quality, 'kept stroke' a crisp, metronomic sound. They are words that sounds like the thing or action it is describing. It is used to manipulate sound.

Zip, ping, pop!

Reversed word, reversed thought, reversed sentence construction¹²¹ or word order in Shakespearean writing. When Shakespeare wrote his prose, he often used a slightly different word order than we are used to. The subject, verb, and object did not always follow in a 1, 2, 3 order. Look at the following sentence. Rewrite the sentence four times, changing the word order each time. Put one word on each blank provided below the original sentence.¹²²

Original Sentence: "I lost my homework."

Rewrite #1: _____

Rewrite #2: _____

Rewrite #3: _____

Rewrite #4: _____

Look at each of your rewritten sentences above. Has the meaning of the original sentence changed? No matter how you word it— you're toast if your homework is lost! Now, think about how Yoda spoke in the Star Wars Movies. We understood exactly what he was saying, even though the word order was slightly different than what we are used to hearing.

It's your turn to makeup a short sentence like the one above and rewrite it several different ways. Does the meaning change with the rewrites? Share your sentences with your teacher and classmates.

Original Sentence: _____

Rewrite #1: _____

Rewrite #2: _____

Rewrite #3: _____

Rewrite #4: _____

¹²¹ For the basic student I do not differentiate between "reversed thought" or "reversed sentence construction."

¹²² A lesson plan by Jan Madden, from: In Search of Shakespeare, PBS Web site, Shakespeare in the Classroom, Lesson Plans. web site: <http://www.pbs.org/shakespeare/educators/>

Pun, Double Entendre, and the Bawdy. “Shakespeare was a pretty punny guy!” Puns are devices that play on words. There are two types of puns, a type of pun that involves the repetition of a word with two different meanings. For example, “Your argument is sound, nothing but sound.” (If you must know, this type is called: antanaclasis.) The second type of pun involves words that sound alike but that differ in meaning. For example, “In the reproof of chance/ Lies the true proof of men.”(These are called paronomasia, again, if you must know).

Finding the Fun in the Pun. Below are some lines from some of William Shakespeare’s plays. You will find a pun in each set of lines. On the lines below each quote, briefly explain the pun as you think Shakespeare might have intended for his audience. Remember, a pun can be a humorous play on words that look or sound alike, but have different meanings. Look at the hints provided and just take a minute to “think about it!”¹²³

1. “No, ‘tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church-door, but ‘tis enough, ‘twill serve: ask for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave man.” (Romeo and Juliet Act III, S.1) Hint: Grave= serious, dead, sad.

2. “I’ll make a ghost of him that lets me!” (Hamlet Act I, S.4) Hint: In Shakespeare’s day, “let” meant “hinder,” and today means the opposite, “allow.”

3. “If reasons were as plentiful as blackberries, I would give no man a reason upon compulsion, I.” (Henry IV, Part One Act II, S.4) Hint: “Reason” was pronounced “raisin” in Shakespeare’s day.

4. “Give me a torch: I am not for this ambling; Being but heavy, I will bear the light.” (Romeo and Juliet Act I, S.4) Hint: Heavy= in a bad mood; Light= not weighing much; a torch.

The real trick to bawdy is to see that it remains *double* entendre.

Malaprops. This form of word play, words that are misused in a humorous way, was named after the character of Mrs. Malaprop from Richard Brinsley Sheridan’s 1775 play *The Rivals*. “Homer wrote *The Iliad* and the *Oddity*.” “The doctor said to take milk of amnesia.” Shakespeare would have known a malapropism by the Italian name ‘cacozelia.’

“Thou shalt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this.” -Dogberry, *Much Ado About Nothing*.

FOR YOUR WORKSHEET ASSIGNMENT GO TO

<http://sfsotatheatre.org/>

click on: **ACTING IS ACTION – Web Pages** 

and click on:



WORKSHEET: Shakespeare’s Language Tricks

Duplicate as needed for your use.

¹²³ A lesson plan by Jan Madden, from: In Search of Shakespeare, PBS Web site, Shakespeare in the Classroom, Lesson Plans. web site: <http://www.pbs.org/shakespeare/educators/>

When Shakespeare varies his verse form it is always deliberate, always for a particular reason, and ALWAYS based on a particular character's particular choice at a particular moment.

EXERCISE SERIES ONE— Voice

EXERCISE: SOUND BY SOUND ¹²⁴

Materials Needed

A memorized piece of Shakespeare verse or sonnet. It is important that everyone in the group be looking at the same edition of the verse or sonnet when doing this series of exercises. Punctuation can vary greatly from edition to edition.

Introduction

This is the first exercise in a voice/body series. Each individual step could be used for a full hour's worth of exploratory work in early training. Later, each step can be speeded considerably into a warm-up routine.

Instructions

Using a sonnet or a few lines of a monologue, speak the lines, breaking them down into each individual component sound, take it apart literally sound by sound. Break it apart to the point that it feels ridiculously slow. Enjoy the sound of each individual phonetic unit. Revel in the repetition of the “s” sound. Spend ten or more seconds on each sound. The line may take you a couple of minutes to explore.

Example

Take a line like the first sentence of *Merchant of Venice*: “In sooth, I know not why I am so sad,” and take it apart literally sound by sound:

iiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii nnnnnnnnnnnnnn/ssssssssssss oooooooooo thhhh, IIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII /
knnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnn oooooooooow/nnnnnnnnnnnnnn oooooooooooooooooooooo tttt/ whhhhhhhhhh
yyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyy/IIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII aaaaaaaaaaaaaa mmmmmmmmmmm/ssssssssssssssss
oooooooooooo/ sssssssssssssss aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa dddd.

Objective

The point of this exercise is to rediscover the simplicity and joy of pure sound combinations.

EXERCISE: SOUND INTO WORDS

Materials Needed

The same memorized piece of Shakespeare verse or sonnet as “Sound by Sound.”

Introduction

From discrete sounds, we want to begin to use words selectively and carefully. Each word is individually precious and meaningful. Using the same piece or sonnet as in the last step, you are going to do some work on the individual words in it.

¹²⁴ Kurt Daw, *Acting Shakespeare & His Contemporaries*.

Instructions

1. Working in a group, form a circle and read the sonnet aloud one word at a time. Each person in the circle will read just one word before the person next to him takes over. Continue around the circle until the sonnet is complete. Give each and every word equal weight and attention.
2. In the group read the sonnet again, but this time the person next to you can either say the next word if they heard your word clearly and it was invested with full meaning or (if they feel you rushed your word or were inattentive to it) they will say the single word “no.” If you hear the word “no,” say your word again. Don't just say it louder or slower, say it with greater attention and relish. The next person in line can again opt to say the next word or again say “no.” Continue until the sonnet is complete.

Note: It is surprising how even a completely nontheatrical person can hear and detect the quality of individual words with no more instruction than this.

Objective

This is pointless, of course, if you are not carefully weighing and considering each word as you speak it. The whole notion here is to take the time and care to really examine each word for both its form and its content. You cannot rush it.

EXERCISE: WORDS INTO PHRASES

Introduction

From attending to words (their form, their structure, their meaning, their length), we want to look at the shortest possible units of combined meaning— the phrase. We will again work with our sonnet, or (if you wish) a speech you may currently be preparing. The emphasis will shift now to short combinations of words.

Instructions

Again in your group circle, read the sonnet with each person reading until she encounters a punctuation mark. As in the earlier word exercise, the next speaker can read his phrase or say “no.” If the response is “no,” the first speaker should repeat the phrase. Continue working this way until the sonnet is complete.

Objective

The object is not to listen to yourself, but to attend to the combined effect of the words. Think about what this combination of words means together that the individual words do not mean alone. This may be because the combination produces a new sense.

Example

In the third line of Sonnet 12, "When I behold the violet past prime," the last three words mean something quite different when taken together than they each mean individually. It may also be that the juxtaposition of sounds adds to meaning. “Past prime” has a repeated sound that binds the phrase more tightly.

EXERCISE: PHRASES INTO LINES

Introduction

From phrases, we want to look at another way of organizing units of meaning, which is the line. This step may produce surprising results.

Instructions

Once again working in the group circle, read the sonnet with each speaker taking one iambic line. Notice the places that phrases (as you discovered them in the last exercise) are split across iambic lines. Read the sonnet as a group so that it makes sense. This may mean that two successive speakers must work closely

together to keep a phrase flowing across a line break. Don't apply a vocal pattern that implies you are at the end of the phrase just because you are at the end of the line you will be speaking. Only use the kinds of vocal patterns we apply to bring closure to a thought if your line end is also the end of the phrase.

EXERCISE SERIES TWO— Voice & Body

EXERCISE: VERBAL CIRCLE 1 ¹²⁵

Instructions

First, some familiar lines from Shakespeare are chosen, known to all the players or quickly memorized by them. Players sit in a circle. One player begins the speech by saying the first word. The player on the right continues with the second, the next player with the third, and so on around the circle.

Objective

The object of the first reading is to pick up the quality of the speech received from the player before you, and carry it on.

EXERCISE: VERBAL CIRCLE 2

Instructions

Repeat the exercise: Verbal Circle 1, this time attempting to change the quality of the speech when it reaches you. This may be done by altering pitch, volume, coloring, rhythm, or stress. Repeat several times, mixing up the circle or starting at different places so that all players get to handle different words and to use all the many possibilities of altering the line readings.

Objective

Discuss the exercise in the following terms: which verbal qualities were most difficult to alter; what qualities, when changed, most significantly altered the speech; how far a player was swept into the rhythm of the speech as it came to him or her; what in the group's opinion became the favorite reading of the speech.

EXERCISE: VERBAL CIRCLE 3

Instructions

Repeat the exercise: Verbal Circle 2, this time illustrating your word with a gesture -- even prepositions and conjunctions can be made physical.

Objective

Discuss what gestures are unnecessary to the speech and what seem most appropriate in communicating the sense.

EXERCISE: NON-VERBAL CIRCLE

Instructions

Repeat the exercise: Verbal Circle 3, this time do the speech again with gestures alone, do not use any words.

¹²⁵ Harrop and Epstein, *Acting with Style*.

