

Table of Contents

Helping students read Shakespeare's plays aloud		2-13
Practice material		
Competitive insults		14
Short practice bits		15
2-4 line practice bits		
	Romeo & Juliet	16
	A Midsummer Night's Dream	17
	Macbeth	18
	Twelfth Night	19
	Hamlet	20,21
	The Merchant of Venice	22
	King Lear	23
Short scenes		
Romeo & Juliet	2,2 (Balcony scene)	24
	3,5 (It was the nightingale)	25
Dream	1,1 (Call you me fair?)	26
	2,1 (I am your spaniele)	27
Macbeth	1,5 (Unsex me here)	28
	1,7 (Screw your courage)	29
Twelfth Night	1,3 (Drinking healths to my niece)	30,31
	1,5 (Prove you a fool)	32
Hamlet	2,2 (These tedious old fools!)	33,34
	3,2 (The recorders)	35
	4,3 (A convocation of worms)	36
	5,1 (Gravedigger scene)	37,38
The Merchant of Venice	1,2 (God defend me from these)	39
King Lear	1,3 (Did my father strike my gentleman?)	40
	1,4 (Service)	41
	1,4 (Dost thou call me fool?)	42
	4,6 (Mad on the heath))	43,44
Much Ado About Nothing	1,1 (My Lady Disdain)	45
	1,3 (A plain dealing villain.)	46
	3,5 (Confidence that discerns you nearly)	47
Henry V	2,1 (There must be conclusions!)	48
The Tempest	2,2 (A drunken monster)	49
Julius Caesar	2,2 (O Caesar, I do fear them!)	50
As You Like It	2,4 (Phebe, Phebe, Phebe!)	51
At Crispian's Day speech (iambic pentameter and thought verse)		52,53
Physical geography		54,55
Synopsis of all <i>Shakespeare Vacuumed</i> 12 texts		56-68
One final word about speed		68

First, a word about speech and silence: I define speech as vocalized thought. When the mind is clear and the voice relaxed, speech may be produced as richly nuanced as thought - at least that is the goal. To HEAR this thought, the sound must be produced in SILENCE. My greatest student-workshop challenge is usually to instigate gales of laughter then absolutely insist on complete silence as the student/actors continue to read. This dynamic of appreciation and contribution, mixed with total silence, is difficult to establish and maintain, but absolutely critical to the enjoyment experienced and the amount learned by the students. Silence for whoever is reading or performing also establishes respect for the craft of acting and respect for fellow students. Like the piano, oral communication takes rigorous practice. Like the piano, it needs to be practised in silence.

Why Shakespeare Vacuumed?

I created the Shakespeare Vacuumed series so that English teachers and students might use their 'Shakespeare time' most nutritiously. Instead of being bogged down in the archaic trivia of an unabridged investigation or relying on the Shakespearean 'garnish' industry where students sample plot, character and setting, illuminated by historical facts, illustrated with photographs, recordings, music, models, maps, bits of props, costumes and sets, with lots and lots of activities, a tiny bit of text and finally the film, *Shakespeare Vacuumed* provides intelligent scripts the students can interpret for themselves. Once students begin reading/playing the parts aloud, not only will they acquire a passion for the Bard, but they will quite naturally gather and retain new vocabulary, syntax and oral communication skill.

What did I do to the texts?

As in all film scripts and most professional stage productions, *Shakespeare Vacuumed* texts have archaic words, repetition, excessive description and incomprehensible wordplay deleted from them. The scripts average 70% of the original word counts. Prefaced with a concise synopsis and judiciously noted, the texts are still challenging but limit the constant investigative stopping necessary to understand unabridged Shakespeare. *Shakespeare Vacuumed* scripts allows students to stay engaged by the stories.

The texts are also formatted as the characters think, with the length of the lines determined by the connectivity of the thoughts and the width of the 8 1/2 inch by 11 inch page, not an iambic pentameter rhythm. Connected thoughts can now remain on the same long line, as individual short thoughts may be given separate lines. I call the formatting **thought verse**.

