

Shakespeare for all ages and stages



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Foreword



There is little doubt that children can become gripped by Shakespeare's engaging stories and memorable characters from an early age. Whilst not part of the statutory programme of study in Key Stages One or Two, many primary teachers find that imaginative and practical approaches to Shakespeare can spark children's enthusiasm and interest, the desire to study his plays further, and a lifelong love of Shakespeare's work.

This booklet contains a suggested framework of opportunities and experiences, designed to help children and young people – regardless of their age, their stage of learning or their level of attainment – to make steady progress in their understanding and enjoyment of Shakespeare. The booklet complements our offer of *Shakespeare: The Animated Tales* on DVD for all primary schools and a live Shakespeare experience for all Key Stage 3 pupils in the Making Good Progress pilot schools. I hope that schools will use these opportunities to enable even more children and young people to enjoy and be inspired by their encounters with Shakespeare.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Knight".

Jim Knight,

Minister of State for Schools and 14–19 Learners.

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Introduction

This booklet represents an exciting collaboration between the DCSF and its key partners in the National Strategies and QCA as well as teachers and arts educators in the world of theatre and the media.

It contains a 'framework of opportunities' which offers significant experiences in Shakespeare from key stage to key stage as well as suggested learning objectives linked closely to the National Strategies' Frameworks, but tailored specifically to Shakespeare. These are supported by practical, tried and tested ideas and approaches for use in the classroom. There is advice from the RSC on preparing pupils for live theatre experiences and from Globe Education, Shakespeare's Globe on working with arts educators in schools.

It offers teachers *from across the phases* ideas for working with Shakespeare's stagecraft and language as well as ways in to the historical and theatrical contexts in which he worked. It aims to enhance the educational experience of Shakespeare for young people by providing a map of opportunities for lifelong learning and pleasure in his work.

Our message is that Shakespeare matters. As his friend and rival, the playwright Ben Jonson, said, "He was not of an age but for all time!" We couldn't agree more and hope that you find this booklet useful.

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Why Shakespeare?

Shakespeare was just one writer amongst many on London's thriving sixteenth and seventeenth century stage – but he's certainly one that has lasted! His work is at the centre of Britain's twenty-first century theatre industry, is constantly adapted for film, has been translated into hundreds of languages and is performed throughout the world today.

Shakespeare was a playwright, a poet, an actor, and a shareholder in his theatre company – a company that might perform one week for anyone who could afford a penny to stand and watch a play at the Globe, and for the fashionable courts of Elizabeth or James I the next. He understood how to take a familiar story and create tragic, hilarious, suspenseful, philosophical, challenging dramas with which people all over the world continue to identify.

Shakespeare was writing at a time before theatre technologies and complex stage design created visual worlds for theatre audiences and he created those worlds through language. He coined new words and phrases that we still use today and his rich, theatrical and poetic language can be both strikingly resonant and a challenge to access.

When young people watch or read Shakespeare today, they are pulled into a world that is both alien and familiar to them. In one scene, his treatment of love, jealousy, racism, mourning or power can seem strikingly relevant; in the next moment, the audience or reader might have to engage with concepts of religion, or family, or fashion completely different from their own. Shakespeare constantly challenges and confounds us: we might be asked to laugh in a painful scene or engage with profound philosophical questions in a comic one.

Watching, performing and reading the work of this extraordinary poet and playwright asks us both to challenge and celebrate our social and personal lives. Shakespeare can open up brave new worlds to young people and offer them fresh ways of dealing with familiar ones. His work can challenge our language skills and introduce us to new realms of poetic playfulness. He can extend our concepts of what fiction can do, and of what stories a drama can tell. Working with Shakespeare can be challenging but is eminently rewarding, rich and fulfilling.

A framework of opportunities in

The following 'framework of opportunities' offers teachers from across the phases ideas for working with Shakespeare. It suggests significant experiences in Shakespeare from key stage to key stage as well as yearly learning objectives linked to the National Strategies' Frameworks, but tailored specifically to Shakespeare.

By providing a map of opportunities, it ensures that each year and key stage builds on what has gone before and helps to prepare for what follows.

A framework of opportunities in Shakespeare across the key stages	
Significant experiences in each key stage would be to...	
Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Watch, read or listen to some of Shakespeare's stories ● Use role play to explore some of the characters' dilemmas in Shakespeare's stories ● Act out, through role play and improvisation, some stories or scenes from Shakespeare
Key Stage 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Read or watch an abridged version of a Shakespeare play ● Read, perform and talk about lines taken from scenes or speeches from Shakespeare's plays ● Work, if possible, with arts educators such as theatre-in-education groups ● Experience, if possible, some learning outside of the classroom, such as a visit to a theatre or a relevant site ● Use dramatic approaches to explore some of Shakespeare's scenes
Key Stage 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study at least one complete play by Shakespeare * ● Work, if possible, with actors and other arts educators such as theatre-in-education groups ● See, if possible, a professional production of a Shakespeare play ● Use a range of dramatic approaches to explore Shakespeare's plays
Key Stage 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study at least one complete play by Shakespeare * ● See, if possible, alternative productions of the same play, for example, on film or in the theatre ● Use a wide range of dramatic approaches to explore Shakespeare's plays
* Statutory requirements	

Shakespeare across the key stages

It is supported on the following pages by suggested teaching approaches designed to help teachers deliver the learning objectives in lively and engaging but manageable ways. They exemplify active, imaginative and participatory approaches related, where possible, to whole plays.

Year on year learning objectives	
Foundation Stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand what is meant by a 'character' in a story To identify some of the distinctive features of the characters they encounter
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To realise that stories can be told in different ways, including dramatisation
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be familiar with some of Shakespeare's stories and characters
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To appreciate how characters are brought to life through performance To understand that the text is a script which is brought to life in performance
Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be familiar with Shakespeare's life, times and theatre
Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify some of the distinctive features of Shakespeare's language and how language has changed over time To appreciate how characters interact and create dramatic tension through their language and actions
Year 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore some of the great themes of Shakespeare's plays, such as kingship, romance and ambition
Year 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To appreciate that Shakespeare's plays can be performed and interpreted in different ways To engage with some of the issues, themes and ideas in Shakespeare's plays and to appreciate the way they remain relevant in the 21st century
Year 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand how characters' actions reflect the social, historical and cultural contexts of Shakespeare's time To understand the cultural significance of Shakespeare and his place in our literary heritage
Year 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand how characters are developed during the course of a play To appreciate the dramatic conventions and linguistic qualities of scenes and understand their significance to the play as a whole
Year 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make a confident, critical and personal response to a whole play, using close textual reference To understand the complexity of Shakespeare's characters and to make connections with other plays by Shakespeare
Year 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand the significance of the social, historical and cultural contexts of a Shakespeare play To appreciate the moral and philosophical significance of Shakespeare's plays and their relevance for a contemporary audience

Suggested teaching approaches from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 4

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For further ideas and guidance, visit:
[www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/secondary/
keystage3/subjects/english/focus/shakespeare](http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/secondary/keystage3/subjects/english/focus/shakespeare)

Shakespeare in the Foundation Stage

About the objectives for Shakespeare:

There are two learning objectives for Shakespeare in the Foundation Stage. They focus on an understanding of the notion of character.

- **To understand what is meant by a 'character' in a story.**
- **To identify some of the distinctive features of the characters they encounter.**

They support progression by:

- Providing the building blocks of further work on story and character before introducing pupils to them within the context of Shakespeare's plays.

Links to the Primary Framework:

Strand 7: Understanding and interpreting texts.

Strand 8: Engaging with and responding to texts.

- Show an understanding of the elements of stories, such as main character, sequence of events, and openings, and how information can be found in non-fiction texts to answer questions about where, who, why and how (same objective both strands).