EXERCISE SERIES THREE— Full Body Acting

PHYSICAL ENGAGEMENT AND BODY LANGUAGE IN SHAKESPEARE

Introduction

In the world of Shakespeare, body language is as much a form of expression as the spoken word. In this series we look at using gesture and movement to define, expand, and delineate the word.

EXERCISE: BODY LANGUAGE 1 ¹²⁶

Instructions

You will need a memorized and scanned piece of Shakespeare. Scan the speech and then beat it out with your feet as a dance while speaking, finding the rhythmical stresses of the ‘feet’ with your ‘feet’, and consequently through the entire body.

EXERCISE: BODY LANGUAGE 2

Instructions

You will need a memorized and scanned piece of Shakespeare as above. Again using the scanned speech, now beat out the rhythm of the foot scansion on your own body: rub, pat, beat as the weight and rhythm suggest. Using very overt movements, hand clapping or other devices, perform the speech to exaggerate the *basic* rhythmic pattern. This can also be done as a partner is saying the speech and you are doing the movements.

EXERCISE: BODY LANGUAGE 3

Instructions

You will need a memorized and scanned piece of Shakespeare as above. Say a speech while carrying out aerobic exercises or any similar physical activity.

EXERCISE: PHYSICALIZING SHAKESPEARE 1 ¹²⁷

Materials Needed

A memorized and scanned piece of Shakespeare, take a few lines at first, using either a couplet or a quatrain.

Instructions

Move freely to the sound, re-creating the sound with your body. Free your imagination so that definite associations with the actual sounds of the words will dominate you, though the mood of the play itself may influence your choice of movement pattern, rhythm, and vocalization. Let the sound of the words or phrase carry you into a physical movement, or word shaping. This may be abstract movement. Give in to the movement and let it grow.

Example

Dragging a foot to simulate the hissing noise of sibilants.

¹²⁶ Harrop and Epstein, *Acting with Style*.

¹²⁷ Dezseran, *The Student Actor's Handbook*.

EXERCISE: PHYSICALIZING PHRASES— Floor patterns

Materials Needed

A memorized and scanned piece of Shakespeare (monologue or sonnet). This exercise can also be used to help the memorization process.

Instructions

1. Working individually, walk as you speak each phrase. Continue in a natural flow with the piece, but change directions sharply with each new phrase, which, of course, should be corresponding to new thoughts. Try walking in square patterns, triangular patterns, and assorted other geometric shapes. Notice how the lengths of phrases dictate different shapes as you walk. Speak the selection in normal time, marking the phrases by executing sharp, almost military, turns.
2. Working alone, try reading the selection as you did previously, with sharp direction changes at the ends of phrases. This time to reinforce upward inflection, also stop and kick on the last word of each line. (Watch the tendency to say the word and then kick. Instead, kick as you say it.) If the line and phrase end simultaneously, you'll be doing a kick and a turn at the same time! Don't worry, you can do it. It only sounds hard. In your warm-up you'll find that it is fun.

EXERCISE: PHYSICALIZING SHAKESPEARE— Random

Materials Needed

Student-actors must have memorized “*To Sit in Solemn Silence*” (see *The Actor’s Voice*, Chapter 4) and a selection of Shakespeare.

Instructions

Using the monologue, sonnet or lines of Shakespeare you have memorized use expanded (exaggerated) body movements and gestures to present the piece. Let the rhythm of the phrase carry you into a physical movement. The more abstract the movement, the better. You may use arbitrary random movement. Give in to the movement and let it grow. Don't be tied to a realistic delivery. Present a major movement for every word, line, phrase, or idea. Rule of the game: Each statement (phrase), sentence, thought, or word cannot be spoken without a (major) movement. Make big choices!

Objective

The point is not to “coordinate” your line with your movement. The point is *to make both the line and the movement emanate from your purpose and desire*. This is to discovering and expanding Shakespeare through the use of movement and to free yourself from the limitations usually place on the presentation of his works.

Warm-up Exercise

Each student-actor presents “*To Sit in Solemn Silence*” with expanded (exaggerated) body movements and gestures. Try a movement or gesture for each word.

EXERCISE: PHYSICALIZING SHAKESPEARE— Illustrative

Materials Needed

Student-actors must have memorized “*To Sit in Solemn Silence*” and a selection of Shakespeare.

Instructions

Using the monologue, sonnet, or lines of Shakespeare you have memorized use expanded and exaggerated “illustrative” body movements and gestures to present the piece. You will choose movement and gesture to “ILLUSTRATE” the word, line, phrase, or idea. Find ways to physicalize each figure of speech in your selection, so as to communicate its structure and its meaning to your audience. Present a major movement for every word, line, phrase, or idea. Rule of the game: Each statement (phrase), sentence, thought, or word cannot be spoken without a (major) movement.

Objective

The point is to “coordinate” your line with your movement.

Warm-up Exercise

Each student-actor presents “*To Sit in Solemn Silence*” with expanded and exaggerated “illustrative” body movements and gestures. Try a movement or gesture for each word.

EXERCISE: MY DUMB SHOW TABLEAUX

Instructions

An Elizabethan dumb show is actually a story conveyed entirely through gesture, or what we would call today a pantomime, they were usually intended to convey the meaning of a larger scene or even of the whole play. They were often presented as a show-within-a-show.¹²⁸

For this exercise you will present your version of the play, scene, monologue, or sonnet you are working on in five silent tableaux, you could also call these “snap shots.” The five tableaux should capture what you believe to be the five essential images of the piece. Each ‘frozen moment’ must have a caption— in either Shakespeare’s or your own language, which you will say before each image. Again, I would like to emphasize that these should be as a full bodied acting exercise.

EXERCISE: PHRASES IN A HAT— Vocal patterns ¹²⁹

Materials Needed

A memorized and scanned line of Shakespeare (from a monologue or sonnet). Directions on slips of paper.

Instructions

You will draw from a hat a slip of paper on which are one of the following directions. You will not inform anyone as to what’s on your slip. You and a scene partner will perform your lines in an improvised situation.

Fast to Slow	Slow to Fast
Soft to Loud	Loud to Soft
(sota voca/stage whisper to full voice)	
Staccato to Legato	Legato to Staccato
(crisp, disconnected to smooth, even, tied together)	
Squash	Crash

Step Two: Each player will select two lines to perform and draw two slips.

¹²⁸ As is the famous “Players scene” in *Hamlet*.

¹²⁹ From Wes Balk via Michael Arndt.

EXERCISE: GESTURES— Illustrating & Pointing the way

Instructions

The most common way of making yourself understood, or explaining yourself, or making a point, is to “illustrate” your meaning, usually by pointing and gesturing.¹³⁰ In this exercise you will “illustrate” with gesture to make yourself totally understood to the other character(s) and audience alike. Consider that they do not know the information you are telling them. See if you can clarify what you mean when you are saying the words— without resorting to symbolic, mime like behavior. This exercise also helps clarify unknown words or phrases to the audience with a full bodied gesture and word working together.

Try the following example. Prepare your rendition to be presented in class. You will, at first, be “over pointing” the way.

Prospero:	Thy mother was a piece of virtue, and	Line 1
	She said thou wast my daughter; and thy father	Line 2
	Was Duke of Milan; thou his only heir,	Line 3
	And princess, no worse issued.	Line 4

Example

Line 1 Where is “Thy” standing on stage? “Thy” is your daughter, Miranda.
Line 1 “Thy mother” (your wife) is dead, in heaven.
Line 2 “She” mother
Line 2 “thou” Miranda
Line 2 “thy father” yourself
Line 3 “Was Duke of Milan” a country across the sea
Line 3 “thou” Miranda
Line 3 “his” yourself
Line 3 “only heir” will inherit ALL you have. Money, land, magic, nothing?
Line 4 “princess” What makes her a princess? His love, a crown, a gown?

Try the following example. Prepare your rendition to be presented in class.

Dromio of Ephesus:	I have some marks of yours upon my pate, Some of my mistress’ marks upon my shoulders; But not a thousand marks between you both. ¹³¹
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Warning

Be careful not to “indicate.” As you know, indicating is adopting an attitude that “indicates” (to the audience) the character’s emotion— putting on a worried expression, for example, to show the audience that you are afraid. We play the action of our character, we do not indicate the emotion we feel they should project. “Illustrating” is making your points to the other characters; it is part of the action of every character.

Be careful of the descriptive capacity of Shakespeare’s verse. Example:¹³² In a production of *Romeo and Juliet* an otherwise competent student-actor playing Mercutio seemed to find it necessary to illustrate physically EVERY image in the Queen Mab speech. Leaping, prancing, mincing, swashbuckling. He managed to so overburden the speech that the audience reeled away from it like a beaten boxer, and a brilliant piece of verse was reduced to a mass of gestures and images. This is not the same as illustrating with gesture words or phrases.

¹³⁰ “Illustrate” derives from words meaning “throw light upon.”

¹³¹ *The Comedy of Errors*, I.ii.81ff. Examples from Robert Cohen.

¹³² Harrop & Epstein, *Acting with Style*.

EXERCISE: “LIKE — I MEAN” DISCOVERY 133

Instructions

Verse moves through a series of discoveries made by the speaker. Each discovery prompts the speaker to say more. For this exercise insert the words “like” or “I mean” before each new discovery in your monologue, scene, or sonnet. Speak your “like — I mean” selection.

Here is an example of a “like — I mean” sonnet.

*When in (like) disgrace with (like) Fortune and (like) men’s eyes
I (I mean) all alone (like) between my(like) outcast state,
And (like) trouble deaf heaven with my (like) bootless cries,
And (I mean) look upon myself and (like) curse my fate.*

Next speak your selection without the “like — I mean,” but use your voice to note the discoveries.

EXERCISE SERIES FOUR

EXERCISE: EVERYDAY SHAKESPEARE

Materials Needed

Memorized piece of Shakespeare verse.

Instructions

While speaking a piece of verse, the student-actor performs some mundane tasks such as making coffee, shaving, replacing a fuse, washing up, et cetera.

This should be done in three ways:

1. By performing the task casually as counterpoint to verse.
2. The task is the prime action and the verse fits in.
3. Find every opportunity in the speech to combine the active nature of the verse with the physical actions.

Example: If one were replacing a fuse to “Now entertain conjecture of a time” chorus; “creeping murmur” and “poring dark” illustrate the tentativeness of the approach. “Fire answers fire” could suggest testing the fuse, “piercing” the use of a screwdriver to fix it.

