

For:

- English teachers
- English subject leaders



**Qualifications
and Curriculum
Development
Agency**

Active
Shakespeare:
Capturing
evidence of
learning

**Directing
Romeo and Juliet
Teacher notes**

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Teaching time: These materials are designed to be integrated into teachers' existing plans for the study of Shakespeare and to take approximately 5 one-hour lessons (or equivalent).

Framework objectives:

- 5.1 Developing and adapting active reading skills and strategies
- 5.2 Understanding and responding to ideas, viewpoints, themes and purposes in texts
- 6.1 Relating texts to the social, historical and cultural contexts in which they were written
- 6.2 Analysing how writers' use of linguistic and literary features shapes and influences meaning
- 10.1 Exploring language variation and development according to time, place, culture, society and technology
- 10.2 Commenting on language use

Assessment focuses: Reading AF5, AF6 and AF7. During the course of these activities you may also see evidence for AF2 and AF3.

Synoptic task: Pupils will describe the choices and decisions they have made to create a production of *Romeo and Juliet* to be performed by their class. They will comment on how their interpretation reflects the different ways Shakespeare's language can be presented, how the audience will view the characters and different social conventions of the time.

Active Shakespeare: Directing *Romeo and Juliet*

Introduction

Using these materials pupils will explore contemporary and Elizabethan interpretations of *Romeo and Juliet*. They will watch film clips of an acting company's rehearsals as the director and actors work through these two interpretations. For the synoptic task pupils will draw on the experience they have gained while using the materials to describe the choices and decisions they made when creating their own production. Pupils will focus on how their interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* reflects different ways of understanding and presenting Shakespeare's language (AF5). Pupils will also have to make decisions about how they might interpret characters and scenes for an audience (AF6) and explore how an understanding of both Elizabethan and contemporary social conventions can affect a director's interpretation of a scene (AF7).

Prior learning

Pupils will need a solid understanding of the plot, main characters and themes of *Romeo and Juliet*. In particular, pupils will need to be familiar with the following key scenes: Act 1 Scene 5, Act 3 Scene 1, and Act 3 Scene 5. They will also need some knowledge of the social and historical context to help them relate their comments to knowledge of Shakespeare's times, in particular marriage and the role of men and women.

The accompanying Teacher Guidance document shows how you might integrate the materials into your scheme of work, in order to provide this prior learning.

Structure

Stage 1: Changing moods in Act 1 Scene 5 (*approximately 50 minutes*)

Pupils will be introduced to the unit, and given their reflection logs. They will identify different ways to direct a scene and explain how the direction of a scene can affect an audience's understanding of the play.

Stage 2: Words as weapons in Act 3 Scene 1 (*approximately 1 hour 30 minutes*)

Pupils will identify how words can be used as weapons, exploring different ways of delivering a line. They will evaluate which interpretation of a line is more effective for the character and justify their opinion with evidence from the text.

Stage 3: Shakespeare's words in context (*approximately 30 minutes – longer if the 'Taking it further' activity is included*)

Pupils will watch a version of Act 3 scene 5 performed in an Elizabethan context and identify how the director has referenced the social, cultural and historical context of the 16th century. Pupils will be asked to identify how the actors have been directed to deliver their lines to reflect Elizabethan social conventions.

Stage 4: Romeo and Juliet: a 21st century perspective (*approximately 1 hour 15 minutes*)

Pupils will work in small groups to apply the different practical activities explored in the unit to Act 3 Scene 5.

Stage 5: Synoptic task (*approximately 1 hour*)

Pupils will complete an extended piece of writing describing the choices and decisions they have made to create their interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* for a class performance. They will draw on their experience they have gained from working through the materials and should refer closely to the text, explaining and justifying their choices and decisions.

Resources

- 🎬 *Romeo and Juliet* film clips
- A copy of the *Reflection log* for each pupil
- Copies of the complete text of *Romeo and Juliet* for pupils to refer to
- Post-it notes

Additional requirements

Ideally all lessons would take place in an open space so that pupils have room to move around and physically explore the text, which aids understanding. This would be particularly helpful for Exploring the Impact of Words (Stage 2, Activity 1). However, many lessons could take place in a classroom, with pupils sitting grouped around desks where necessary, or with desks cleared away.