Suggested teaching approaches

To understand what is meant by a 'character' in a story

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on storytelling, for example, by:

- Identifying characters in stories, locating them in illustrations and discussing key moments with the pupils.

- Developing wall stories during or after reading and asking questions relating to where and why a character is in a particular setting.
- Providing small world figures, puppets and masks which encourage pupils to retell known stories and adapt or invent their own.
- Encouraging pupils to use the stories that they hear in their own play by resourcing role play areas with a range of stimulating objects and dressing-up clothes.
- Asking 'who' questions related to a story, e.g. "Who got married at the end of the story?"

To identify some of the distinctive features of the characters they encounter

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on artefacts, for example, by:

- Placing objects which relate to a particular character in a story into a 'character chest'. As each of the objects is removed, encourage pupils to make predictions about the character's personality, job, interests etc. During the reading of the story, encourage pupils to match the character to the objects and discuss the accuracy of their predictions.
- Drawing an outline of two characters on a large sheet of paper on the floor. Choose characters that are distinctly different, such as a wicked queen and a good fairy. Select objects relating to the characters and discuss their significance before asking pupils to place each item next to the character it best represents. If necessary, support the decision and ask pupils to justify their choices with reference to the character's actions within the story.

Shakespeare in Year 1

About the objectives for Shakespeare:

There is one learning objective for Shakespeare in Year 1. It focuses on an understanding of dramatisation as a way of telling a story.

- **To realise that stories can be told in different ways, including dramatisation.**

It supports progression by:

- Building on pupils' familiarity with different types of stories.
- Building on pupils' understanding of characters in stories.

Links to the Primary Framework:

Strand 4: Drama.

- Explore familiar themes and characters through improvisation and role-play.
- Act out their own and well-known stories, using voices for characters.

Strand 7: Understanding and interpreting texts

- Recognise the main elements that shape different texts.

Strand 8: Engaging with and responding to texts.

- Visualise and comment on events, characters and ideas, making imaginative links to their own experiences.

Suggested teaching approaches

To realise that stories can be told in different ways, including dramatisation

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on performance, for example, by:

- Asking pupils to listen to the soundtrack of a short film, without dialogue. In pairs, ask them to discuss what they hear and what might be happening, where it might be set and what feelings the sound evokes. Suggest that they dance or move to selected passages. Begin viewing, pausing at key moments for the pupils to recount what they have seen and make predictions. After viewing, select a sound sequence to support pupils' re-enactment.
- Selecting a wordless picture book, or one with a simple text, of a traditional tale or story well known to the pupils. Ask them to decide on essential items from the prop box and to perform selected scenes. Photograph freeze frames, (with a digital camera linked to the whiteboard, if possible) and ask pupils to explain how they were able to identify the characters and how the characters might be feeling and thinking. Turn some of the responses into thought bubbles and add to the photographs.
- Taking the class through a significant section of a story. Ask pupils to work in small groups to decide what the characters would wear, how they would move, how they would speak, what gestures and expressions they would use, what sound effects they could add etc. Once pupils have completed their thought processes about the characters, challenge them to stage the scene.

Shakespeare in Year 2

About the objectives for Shakespeare:

There is one learning objective for Shakespeare in Year 2. It focuses on encounters with some of Shakespeare's stories and characters.

- **To be familiar with some of Shakespeare's stories and characters.**

It supports progression by:

- Developing pupils' understanding of story and character.
- Developing pupils' growing understanding of dramatisation as a way of telling a story.

Links to the Primary Framework:

Strand 4: Drama.

- Present part of traditional stories, their own stories or work drawn from different parts of the curriculum for members of their own class.

Strand 8: Engaging with and responding to texts.

- Engage with books through exploring and enacting interpretations.

Suggested teaching approaches

To be familiar with some of Shakespeare's stories and characters

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on pupils' prior knowledge of other stories, for example, by:

- Introducing the story of *King Lear* by linking it to pupils' knowledge of folk tales and fairy stories, for example, those involving a parent (king/queen) with three very different sons or daughters. (There are particularly strong parallels between the plot of *King Lear* and the story generally known as *I Love You More Than Salt*). Ask them to help create a story using prompts from the *King Lear* plot, filling in the gaps in the narrative by drawing on their

experience of other stories. This could be done orally, for example:

Once upon a time, there was a king, and he had three _____. The first was very _____ and _____. The second was very _____ and _____. But the third was very _____ and _____. The years went by and the king grew old. He decided to divide his kingdom between his three _____. First, he wanted to know how much they loved him. The first thought _____ but said _____. The king was _____. The second thought _____ but said _____. The king was _____. The third thought _____ and said _____. The king was very _____.

- Telling, watching, reading or performing the story from a play by Shakespeare but leaving out the ending. Ask for predictions as to how pupils think the play will end. For example, do they think that Prospero will have his enemies killed, will he put a spell on them, or will he forgive them at the end of *The Tempest*? Which is better – a happy or sad ending? Why? Using talk partners, ask pupils what would be the best ending? Encourage pupils to justify their answers and explain their reasons.
- Presenting the pupils with a list of 'ingredients' from a chosen Shakespeare play, such as: fairies, a jealous king, a queen, an enchanted wood, magic etc (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and ask them in pairs or small groups to create a story. Ask the pupils to tell or perform their story to the rest of the class and discuss similarities and differences. Identify other known stories where other similar settings and characters appear.
- Telling, reading, watching or performing a suitable version of the play, stopping for predictions and discussion. Ask pupils to choose 6-10 moments in the story to create a storyboard which could either be drawn or photographed using digital cameras as pupils act out and freeze a series of tableaux.

At Leighton Primary School in Crewe, teachers wanted to adopt a ‘Shakespeare-friendly approach’ from Year 1 to Year 6. English teacher Marie Speake describes their approach:

“The experience of Shakespeare through role play, drama and art has always enhanced our children’s reading and writing skills. Previously, we had offered the ‘Shakespeare experience’ to some Year 6 gifted and talented children, but the increased flexibility of the Renewed Primary Framework and the desire to involve more children prompted the staff to promote Shakespeare from Year 1 to Year 6. Shakespearean themes have contemporary relevance and we are constantly striving to open new learning opportunities for the children through an array of cultural experiences. Consequently, a team within the school, formed under the guidance of the literacy co-ordinator, wrote a progression plan for the teaching of Shakespeare as a pilot.

Six units of work, which focused on three plays – *The Tempest*, *Macbeth* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, were written and trialled. Original language was used as far as possible – even KS1 children were using original Shakespearean phrases in their role play. Cross-curricular activities included drama, art, media, history, ICT and design and technology. At least one piece of writing was produced by each year group based on the play that they were studying. This writing took a variety of forms, such as poems to describe the storm in *The Tempest*, report writing on Elizabethan theatre and detailed setting descriptions based on *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

The success of the work is best summed up by the following comments from our recent Ofsted inspection in December 2007: ‘A whole school focus on reading and writing has resulted in some astonishingly good work in literacy. Very notable examples are the works on *Macbeth* by pupils in Year 1 and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* by pupils in junior classes.’”

What the children said about Shakespeare:

“I liked saying, ‘All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be King!’” (Year 1 boy)

“The acting was fun! I liked it when we were on the ship saying, ‘Mercy on us! We split, we split, we split!’” (Year 2 boy)

“I enjoyed *The Tempest* because some parts were funny, some parts were scary and some parts were mysterious.” (Year 4 girl)

“I really enjoyed studying Shakespeare. *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* inspired me to write a piece of writing of my own”. (Year 6 girl)

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Shakespeare in Year 3

About the objectives for Shakespeare:

There are two learning objectives for Shakespeare in Year 3. They focus on an understanding that Shakespeare's plays and characters are brought to life through performance.