Thoughts on verse

Iambic pentameter verse was a fashion of the day facilitating wordplay, puns and various rhyming schemes. It also helped actors memorize. I believe it was less an aesthetic choice and more an economic one: four tight little blocks of ink on an expensive piece of parchment. Punctuation varies greatly between modern editors, but it cannot be denied that iambic pentameter verse often sustains lengthy connected thinking.

This 19 line iambic pentameter question of Juliet's in her Act IV 'vial monologue' is the essence of verse (connected thought.) It takes great skill by the actress to colour all the frightening images while clearly asking the main question, "**Or, if I live, shall I not dash out my desperate brains?**"

Or, if I live, is it not very like,
 The horrible conceit of death and night,
 Together with the terror of the place,--
 As in a vault, an ancient receptacle,
 Where, for these many hundred years, the bones
 Of all my buried ancestors are packed:
 Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,
 Lies festered in his shroud; where, as they say,
 At some hours in the night spirits resort;--
 Alack, alack, is it not like that I,
 So early waking, what with loathsome smells,
 And shrieks like mandrakes' torn out of the earth,
 That living mortals, hearing them, run mad:--
 O, if I wake, **shall I not** be distraught,
 Environed with all these hideous fears,
 And madly play with my forefather's joints,
 And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud,
 And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,
 As with a club, **dash out my desperate brains?**

The same speech, vacuumed slightly in thought verse, and still one question.

Or, if I live, is it not very like, the horrible conceit of death and night,
 together with the terror of the place, as in a vault, an ancient receptacle,
 where, for these many hundred years, the bones of all my buried ancestors are packed;
 where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth, lies festered in his shroud,
 where, as they say, at some hours in the night spirits resort;
 O, if I wake, shall I not be distraught, environed with all these hideous fears,
 and madly play with my forefather's joints, and pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud,
 and, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone, as with a club, dash out my desperate brains?

I suggest that it is not how Shakespeare's words are placed on a page that determines the principle idea behind verse, but the interplay between connected thoughts. The larger page and thought-verse of Shakespeare Vacuumed simply makes it easier for students to understand, connect and speak the often complex thoughts of Shakespeare's characters.

Below is Edmund's "Thou nature" monologue from *King Lear*: first in iambic pentameter verse, then in un-vacuumed thought verse.

Thou, nature, art my goddess; to thy law
 My services are bound. Wherefore should I
 Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
 The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
 For that I am some twelve or fourteen moon-shines
 Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base?
 When my dimensions are as well compact,
 My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
 As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
 With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?
 Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take
 More composition and fierce quality
 Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,
 Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops,
 Got 'tween asleep and wake? Well, then,
 Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:
 Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
 As to the legitimate: fine word,--legitimate!
 Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
 And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
 Shall top the legitimate. I grow; I prosper:
 Now, gods, stand up for bastards!

Thou, nature, art my goddess; to thy law my services are bound.
 Wherefore should I stand in the plague of custom,* and permit the curiosity of nations* to deprive me,
 for that I am some twelve or fourteen moon-shines lag* of a brother?
 Why bastard? Wherefore base, when my dimensions are as well compact, my mind as generous,
 and my shape as true, as honest madam's issue?
 Why brand they us with base? With baseness? Bastardy? Base. Base?
 Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take more composition* and fierce* quality
 than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed, go to the creating a whole tribe of fops* got* 'tween asleep and wake?
 Well then, legitimate Edgar, I must have your land.
 Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund as to the legitimate.
 Fine word, 'legitimate.'
 Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed, and my invention thrive, Edmund the base shall top the legitimate.
 I grow; I prosper. Now gods, stand up for bastards!

stand...custom - submit to diseased convention, *curiosity of nations* - nice distinctions of people, *lag* - younger than
composition - robustness, *fierce* - thoroughbred, *fops* - fools, *got* - begot

Educational advantages of reading *Shakespeare Vacuumed* plays aloud.

The plays of Shakespeare are experienced as the author intended - as drama.

Reading Shakespeare aloud develops confidence and oral communication skills.

When students read aloud new vocabulary and forms of expression, they are much more likely to re-use them.

The simple act of breathing and speaking engages the emotions of students and opens up avenues of understanding not available through silent reading.

The sheer joy of playing and acting a play by Shakespeare often makes students more curious about reading, performing and seeing other Shakespearean plays.