Objective

This is a further exercise in taking the mystery out of verse speaking, and it is a comfortable way of discovering how sense and active image combine.

EXERCISE: THINKING ON YOUR FEET

Instructions

Attempt to make everything that you say “a discovery” that you can make onstage. All discoveries will lead you to a final decision that you will make during the speech.

EXERCISE: SHAKESPEARE ON THE RUN— The Forest

Introduction

First and foremost, acting is a physical discipline. It requires intense effort, often much more than the beginning student-actor imagines. It requires a great deal of vocal energy as well.

¹³³ Paul Kurtz, *Fundamental Acting*.

Instructions

In a large space, such as a gym or outdoors, to help understand that your speech is one long thought and the stamina required to deliver it, run doing your Shakespeare. Start running on the first word and don't stop running till you have finished the speech. Do it as fast as possible. Try doing it on one breath.

EXERCISE SERIES FIVE

EXERCISE: BOW & CURTSIES: GREETINGS 134

Materials Needed

All student-actors should be prepared with a few lines of a Shakespeare speech or sonnet.
Elizabethan instrumental music tape/CD and player

Instructions

“Your turn to curtsy, my turn to bow.” Meeting at an Inn yard, in court, or at the Globe.¹³⁵

This is a group exercise. You will have five minutes of individual preparation time to learn the proper Elizabethan bow and curtsy as explained on the following page. (I will play music in background during this time.) When ready one-half of group stand in circle in the center of the workspace facing outward. The second group stands in larger circle outside of the first circle, facing inward (towards first group). Outer circle walks clockwise (to the music), inner circle walks counter clockwise, on directions of leader (with a whistle, a clap of hands, or a stopping of the music, as in musical chairs) each member of both groups stop walking and moves to the person directly opposite them at that time and do an appropriate bow or curtsy using their prepared line of Shakespeare as their verbal introduction.

The first few times these introductions are done by the entire group simultaneously in unison with each partner taking a turn (who speaks first of the two is unimportant).

As you get comfortable you will deliver your “greeting” individually progressing around the circle.

This exercise is repeated a number of times as you “change partners” walking in your circles. Stay in character as you walk around the circle, react to the various individuals in the opposite circle as you pass them, with a nod, or a slight bow, or wink, or flirtation for the opposite sex.

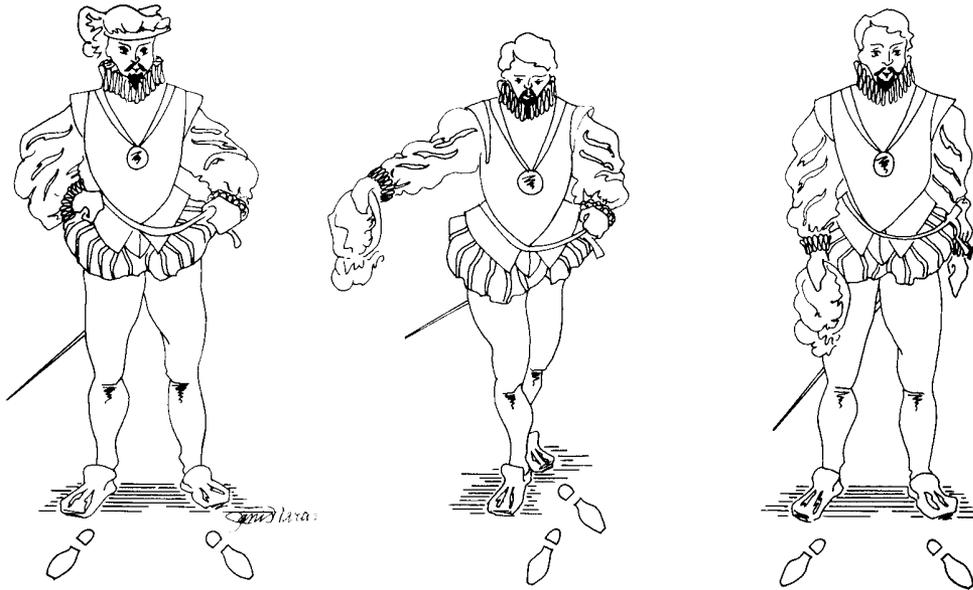
To add another element to this game the teacher/leader could pound a period cane (made of a dowel) on floor and introduce the partners (as would a majordomo at a ball or in court)



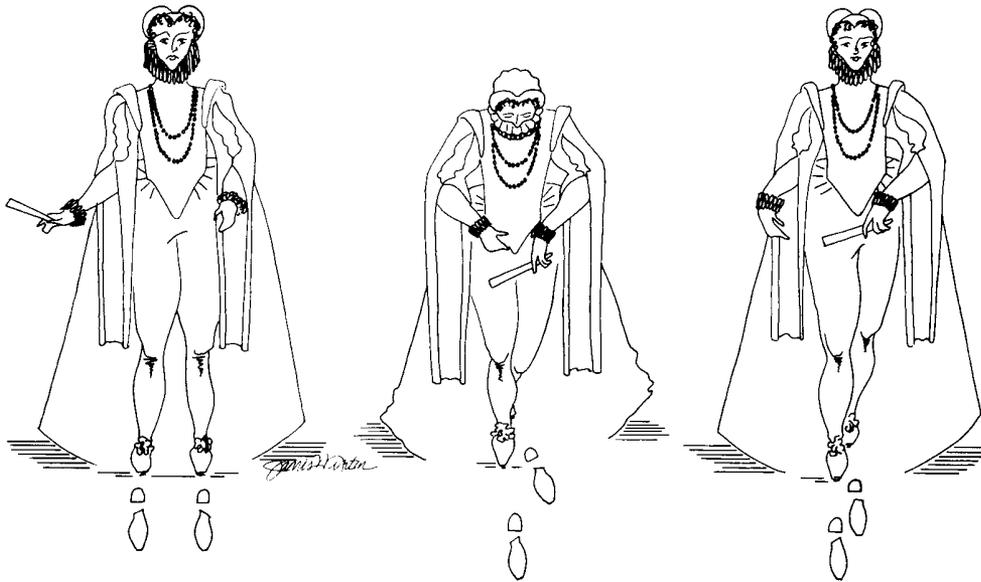
Courtesies. Although we firmly believe that the performance of external manner is useless if not informed by both an understanding of why it is required (the sensibility of the period), and a strong sense of the character, the character does work within a given social form. Therefore we are starting this section with a few specifics of Elizabethan social manner.

¹³⁴ With my own bow to Louis John Dezseran. *The Student Actor’s Handbook*. (pp. 147-174).

¹³⁵ From Harrop and Epstein. *Acting with Style*.



The Bow (above). Draw the left foot backwards, slightly turned out. Bend both knees, keeping the heels on the ground. At the same time the body bends forward from the waist with a straight spine and neck. The body weight moves partially onto the back foot, and the back knee is slightly turned out. If the bow is deep the back knee may touch the ground. At the end of the bow, the body comes erect, the weight moves onto the front foot, and the back foot is drawn in.



The Curtsy (above). Starting with feet together, draw the left foot back a few inches behind the right, keeping the foot flat and the body straight. Bend the knees and incline the body slightly forward with straight spine and neck. The knees turn outwards slightly and the left heel rises. At the end of the curtsy rise slowly and smoothly and replace the left foot beside the right.

Other major courtesies were as follows:

When doffed, the hat was swept down to the side during the bow (inside of hat to the thigh) or, in the presence of a superior, held under the arm.

The kissing of a woman's hand was done with a bow. The hand was never actually touched with the lips.

An informal greeting, kissing lip to lip, was quite frequent among the Elizabethans.

The kissing of one's own hand, which was then held out toward the person saluted, was used only for extreme reverence; it became more commonplace in the later-17th Century court.

Arm clasps and strong physical embraces were common among men.

of their own lines so that they make as much connection as possible with what they respond to, and by *creating* a new situation out of the combination of two separate strands of dialogue.

This exercise works best in the early playing if a locale (where) and an activity are established before the exercise begins. As the performers get more advanced they should mutually establish as early as possible in the playing the locale, situation, and activity.

Viola Spolin's improvisational techniques should be reinforced throughout the playing (through side-coaching): establish a detailed locale, when blocked add to and expand the locale, don't meet as strangers, don't deny/contradict others, add to other's on-stage suggestion.

Objective

The exercise tests many of the student-actors basic skills: how well they have memorized their material, how well they listen, how well they relate, how flexible they are in responding to what is actually happening rather than to what they wish would happen, and how well they are able to create the circumstances of drama through the use of language and creative interplay. By sending in replacements for each person in turn, the whole class can be involved in a very short time, and the exercise makes an excellent warmup.

First Step Exercise

With any single line of Shakespeare use it to "meet/greet" another person. Use it to "whisper a secret" to another person. Use it to "check your exam results on a bulletin board" with a group of people.

Warning

The selection of Shakespeare being used must be solidly memorized. Until you are solidly prepared you will "go up" as soon as you enter the space and start the game. But remember, there is no rule that says you cannot repeat the same line (even over and over and over, until the next line come to you).

EXERCISE: TWO MINUTE SHAKESPEARE

Materials Needed

A copy of the play from which your selected monologue or scene has been taken, and *Cliffs Notes* on Shakespeare, if you wish.

Introduction

This exercise could also be titled "Three Minute" or "Five Minute Shakespeare," or any length you wish, depending your teacher's requirements.

Instructions

Each student-actor will present for the class a two-minute Shakespeare play using the play from which your monologue or scene is taken. Select a line or lines from each scene that defines that scene and that moves the plot forward. What is the essence (in one or two lines) of each scene. What scenes can you leave out? What famous lines should be quoted? Write out your script.

This play should be rehearsed and staged. You can play as many characters as you wish. Change hats, change wigs, change voices, change stage positions, change physical posture, wear signs, do anything that delineates each character you wish to present. You should probably keep it down to five or so characters. Move as rapidly as possible between these characters, but play the characters completely. Don't let the quick character changes interfere with the playing of each character.