- **To appreciate how characters are brought to life through performance.**
- **To understand that the text is a script which is brought to life in performance.**

They support progression by:

- Building on pupils' knowledge of some of Shakespeare's stories and characters.
- Developing pupils' understanding of dramatisation as a way of telling stories.

Links to the Primary Framework:

Strand 4: Drama.

- Present events and characters through dialogue to engage the interest of an audience.

- Use some drama strategies to explore stories or issues.
- Identify and discuss qualities of others' performances, including gesture, action and costume.

Strand 7: Understanding and interpreting texts.

- Infer characters' feelings in fiction and consequences in logical explanations.

Strand 8: Engaging with and responding to texts

- Empathise with characters and debate moral dilemmas portrayed in texts.

Suggested teaching approaches

To appreciate how characters are brought to life through performance

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on dramatic techniques, for example, by:

- Taking a scene from a play, such as Act 3, Scene 1 in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* where Titania wakes and sees Bottom. Invite two

pupils to volunteer to be Titania and Bottom and ask the rest of the class to sculpt them in the positions they would like them to be in at this point in the play. Freeze the scene, while two other pupils read some edited lines from the scene, perhaps projected onto the whiteboard. Ask the rest of the class what they think the characters would say next and invite individual pupils to stand next to the character they would like to speak for. Continue the scene in this way, allowing more pupils to enter the sculpted scene and develop the communal voice.

- Hot-seating a character at a moment of dilemma, for example, Macbeth after the murder of Duncan. The teacher might be hot-seated by pupils first in order to model the process before moving on to thought tracking whereby pupils can be taken from 'public answers' to more private responses in order to reveal the differences between what a character says and what they might really think.

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To understand that the text is a script which is brought to life in performance

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on openings, for example, by:

- Introducing the opening to *The Tempest* through a soundscape by asking pupils to suggest five or six noises associated with a storm at sea, such as wind howling, waves crashing, seabirds crying etc. Allocate each noise to different groups of pupils. One or two lines from the opening scene, such as, "We split we split" or "Mercy on us!" can also be allocated. Conduct the class, bringing in (or leaving out) one group at a time, then gradually incorporating all of the sounds to depict the storm at sea.
- Giving pupils the opening scene of *Macbeth*, perhaps on the whiteboard, and practise chanting the lines together with them. Show pupils images or extracts from one or two productions to see how the witches have been portrayed. Ask them how they would portray the witches and ask them to act out the scene in groups of three. Compare the different presentations, and encourage each group to explain why they presented their witches in a particular way.

Shakespeare in Year 4

About the objectives for Shakespeare:

There is one learning objective for Shakespeare in Year 4. It focuses on a knowledge and understanding of Shakespeare the playwright, the times in which he lived and the world of the theatre at the time.

- **To be familiar with Shakespeare's life, times and theatre.**

It supports progression by:

- Providing a context for pupils' previous and future encounters with Shakespeare's stories and characters.
- Supporting pupils' understanding of the ways in which Shakespeare's plays were performed during his lifetime.

Links to the Primary Framework:

Strand 8: Engaging with and responding to texts.

- Explore why and how writers write, including through face-to-face and online contact with authors.

It also relates closely to the National Curriculum history programme. Teachers are strongly encouraged to exploit such cross-curricular links in literacy learning and teaching.

Suggested teaching approaches

To be familiar with Shakespeare's life, times and theatre

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on research through cross-curricular links with history, for example, by:

- Focusing on Elizabethan life and theatre. Give the pupils identities as Elizabethan characters e.g. butcher, soldier, nursemaid. They can dress up and act out some everyday scenes in the classroom, perhaps set up as an Elizabethan street. Using pretend Elizabethan money, pupils can pay for entry to a 'reconstruction' of a theatre in the playground or the hall (stageblocks with a 'pit' area in front surrounded by a circle of chairs). Depending on their chosen status in society, they can stand in the 'pit' and behave like an Elizabethan audience, e.g. buying fruit from adults dressed as vendors, or sit in one of the galleries or even on the stage as they watch scenes from the play (performed by teachers or older pupils or by groups of the pupils themselves in rotation using suitably rehearsed scripts).
- Focusing on aspects of Shakespeare's life. Using the information they discover, ask pupils to identify some of the most significant events in his life, e.g. his childhood at grammar school, member of the Lord Chamberlain's Players, birth and loss of children, building the Globe, acting before the Queen, etc. Ask pupils to choose one of these events or periods of his life and devise a short drama. Select a narrator to link the events together and present this as a TV style history documentary programme, as an assembly presentation for other classes or possibly recorded for the school website. Alternatively, the scenes could be used to make a living museum in the school hall.

At St. Mary's Church of England Primary School in Banbury, pupils in Years 5 and 6 approach Shakespeare through performance. Deputy Headteacher Claire Dyer describes her approach:

"As a teacher, Shakespeare takes guts. Right from the start, I feel it is essential to get the children speaking, chanting and dramatising the language so as not to feel scared – we often talk far more about the atmosphere and relationships created initially, and from this comes a greater understanding of the language. Movement also helps children understand the general mood of a scene.

Teaching Shakespeare, for me, is not about understanding or interpreting every word, or indeed having a complete knowledge of the intricacies of the often confusing plots: it is far more about having an unforgettable experience. Shakespeare wrote about characters that are unresolved and have such infinite guises. I love to explore this in my initial approach to Shakespeare. In the past we have had an Ariel that dances around – sprite like – and lives in a cave woven from rags. At the same time we knew that Ariel could be a vision of twirling leaves, or a paperweight that had a beautiful butterfly carved into it. I often find that those characters with magical qualities are wonderful starting points, as there is no right or wrong.

Overall we aim towards a performance, so children have an end outcome in sight and feel involved in the process of putting on a performance. We try to add a dimension that the children can relate to, or have themselves created, and build upon thematic ideas. We have, in the past, created whole scenes that suggest the relationship between Romeo and Juliet or simply had the character Ariel building the scenery for a scene before the audience.

It is hard to summarise the benefits of working in such a way, but I can safely say that some of the most amazing and thought provoking work has been produced from our Shakespeare productions. My current Year 6, who took part in the project last year, are so enthusiastic and excited about this year's project and I am sure will be able to take their understanding even further. Every child is involved and all children speak Shakespeare."

What the children said about Shakespeare:

"The relationship between Caliban and Prospero is tense like a bomb waiting to go off. When Ariel comes in the mood changes and it is like the bomb has been defused."

"We've been thinking about how Shakespeare developed his scene and we said you could describe the changing emotions and atmosphere like the changing seasons."

Shakespeare in Year 5

About the objectives for Shakespeare:

There are two learning objectives for Shakespeare in Year 5. They focus on Shakespeare's language – the way it has changed over time and the way it is used to create dramatic tension in his plays.

- **To identify some of the distinctive features of Shakespeare's language and how language has changed over time.**
- **To appreciate how characters interact and create dramatic tension through their language and actions.**

They support progression by:

- Building on pupils' understanding of the plays as performance which can be interpreted in different ways.
- Developing their understanding of Shakespeare's characters.
- Preparing pupils for a more explicit exploration of Shakespeare's language.

Links to the Primary Framework:

Strand 4: Drama.

- Reflect on how working in role helps to explore complex issues.
- Perform a scripted scene making use of dramatic conventions.
- Use and recognise the impact of theatrical effects in drama.

Strand 7: Understanding and interpreting texts.

- Explore how writers use language for comic and dramatic effects.