What can teachers do to help and encourage their students to read the plays aloud?

Be courageous and set a good example by reading aloud to your class. If you are a bit nervous, practise out loud at home.

Encourage courage. There is no such thing as a perfect performance, there is only the process of getting better.

Make sure you know what every word means and have a good idea of how each line should be stressed. (For difficult lines, often stressing the verbs and the antithesis in them makes them clear.)

Notify students of the scenes to be read aloud the next class. Assign parts if possible.

ENGLISH TEACHER *as* ***SHAKESPEAREAN DIRECTOR***

In the *Shakespeare Vacuumed* series, plots have not been altered, dialogue has not been added, almost all characters remain and very few whole scenes have been cut. A literary analysis of the plays is still possible. Discussions of themes, symbols, figures of speech and derivations of words remain valid areas of investigation. With less time needed for paraphrasing or deciphering obscure references and vocabulary, English teachers have more time to direct readings.

To achieve a clear, complex and entertaining reading of a play, the director needs to encourage the students to employ the tools of the actor. Acting is an extremely complex craft that can never be perfected, but the following six basic principles should go a long way to helping your students bring Shakespeare's plays to life.

COLOURING

FRESH-MINTING

STRESSING AND COLOURING ANTITHESIS

HIGH NOTES IN ACTORS' VOICES

THE EMOTION OF WONDER

DIRECT WITH YOUR EARS

Colouring *(the ability to vocally realize a richly imagined text)*

Thought is an actor's most powerful tool. Actors must trust that the more coloured and detailed an image is in their minds, the clearer an audience will see it. Directors need to encourage actors to be mentally very specific about what their characters express. The voice responds in very subtle ways to thought, and often actors with small voices and clear, imaginative minds are much easier to understand than those that boom hollow noise. Colouring language is most of the actor's homework. Good actors never stop refining the images they find in Shakespeare's texts.

In this speech from *Henry V*, Chorus asks the audience to imagine an evocative time and setting. The actor must clearly visualize the rich images in the text for the audience to imagine them as he/she speaks.

CHORUS

Now entertain conjecture of* a time when creeping murmur and the poring dark
fills the wide vessel of the universe.

From camp to camp, through the foul womb of night, the hum of either army stilly* sounds,
that the fixed sentinels almost receive the secret whispers of each other's watch.

Fire answers fire, and through their paly* flames each battle sees the other's umbered* face.

Steed threatens steed, in high and boastful neighs piercing the night's dull ear;

and from the tents the armorers, accomplishing* the knights, with busy hammers closing rivets up,
give dreadful note of preparation.

The country cocks do crow, the clocks do toll, and the third hour of drowsy morning name.

Proud of their numbers and secure in soul,

the confident and over-lusty French do the low-rated English play at dice;

and chide the cripple tardy-gaited* night who like a foul and ugly witch doth limp so tediously away.

The poor condemned English, like sacrifices,

by their watchful fires sit patiently and inly ruminate the morning's danger.

entertain conjecture of - imagine, *stilly* - quietly, *paly* - pale, *umbered* - shadowed; earth colored,
accomplishing - completing the armoring of; equipping, *tardy-gaited* - slow footed

Fresh-minting *(the ability to make the words seem invented)*

Great Shakespearean actors constantly surprise their audiences. They do this by inventing or discovering their language. Iambic pentameter verse looks like a repetitive poem and usually causes young actors to sound predictable. The thought verse formatting of *Shakespeare Vacuumed* encourages fresh-minting because line lengths are now determined by the connectivity of the thoughts and the width of the page, not by a ten-beat line. The unstressed/stressed rhythm is just that of everyday English speech. Encourage students to invent their language, choose their words, and act in the same spirit of unbridled creativity in which Shakespeare wrote.

In *As You Like It* Jaques' "Seven ages of man" speech is usually performed like old wisdom, like a familiar and predictable list. If it is instead invented as new thought it becomes much more interesting and even dramatic.

JAQUES

All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players:

they have their exits and their entrances;

and one man in his time plays many parts, his acts being seven ages.

At first the infant, mewling* and puking in the nurse's arms.