If you have time to rehearse with a fellow classmate, you may have her act as your "quick change dresser," prop person, or even spear carrier on stage, although she may not play a major character (but could be a "ghost," or army, or courtier, or dead body) or speak any lines (other than a "love live the king," or such).

Feel free to use the play summaries in *Cliffs Notes on Shakespeare* to help prepare this exercise.

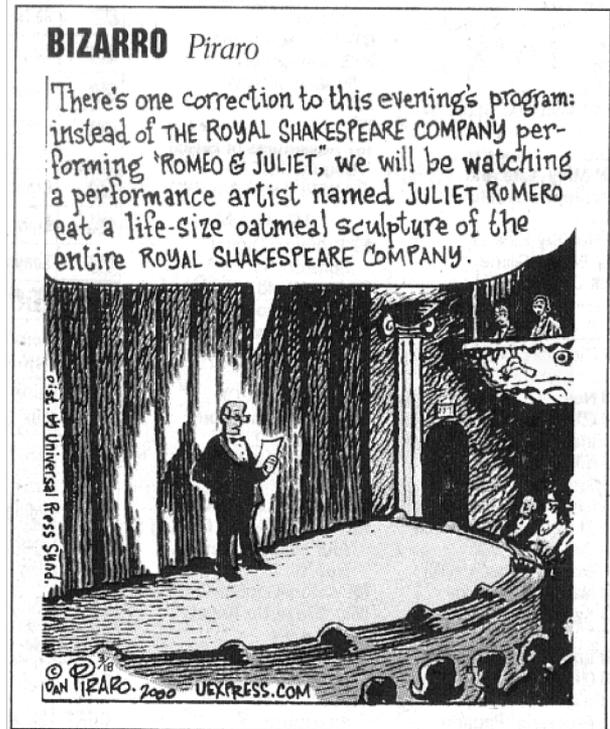
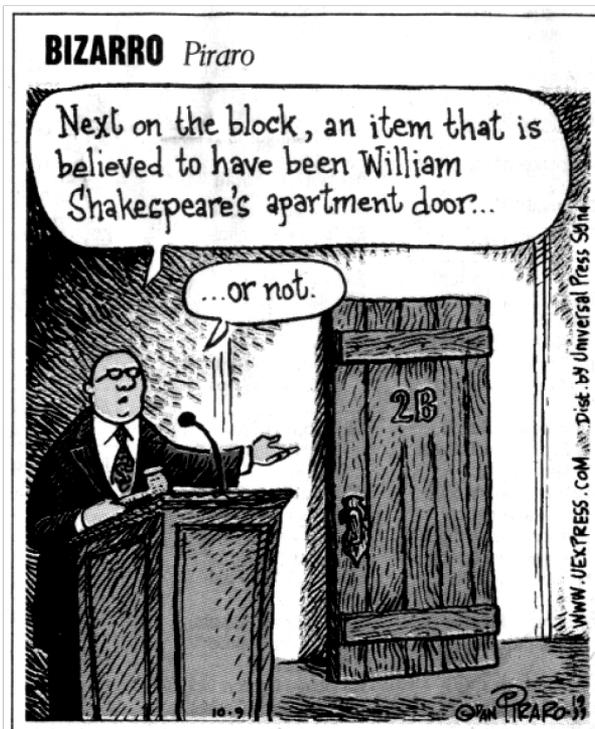
Objective

The purpose of this exercise, of course, is to reduce the play to its absolute essentials, to reduce the play to an absolute skeleton. It is of primary importance that the through-line of plot be maintained. The sense of the play must be clear to the audience. This will help you understand more clearly the entire play from which your monologue or scene was selected.

THINGS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT

- SOCIETY & CLASS IN SHAKESPEARE
- PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SELF IN SHAKESPEARE
- THE PLAGUE “Black Death”
- ASTRONOMY, FATE, SUPERSTITIONS, and the HUMORS in Shakespeare.

The HUMORS in medieval and Elizabethan medicine (and psychology) are the four fluids in the body that dominates the person— blood, phlegm, yellow bile (or choler), and black bile— which was thought to determine the character, mood, and general health of a person. Accordingly, a person’s disposition might be sanguine (dominated by your blood— passionate or firer), phlegmatic (a calm, sluggish, or unemotional temperament), choleric (causes anger or bad temper when present in excess), or melancholy (gloom, depression, sadness, sullenness— such as Hamlet or Romeo). From this belief arose the use of ‘humor’ to mean “disposition or temperament.” Shakespeare is credited with turning the noun ‘humor’ into a verb. The use of the word ‘humor’ to mean a funny or amusing quality did not appear till the late seventeenth century.



EXERCISE: SHAKESPEARE IN STYLE GUERRILLA - GORILLA SHAKESPEARE

Materials Needed

List of styles handout (listed below). Student-actors must have memorized a selection of Shakespeare.

Instructions

Select a performance style or historical period, anything but Elizabethan (see the list below), and present your Shakespeare selection in that style. What is your favorite style of movie or T.V. program? What period of history are you studying in Social Studies class?

Below is a list of examples, you may select one or create any performance style or historical period you wish.

Three Stooges	Ethnic, Russian, others
Wild West	Prehistoric, cavemen
Western movie	Vikings
Chekovian	Middle Ages
Japanese Kabuki	Victorian
Japanese Samurai movie	U.S. Civil War
Spaghetti Western movie	World War I
Outer space (real or imagined)	World War II
Horror movie	Roaring Twenties, Flappers, and Gangsters
T.V. Soap Opera	1950s, Beatniks
Futuristic	1960s, Hippies, flower children, psychedelic
Commedia dell'arte	Yuppies
Motorcycle gang	Valley Girls
Dada	H.S. cheer leaders
Epic (Brechtian)	Contemporary students
T.V. Newscast on location	Wayne's World
Favorite T.V. program	Rap (why not)
M.T.V.	Beatles
Game Show	

EXERCISE SERIES SEVEN Other Helpful Tools and Methods

EXERCISE: THE SHORT MESSENGER SPEECHES 138

Instructions

These sections of various Shakespearean messenger speeches will be used in class as a hands-on exercise to examine characters objectives, stakes, and given circumstances. Messenger speeches are useful exercises, because they carry necessary or pivotal plot information and the characters usually have to deliver their messages in situations of high stakes. It is usually vital that they convey their news, and often they have risked much, traveled far, and/or made personal sacrifice to fulfill their job or mission (objective). Even in the simplest message the stakes are very high, making clarity, specificity, and urgency of utmost importance to the character.

Shakespeare's language is as rich and exiting for actors playing messengers as it is for actors playing title characters. It is impossible for Shakespeare to keep his hands off the soul of the characters he created no matter how small.

Sometimes a message can be delivered by a central character as we will see.

Here are some sample Messenger speeches for practice:

¹³⁸ From Paul Barnes, former Chairman, PCPA

Romeo and Juliet, I.v. Nurse speaking to Romeo at the Capulet's party. (She's got a lot to tell Romeo and not much time to do it in. Possible stakes: She has probably just seen Romeo kiss Juliet. Possible obstacles: A lot of party noise to talk over. Being caught with Romeo.)

[Romeo: What is her mother?]

Nurse: Marry, bachelor,
Her mother is the lady of the house,
And a good lady, and a wise and virtuous
I nursed her daughter, that you talk'd withal;
I tell you, he that can lay hold of her
Shall have the chinks.

Romeo and Juliet, II.ii. Juliet speaking to Romeo from her balcony.

{Re-enter Juliet, above.}

Juliet: Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.
If that thy bent of love be honorable,
Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow,
By one that I'll procure to come to thee,
Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite;
And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay
And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

Romeo and Juliet, II.iii. Romeo speaking to Friar Laurence.

Romeo: Then plainly know my heart's dear love is set
On the fair daughter of rich Capulet:
As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine;
And all combined, save what thou must combine
By holy marriage: when and where and how
We met, we woo'd and made exchange of vow,
I'll tell thee as we pass; but this I pray,
That thou consent to marry us to-day.

Romeo and Juliet, II.v. Nurse speaking to Juliet.

Nurse: Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?

[Juliet: I have.]

Nurse: Then hie you hence to Friar Laurence' cell;
There stays a husband to make you a wife:
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks,
They'll be in scarlet straight at any news.
Hie you to church; I must another way,
To fetch a ladder, by the which your love
Must climb a bird's nest soon when it is dark:
I am the drudge and toil in your delight,
But you shall bear the burden soon at night.
Go; I'll to dinner: hie you to the cell.

EXERCISE: FROM VERSE TO PROSE

Materials Needed

A memorized piece of Shakespeare, a sheet of paper, and a pen or pencil.

Instructions

Without changing any of the words or punctuation, “re-write” your selection as if it were prose. Rearrange the speech according to its punctuation. This will help you identify complete sentences within the passage and also provide a preliminary guide to phrasing and breathing. This will not be necessarily easy for the beginning Shakespeare student.¹³⁹

EXERCISE: LETTERS ¹⁴⁰

Materials Needed

A memorized piece of Shakespeare, a sheet of paper, and a pen or pencil.

Instructions

Take a speech that is addressed to someone in the play and, as you are speaking it, write it out as if it were a letter you were going to send.

Objective

It takes more thought and effort to write than it does to speak. The player should gain a strong sense of why the letter is being written (that is, why the speech is made), and why the particular words of the speech were necessary.

EXERCISE: TELEGRAMS— Finding the Spine ¹⁴¹

Materials Needed

A memorized piece of Shakespeare, a sheet of paper, and a pen or pencil.

Introduction

We stressed that no matter how important it is to be aware of the structure, imagery, figures of speech, and other elements of Shakespeare's verse, it is still of primary importance that the through-line of thought be maintained. The intellectual sense of the speech must be clear to the audience. This won't happen unless the student-actor has put in a great deal of effort to achieve it.

Instructions

There are a couple of ways student-actors can clarify the speech in their own mind. One is to write a synopsis of the speech in one's own words. The other is to write out the speech as if it were a telegram.

¹³⁹ Suggested by Paul Barnes, former Chairman, PCPA

¹⁴⁰ Harrop and Epstein. *Acting with Style*.

¹⁴¹ Harrop and Epstein. *Acting with Style*.