Suggested teaching approaches

To identify some of the distinctive features of Shakespeare's language and how language has changed over time

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on ways of experimenting and interacting with Shakespeare's language, for example, by:

- Giving pupils a line from a play (ensuring a range across the class). Ask them to greet each other with it in different ways, e.g. sadly, critically, threateningly, affectionately, questioningly, jokingly etc.
- Playing a 'word loop' game, involving matching cards with phrases/sentences/lines of Shakespeare's original language to contemporary versions or explanations. Then compare the two in order to explore language change over time.
- Trading Shakespearian insults, for example, in *Romeo and Juliet*. Set the context for the feud between the two families before giving pupils sets of cards, one for the Montagues and one for the Capulets. The cards should contain paired insults and retorts from Act 1, Scene 1. Divide the class into Montagues and Capulets and line them up, facing each other. In turn, pupils shout an insult whilst pupils on the other side of the classroom search to see whether they have the retort, which they then shout back. Alternatively, gather terms of endearment from several plays and invite pupils to whisper them to one other.

To appreciate how characters interact and create dramatic tension through their language and actions

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on rehearsal room techniques, for example, by:

- Providing a short duologue from a play and asking pupils to identify the pronouns. Then ask them, in pairs, to perform the script, pointing at the characters whenever they are referred to by a pronoun. For example, they point to themselves (I/me), to their partner (you) and to a third person (he/she/they/him/her/them). Discuss the dramatic impact of pointing and not using a character's name.
- Using some of the approaches and techniques practised in earlier years (e.g. freeze-framing and hot-seating), explore a particularly dramatic interaction between two characters, for example, Prospero and Caliban or Juliet and her father. Then act out the scene in

different ways, drawing on the insights gained. Finally, compare this with a short extract from a performance of the original text.

- Exploring status. Give each pupil a card from a pack of playing cards and tell them to hold their card onto their forehead without looking at it so that everybody else can see it apart from them. Ask pupils to walk around the room, responding to each other according to the status denoted by the cards displayed on their foreheads (ace is low, ten is high and royal cards are omitted). Then ask them to place themselves in a status line to see how far they were aware of the status accorded to them by the rest of the class. Develop this by exploring the shifting status in an edited piece of text such as the exchange between Prospero and Ariel in Act 1, Scene 2 of *The Tempest* or between Antonio and Shylock in Act 1, Scene 3 of *The Merchant of Venice*.

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Shakespeare in Year 6

About the objectives for Shakespeare:

There is one learning objective for Shakespeare in Year 6. It focuses on an exploration of some of the great themes in Shakespeare's plays.

- **To explore some of the great themes of Shakespeare's plays, such as kingship, romance and ambition.**

It supports progression by:

- Building on pupils' understanding of Shakespeare's characters, plots and language.
- Developing an understanding of the themes and ideas in some of Shakespeare's plays and making links between them.

Links to the Primary Framework:

Strand 4: Drama

- Improvise using a range of drama strategies and conventions to explore themes such as hopes, fears and desires.
- Consider the overall impact of a live or recorded performance, identifying dramatic ways of conveying characters' ideas and building tension.
- Devise a performance considering how to adapt the performance for a specific audience.

Strand 7: Understanding and interpreting texts.

- Understand underlying themes, causes and points of view.

Strand 8: Engaging with and responding to texts.

- Sustain engagement with longer texts, using different techniques to make the text come alive.
- Compare how writers from different times and places present experiences and use language.

Suggested teaching approaches

To explore some of the great themes of Shakespeare's plays, such as kingship, romance and ambition

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on role play and discussion, for example, by:

- Taking a play with a strong theme, e.g. ambition in *Macbeth* and helping pupils to explore it through a familiar scenario, e.g. "Have you ever been tempted to do something that you knew was wrong because you wanted something very badly?" Ask pupils to explore this through discussion or role play before exploring it in the context of the play.
- Asking pupils, in groups of three, to sculpt or freeze frame a theme from a chosen play. Give each group a card with a single theme (ambition, greed, betrayal, romance, kingship) written on it and ask them to devise a tableau, using only themselves, which exemplifies their word. Then provide the rest of the class with some short extracts from the play which exemplify those themes and invite pupils to place the appropriate extract in front of each tableau.

- Using a props box as a means of introducing pupils to the major themes of a play. Prepare a box containing items relevant to the chosen play (*Romeo and Juliet* might include: a heart, a rose, a (fake) sword, a small bottle of liquid, a wedding ring etc). Ask pupils, in groups, to choose a prop and speculate about its significance to the play, ensuring that all props

are chosen. Then ask the class to consider the significance of all the props to the play as a whole. Alternatively, use a props box after the play has been explored, by asking pupils, in groups, to choose six items which they think should be included in the props box to represent the main themes of a play.

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Jane Jordan, Head of the English Faculty at Larkmead School in Oxfordshire, describes her approach to cross-phase work in Shakespeare:

At Larkmead, we were very keen to promote a smooth transition for students from Year 6 to Year 7 and also develop a closer relationship with many of our partner primary schools. We decided to develop a transition project which would focus on Shakespeare through the use of ICT.

The project evolved into three parts. After making initial contact with the primary school, I visited to observe a Year 6 lesson, returning a week later to teach a lesson myself on *Macbeth*. This involved an oral telling of the story together with the *Animated Tales* version of the play. We explored the cauldron scene through some simple drama work which focused on witches and spells, before moving on to the banquet scene. Students read the scene and then storyboarded it into four frames. They also kept a journal, in which they recorded not only their work but also their thoughts and reflections on the lessons.

The final part of the project was the visit to Larkmead and one of our ICT rooms. Using Kar2ouche computer software, students transferred their storyboards into four cartoon stills. They learnt to use Kar2ouche incredibly quickly as it is designed to be used like a computer game. The characters had to speak Shakespeare's original language, but the thought bubbles had to be the student's own ideas of what Macbeth or Lady Macbeth, or indeed the murderers, or even the ghost of Banquo might be thinking. This provided a very illuminating and humorous insight into the play. Students always left with the colour printout to take back to their primary school and stick into their diary, which also contained extension work for the more able.

Using *Macbeth* and Kar2ouche was brilliant. Our primary schools did not have access to Kar2ouche as the license was too expensive for them, but at Larkmead we were very early users of this software, which we already used in Year 9. Students got to use one of our computer rooms, spend an afternoon in their new secondary school, taught by an English teacher and, best of all, experience Shakespeare through 'hands-on' use of ICT.

What the students said about Shakespeare:

"It took a bit of getting used to, but once we got to grips with the language, we were able to process it really quickly."

"You get to know it earlier. When we do another play, it's easier to understand it. We should have done it even earlier."

"I went to see *The Merchant of Venice* at the theatre last year and I wouldn't have done that if I hadn't done this work."

(Year 10 students, reflecting on their experiences of the cross-phase project)

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Artwork by Year 5 pupil,
Leighton Primary School, Crewe

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Shakespeare in Year 7

About the objectives for Shakespeare:

There are two learning objectives for Shakespeare in Year 7. They focus on interpretive choices and the relevance of the plays' themes to a modern audience.

- **To appreciate that Shakespeare's plays can be performed and interpreted in different ways.**
- **To engage with some of the issues, themes and ideas in Shakespeare's plays and to appreciate the way they remain relevant in the 21st century.**

They support progression by:

- Building on pupils' understanding that a drama text is brought to life through performance and that different choices and interpretations are both possible and desirable.
- Developing the exploration of some of Shakespeare's key themes and extending this to an appreciation of their continuing relevance in today's society.

Links to the Secondary Framework:

Strand 4.1: Using different dramatic approaches to explore ideas, texts and issues.

- Explore ideas, texts and issues through a variety of dramatic approaches and conventions.