And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel and shining morning face,
creeping like snail unwillingly to school.

And then the lover, sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad made to his mistress' eyebrow.

Then a soldier, full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,* jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel,
seeking the bubble reputation even in the cannon's mouth.

And then the justice, in fair round belly with good capon* lined, with eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
full of wise saws* and modern instances;* and so he plays his part.

The sixth age shifts into the lean and slippered pantaloons,* with spectacles on nose and pouch on side,
his youthful hose* well saved, a world too wide for his shrunk shank,

and his big manly voice, turning again toward childish treble, pipes and whistles in his sound.

Last scene of all, that ends this strange eventful history, is second childishness and mere oblivion,
sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

mewling - crying, ***pard*** - leopard, ***capon*** - cocks bred for the table and a common gift to a judge to gain his good will, ***saws*** - maxims, ***modern instances*** - everyday examples, ***pantaloons*** - the ridiculous stock old man of Italian comedy, ***hose*** - breeches



To my mind, Portia's Act IV 'quality of mercy' speech in *The Merchant of Venice* is one of Shakespeare's greatest invented speeches. Wanting desperately to help her husband's friend she improvises and builds on beliefs long held about mercy, perhaps making connections and cementing ideas for the first time.

PORTIA

The quality of mercy is not strained,* it droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice blest; it blesseth him that gives and him that takes.

'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes the throned monarch better than his crown.

His scepter* shows the force of temporal power, the attribute to awe and majesty, wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;

but mercy is above this sceptred sway; it is enthroned in the hearts of kings; it is an attribute to God himself, and earthly power doth then show likest God's when mercy seasons* justice.

Therefore, Jew, though justice be thy plea, consider this:

that in the course of justice none of us should see salvation.

We do pray for mercy, and that same prayer doth teach us all to render the deeds of mercy.

I have spoke thus much to mitigate* the justice of thy plea, which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

strained - forced, *scepter* - ceremonial staff held by rulers signifying royal authority, *seasons* - tempers, *mitigate* - moderate

Even a passage as simple as Oberon's description of Titania's bower in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* can be invented. Sure, he has been there before, but perhaps a while ago at night, and his memory is slowly recalling the secret bower and its flowers. Perhaps, if the bower is difficult for Oberon to locate precisely in his mind, it lends great credit to the magical and hidden quality of their world.

OBERON

I know a bank where the wild thyme blows, where oxlips and the nodding violet grows, quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine, with sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine.

There sleeps Titania sometime of the night, lulled in these flowers with dances and delight; and there the snake throws her enamelled skin, weed* wide enough to wrap a fairy in.

As a director I encourage as much invented thought and speech as possible. That is, after all, what most people do in real life - improvise as they go along and build off of what they have just said or thought. Shakespeare's characters, like Portia, just do it better than we do.

Stressing and colouring antithesis

Shakespeare had an antithetical mind. His most basic story is that we are all born into this beautiful world and someday we all must die. He regarded life and nature as complex and he constantly opposed, or at least compared, thoughts, ideas, emotions, actions, e.g. To be or not to be. Much clarity can be gained in acting or reading Shakespeare aloud, by identifying, stressing and colouring the antithesis found in Shakespeare's texts.

In this speech from *King Lear*, Edmund mocks the idea that his father blames the baseness of human beings on the stars.

Edmund

This is the excellent foppery* of the world,
that when we are sick in fortune, often the surfeits* of our own behavior,
we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars;
as if we were villains on necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion;
knaves, thieves, and treachers,* by spherical predominance;
drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence;
and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on.
An admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish* disposition to the charge of a star.

foppery - foolishness, *surfeits* - excesses, *treachers* - traitors, *goatish* - lecherous

In this speech from *Much Ado About Nothing*, Benedick is upset with Claudio for scorning marriage then getting engaged to Hero.