Stage 1: Changing moods in Act 1 Scene 5

Learning objectives

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

10.2 Commenting on language use

Resources

- Reflection log pages 1-2
- 🎬 *Romeo and Juliet* clip
 - Clip 1: Potpan and servingmen

Introduction (*10 minutes*)

- The purpose of this unit is to:
 - consider the role of a director in the production of a play
 - explore how the way Shakespeare's language is used can impact on the interpretation of a scene and the relationships between characters
 - consider and justify the choices that they might make if they were directing a production of this play.
- Many of the activities in this unit are rehearsal room activities used by actors and directors to try different interpretations of scenes in a play.
- Give out the reflection logs and ask pupils to write their names on the front. Explain that:
 - it contains all the text they will need for these activities
 - it provides opportunities for them to reflect and write down notes about Shakespeare's use of language, the characters' relationships with each other and how a scene might be presented to reflect either the Elizabethan or 21st Century context

- it has questions to prompt some writing about language, characters and social conventions
- it has a 'synoptic task' which brings together everything they have learnt to enable them to justify the choices and decisions they have made to create their production of the play
- the notes they make in their reflection logs will greatly help them when they come to do the synoptic task so it's important that they make as many notes as they can during the course of the activities
- they will need to include quotations and explain the reasons for their choice of quotations
- you will be looking for evidence of AF5, AF6 and AF7.

Activity 1: Analysing the impact of a director's instructions on the meaning of a scene (30 minutes)

- Pupils will now watch actors rehearsing key episodes from Act 1 Scene 5 (the ball scene). You may need to contextualise this scene for your pupils.
- Ask pupils to turn to page 1 of their reflection log where they will see photographs of the actors taking part in the clips they are about to watch (*Resource 1: Meet the cast and director*). The names of the characters they will be playing in the scene are alongside the photographs.
- 🎬 Play clip 1: Potpan and servingmen. Pause the clip after the company have finished their first (fast/frantic) interpretation of the scene (when Bill says 'That's great').
- **Reflection opportunity:** Pupils write as many words as possible to describe the mood of the scene extract they have just watched on page 2 of their reflection log (*Reflection opportunity 1: Potpan and servingmen – Act 1 Scene 5*).
- 🎬 Play the clip up to the end of the company's second (slow/lazy) interpretation of the scene (when the company applaud).

- **Reflection opportunity:** Pupils write as many words as possible which describe the mood of the second (slow/lazy) interpretation of the scene on page 2 of their reflection log (*Reflection opportunity 1: Potpan and servingmen – Act 1 Scene 5*).
- Ask for a volunteer to feed back their chosen mood words to the whole group and note these words on an interactive whiteboard (IWB) (or equivalent) under the heading 'Potpan and servingmen'.
- When pupils are feeding back you may want to consider the following prompt questions.
 - Why did you choose those particular mood words?
 - How did the actors change their performances according to the director's instructions?
- 🎬 Play the clip up to the point when the company have finished discussing the two interpretations of the scene (when Bill says '...make as many discoveries as possible about the play').
- **Reflection opportunity:** Pupils make notes on page 2 of their reflection log about the way in which they would direct the scene (*Reflection opportunity 1: Potpan and servingmen – Act 1 Scene 5*). You may want to ask pupils to discuss this question in pairs or groups before they make notes in their reflection logs.

Assessment opportunity

During Stage 1 pupils consider scenes from a Director's point of view. The notes pupils make in their reflection logs on the different meanings and effects created by the Director's suggestions will provide evidence of AF6 (their understanding of writer's purposes and viewpoints).

During the pair/group discussions you could focus on one pair/group and observe the discussion in order to make notes of any relevant oral contributions. Or you could ask for a volunteer from each group to summarise their group's discussion to one or all of the other groups. You could record this summary on a video or digital camera. This, in addition to the notes pupils will write in their reflection logs, will provide further evidence for AF6.

Stage 2: Words as weapons in Act 3 Scene 1

Learning objectives

- 6.2 Analysing how writers' use of linguistic and literary features shapes and influences meaning
- 10.2 Commenting on language use

Resources

- Reflection log pages 6-7
- 🎬 *Romeo and Juliet* clips
 - Clip 2: Throwing words exercise and Words as weapons exercise

Introduction (5 minutes)

- Pupils will be looking at Act 3 Scene 1 (the brawl). They will now engage in a range of activities and watch clips of the actors rehearsing key moments from that scene. They will then be asked to respond to this footage and make notes in their reflection logs.
- Pupils should concentrate on how Shakespeare uses words and language to create character and dramatic tension.

Activity 1: Exploring the impact of words (approximately 20 minutes)

- Pupils will be taking part in a practical rehearsal room exercise that will look at how words can be used as weapons.
- Put pupils into pairs and ask the pairs to label themselves A or B. All As stand in a line, with Bs facing them (the lines should be at least 2 metres apart). Once in two lines, pupils should place their reflection logs on the floor in front of them.
- When the pupils are in their two lines, work through the following exercise with them.