Strand 4.2: Developing, adapting and responding to dramatic techniques, conventions and styles.

- Work on their own and with others to develop dramatic processes, narratives, performances or roles.
- Comment on the effectiveness of the different dramatic conventions and techniques used.

Strand 5.2: Understanding and responding to ideas, viewpoints, themes and purposes in texts.

- Identify and understand the main ideas, viewpoints, themes and purposes in a text.
- Make a personal response to a text and provide some textual reference in support.

Strand 6.1: Relating texts to the social, historical and cultural contexts in which they were written.

- Understand the different ways in which texts can reflect the social, cultural and historical contexts in which they were written.

Strand 6.2: Analysing how writers' use of linguistic and literary features shapes and influences meaning.

- Identify and describe the effect of writers' use of specific literary, rhetorical and grammatical features.

Strand 7.2: Using and adapting the conventions and forms of text on paper and on screen.

- Draw on the conventions of written forms to plan writing and develop ideas to fit a specific task.

Strand 10.2: Commenting on language use.

- Understand and make use of the most common terms used to describe language when referring to their own or others' language use.

Suggested teaching approaches

To appreciate that Shakespeare's plays can be performed and interpreted in different ways

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on key scenes, speeches or soliloquies, for example, by:

- Taking a significant scene from a play and exploring its various interpretations in two or three different film versions. Possible film

versions include *Macbeth* (Polanski's 1971 version and the RSC's 1979 version starring Ian McKellen and Judi Dench), *Romeo and Juliet* (Luhmann's 1995 version and Zeffirelli's 1968 version), *Much Ado about Nothing* (Branagh's 1993 version and the BBC's Shakespeare ReTold 2005 version) or *Hamlet* (Branagh's 1996 version and Zeffirelli's 1990 version starring Mel Gibson). Explore the effect and impact on the viewer created by each interpretation by considering the decisions made by the director with regard to setting, costumes and how actors play their parts.

- Asking pupils to perform a soliloquy with a partner in a range of different ways, such as reading alternate lines, whispering the words, or interrupting each other three words in to a line and then discussing the effect, e.g. what impact would it have on the audience if Hamlet whispered "To be or not to be" or if he shouted it?

To engage with some of the issues, themes and ideas in Shakespeare's plays and to appreciate the way they remain relevant in the 21st century

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on modern parallels to some of Shakespeare's key themes, for example, by:

- Providing pupils with a series of dilemmas, written as questions, for example:
 - How far would I be prepared to go to get something I really want? (*Macbeth*)
 - Should my parents have any say in the person I want to marry? (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*)
 - Is it ever justifiable to overthrow the leader of a country by force? (*Julius Caesar*)

Ask pupils to link the dilemmas to examples from film, television, the news and current events. Display these as cards with questions and responses around the room, and encourage pupils to add to them over time. This will gradually build into a haphazard but lively display of ways in which Shakespeare's themes are relevant to contemporary life and media.

- Investigating recent political speeches where leaders have justified going to war. Use Henry V's speech before Harfleur in Act 3 Sc1 to show how he motivates his soldiers. Make a collage around the speech of the images which Shakespeare uses – these can be drawn or taken from printed sources.

Shakespeare in Year 8

About the objectives for Shakespeare:

There are two learning objectives for Shakespeare in Year 8. They focus on social, historical and cultural aspects of Shakespeare's plays and on Shakespeare's place in our literary heritage.

- **To understand how characters' actions reflect the social, historical and cultural contexts of Shakespeare's time.**
- **To understand the cultural significance of Shakespeare and his place in our literary heritage.**

They support progression by:

- Building on pupils' knowledge and understanding of Shakespeare's life and times.
- Developing pupils' appreciation of Shakespeare's characters as dramatic constructs which can be interpreted in different ways according to different social, historical and cultural contexts.

Links to the Secondary Framework:

Strand 4.1: Using different dramatic approaches to explore ideas, texts and issues.

- Use specific dramatic approaches and conventions in structured ways for effective exploration of ideas, texts, issues and themes.

Strand 5.2: Understanding and responding to ideas, viewpoints, themes and purposes in texts.

- Trace the development of a writer's ideas, viewpoints and themes.
- Respond to a text by making precise points and providing relevant evidence in support of those points.

Strand 6.1: Relating texts to the social, historical and cultural contexts in which they were written.

- Explore the concept of literary heritage, why certain texts are important within it and how some texts have influenced culture and thinking.

Strand 6.2: Analysing how writers' use of linguistic and literary features shapes and influences meaning.

- Explore the range, variety and overall effect of trades of literary, rhetorical and grammatical features used by writers of literary and non-literary texts.

Strand 7.2: Using and adapting the conventions and forms of text on paper and on screen.

- Plan writing and develop ideas to suit a specific audience, purpose and task by adapting familiar forms and conventions.

Strand 10.2: Commenting on language use.

- Explain how linguistic concepts are related, and use the terminology in ways that help them describe and review language use.

Suggested teaching approaches

To understand how characters' actions reflect the social, historical and cultural contexts of Shakespeare's time

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on short extracts from plays which present views found in Elizabethan or Jacobean society, for example, by:

- Exploring the very real belief in witches and their malign influence as portrayed in *Macbeth* (James 1 had taken part in the interrogation of witches and believed that they had attempted to drown him on a sea voyage). Ask pupils to contrast the reactions of Macbeth and Banquo to the witches in Act 1 Scene 3 or explore Lady Macbeth's reaction to her husband's letter in Act 1, Scene 5.

- Exploring the anti-Semitic treatment of Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*. Make a list of the insulting language used by the Christians against Shylock before closely exploring Shylock's famous speech about revenge in Act 3, Scene 1. Antonio's behaviour would have been considered acceptable in Shakespeare's day and Shylock would have been regarded as a minor comic figure. A modern audience is likely to regard Shylock as a more interesting character than the merchant who gives his name to the play.

To understand the cultural significance of Shakespeare and his place in our literary heritage

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on the ways in which we still encounter Shakespeare's plots and language today, for example, by:

- Using a suitable selection of the many words and phrases in everyday use that owe their origin or longevity to their existence in Shakespeare's plays, for example, 'in a pickle', 'green-eyed monster', 'the game is up', 'make your hair stand on end'. (A useful source is: <http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/phrases-sayings-shakespeare.html>.) If internet access is available, ask pupils to research the site to find other phrases. Working in pairs, pupils can be asked to highlight phrases, in different colours, that they actually use and those they have heard others use. Draw out how many everyday expressions in English still owe something to their use by Shakespeare.
- Combining the study of a play with sections of a contemporary film, e.g. *Ten Things I Hate About You* (*The Taming of the Shrew*), or a novel e.g. *Noughts & Crosses* (*Romeo and Juliet*), to uncover how the plots of Shakespeare's plays continue to reverberate in modern culture, and significantly influence modern writers and directors.

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Shakespeare in Year 9

About the objectives for Shakespeare:

There are two learning objectives for Shakespeare in Year 9. They focus on engagement with a complete play and an appreciation and understanding of the way its constituent parts contribute to the whole.

- **To understand how characters are developed during the course of a play.**
- **To appreciate the dramatic conventions and linguistic qualities of scenes and understand their significance to the play as a whole.**

They support progression by:

- Building on pupils' understanding of Shakespeare's characterisation.
- Developing their appreciation of the language and dramatic conventions of Shakespeare's plays.

Links to the Secondary Framework:

Strand 4.1: Using different dramatic approaches to explore ideas, texts and issues.

- Use a wide variety of dramatic approaches and conventions to analyse complex and challenging ideas, issues, themes and texts.

Strand 4.2: Developing, adapting and responding to dramatic techniques, conventions and styles.