BENEDICK

I do much wonder that one man,
seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviors to love,
will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others,
become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love;
and such a man is Claudio.
I have known when he would have walked ten mile afoot to see a good armor;
and now will he lie ten nights awake carving the fashion of a new doublet.
He was wont to speak plain and to the purpose, like an honest man and a soldier;
and now is he turned orthography*; his words a very fantastical banquet—just so many strange dishes.

orthography - overly precise in his choice and pronunciation of words

High notes in actors' voices

Society encourages us to use the low notes in our everyday speech so we may sound authoritative, as though we know what we are talking about. In the plays of Shakespeare, characters are constantly surprised, or delighted, or filled with wonder about their revelations or thoughts. Many of these thoughts are best related through the upper notes of the voice. Sometimes when I have difficulty getting a young actor to contemplate how new or extraordinary a thought or word may be, I simply ask him to put a word on a higher note, and the newness of the thought becomes clear.

In *The Two Gentleman of Verona*, Dromio is not only terrified that a woman is in love with him, but he is astonished at her appearance. Try putting the bold words on higher notes and Dromio's confusion, fear and even wonder should become clear.

DROMIO

Marry, sir, she's the **kitchen** wench and all **grease**;
and I know not what **use** to put her to but to make a **lamp** of her and run from her by her own **light**.
I warrant, her rags and the tallow in them will burn a **Poland** winter:
if she lives till **doomsday**, she'll burn a week longer than the whole **world**.
Her complexion is swart, like my **shoe**, but her face nothing half so clean kept:
Nell is her name.
She bears some breadth sir, no longer from head to foot than from hip to **hip**:
she is **spherical**, like a **globe**; I could find out **countries** in her.

Hamlet is sickened by his mother's behavior and surely expresses much of this speech in the higher notes of his **VOICE**. (Different actors will, obviously, find different high notes.)

HAMLET

That it should come to this! But two months dead, nay, **not** so much, **not** two,
so excellent a king, that was to this Hyperion to a **satyr**,
so loving to my mother that he might not betem the winds of **heaven** visit her face too roughly.
Heaven and earth, must I **remember**?
Why, she would hang on him, as if increase of appetite had grown by what it **fed** on,
and yet within a month—let me not **think** on it; frailty, thy name is woman—a little month,
or ere those shoes were old with which she followed my poor father's body like **Niobe**, all tears,
why she, **even** she— **God**, a beast that wants discourse of **reason** would have mourned longer—
married with my uncle, my father's brother, but no more like my father than I to **Hercules**.

The emotion of wonder

Emotions are physiological responses to thoughts; my experience has been, the clearer the thought, the deeper the emotion. Shakespeare's language is often so surprising, or perfect, or contrary, or colourful, actors can't help but experience the emotion of wonder as they speak or listen.

I often imagine Shakespeare, as he wrote, constantly experiencing wonder at his own invention.

Direct with your ears

Since so much of modern entertainment is visual, young actors will want to stand up and gesture before they know what they are saying. Don't let them. Getting actors "on their feet" is vastly overrated. If your actors utilize all the imaginative power of their minds and all the notes of their voices; and the director helps them colour, fresh-mint, discover antithesis and experience the emotion of wonder; a rich oral reading will be produced, far more rewarding for all concerned than a hastily staged production. The visuals in Shakespeare are in the text: perhaps that is why people originally spoke of going to the theatre to hear a play.

What do you need?

Scripts An open layout with a foldable spine like the *Shakespeare Vacuumed* series, that allows students to easily read the words while holding the script in one hand, is very helpful..

Pencils Professional actors always use pencils when writing in their scripts - never, ever pens. Notes are taken learned and then erased. My scripts are clean by opening night although they may have been written over many times in rehearsal. When teachers/directors give notes, students/actors should jot them down so as to be practised and remembered for the next reading. That is how a performance is built - writing, practising, remembering and then erasing notes. Extra pencils should always be available. For schools where the texts will be used over and over again, a public hanging is a suitable punishment for any found writing in pen.

What do you need to do?

listen (write notes)

give suggestions

listen some more

Always let the actors read a scene aloud before working on it. If it is a new scene, basic information will be learned. If the scene is being revisited, you will learn what the actors have thought up on their own. Discreetly jot down your ideas on how to make the reading clearer or richer as the scene is read. Many teachers new to this process either don't trust themselves or want to be polite to the actors. Taking notes is your job and will help you actually direct the reading with your ears.