Objective

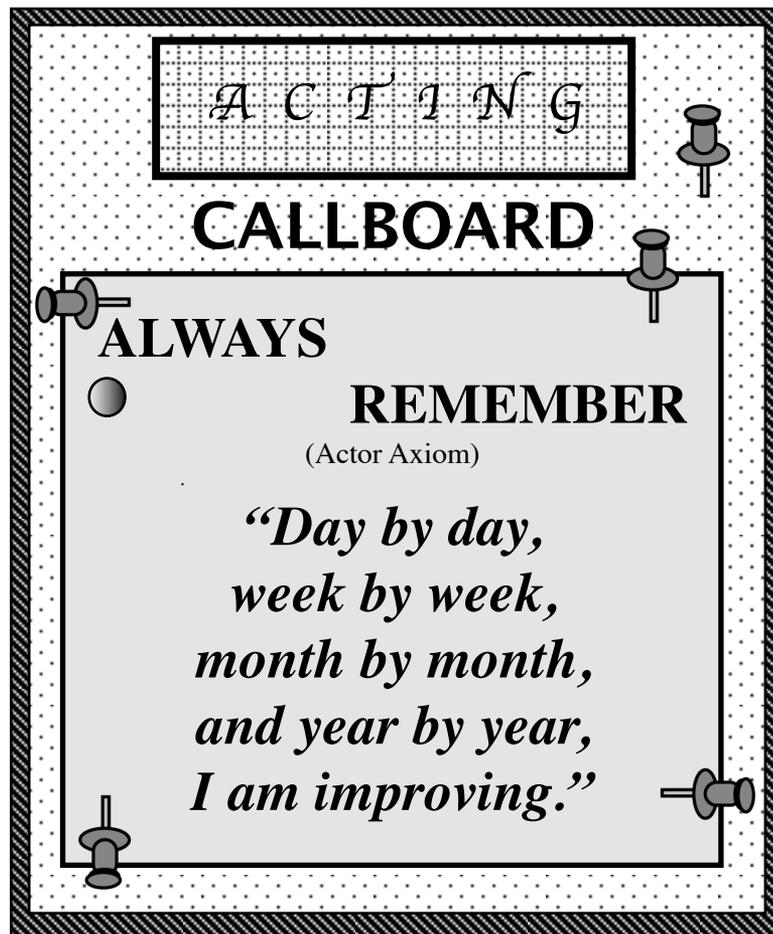
You pay for a telegram by the word (think of it as an early version of a ‘Twitter.’) The purpose of this exercise, of course, is to reduce the speech to its absolute essentials, so that if one more word were removed it would lose meaning. It’s an interesting exercise to decide which word you would delete if you couldn’t afford the whole telegram. But the point of the exercise is that the sense is reduced to an absolute skeleton and becomes very clear to the speaker. Now, of course, the student-actor must go back to the entire speech and give it full value, but with a clearer sense of spine to guide him or her through it.

Example

Macbeth's speech in I.vii¹⁴², would look something like this in telegram form:

If done when done then done quickly. This blow end-all here jump life to come. But judgment here. He's here double trust. Kinsman host. Besides Duncan virtues plead pity. Every eye tears. I no spur but ambition. Which o'erleaps falls.

It might just be possible to remove another couple of words- “besides” or “O’erleaps,” but not much more.



¹⁴² This entire speech can be seen in the EXERCISE: Looking at the Shape of a Speech next in this chapter.

EXERCISE: LOOKING AT THE SHAPE OF A SPEECH

Instructions

This speech from *Macbeth* (I.vii.1-30) is shown in its original format. Look at the sample on the next page for an example of the Shape of a Speech.

Macbeth:

If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly. If th' assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With his surcease success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and [shoal] of time,
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgment here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague th' inventor. This even-handed justice 10
Commends th' ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips. He's here in double trust:
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongu'd, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off; 20
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim, hors'd
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on th' other --¹⁴³



¹⁴³ *Riverside Shakespeare.*

Instructions

This extensively edited section of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (II.i) will be used in class as a hands-on exercise to examine characters objectives.

[Enter Demetrius, Helena, following him]

Demetrius: I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia?
The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me. (3 lines cut)
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

Helena: You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant; (3 lines cut)

Demetrius: Do I entice you? do I speak you fair?
Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth
Tell you, I do not, nor I cannot love you?

Helena: And even for that do I love you the more.
I am your spaniel; and, Demetrius,
The more you beat me, I will fawn on you: (6 lines cut)

Demetrius: Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;
For I am sick when I do look on thee.

Helena: And I am sick when I look not on you.

Demetrius: You do impeach your modesty too much,
To leave the city and commit yourself
Into the hands of one that loves you not; (19 lines cut)
Let me go:
Or, if thou follow me, do not believe
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

Helena: Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius! (3 lines cut)

[Exit Demetrius]

I'll follow thee and make a heaven of hell,
To die upon the hand I love so well.

[Exit]

When you are doing exercises with dialogue passages it is vital that you speak all the passages ALOUD— using your full voice in all rehearsals.

¹⁴⁵ From Paul Barnes, former Chairman, PCPA

THE SONNET 148

“Just by speaking them and feeling them on the tongue, we make ourselves more easy with the rhythm of the language and how to manage it.”

-- Cicely Berry¹⁴⁹

Introduction

The 154 sonnets are presented in sequences or cycles, which involve the ups and downs of an extended love affair. Critics frequently divide the Sonnets at the 126th, assuming that all those preceding it address “The (Fair) Young Man” (a young nobleman), and all those following address “The Dark Lady,” with the exception of Sonnets 78 to 86 which speak of “The Rival Poet.” The following sonnets are generally accounted to be superior: 18, 29, 55, 116, and 138.

The sonnets are extremely useful as beginning exercises for student-actors. Though the sonnets are nondramatic material, they are superb for beginning student-actor exercises.¹⁵⁰

EXERCISE: PICK A SONNET

Instructions

Pick one sonnet from those handed out to you. Read it aloud several times. (As a sample a copy of Sonnet XII can be found at Sfsotatheatre.org and click on **ACTING IS ACTION – Web Pages**  and **WORKSHEET: SONNET XII.**)

Remember

Some things to remember about Sonnets:

- Each is a self-contained little package in the useful limits of 14 lines.
- Each Sonnet is a structured argument. This is the structure:

ABAB	First Quatrain	States a theme
CD CD	Second Quatrain	Expands on it
EFEF	Third Quatrain	Usually, but not always, personalizes it. Most common function is to make a connection between the listener and the theme.
GG	Concluding Couplet	Is most often a surprise twist. Sometimes it contains a complete reversal of the previous direction, or sometimes a witty comment on the theme.

- Sonnets all develop emotionally, frequently with a reversal or twist in the last lines, so you should learn not to swamp a speech with one generalized emotion.
- The Sonnets are not just about emotion, but emotion *intelligently expressed*, or are a combination of intellectual argument and emotion.
- They are vital, even aggressive.
- They are often ironically humorous and, at the very least, clever.

The instructions on the Sonnet presentation from the E-S U incorrectly states: The sonnet, as a presentation of an idea, has no dramatic context and so should be recited. Students should focus on its theme rather than on a character; they should convey thought instead of action.

¹⁴⁸ The term sonnet literally means “little sound.”

¹⁴⁹ From *The Actor and His Text*, p. 240

¹⁵⁰ Kurt Daw agrees.

EXERCISE: SONNET PARAPHRASE— Thoughts not Words ¹⁵¹

Instructions

See if you can paraphrase the argument, very brief and concise in writing of the sonnet you pick. This is done just to be sure you understand the point of the sonnet. Paraphrase and speak this paraphrasing. Learn it thought by thought, rather than word by word. Figure out how each thought leads to the next one.

Example using Sonnet XII: “Like everything else, you are to die, so in order to leave something behind, have kids.” (It’s not much of a sonnet anymore, is it!)

EXERCISE: SONNET WORD PICTURES

Instructions

Look at the word pictures (images) of the sonnet. Write them on a list. Example using Sonnet XII: Spring, flowers, nature, traditional images of death.

EXERCISE: SONNET STRESSES— Scansion

Instructions

On a sheet of paper list in order all the words or syllables that you believe fall into the stressed position (˘). You should have a total of 70 words and/or syllables. (5 stresses x 14 lines = 70.) See what pattern or story emerges from these stressed words and syllables.¹⁵²

EXERCISE: SONNET VERBS AND NOUNS

Instructions

Speak the sonnet, stressing only the verbs, simple subjects and objects in each sentence. Hurry through the rest of the words. Double underline the verbs and single underline the subjects and objects.

EXERCISE: SONNET PARTNERS

Instructions

Speak the sonnet aloud to someone in your group. Speak “to” them, not “at” them. Don’t just read the poem. Think of someone you could actually imagine yourself saying this to, and *meaning* it. NO POLITE FICTIONS THAT THIS IS JUST AN EXERCISE. Read it aloud as if it’s a poem that *you’ve* written, and you’re proud of your writing.

This exercise can be started by playing the theatre game of “Group Stop.” The group quietly moves randomly around an empty space at a pre-selected speed. The group tries to stop simultaneously, a unified effort, without any “clues” given by any member of the group. One person will elect to freeze in position unexpectedly. As soon as one notices that someone else has frozen in position, they freeze as well. So the effect of one person freezing causes everyone to freeze. Once everyone is still the group starts milling around again—again with no one person leading the “unfreezing.” The goal is to see how quickly the group can freeze and unfreeze. Variations: The warm-up can be made more interesting by having the players make noises as they move around. Increasingly noisy characters make it harder to notice the group stop, and therefore makes it more challenging.¹⁵³ After the group has played the games for a few moments they follow it with “Sonnet partners.” After the group has stopped each member moves silently to the person that is closest to them and plays “Sonnet partners.”

¹⁵¹ Some of these exercises are based on the work of Kurt Daw.

¹⁵² This exercise Paul Barnes calls “Paul’s Cheat Sheet.”

¹⁵³ Synonyms for “Group stop”: “Statues” and “f-stop”

Side Coaching

How did the person you addressed respond? Notice the emotional involvement that arises from your partner.

EXERCISE: “LIKE — I MEAN” DISCOVERY 154

Instructions

Verse moves through a series of discoveries made by the speaker. Each discovery prompts the speaker to say more. For this exercise insert the words “like” or “I mean” before each new discovery in your sonnet. Speak the “like — I mean” sonnet.