- Ask the As to imagine they are holding a stone and, when instructed, to mime (without moving their feet) throwing this stone at their partner. As they 'throw' the stone, they may make a non-verbal sound should they wish. The Bs should react to the imaginary object as it is thrown at them, without moving from the line.
- Repeat the above exercise with Bs throwing an imaginary stone at As.
- Remaining in the two lines, pupils pick up their reflection logs and turn to page 5 (*Resource 1: Words as weapons*). This page contains some lines from Act 3 Scene 1. They should select one or two words from these lines that they feel are aggressive, memorise their chosen word(s) then place their reflection logs on the floor behind them.
- Ask the As to repeat the above 'throwing' exercise and this time, accompany their action with their chosen word(s). Repeat this activity as above with the Bs.
- In their pairs, ask them to discuss the following followed by class feedback:
 - their choice of words
 - words they thought were aggressive
 - words that surprised them.
- **Reflection opportunity:** Pupils make notes of their answers as well as any particularly interesting answers from others in the class in the relevant spaces on page 4 of their reflection logs (*Resource 1: Words as weapons – Act 3 Scene 1*).

Activity 2: Applying knowledge of ‘words as weapons’ to the text (*approximately 20 minutes*)

- Pupils will watch a group of actors doing the same exercise that they have just completed.
- Pupils should think about the questions on page 5 of their reflection logs (*Reflection opportunity 1: Throwing words*) as they are watching the clip.
- 🎬 Play Clip 2: Throwing words exercise and Words as weapons exercise. Stop the clip at the point when the company finish the Throwing words exercise (when Bill says ‘Great work, thank you’).
- **Reflection opportunity:** Pupils write notes on page 6 of their reflection log (*Reflection opportunity 1: Throwing Words*). They should write their thoughts on the actors’ choice of words, which words were most effective and the way the actors delivered the words.

Activity 3: Identifying different ways of delivering a line (*approximately 25 minutes*)

- Pupils will watch a clip in which the actors try different ways of saying their lines to attack other characters. They need to look at the questions on page 6 of the reflection log (*Reflection opportunity 2: Mercutio and Tybalt*).
- 🎬 Play Clip 2: Throwing words exercise and Words as weapons exercise. Start the clip when Bill says ‘In this section of Act 3 Scene 1 the actors try different exercises using words as weapons’.
- **Reflection opportunity:** Pupils make notes in the relevant boxes on page 6 of their reflection log (*Reflection opportunity 2: Mercutio and Tybalt*). You may want to ask pupils to discuss this question in pairs or groups before they make notes in their reflection logs.

Activity 4: Evaluating the effectiveness of delivering a line (*approximately 20 minutes*)

- Pupils will watch the Words as weapons exercise from Clip 2 again.
- While they are watching this clip, they should note key words from the scene on page 7 of their reflection logs (*Reflection opportunity 3: Effective language*).
- Put the pupils into pairs. In each pair one pupil will make a list of words that were effective in provoking a fight (on page 7) and the other pupil will make a list of words that were effective in encouraging peace (on page 7).
- 🎬 Play Clip 2: Words as weapons exercise again. Stop the clip at the point where the company finish the exercise (when Bill says 'That is the word that will launch the verbal sparring').
- After pupils have watched this clip the pairs feed back to each other in order to complete both sections on page 7 of their reflection logs (*Reflection opportunity 3: Effective language*).
- Pupils discuss in their pairs what they have discovered about how words achieve (or do not achieve) the purpose intended by the character. They should then individually complete the third section on page 7 of their reflection logs (*Reflection opportunity 3: Effective language*).
- Using the questions below, prompt a group discussion about how words can or cannot achieve the purpose intended by the character - note pupil responses on the IWB or equivalent and draw out what the pupils have discovered.
 - How effective were the words and actions/gestures?
 - Which words did you associate with peace or fighting?
 - How would you instruct an actor to deliver the lines?
 - Which version of the lines would be more effective for an audience?

Assessment opportunity

By the end of this stage, pupils should have made notes in their reflection logs which begin to provide assessment evidence for AF5 (writer's use of language).

During Activity 4 pupils will engage in whole class discussions. You may be able to make notes about relevant oral contributions. Alternatively, if there are particular pupils you want to focus on for oral evidence, discussions could take place in small groups rather than as a class. This will allow you to see evidence for AF5.