Have the actors read it again and then begin working. As you then stop-and-start your actors through the scene, give your actors practical suggestions: such as line stresses, imaginative colouring, invented or known thoughts, thoughts that might inspire certain words - anything that the actor can use immediately to clarify and enrich the reading, like piano teachers do.

Some directors do line-readings and others do not. Often helping an actor make his/her own discoveries by asking questions is preferable to demonstrating the way you prefer a scene be spoken or played. An actor will always treasure an idea or thought he thinks he has discovered by himself. If theoretical or literary discussion, rather than practice dominates, you are likely wasting some time. To build performances, ideas need to be tried to be discarded or investigated further, and actors, like musicians, need to practise. As the director/teachers and student/actors get better at this give-and-take process, thoughts will become finer and finer. Building a character is a process of layering, moving from the obvious to the less obvious. The deeper you dig the farther into the inner lives and imaginations of the characters you will venture. There you will find the riches that make playing Shakespeare so magical.

Competitive Insults

Column A

bawdy
brazen
fitful
gnarling
greasy
grizzled
haughty
hideous
jaded
knavish
lewd
peevish
pestilent
simpering
sneaking
queasy
rank
reeky
crusty
sottish
saucy
effeminate
vacant
brutish
sour
wenching
whoreson
yeasty
adulterate
bloody
clamorous
common
crafty
detested
unmuzzled
foul
wrinkled
poisonous
babbling
lousy
pernicious
monstrous
naughty
noisome

Column B

bunch-backed
clay-brained
evil-eyed
eye-offending
smooth-tongued
ass-headed
horn-mad
ill-breeding
ill-composed
ill-nurtured
iron-witted
lean-witted
lily-livered
mad-bred
bitch-wolf's
muddy-mettled
onion-eyed
pale-hearted
paper-faced
sodden-witted
raw-boned
rug-headed
long-tongued
sharp-eared
shrill-gorged
sour-faced
weak-hinged
white-livered
bald-pated
brazen-faced
burly-boned
cold-blooded
cream-face
double-dealing
fell-lurking
frosty-spirited
hedge-born
hollow-hearted
promise-breaking
horn-mad
low-born
marble-hearted
night-brawling
prick-eared

Column C

canker-blossom
clot pole
dogfish
lackey
puke-stocking
hempseed
hedge-pig
jack-a-nape
malignancy
lack-beard
she-fox
rascal
leper
turd
skains-mate
nut-hook
nit
rabbit-sucker
plague-sore
slug
rudesby
ruffian
serpent
knob
snipe
water-fly
whipster
younker
drudge
nag
toad
baboon
boor
tickle-brain
cuckold
dog-ape
dung-hill
drunkard
lout
hobby-horse
maggot-pie
hag
mongrel
stench

Choose one from two or three columns and have a competition to hear who the most insulting student in the class is. For extra motivation allow the students to insult the teacher or each other. Colour and invent the insults.

- 1) I will be proud, I will read politic authors, I will baffle Sir Toby, I will wash off gross acquaintance,
I will be point devise* the very man.
- 2) He's an affected ass.
So crammed, as he thinks, with excellencies, that it is his grounds of faith that all that look on him love him.
- 3) He lay under an oak whose antique root peeps out upon the brook that brawls along this wood.
- 4) The quality of mercy is not strained,* it droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath.
- 5) The night, that like a foul and ugly witch, doth limp so tediously away.
- 6) Good things of day begin to droop and drowse, while night's black agents to their preys do rouse.*
- 7) How fearful and dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low.
The crows and choughs* that wing the midway air show scarce so gross* as beetles.
- 8) An ancient receptacle, where, for these many hundred years, the bones of all my buried ancestors are packed,
- 9) ...where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth, lies festering in his shroud,
- 10) Quite over canopied with luscious woodbine, with sweet musk roses and with eglantine.
- 11) Hop in his walks and gambol* in his eyes; feed him with apricots and dewberries...
- 12) Pluck wings from painted butterflies to fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes.
- 13) They bayed* the bear with hounds of Sparta.
Never did I hear so musical a discord, such sweet thunder.
- 14) Duncan's horses, turned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out, as they would make war with mankind.
- 15) A wanton* herd of youthful and unhandled colts, fetching* mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud.
- 16) Horses did neigh and dying men did groan, and ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets.
- 17) I have heard that guilty creatures sitting at a play have by the very cunning of the scene
been struck so to the soul that presently they have proclaimed their malefactions.*
- 18) 'Tis now the very witching time of night,
when churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out contagion to this world.
- 19) To live in the rank sweat of an enseamed* bed,
stewed in corruption, honeying and making love over a nasty sty.*
- 20) Thou shalt not die. Die for adultery? No.
The wren goes to it, and the small gilded fly does lecher in my sight. Let copulation thrive!