- Analyse and explain, in and out of role, the use, impact and effect of different dramatic conventions and techniques.

Strand 5.2: Understanding and responding to ideas, viewpoints, themes and purposes in texts.

- Develop interpretations of texts, supporting points with detailed textual evidence.

Strand 6.1: Relating texts to the social, historical and cultural contexts in which they were written.

- Develop an informed understanding of how ideas, experiences and values are portrayed in texts from different cultures and traditions.

Strand 6.2: Analysing how writers' use of linguistic and literary features shapes and influences meaning.

- Analyse in depth and detail writers' use of literary, rhetorical and grammatical features and their effects on different readers.

Strand 7.2: Using and adapting the conventions and forms of text on paper and on screen.

- Plan different types of writing and develop ideas by drawing on the ways in which forms and conventions can contribute to the overall impact and effectiveness of texts.

Strand 10.2: Commenting on language use.

- Analyse a range of texts or language uses, drawing on terminology related to literary, linguistic and grammatical features.

Suggested teaching approaches

To understand how characters are developed during the course of a play

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on a character's journey in a play, for example, by:

- Placing the name of a key character on the wall or screen and annotating it with quotations which focus on his or her feelings and state of mind at key points in the play. This activity is best applied to a character who undergoes change or development from the beginning to the end of the play: Prospero from *The Tempest* is a good example as are Macbeth and King Lear.

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- Asking pupils to sculpt one or more of the play's protagonists at key moments in the play. Other characters are placed and sculpted around them to represent relationships at these moments e.g. Richard III as the play begins, then as the new king, then on the night before Bosworth. Pupils are supported and guided to find textual evidence to verify the entire sculpture, focusing on the nature of the central character and his or her relationship with others at each key moment. The sculpture can be adapted if textual evidence suggests sharper detail is necessary.
- Positioning characters such as Lord and Lady Capulet and Lord and Lady Montague on 'stage' at the beginning of the play in Act 1 Scene 1 and again at the end in Act 5 Scene 3. This can be done by positioning the pupils themselves in a sculpted scene or by using cut-out figures on a mocked up stage. Ask pupils to justify their decisions using textual evidence.
- Exploring iambic pentameter. Ask pupils to chart the rhythm of a speech in iambic pentameter on a cardiogram – a piece of paper split into three horizontal lines on which each line of text in a speech is recorded. The central line is for recording lines of ten beats (regular), the lower line is for lines of fewer than 10 beats and the upper line is for lines of more than 10 beats. Each line is marked in order of speech and is joined up to give an indication of the rhythm of the character's heartbeat and feelings. This can be repeated at various points in the play to show changing moods and emotions.
- Identifying key words to provide an understanding of the essence of a speech. Pupils work with a line each and are asked to pick one key word or 'silver bullet' from their line. The delivery or response to this word can then be extended into a whole group exploration or performance and developed further as pupils trace recurring themes or images throughout the play.

To appreciate the dramatic conventions and linguistic qualities of scenes and understand their significance to the play as a whole

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on soliloquies, for example, by:

James Durran, English and Media Advanced Skills Teacher at The Parkside Federation in Cambridge, describes the approach taken by the English and Media Faculty:

Over the last few years, the English and Media Faculty at Parkside Community College, and now also Coleridge Community College, has experimented with a range of innovative approaches to the teaching of Shakespeare through the moving image. Film texts have often been seen as merely injecting motivation into the study of literature – providing access to a higher form. In these projects, literature and film are read together, and both are valued equally.

In Year 8, students study Baz Luhrmann's film of *Romeo and Juliet*, as part of their media work. In sequencing activities, they explore moving image 'grammar', and they use editing software to reinterpret part of the film in their own way. However, through their analysis of Luhrmann's interpretation, they also discuss aspects of the play's language and dramatic devices. Importantly, they also have a hugely enjoyable experience of Shakespeare.

At Key Stage 3, students preparing for national tests have studied scenes through close reading of the text in performance, comparing different directors' treatments of moments from the scenes. Displayed as 'tiled' clips on *PowerPoint*, these parallel fragments generate focused comparative thinking and talk, about interpretation of the written text, and about the language of film.

At Key Stage 4, all our students study for GCSEs in English, English Literature and Media Studies, in one integrated course. They study one of a choice of five Shakespeare plays, which they approach through watching and discussing a film version, and studying extracts from the text in class. They then write a GCSE English Literature coursework essay on a part or an aspect of the play, in which they make reference to the film as one interpretation of the play in performance. After this, they compare the film with another version, from a different period. They use *PowerPoint* to prepare formal oral presentations on how moments from the play have been interpreted differently in the two films, for different audiences and in different historical and cultural contexts. This then leads to a media essay, assessed as coursework for both GCSE English and GCSE Media Studies.

What the students said about Shakespeare:

"I'd introduce Shakespeare from a younger age." (Year 9 girl)

"I'd advise teachers to make it fun from the start with more acting and more trips to the theatre." (Year 8 boy)

"I'll definitely go and see Shakespeare plays and watch films of them." (Year 11 girl)

Shakespeare in Year 10

About the objectives for Shakespeare:

There are two learning objectives for Shakespeare in Year 10. They focus on the use of close textual reference in responding to a play and making connections with other plays studied.

- **To make a confident, critical and personal response to a whole play, using close textual reference.**
- **To understand the complexity of Shakespeare's characters and to make connections with other plays by Shakespeare.**

They support progression by:

- Developing pupils' awareness of the ways in which characters are constructed and developed.
- Helping pupils to apply their critical skills to their growing repertoire of Shakespeare's plays.

Links to the Secondary Framework:

Strand 4.1: Using different dramatic approaches to explore ideas, texts and issues.

- Compare, question and analyse complex and challenging ideas, texts, issues and themes by using a wide variety of dramatic approaches and conventions.

Strand 4.2: Developing, adapting and responding to dramatic techniques, conventions and styles.

- Analyse, compare, evaluate and exemplify, in and out of role, the different uses, intentions and impacts of particular dramatic conventions and techniques in a wide range of drama processes, texts or performances.

Strand 5.2: Understanding and responding to ideas, viewpoints, themes and purposes in texts.

- Analyse, compare and contrast ideas, viewpoints, purposes and themes, both within a text and between texts.
- Build an interpretation of a whole text, recognising links between ideas, themes or characters and supporting points with precise analysis, evidence and explanation.

Strand 6.1: Relating texts to the social, historical and cultural contexts in which they were written.

- Make informed connections and comparisons between texts and writers that are different in time, culture and literary tradition, exploring their influence on each other and on culture as appropriate.

Strand 6.2: Analysing how writers' use of linguistic and literary features shapes and influences meaning.

- Compare and contrast how writers use specific literary, rhetorical and grammatical features to shape meaning, how techniques differ between different texts and writers, and the potential impact on different readers.

Strand 7.2: Using and adapting the conventions and forms of text on paper and on screen.

- Plan and write effectively, making well judged choices and adaptations to suit particular tasks, purposes and audiences through their knowledge of a range of conventions and forms.

Strand 10.2: Commenting on language use.

- Draw on a wide repertoire of language terms, as appropriate, when analysing, comparing and contrasting texts, including their own.

Suggested teaching approaches

To make a confident, critical and personal response to a whole play, using close textual reference

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on directorial choices, for example, by:

- Developing a specification for a new version of the play for the BBC Shakespeare ReTold series. Insist that pupils provide a very specific brief which should include reference to particular scenes, lines and words and the type of interpretation looked for. This might be presented as a written piece or as an improvised meeting between the producers and the commissioning team.
- Reviewing a version of the current play seen either on film or in the theatre. This might take the form of a letter to the director or an actor, commenting on or questioning particular interpretive choices made.