*When in (like) disgrace with (like) Fortune and (like) men’s eyes
I (I mean) all alone (like) between my(like) outcast state,
And (like) trouble deaf heaven with my (like) bootless cries,
And (I mean) look upon myself and (like) curse my fate.*

Next speak the sonnet without the “like — I mean,” but use your voice to note the discoveries.

EXERCISE: SONNET PERFORMANCE

Instructions

Choose a specific area in your rehearsal space to present (represent) the beginning of the sonnet. While you stand in this area, you are asking a question or introducing a theme. Physically move to a new area when you are developing your argument in the middle section. Return to the first area when you bring your speech around to its conclusion. Think of yourself as literally tying up loose ends when you return to the starting place.

EXERCISE: SONNET CHECKLIST

Instructions

- Are there any antithesis? Rehearse and emphasize it (using the EXERCISE: Physicalizing Antithesis). (In Sonnet 94 there are 18 antithetical pairs in the 14 lines!)
- Look for alliteration and assonance. Rehearse and make them more apparent.
- Jokes? Puns? Rehearse and be outrageous with the wit.
- Scansion. Remember, with each line, build to the last word.

Try this exercise to build to the last word: Kick or punch the air as you say the last word of each line. Notice the extra life or energy you get! Don’t break it up too much. See what happens if you read it not as 14 lines, but as one long thought.

EXERCISE: SONNET EXPERIMENTATION

Instructions

- Whisper your sonnet, feel the intensity and urgency. Whisper to someone far away from you, to make yourself understood even across a large space. Don’t make the sonnet introspective, but something you want to tell someone.
- Speak your sonnet varying the tone, lightly, fast, slow, look for humor, extravagantly, intellectually, sing it.

¹⁵⁴ Paul Kurtz, Fundamental Acting.

INTERESTING STUFF ABOUT SHAKESPEARE AND HIS TIMES



NON SANS DROICT
The Shakespeare coat of arms



A Few Little Known Facts About the Elizabethan Theatre

- ◆ Actors learned their parts in about a week. The leading man might have to memorize 800 lines a day. A leading man would learn and retain over 70 different roles in three years.
- ◆ Plays would run from one or two performances to as long as six months. Performances ran six days a week (except Sunday) from 2 to 5 in the afternoon (so that the sun was not directly overhead). Lanterns & candles were a convention for night.
- ◆ All female roles were played by boys (another convention). This might contribute to the reason why there's so little actual sexual contact in Shakespeare's plays. Kissing was called "bussing."
- ◆ Play-going was considered immoral and, therefore, the city of London did not allow advertising. Flags (black signified tragedy; white comedy; and red history) and trumpet fanfares proclaimed that the performance was about to begin.
- ◆ Near the theatres were bawdyhouses, **bear baiting** arenas (chained bears being baited by dogs) and **bull gardens**, cockfights, pubs, and taverns that did a booming business. Pimps and prostitutes, vendors hawked wares. Pickpockets, thieves, and swindlers roamed in the crowd. All of Southwark's property belonged to the bishop of Winchester so the church profited from all the above.
- ◆ Theatre patrons were transported across the Thames by wherry boats.
 - At one time over 2,000 wherries made their way to and from the theatre district daily.
 - An estimated 10 percent of London's population regularly attended the theatre -- far more than in most major cities today.
 - The audience was a cross section of the population a lot like a baseball game today.
- ◆ The Elizabethan theatre held 3,000 spectators. They would go to "hear" a play, not to "see" a play.
- ◆ As people entered the theatre they would drop their admission into a box (hence "**box office**"). Spectators could sit on cushions with the gentry or stand in the (cock)pit on the bare ground, elbow-to-elbow with the **groundlings**, for one penny. The most exclusive patrons sat on the stage. COST: a penny for each floor
- ◆ Vendors sold beer, water, oranges, nuts, gingerbread, and apples, all of which were occasionally thrown at the actors. Hazelnuts were the most popular theatre snack, the Elizabethan equivalent of Raisinets.
- ◆ There were no public restrooms for the 3,000 spectators, nor were there any intermissions. The playhouse smelled of urine, ginger, garlic, beer, tobacco, and sweat (few Elizabethans bathed).

ELIZABETHAN MONEY ¹⁵⁵

English money during Shakespeare's time was complicated when compared to American or British money today. Today's money is decimalized— that is, it is based on units of ten, so we have the following:

- 100 pennies = 1 dollar
- or
- 100 pence = 1 pound

Decimalizing the money made it much easier to add, subtract, multiply, and divide in terms of prices, costs, profits, etc. English money during Shakespeare's time, however, was not decimalized, so figuring it out sometimes took a lot of work. The following may give an indication of just what was involved in trying to solve a problem using money.

- 12 pennies (12 d) = 1 shilling (1 s)
- 20 shillings (20 s) = 1 pound (1 £)

To make it more difficult, there were other coins, such as these:

- halfpenny, called a “ha penny” (1/2 d)
- farthing (1/4 d), which was one-fourth of a penny
- mark, which was 2/3 of a pound (or 13 s-4 d).

Then there were half marks, 3/4 shillings, threepence, and so on. If you want to change old English money into new, the easiest way to estimate would be to multiply the number of shillings by five to get an answer in new pence, or you can count 2.4d as one new penny. Since old pennies, halfpennies, and farthings would be worth next to nothing now, it is probably best just to ignore them altogether. Of course, if you want to convert English pounds into American dollars, you have to watch the nightly business news to see just what the current exchange rate of pounds for dollars is; and if you are trying to exchange dollars for pounds, or vice versa, you will need to include the fee charged by the bank for that service. (Actually, when you get right down to it, you are probably better off just to forget the whole thing—or trust the bank teller to figure it out for you!)

 **NOBLE BUDGETING** 156

How a Nobleman Got His Money

Noblemen were men who had inherited wealth and property and were, therefore, able to wield a lot of power over the people who lived on their lands. The most important of the ways in which the noblemen wielded power was in their control over the money made on and by their lands. They themselves did not work the land. Tenants rented the lands from the lord, generally paying him both in money and in produce. In this way, no matter where the lord was or what he was doing, money continued to pour into his coffers, and all he had to do was manage it and spend it.

Below is a budget showing the income and expenses of a fictional noble called the Earl of Wakering. Use the budget to answer the questions at the bottom of the page.

Income—January 1 to July 31, 1592

Money won by his Lordship at gambling	550 £
Incoming rents (paid yearly)	6,100 £
Fines (money paid to noble by tenant when taking over a farm)	1,600 £
Sales of firewood	1,400 £
Money borrowed	2,350 £
Total	12,000 £

Expenses—January 1 to July, 1592

Bread (296 loaves from baker)	£15-6s-0d
Beer (56 barrels from brewer)	£15-16s-10d
Meat (beef, mutton, and veal from butcher)	£353-23s-15d
Stable charges	£247-6s-9d
Horsehoeing	£15-4s-5d
Falconers and hawks	£67-12s-2d
Hound keeper	£12-3s-7d
Household necessities (pots, andirons, etc.)	£51-4s-3d
New crossbow	£2-5s-2d
Eight oyster knives	£4s-2d
Alms (paid to Church for the needy)	£15
Rewards (tips to service people)	£176
Jewelry	£1,246
Debts	£1,700

Discussion Questions

1. How much did the nobleman pay in taxes?
2. What items are listed on this budget that probably would not be in one for your family?
3. What are the three biggest expenses on the nobleman’s budget?
4. What was the source of most of his income?

5. How much did the nobleman spend for fruits and vegetables?
6. What can you tell about the life of a nobleman by reading this budget?

SHAKESPEAREAN SUPERSTITIONS

Introduction

The people of Shakespeare's time were very superstitious. Superstitions usually have their beginnings with people who are uneducated and ignorant. They do not know or understand many things that happen, so they attribute magical qualities to puzzling occurrences as a way of explaining them. Some of the superstitions the Elizabethans believed include the following:

- If the bay trees (laurel trees) wither, you'll know the king has died.
- If two friends are walking together and a child or animal walks between them, they will stop being friends.
- If the family has mutton (sheep) for dinner and finds a spot on the blade bone after the meat has been picked from it, there will be a funeral in the family.
- If you wish to find a person who has drowned, throw a loaf of bread into the water near where he drowned, and it will go directly over the body.
- If you do not throw bones into the fire, you will not get a toothache.
- If you give milk to a strange woman, she might be a witch who will use that milk to bewitch your cow.
- If you give holy bread and holy water to your horse, no one will steal it.
- If the sun shines on the day of a wedding, the bride will always be happy.
- If you wish, you can tell what kind of person someone is by knowing on which day of the week that person was born, according to the following:

Monday's child is fair in face. Tuesday's child is full of grace.

Wednesday's child is full of woe. Thursday's child has far to go.

Friday's child is loving and giving. Saturday's child works hard for a living.

A child born on Christmas day is fair and wise and good.

(What about Sunday's child? Nothing was said!)¹⁵⁷

Theatre is awash with superstitions. Here's one well-known theatrical superstition, with some with explanations.

The Scottish Play

The most common theatre superstitions are those surrounding Shakespeare's tragedy *Macbeth*. Most actors and directors won't even speak its name— ever! —, calling it “the Scottish play,” “the unmentionable,” “the Comedy of Glamis,” “the Scottish Business,” or simply, “that play.” These are just a few of the euphemisms actors use to avoid mentioning the title.

If the dreaded word is uttered in the theatre, tradition requires you immediately to leave the theatre, turn around or run in a circle three times, spit on the ground (curses can be thrown in for good measure), and then knock and beg to be readmitted to the building. (This procedure also provides protection after you whistle in the theatre.) Or you can quote from *The Merchant of Venice*, Shakespeare's lucky play: “Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you.”

You must never quote from “the Scottish play” either, in or out of the theatre, or total disaster will fall on the show. It is also supposed to be bad luck to use any sets, costumes, or props from a past production of the play.

Indeed, many professionals believe that “the Unmentionable”— with its bloodshed, ghosts, and witchcraft— is one of the darkest dramas ever written. It is said to be a truly evil play and that the song the three witches sing could really summon demons. The theory goes that Shakespeare included actual black magic spells in the incantations of the weird sisters.