point devise - perfectly correct, *strained* - constrained; forced, *rouse* - attack, *choughs* - medium sized, red-legged black birds, *gross* - large, *gambol* - skip; frolic, *bayed* - hunted, *wanton* - undisciplined, *fetching* - veering, *malefactions* - crimes, *enseamed* - soaked with grease, *sty* - enclosure for pigs

Romeo and Juliet

- 1) **Romeo** 1,1
 Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs;
 being purged,* a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;
 being vexed,* a sea nourished with lovers' tears,
 a madness most discreet, a choking gall,* and a preserving sweet.
purged - cleansed, *vexed* - annoyed, *gall* - bitterness
- 2) **Mercutio** 1,4
 Queen Mab comes in shape no bigger than an agate-stone* on the fore-finger of an alderman,
 drawn with a team of little atomies* over men's noses as they lie asleep.
agate-stone - jewel, *atomies* - tiny creatures
- 3) **Mercutio** 1,4
 Her wagon-spokes made of long spiders' legs,
 the cover of the wings of grasshoppers; the traces* of the smallest spider's web;
traces - reins
- 4) **Nurse** 2,4
 If he speak anything against me, I'll take him down, and if I cannot, I'll find those that shall.
 Scurvy knave! I am none of his flirt-gills;* I am none of his skains-mates.*
flirt gills - woman of loose behavior, *skains-mates* - gangster girls
- 5) **Peter** 2,4
 I saw no man use you at his pleasure. If I had, my weapon should quickly have been out, I warrant you.
 I dare draw as soon as another man, if I see occasion in a good quarrel, and the law on my side.
- 6) **Juliet** 2,5
 The clock struck nine when I did send the nurse; in half an hour she promised to return.
 O, she is lame! Love's heralds* should be thoughts, which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams.
heralds - messengers
- 7) **Juliet** 3,2
 Come, night; come, Romeo; come, thou day in night;
 for thou wilt lie upon the wings of night whiter than new snow upon a raven's back.
- 8) **Romeo** 3,3
 Heaven is here, where Juliet lives;
 and every cat and dog and little mouse, every unworthy thing,
 live here in heaven and may look on her; but Romeo may not.
 And sayest thou yet that exile is not death?
- 9) **Romeo** 3,5
 Look, love, what envious streaks do lace the severing clouds in yonder east.
 Night's candles* are burnt out, and jocund* day stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.
Night's candles - the stars, *jocund* - cheerful
- 10) **Juliet** 4,3
 an ancient receptacle, where, for these many hundred years, the bones of all my buried ancestors are packed
- 11) **Juliet** 4,3
 Shall I not then be stifled in the vault, to whose foul mouth no healthsome airs breathes in,
 and there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?

A Midsummer Night's Dream

1) **Titania** 2,1

His mother was a votaress* of my order,
and in the spiced Indian air, by night, full often hath she gossiped by my side,
and sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands, marking the embarked traders on the flood.*

votaress - woman who had taken a vow to serve Titania, *traders on the flood* - trading ships sailing with the tide

2) **Titania** 2,1

When we have laughed to see the sails conceive and grow big-bellied with the wanton* wind;
which she, with pretty and with swimming gait* following (her womb then rich with my young Squire) would imitate,
and sail upon the land to fetch me trifles, and return again, as from a voyage, rich with merchandise.

wanton - undisciplined; unchaste, *gait* - walk

3) **Titania** 3,1

I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again.
Mine ear is much enamored of thy note; so is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;
and thy fair virtue's force* doth move me, on the first view, to say, to swear, I love thee.

virtue's force - manly charms

4) **Bottom** 3,1

Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that.
And yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together now-a-days.
The more the pity that some honest neighbors will not make them friends.