To understand the complexity of Shakespeare's characters and to make connections with other plays by Shakespeare

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on archetypes, for example, by:

- Exploring some of Shakespeare's villains, such as Iago, Macbeth, Richard III, Don Pedro, Claudius, etc. As a starting point, take a character from the current play who might be considered a villain and place him or her on a continuum with other Shakespearian villains, from those whose evil seems inexplicable to those who are more complex, flawed characters to those who are likeable rogues. Tease out the nature of the villainy in the character in the core play. Notions of leadership, heroines, outsiders etc could be similarly explored.
- Putting a character on trial, involving every member of the class in various ways, e.g. as a character witness, as an expert witness, as a victim of the defendant, etc. Invite pupils to make creative links with other plays, e.g. by transposing the doctor in *Macbeth* to stand as an expert witness for Othello or Hamlet. This might form part of a piece of speaking and listening coursework as well as a response to Shakespeare.

Shakespeare in Year 11

About the objectives for Shakespeare:

There are two learning objectives for Shakespeare in Year 11. They focus on an understanding of the contextual significance of Shakespeare's plays, based on encounters with a range of plays.

- **To understand the significance of the social, historical and cultural contexts of a Shakespeare play.**
- **To appreciate the moral and philosophical significance of Shakespeare's plays and their relevance for a contemporary audience.**

They support progression by:

- Building on and developing pupils' awareness of the cultural, historical and social contexts of Shakespeare's plays.
- Consolidating an awareness of the deeper significances of Shakespeare's plays for an audience today.

Links to the Secondary Framework:

Strand 4.1: Using different dramatic approaches to explore ideas, texts and issues.

- Draw on a repertoire of dramatic approaches and conventions to pursue original and inventive lines of thought when exploring ideas, texts and issues and transfer them to other ideas and texts.

Strand 5.1: Developing and adapting effective reading skills and strategies.

- Analyse, compare and contrast texts and sources with insight into their context as well as their content, evaluating their validity and relevance for a range of tasks or purposes.

Strand 5.2: Understanding and responding to ideas, viewpoints, themes and purposes in texts.

- Evaluate the ways in which ideas, viewpoints and themes in texts may be interpreted differently according to the perspective of the reader.
- Develop and sustain independent interpretations of texts, making concise evaluative comments and supporting points with detailed textual reference and analysis.

Strand 6.1: Relating texts to the social, historical and cultural contexts in which they were written.

- Analyse the values and assumptions of writers by drawing out connections and comparisons between texts and their relationship to social, historical and cultural contexts.

Strand 6.2: Analysing how writers' use of linguistic and literary features shapes and influences meaning.

- Analyse how specific literary, rhetorical and grammatical features shape meaning in implicit and explicit ways to create impact, how techniques differ across a wide range of texts and writers, and evaluate the potential impact of these choices on different readers.

Strand 7.2: Using and adapting the conventions and forms of text on paper and on screen.

- Select from a wide range of conventions and forms, adapting or synthesising their distinctive features as appropriate to achieve particular effects and impact in their writing.

Strand 10.2: Commenting on language use.

- Select carefully from the full repertoire terminology to make precise analysis, communicate ideas effectively and enhance critical exploration of a wide range of texts.

Suggested teaching approaches

To understand the significance of the social, historical and cultural contexts of a Shakespeare play

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on the way Shakespeare's plays are set within a political landscape, for example, by:

- Investigating Shakespeare's treatment of his source material and the way he adapted it for dramatic and artistic reasons, e.g. Richard III was a successful soldier and popular leader, a patron of the Arts; Macbeth was actually a good king who reigned in Scotland for many years. Pupils might write in role as Richard's or Macbeth's lawyers, demanding a retraction of the damaging portrayal of their clients.

- Exploring the positive representation of leadership in plays such as *Henry V* and *Richard II* in the wider historical and political context of the latter years of Elizabeth's reign in order to idealise the Queen and set the standard for kingship.

To appreciate the moral and philosophical significance of Shakespeare's plays and their relevance for a contemporary audience

One way to approach this learning objective would be to focus on group talk, for example, by:

- Giving pupils a series of statements, for example:
 - The play shows us that humans are basically good.
 - The play shows the importance of religion.

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- The play shows that prejudice is always wrong.
- The play shows us that revenge is sometimes justifiable.
- The play shows us that the end justifies the means.

Give them 30 seconds, with a partner, to apply the statement to the play they have studied and to decide on their response. Then share the following statement: 'Shakespeare's plays still have relevance today. They hold up a mirror to society, showing us our strengths and weaknesses'. In pairs or small groups, ask pupils to make a two-column list for ideas that support the statement and those that do not support it.

- Using whole class and group discussions and strategies such as 'conscience corridor', 'walk of fame' and 'walk of shame', encourage pupils to explore the moral issues that underpin the play they are studying. Build up a working wall display on these issues and allow pupils to annotate the display with quotations or their thoughts on characters' actions that exemplify these themes. Encourage them to make connections with films, novels, and popular TV series, e.g. the parallels with the downfall of Macbeth and Darth Vader in their pursuit of power. Pupils could write the obituary for their chosen character using evidence from the play to demonstrate how their actions, their attitudes and what other characters have said and feel about them, reveal their moral position and how it is contrary to the good of society.

- Asking pupils to identify the characters that represent moral or philosophical perspectives or could be seen as a moral touchstone for the themes of the play, e.g. Banquo and Macduff in *Macbeth*, Polonius in *Hamlet* or Cordelia in *King Lear*. Pupils might plan and present a 15-minute version of *This is your Life* using other pupils as characters who talk about the star of the show and their exemplary life.

Shakespeare post-16

As each key stage builds on the last and prepares for the next, so post-16 study builds on students' prior knowledge of Shakespeare at GCSE. Likewise, students' engagement with Shakespeare during the years of compulsory education prepares them for post-16 study, if that is their chosen route.

Students following GCE English Literature courses will study at least one play by Shakespeare as a compulsory element either at AS or A2 and some Drama and Theatre Studies specifications also offer an optional Shakespeare play for study. Students can continue to use a range of active and interactive approaches to explore his plays, whether they are studying Shakespeare in English Literature or in Drama and Theatre Studies.

Depending on the chosen GCE specification, students may be required to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in a range of ways, for example:

- Through an extended, comparative study, making comparisons and links between a chosen Shakespeare play and other, thematically linked texts.
- Through a study of genre, drawing connections between Shakespeare's plays and other plays from the same historical period or from related dramatic genres.
- Through a critical analysis of others' interpretations of a play, perhaps showing an appreciation of the way different literary critical theorists and theatre practitioners have reinterpreted Shakespeare over time and across cultures.
- Through a 're-creative' response, such as a character's monologue in the style of Alan Bennett's *Talking Heads*. Students might explore how and why Shakespeare's plays have been reinterpreted and transposed into different media over time, for example, in Margaret Atwood's *Gertrude Talks Back* in *Good Bones and Simple Murders*.

Significant experiences in Key Stage 5 might include:

- Encountering a wider range of Shakespeare's plays, e.g. histories, comedies, tragedies etc.
- Encountering a range of different views and theories about Shakespeare, including those from other cultures.
- Drawing on a wide range of dramatic approaches to engage with texts and to test out critical views of plays.

For those who continue to study Shakespeare into Higher Education, students undertake a range of different approaches, such as a close study of Shakespeare texts as poetry, through

historical and dramatic interpretations, to full-scale dramatic productions of his work. They will be presented with option choices such as, 'Shakespeare on Film', 'Shakespeare in the Jacobean and Restoration periods', 'Shakespeare's Theatre' and 'Shakespeare as cultural icon'. Students studying Shakespeare within Drama and Performance Departments may be asked to consider how the theatrical conditions of his time affected the meaning of his work, or how staging conventions, set design or actor training have produced and reproduced Shakespeare from his own time to the present day.