Stage 3: Shakespeare's words in context

Learning objectives

- 5.2 Understanding and responding to ideas, viewpoints, themes and purposes in texts
- 6.1 Relating texts to the social, historical and cultural contexts in which they were written

Resources

- Reflection log page 8-9
- 🎬 *Romeo and Juliet* clip
 - Clip 3: Scene rehearsal – Elizabethan interpretation and 21st Century interpretation

Activity 1: Observing body language that draws on Elizabethan conventions

(approximately 30 mins)

- Remind pupils of what they know about Elizabethan social conventions, particularly marriage and the role of men and women. Ask pupils briefly what ideas they have about Elizabethan society.

Pupils will be watching actors drawing on Elizabethan conventions to explore how it affects the characters' relationships in Act 3 scene 5. Remind pupils that in this scene, Juliet will be told that she must marry Paris, having already married Romeo without her parents' permission earlier in the play. They will be identifying how the director has referenced the social, cultural and historical context of the 16th century by asking the actors to deliver their lines and react to each other in specific ways that reflect Elizabethan social conventions.

- After watching the clip they will be working in small groups to evaluate and discuss the scene in more detail to compare their observations; they will need to consider the following:
 - words/phrases that stand out
 - physical actions/gestures the actors use.

- Pupils will use the questions on pages 8 and 9 of their reflection logs (*Reflection opportunity 1: Status words and actions*) as prompts to support their group discussion.
- 🎬 Play Clip 3: Scene rehearsal – Elizabethan interpretation and 21st Century interpretation. Stop the clip at the end of the Elizabethan interpretation (when Bill says ‘Can we try it now as 2008 version’).
- **Reflection opportunity:** After watching the clip, pupils first discuss the scene in groups then make their own notes on pages 8 and 9 of their reflection log (*Reflection opportunity 1: Status words and actions*).

Taking it Further - Considering a 21st Century interpretation (20 minutes)

This activity gives pupils the opportunity to think about and explore the ways in which a contemporary version of a scene from *Romeo and Juliet* compare with an Elizabethan interpretation.

- Pupils will watch the 'Elizabethan Interpretation' rehearsal again. While watching they should consider which contemporary gestures they would use to replace any 'Elizabethan' gestures they see in this clip and how the characters might say their lines differently.

Note: you may wish to pause the clip and ask pupils this question at multiple points rather than wait until the end of the clip.

-  Play Clip 3: Scene rehearsal – Elizabethan interpretation and 21st Century interpretation. Stop the clip at the end of the Elizabethan interpretation (when Bill says 'Can we try it now as a 2008 version').
- In small groups or as a whole class, pupils should consider how a contemporary version of this scene would differ from the 'Elizabethan' version. Begin the discussion by asking the pupils to think about:
 - the status of the characters
 - the changing status from one version to the other
 - how the characters behave towards one another in each version.
- As well as discussing how the scenes would differ, ask pupils to show you the alternative gesture, action or way they would deliver a line from a contemporary perspective.

Assessment opportunity

By the end of this stage, pupils should have made notes in their reflection logs which begin to provide assessment evidence for AF7 (relate texts to their social, cultural and historical contexts). Pupils' responses to discussion questions at the end of Activity 1 and the *Taking it Further* activity may offer further oral evidence which could be noted down during the class/group discussion.

If pupils comment on the impact the different ways of playing the scene might have on an audience, either in their reflection log or orally, this could provide additional evidence for AF6 (overall effect on the reader).

Stage 4: Romeo and Juliet: a 21st Century perspective

Learning objectives

- 5.2 Understanding and responding to ideas, viewpoints, themes and purposes in texts
- 6.1 Relating texts to the social, historical and cultural contexts in which they were written
- 10.1 Exploring language variation and development according to time, place, culture, society and technology

Resources

- Reflection log pages 10-13
- 🎬 *Romeo and Juliet* clip
 - Clip 3: Scene rehearsal - Elizabethan interpretation and 21st Century interpretation

Introduction (5 minutes)

- In this stage pupils will work in small groups to take on the role of a director. They will direct Act 3 Scene 5 from a contemporary perspective by applying their personal experiences as a teenager today to inform their decisions. The justifications they make for their own interpretation and how they link this to the text will be particularly important.

Activity 1: Exploring different ways to direct a scene to illustrate contemporary behaviour and attitudes (30 minutes)

- Divide the class into small groups and give each group one of the three scene extracts from pages 10-12 in the reflection logs (*Resource 1: Act 3 Scene 5*).
- Use the following questions to prompt a group discussion about the way present day social conventions, behaviour, language and attitudes might be used for this scene.