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Theatrical history is littered with the many misfortunes of those who have chosen to ignore these rites of exorcism. Here is a catalogue of disasters that made *Macbeth* seemed doomed from the beginning. Tradition traces a long line of disasters back to its premier. The curse apparently struck during that original performance on August 7, 1606, when Hal Berridge, the boy actor cast as Lady Macbeth, collapsed from a fever and later died (some say he died back stage on opening night). Shakespeare himself had to step in and play the role on short notice. It was also first performed before James I, who had a phobia of weaponry and highly fearful of witchcraft, and was descendant of both the historical Duncan and Banquo, who are killed in the play.

The play was rarely performed again for nearly a century. The day of its London revival in 1703 was noteworthy for one of the most severe storms in English history. Because of its blasphemous content, the play was blamed for the storm's calamities, and Queen Anne ordered a week of prayer during which all theaters were closed.

Over the next two centuries the disasters continued, the curse taking its greatest toll after the Astor Place riots in New York City in 1849. During a performance of *Macbeth* by British actor William Charles Macready, supporters of his American rival, Edwin Forrest, clashed with police outside the theatre. Twenty-two people were killed and some 36 more injured.

Probably the most famous person to suffer the Macbeth curse was not an actor but a U.S. President. *Macbeth* was Abraham Lincoln's favorite play, and he spent the afternoon of April 9, 1865, reading passages aloud to a party of friends on board the River Queen on the Potomac River. The passages Lincoln chose happened to follow the scene in which Duncan is assassinated. Five days later Lincoln was shot.

In the 20th century numerous other calamities associated with the fatal play have been recorded. In the early 1920's Lionel Barrymore's portrayal of Macbeth received such harsh reviews that Barrymore never performed on Broadway again.

During the first modern-dress production at the Royal Court Theatre in London in 1928, a large set fell, causing serious injury to members of the company, and a fire broke out in the dress circle.

In 1934, four actors played Macbeth in a single week in a single production. In 1937 at the Old Vic, the career of 30-year-old Laurence Olivier almost came to an abrupt end when a heavy weight crashed down from the flies while he was rehearsing. It missed him by inches. Later rehearsals were interrupted when the director and the actress playing Lady Macduff were involved in a car accident on the way to the theater. Worse, the theater's proprietor, Lilian Boylis, died of a heart attack during the dress rehearsal. As a follow up, in 1954, the portrait of Lilian Boylis that hung in the lobby crashed down on the bar on opening night of a production of "the Scottish play."

In a 1953 open-air production in Bermuda, starring Charlton Heston, the soldiers storming Macbeth's castle were to burn it to the ground onstage. On opening night the wind blew smoke and flames into the audience, which fled in terror.

In 1980 Peter O'Toole, playing Macbeth for the first time at the Old Vic, was careful never to refer to the play by name. His precautions were in vain. Beset by numerous problems and accidents during rehearsals, when the play opened the critics called his work an artistic disaster.

These are just a few of the deaths, injuries, illness, accidents, fires, falls (usually from high places), broken bones, cuts and stabs from swords, sets falling apart, props breaking, actor substitutions at the last minute, etc., that have plagued past productions.

Is *Macbeth* bad luck? You decide. There is a lot of fighting and physical action in *Macbeth*. The play has more than 8 scenes requiring combat, usually with Celtic weapons (axes, daggers, broad swords, etc.) with actors in Chainmail. Atmospherically, there is usually fog or smoke (making the stage slippery or visibility impaired), and very dim lighting. Combine this fighting with trapdoors, fire scenes, pyrotechnics, and the like—and it is NOT surprising that more accidents happen in this play than say, *Hamlet*. It is inevitable that in the long run of the play someone is going to get hurt. After a few of these stories get around, you get the "Curse of Macbeth."

Poetry & Prose in Shakespeare's Plays
— A Proportion Chart

This table, reprinted from *The Complete Pelican Shakespeare*, edited by Alfred Harbage, indicates the relative amounts of poetry and prose in Shakespeare's plays, along with the names of the characters with the longest parts in each play, and other information. Do you know all of the play title abbreviations?

	Total Lines	Blank	Rhyme	Prose	Scenes	Casts		songs	Longest roles (with count for those over 500 lines)
						Men	Women		
COMEDIES									
Errors	1756	65.8	21.5	12.7	11	11	5		Antipholus S., Adriana, Dromio S.
Shrew	2584	72.5	5.8	21.7	12	19	4	2	Petruchio (549), Tranio, Katherina
T.G.V.	2199	68.7	5.8	25.5	19	13	3	1	Proteus, Valentine, Julia
Dream	2106	35.4	45.5	19.1	7	15	6	2	Theseus, Helena, Bottom
L.L.L.	2667	21.8	43.1	35.1	9	13	5	2	Berowne (591), Navarre, Princess
Merchant	2564	73.5	5.5	21.0	19	16	3	1	Portia (565), Shylock, Bassanio
A.Y.L.	2636	35.2	10.3	54.5	22	17	4	5	Rosalind (668), Orlando, Touchstone
Much Ado	2549	25.3	3.0	71.7	17	14	4	2	Benedick, Leonato, Don Pedro
Twelfth Night	2423	31.4	7.3	61.3	18	11	3	4	Toby, Viola, Feste
Merry Wives	2598	9.6	3.8	86.6	21	16	4	1	Falstaff, Mrs. Page, Mr. Ford
All's Well	2760	43.6	10.3	46.1	23	8	6		Helena, Parolles, King
Measure	2671	59.0	3.4	37.6	15	17	5	1	Vincentio (820), Isabella, Lucio
HISTORIES									
I Henry VI	2676	88.0	11.9	0.1	19	39	3		Talbot, Joan, York
2 Henry VI	3062	82.1	3.2	14.7	18	43	4		York, Margaret, Henry
3 Henry VI	2902	95.5	4.4	0.1	22	40	3		Warwick, Edward, Richard
Richard III	3602	93.8	4.4	1.8	23	40	5		Richard (1124), Buckingham, Elizabeth
John	2560	94.9	5.1	0.0	15	18	4		Faulconbridge (520), John, Constance
Richard II	2755	80.9	19.1	0.0	18	26	5		Richard (753), Bullingbrook, York
I Henry IV	2954	54.3	2.7	43.0	17	32	3		Falstaff (585), Hotspur (545), Hal (535)
2 Henry IV	3182	48.7	2.6	48.7	17	39	5	1	Falstaff (593), Hal, Henry
Henry V	3176	57.2	3.2	39.6	20	39	4		Henry (1025), Fluellen, Canterbury
Henry VIII	2804	95.1	2.6	2.3	16	36	4	1	Henry, Wolsey, Katherine
TRAGEDIES									
Titus	2521	93.2	5.2	1.6	13	21	3		Titus (687), Aaron, Marcus
Romeo	2964	71.0	16.6	12.4	21	21	4	1	Romeo (591), Juliet (509), Laurence
Caesar	2453	92.5	1.3	6.2	13	36	2		Brutus (701), Cassius, Antony
Hamlet	3776	66.3	5.7	28.0	20	25	2	3	Hamlet (1422), Claudius (540), Polonius
Troilus	3326	63.0	6.1	30.9	18	24	4	1	Troilus, Ulysses, Pandarus
Othello	3228	78.4	3.1	18.5	15	14	3	3	Iago (1097), Othello (860), Desdemona
Lear	3195	69.9	5.3	24.8	22	22	3	4	Lear (697), Edgar, Kent
Macbeth	2113	80.3	12.1	7.6	26	25	7		Macbeth (681), Lady Macbeth, Malcolm
Timon	2281	66.4	7.0	26.6	17	27	2		Timon (795), Apemantus, Flavius
Antony	3019	90.5	1.3	8.2	36	30	4	1	Antony (766), Cleopatra (622), Caesar
Coriolanus	3294	77.4	0.8	21.8	27	29	4		Coriolanus (809), Menenius, Volumnia
ROMANCES									
Pericles	2322	59.7	22.4	17.9	22	22	7		Pericles (592), Marina, Simonides
Cymbeline	3266	79.9	6.3	13.8	23	24	3	2	Imogen (522), Posthumus, Iachimo
Winter's Tale	2946	71.5	3.1	25.4	14	15	6	6	Leontes (648), Paulina, Autolycus
Tempest	2026	71.4	7.5	21.1	9	15	4	7	Prospero (603), Ariel, Caliban

Note: Words in the definitions that are themselves glossed are printed in *italics*.

action cue the word in one speech that stimulates the general nature of a character's response (see also *line cue*)

added syllable a *foot* that is one syllable long

alexandrine a line of verse consisting of six consecutive iambs (also known iambic hexameter).

alliteration a figure of speech characterized by repetition of an initial sound, usually a consonant, in two or more adjacent or near-adjacent words of a phrase or line. For example, "Can cunning sin cover itself withal! "

allusion an indirect reference.

amphibrach see feminine ending or foot.

anadiplosis a figure of speech characterized by the repetition of the last word of one clause or sentence at or near the beginning of the next. For example, "Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight."

anapaest, anapestic foot "anapest, anapestus" in scansion, a three-syllable foot, a unit that consists of two unstressed syllables followed by a stressed syllable. The first two unstressed syllables are spoken more quickly than the final strongest stressed syllable. For example, "it is gone," "I am mad," and "my intent." Short-short-long, ~ ~ -; "marching rhythm.": Shakespeare used many anapests, sometimes in succession.

anaphora a figure of speech characterized by repetition of the same word or group of words at the beginning of successive clauses, sentences, or lines. For example, "Our discontented counties do revolt; /Our people quarrel with obedience,"

anastrophe a figure of speech characterized by the inversion of natural word order. For example, "It only stands / Our lives upon, to use our strongest hands."

antanaclasis a type of pun that involves the repetition of a word with two different meanings. For example, "Your argument is sound, nothing but sound."

anthismeria a figure of speech characterized by the substitution of one part of speech for another, as in a noun used as a verb. For example, "Lord Angelo dukes it well in his absence."

antimetabole a figure of speech that reverses the order of repeated words or phrases. For example, "Plainly as heaven sees earth and earth sees heaven."

antithesis a figure of speech characterized by a contrast or opposition of thoughts, usually in two phrases, clauses, or sentences. For example, "Wherein I am false, I am honest: not true to be true."