Ultimately, those who enter professions such as teaching and the Arts continue this cycle for future generations, providing positive experiences of Shakespeare and helping to create a new generation of informed young adults who understand why Shakespeare's plays continue to be widely watched, read, studied, performed and reinterpreted; are able to make connections with their literary and cultural heritage and with the language, themes and ideas of Shakespeare's plays; and who benefit, as a result, from a lifelong pleasure in his work.

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Working with a theatre practitioner in schools – guidance from Globe Education, Shakespeare's Globe

Bringing a theatre practitioner into your classroom will give pupils the opportunity to experience the play from the perspective of an actor and a director. By working interactively with the text as a script, pupils will develop an understanding of Shakespeare's characters, themes, plot and the process undertaken by an actor prior to performance.

To develop the pupil's critical thinking, the practitioner will facilitate practical activities that will engage pupils imaginatively, emotionally and physically with the text. To deepen the understanding of complex themes and to inspire discussion and discourse, the practitioner will use a range of drama strategies. Through collaborative, ensemble work the pupils will discover the relationship between the structure of Shakespeare's language, the character's emotional journey and their motivation. The practitioner will encourage pupils to make independent, creative choices, supported by evidence from the text.

As an actor, the practitioner can give an insight into the process of staging a Shakespearian play

for a contemporary audience by revealing how a director works analytically with the text and with their actor's contributions during the rehearsal period. Using familiar and contextual role-play situations in the workshop, the pupils will be able to understand the themes explored in the play and discover links between the human dilemmas faced by people in the 16th century and today. Working experimentally and directly with Shakespeare's language in a physical way enables pupils whose learning style is more kinaesthetic and visual to excel.

Some basic principles:

- Before speaking to the practitioner, establish the purpose of the workshop, for example, if the workshop is to introduce pupils to the play, to focus on a specific theme, to explore language or to work on a series of scenes.
- Inform the practitioner of the class size and any special requirements.
- Discuss the working space and share the timings of the school day.

- Identify the structure of the workshop and your role within the session.

Preparing the ground prior to the workshop:

- Book and prepare the space so that it is free from interruptions and is warm enough for practical work.
- Inform the pupils that they will be working physically and should dress appropriately.
- Check with the practitioner if additional resources or materials are required to support the delivery.

Supporting the visit:

Before the workshop begins, inform the practitioner of any recent developments or incidents which could affect the work or may

affect the group dynamic during the session. During the workshop, support the practitioner, as previously agreed in the initial discussion and follow the practitioner's lead in order to ensure the smooth delivery of the aims and objectives of the workshop.

Embedding the experience:

- Incorporate the workshop into termly planning.
- Plan time to reflect and review the workshop in order to consolidate the learning and enable pupils to apply their experience to their future critical appreciations.
- Integrate and adapt practical elements of the workshop into future lessons.

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Preparing pupils for a theatre visit – suggestions from the RSC

Taking young people to see a Shakespeare play requires a particular kind of preparation if they are to get the most out of the experience of seeing live theatre. We want young people to understand that the director, the actors and designers have come together to make a series of interpretative choices about the text and then created a unique production of that play within a specific theatrical environment.

Taking an active approach to this preparation using drama-based methods encourages young people to make their own interpretative choices about the text.

These approaches:

- Offer hooks into different moments of the play.
- Allow pupils to explore key lines of text.
- Introduce pupils to some of the characters that they will meet and the dilemmas that these characters face.
- Help them engage with some of the interpretative choices that have to be made when staging a production of this play.
- Help young people develop a language of critical viewing.

Choosing a production that is accessible to young people is important and you may wish to consider the following:

- Does the interpretation of the play speak to young people today?
- Are there elements of the production that young people may respond to such as use of certain music?
- Is there a strong visual and design element that can help signify what is going on?
- Is the staging exciting?

In preparing young people for the visit also ask them to consider the differences between live theatre and cinema – what is the effect of a live audience on the actors? Can different audience reactions alter the experience of being in and of watching a play? Can any two productions of a play be exactly the same? A theatre production is essentially a sociable experience so does this affect how we relate to other members of an audience in the theatre? Why do we have intervals at the theatre and not at the cinema?

Engaging pupils in some of these suggested activities before and after seeing a play can help to ensure that they get the most out of the

experience of live theatre and begin to develop skills that will stand them in good stead for a lifetime of theatre-going pleasure.

Before the trip

If pupils are unfamiliar with the play:

Ensure they know the narrative.

Sample exercise:

- **Headlines:** Teacher chooses up to ten key moments within the play and creates a newspaper headline for each one. In groups, pupils make a still image (photograph) of that headline, and then find a choral way to speak the headline. Share and interrogate.

Introduce Shakespeare's language. Encourage pupils to speak the language and feel the rhythm of the words.

Sample exercise:

- **Text Scraps:** Introduce text scraps (short lines of text from the play) for each headline in exercise 1. Starting with the original tableaux bring these short scenes to life incorporating the text scraps. Share and interrogate.

Introduce key characters.

Sample exercise:

- **Character facts:** Create lists of 4-5 facts about the main characters. Pupils in groups create still images of the relationships between the characters at the beginning and at the end of the play. Share and interrogate.

If pupils have studied the play in depth:

Encourage exploration of interpretative choices.

Sample exercises:

- **Play 'As Ifs':** Choose a scene and edit it into no more than 2 sides of A4. Ask pupils to play

the scene in a variety of different ways that illuminate different interpretative possibilities within the text. For examples and tips on editing text, please see RSC website:

<http://www.rsc.org.uk>.

Finally, ask pupils to choose their own 'As Ifs' to perform.

- **Choose a pivotal moment in the play:**

Create a tableau or short scene of that moment (using key props etc). Each group may decide on a different moment. Pupils then choose text to add to their image (encourage exploration of dramatic irony by juxtaposing text with image). Share and interrogate.

After the trip

Encourage critical reflection by starting from moments in the production that stand out in pupils' memories. Then analyse why these were effective.

Sample exercises:

- In groups, pupils discuss what they felt was the most important moment in the production and then recreate a still image of this moment. These are shared and discussed. Why were these moments memorable?
- Pupils feed back on the moments when key elements such as lighting/sound stood out. In discussion, they are encouraged to analyse some of the interpretative choices that were made in the production.

Explore other interpretative choices:

Sample exercise:

- **Stage an edited scene:** choose a short or edited section from a scene and ask pupils in small groups to explore how *they* might stage this scene – what difference choices would they make to the ones they saw in their theatre visit? Share and interrogate, then refer back to how the scene was staged in the production. Which do pupils prefer and why?

With thanks to the many people who contributed their time and expertise to the development of this resource:

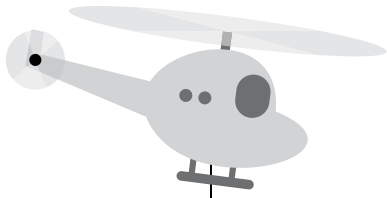
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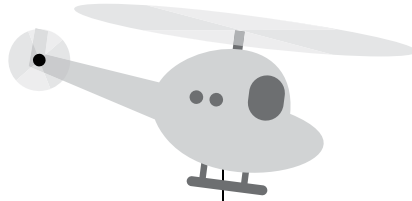
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Image on p41 shows Jacqueline Defferary as Beatrice in Globe Education's production of 'Much Ado About Nothing' at Shakespeare's Globe. Photographer: Andy Bradshaw.



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