- How might the characters behave today?
- Would all the characters be present in the modern family?
- What language is used in the scene that is specific to Elizabethan society?
- What language would be used today in this scene?
- Pupils read through their extract and nominate a member of the group to be the director. The director can and should take suggestions from the entire group.
- Pupils should experiment with different ways of performing the scene. They should try out different ideas which reflect a contemporary interpretation of a mother, father and daughter relationship. They should also consider the role of the Nurse from today's perspective.
- Ask each group to decide on the interpretation they prefer. They should show this interpretation to the class and explain how the language informed their decisions.
- Pupils now write annotations on the relevant text extracts in their reflection logs (*Resource 1: Act 3 Scene 5*). These annotations should include reasons for the decisions their group made about the interpretation of the scene as well as any other thoughts they had about the activity.
- If you would like your class to explore the role of the director in more detail you could repeat the activity with groups having different extracts and/or different pupils taking the role of director.

Activity 2: Evaluating versions and justifying responses (*40 minutes*)

- In this activity pupils will watch a contemporary interpretation of Act 3 Scene 5 and compare this version with the Elizabethan version they watched in the previous stage (Clip 3: Scene rehearsal – Elizabethan interpretation). As they watch the clip they should consider how the 21st Century interpretation differs from the Elizabethan interpretation.
- 🎬 Play Clip 3: Scene rehearsal - Elizabethan interpretation and 21st Century interpretation (from the point Bill says 'Can we try it now as a 2008 version').

- **Reflection opportunity:** Pupils write their observations about the ways in which the 21st Century interpretation compares to the Elizabethan interpretation on page 13 of their reflection logs (*Reflection opportunity 1: A 21st Century perspective – Act 3 Scene 5*).
- Use whole class or small group discussion to identify similarities and differences between their version and the filmed ‘contemporary’ version of this scene. You may wish to use the following questions to prompt the discussion.
 - What is the status of the characters during the scene?
 - How is the status of the characters influenced by the contemporary context? How is this shown?
 - Which version did you prefer and why?
 - How has the clip made you think about the way you would direct the scene?
- Write the pupil observations on an IWB (or equivalent). Ask pupils to identify particular words or phrases from the text which were focused on in the two interpretations of the scene (i.e. their own interpretation and the filmed interpretation), before describing any relevant gestures or actions used by the actors (pupils).
- **Reflection opportunity:** Pupils write their observations next to the relevant text extracts on pages 10-12 of their reflection logs (*Resource 1: Act 3 Scene 5*). Ask them to look at the notes they made on page 13 of their reflection logs (*Reflection opportunity 1: A 21st Century perspective – Act 3 Scene 5*) and add any observations that came from the class discussion which they feel will be useful when it comes to completing the Synoptic Task. You may wish to remind them at this point that in the synoptic task they will complete an extended piece of writing describing the choices and decisions they have made to create their interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* for a class performance.

Assessment opportunity

By the end of this stage, pupils will have made notes in their reflection logs which provide assessment evidence for the identified assessment focuses.

Activities 1 and 2 will provide evidence for AF7 (relate texts to their social, cultural and historical contexts) and AF5 (language). The annotations pupils add to the scene extracts in Activity 1 and any relevant observations they make about their own or others performances could provide evidence of AF6 (overall effect on the reader). Oral evidence for AF5 and AF6 could also come from the group discussion at the end of Activity 2.

Stage 5: Synoptic task

Success criteria

You should share these success criteria with the pupils before they begin the activity.

Alternatively, you may want to agree and share your own success criteria for the task.

- How well does the pupil comment on the use of language in the play and the impact it has on the audience? (RAF5)
- How well does the pupil interpret Shakespeare's text, consider and comment on Shakespeare's purpose and viewpoint in the play to support their interpretation and direction of the play? (RAF6)
- How well does the pupil justify and explain their interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* in relation to the social, cultural and historical context of the Elizabethan period? (RAF7)

Resources

- Reflection log

Activity: Directing the play (*approximately one hour*)

- Pupils will produce an extended piece of writing describing the choices and decisions they have made in creating either a 21st Century or Elizabethan interpretation for their production of *Romeo and Juliet*, as well as discussing their intended impact on the audience. They will need to decide whether they will be directing a 21st Century or Elizabethan interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet*.
- Pupils should write as themselves, drawing on their current knowledge and experiences from using the materials and the notes that they have collected in their reflection logs. They do not need to explain how to stage the play or how actors should deliver a line or describe in detail the costume and set design.
- Refer pupils to page 14 of their reflection logs (*SYNOPTIC TASK: Directing the play*).

- Pupils will need to spend some time looking back at their notes, planning what to write and deciding on which quotations to use.



About this publication

Who is it for?

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What is it about

Providing active and engaging ways to integrate Shakespeare in the ongoing periodic assessment of pupils' reading.

What is it for?

To support the teaching and assessment of Shakespeare at Key Stage 3.

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