apostrophe(s) a figure of speech or short speeches addressed to an absent or dead person, or personified object, inanimate object, abstraction, things, or god usually with strong emotions. An appeal to a non-present being, real or imaginary. For example, "Thou, Nature art my goddess ..." and "Come, thick Night, And pall thee in the dunkest smoke of hell ..."

aside a short speech or remark, most often, a truthful, heartfelt comment, personal in nature, either addressed to the audience or self-directed. Occasionally, an aside will be directed to another onstage character.

assonance a figure of speech characterized by repetition of a sound, usually a vowel or diphthong, within two or more words of a phrase or line. For example, "No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose. ..."

asteismus a character using a word just used by a previous speaker, but with a different meaning

asyndeton a figure of speech characterized by the omission of conjunctions between words, phrases, or clauses. For example: "Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night."

beat (in acting) a specific unit of thought or action. beat (in scansion) a syllable of verse dialogue.

blank verse language that does not rhyme, written in iambic pentameter or an accepted variation thereof.

breve (˘) a semicircle over the unstressed syllable or foot

broken verse where a *verse* line stops abruptly in midphrase or midword

build in acting, a steady *escalation* of expressed intensity

caesura a momentary break in the middle of certain *verse* lines. An unvoiced (two beat) rest.

compression in scansion, the removal of one or more unstressed syllables from certain words in verse dialogue in order to fit an acceptable rhythm.

cross rhyme a rhyme pattern comprising at least four lines of verse in which the final syllables of lines one and three rhyme, and the final syllables of lines two and four rhyme. Also known as alternating rhyme.

cutback following a *build*, a sudden de-escalation of expressed intensity

dactyl, dactylic foot a three-syllable unit (foot), consisting of a stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllables, with the strongest stress on the first syllable. The two unstressed syllables are spoken more quickly than the first stressed syllable (from "dialect," a speech regionalism). Long-short-short.: - ~ ~ For example, "universe," "argument," and "terminal." The verse form of Humpty Dumpty is dactylic tetrameter. Variation called paeon: long-short-long, "excitement and foolishness."

dropped syllable a *foot* that is one syllable short (often accompanied by a *stressed silence*)

elevated language concentrated language that takes advantage of every aspect of the spoken word— literal definitions, figurative definitions, sensory definitions, multiple definitions as well as sound and rhythm to persuade and stir the emotions of the listener.

¹⁵⁸ Prepared by Phillip Rayher (especially from: Robert Cohen's *Acting in Shakespeare* and Joseph Olivieri's *Shakespeare without Fear*.)

malapropism the use of the wrong word

mannerism a character's peculiar and habitual speech or movement pattern

masculine endings ending on stresses

measure in scansion, a synonym for an iamb or one of its variant units, including the trochee, anapaest, amphibrach, spondee, and pyrrhic. Also called a foot.

medial truncation a line of verse in which a single stressed syllable occurs within the line, after punctuation. For example: "And so all yours. Q, these naughty times."

metaphor a figure of speech containing an implied-comparison, in which a word or phrase ordinarily and primarily used of one thing is applied to another; a comparison between two unlike things that does not use the words like or as. For example, "Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player ..."

meter any specific form of poetic rhythm, its kind being determined by the character and number of syllables of which it consists. Basic rhythm of alternating stressed and unstressed syllables.: The "measure" of verse; the number and regularity of stresses in verse line:
trimeter = a three-foot line
tetrameter = a four-foot line
pentameter = a five-foot line
hexameter = a six-foot line

metonymy a figure of speech characterized by the reference to something or someone by one of its attributes. For example, "With hard, bright steel, and hearts harder than steel."

metrics the study of *meter*, of stress patterns in verse

nasal typically a vowel followed by the letters *m*, *n*, or *ng*

OED acronym for the **Oxford English Dictionary**. The OED defines nearly every word ever used in the English language as well as how definitions of a word have changed over time.

oxymoron a figure of speech characterized by the combining of two normally opposite or contradictory terms—an adjective modifying a noun— in an ironically, contradictory fashion. For example, "Beautiful tyrant! Fiend angelical!" "terribly good."

parallelism a figure of speech that entails recurring syntactical similarity. In this figure, words, phrases, or clauses are structured similarly. For example, "What place? What time? What form? What likelihood?"

paraphrase from a Greek word meaning "to tell the same thing in other words," (noun) an expression in other words, usually fuller and clearer, of the sense of any passage or text; (verb) to express the meaning of a word, phrase, passage, or work by using other words, usually with the object of fuller and clearer exposition.

parenthesis a figure of speech characterized by the insertion of a word or phrase within a sentence that interrupts the normal syntactical flow. For example, "My gravity, /Wherein (let no man hear me) I take pride, Could I, with boot, change for an idle plume,"

parison a mixture of repetition and *antithesis*; in arching word against word

paronomasia a type of pun that involves words that sound alike but that differ in meaning. For example, "In the reproof of chance/ Lies the true proof of men."

periphrasis a figure of speech characterized by the use of a proper name for qualities associated with that name or the use of a descriptive word or phrase for a proper name. For example, "Discard, bully Hercules, cashier;"

platform after a *build*, the sustained, top level of intensity

plote a patterned repetition of words in the same phrase or sentence

polyptoton a figure of speech characterized by the repetition of words that are derived or a variation from the same root. For example, "More sinned against than sinning."

polysyndeton a figure of speech characterized by the used many conjunctions between clauses. For example, "How I would make him fawn, and beg, and seek, / And wait the season."

prose not verse; speech or writing without metrical pattern or rhythmic structure; ordinary writing or speech.

prosody: general term for the patterning of poetic elements.

pun figures that play on words. Two types of puns are *antanaclasis* and *paronomasia*.

pyrrhic in scansion, a two-syllable unit in which both syllables are very lightly stressed. The weakest and smallest foot.: Two unstressed syllables.; ~ ~ For example, "in the," "it is."

quarto roughly half of Shakespeare's plays were first published in quarto form; so called because the large sheets of paper on which they were printed were folded twice, into quarters. Quartos are individual plays rather than collections.

rhetoric the contrived arrangement of words and ideas for maximum persuasiveness and emotional charge; the art of using language so as to persuade or influence others; speech or writing expressed in terms calculated to persuade.

rhetorical question a figure of speech that is a question asked, not for an answer, but for effect or to emphasize or make a point.

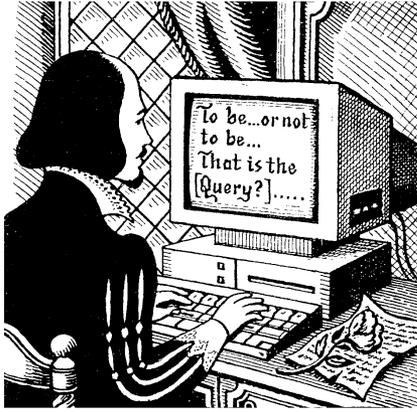
rhyming couplet two successive lines of verse whose final syllables rhyme.

rhyming verse language that rhymes, written in iambic pentameter or an accepted variation thereof. Also called rhymed verse.

rhythm The recurrence or repetition of stress, beat, sound, accent, motion, and so forth, usually occurring in a regular or harmonious pattern or manner.

rhythmic pacing the speed at which the dialogue is spoken. Lightly stressed syllables tend to move more quickly, while heavily stressed syllables tend to move more slowly. Shakespeare would often alternate the rhythmic pacing of his verse dialogue.

rhythmic turbulence a gap between actual rhythm and metrical expectation, such as when Shakespeare's verse rhythms become heavy and rough rather than smooth. This occurs most often at times of emotional intensity.



Shakespeare On the Net

Shakespeare Resource Center <http://www.bardweb.net/>

You'll find here collected links from all over the World Wide Web to help you find information on William Shakespeare.

Mr. William Shakespeare and the Internet <http://shakespeare.palomar.edu/>

These two are a great starting point for your Shakespeare study. Includes Works, Life & Times, Theatre, Criticism, Renaissance, etc.

Shakespearean Insults www.pangloss.com/seidel/Shaker

"Thou crusty botch of nature!" If you don't get enough abuse in a day and want to read a daily insult taken from Shakespeare's literary works than turn to this site.

Shakespeare's Canon On the Net — complete works

The Complete Works of William Shakespeare <http://the-tech.mit.edu/shakespeare/>

<http://tech-two.mit.edu/Shakespeare/works.html>

Provided by MIT, from Jeremy Hylton at MIT. The original electronic source for this server is the Complete Moby(tm) Shakespeare, which is freely available online. There may be differences between a copy of a play that you happen to be familiar with and the one of this server: Don't worry, this is a very common phenomenon. Contents: Shakespeare discussion area; Search the complete works; Shakespeare resources on the Internet; What's new on this server; A chronological listing of plays, and an alphabetical listing; Frequently asked questions about this server; Bartlett's familiar Shakespearean quotations; about the glossary. NOTE: Sonnets are not on the site, but are linked to it. Play texts do not have lines numbered.

The Internet Public Library — Shakespeare Bookshelf <http://www.ipl.org/reading/shakespeare/shakespeare.html>

Shakespeare's Complete Works Is just that, four bookshelves of Comedies, Histories, Poetry (includes sonnets), and Tragedies. Includes A Shakespeare Glossary. NOTES: Play script lines are numbered. The titles are linked to 1914 edition of THE OXFORD SHAKESPEARE and Shakespeare's Monologues site, a collection of monologues from Shakespeare's works, and many other good links.

IPL Shakespeare's Individual Works <http://readroom.ipl.org/bin/ipl/ipl.books-idx.pl?type=deweystem&q1=8223>

Individual text on The Internet Public Library Online. Same as the above site listed individually. Texts in Dewey Browse 822.3 Shakespeare.

The Works of the Bard <http://www.cs.usyd.edu.au/~matty/Shakespeare/test.html>

The engine searches the text of the plays and poetry not for a play or poem or critical essay. It is although linked to the complete works.

Shakespeare's Monologues <http://www.shakespeare-monologues.org/>

List of monologues divided into men and woman categories, and Plays.

Sonnets <http://www.ludweb.com/msff/sonnets/>

The complete text of Shakespeare's Sonnets.