5) **Titania** 3,1

I am a spirit of no common rate, the summer still* doth tend upon my state; and I do love thee.
Therefore, go with me. I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee.

still - always

6) **Titania** 3,1

Be kind and courteous to this gentleman.
Hop in his walks and gambol* in his eyes;
feed him with apricocks and dewberries, with purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries.

gambol - skip; frolic

7) **Bottom as Pyramus** 5,1

Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams;
I thank thee, Moon, for shining now so bright;
for, by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams, I trust to take of truest Thisby sight.

8) **Bottom as Pyramus** 5,1

But stay. O spite! But mark, poor knight. What dreadful dole* is here?
Eyes, do you see? How can it be?
O dainty duck, O dear. Thy mantle good. What, stained with blood?

dole - cause of grief

9) **Flute as Thisby** 5,1

Asleep, my love? what, dead, my dove?
O Pyramus, arise! Speak, speak! Quite dumb? Dead, dead?

10) **Puck** 5,1

Now the hungry lion roars, and the wolf behowls the moon.
Now it is the time of night that the graves all gaping wide,
every one lets forth his sprite, in the church-way paths to glide.

Macbeth

1) **Lady Macbeth** 1,5

Yet do I fear thy nature. It is too full of the milk of human kindness to catch the nearest way.
Thou wouldst be great, art not without ambition, but without the illness* should attend it
illness - ruthlessness

2) **Lady Macbeth** 1,5

The raven himself is hoarse that croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan under my battlements.
Come, you spirits that tend on mortal* thoughts, unsex me here,
and fill me from the crown to the toe top-full of direst cruelty.
mortal - deadly

3) **Lady Macbeth** 1,5

Your face, my Thane, is as a book where men may read strange matters.
Bear welcome in your eye, your hand, your tongue; look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under it.

4) **Duncan** 1,6

This castle hath a pleasant seat.*
The air nimbly and sweetly recommends itself unto our gentle senses.
seat - site

5) **Banquo** 1,6

The temple-haunting martlet* hath made his pendent bed* and procreant* cradle here.
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed the air is delicate.
martlet - martin; swallow, *pendent bed* - overhanging nest, *procreant* - breeding

6) **Macbeth** 1,7

But in these cases we still* have judgment here,
that we but teach bloody instructions, which being taught, return to plague the inventor.
this even-handed justice commends the ingredients of our poisoned chalice* to our own lips.
still - always, *chalice* - cup

7) **Macbeth** 2,2

Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more! Macbeth does murder sleep'—
the innocent sleep, sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care, the death of each day's life,
sore labor's bath, balm* of hurt minds, great nature's second course, chief nourisher in life's feast.
balm - something that soothes

8) **Ross** 2,4

And Duncan's horses, beautiful and swift, the minions* of their race,
turned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out, as they would make war with mankind.
They ate one another, to the amazement of my eyes that looked upon it.
minions - darlings

9) **Macbeth** 3,2

Come, seeling* night, scarf up* the tender eye of pitiful day;
and with thy bloody and invisible hand cancel and tear to pieces that great bond* which keeps me pale.
seeling - sewing the eyelids of a falcon together with very fine thread to make him more obedient, *scarf up* - put a scarf over,
great bond - Banquo's life

10) **Macbeth** 3,2

Light thickens, and the crow makes wing to the rooky wood.
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse, while night's black agents to their preys do rouse.*
rouse - attack

Twelfth Night

- 1) **Duke Orsino** 1,1
If music be the food of love, play on,
give me excess of it, that surfeiting,* the appetite may sicken, and so die.
surfeiting - consuming too much
- 2) **Duke Orsino** 1,1
Away before me to sweet beds of flowers;
love thoughts lie rich when canopied with bowers.
- 3) **Maria** 1,3
Sir Toby, you must come in earlier at nights. That quaffing* and drinking will undo you.
I heard my lady talk of it yesterday;
and of a foolish knight that you brought in one night here to be her wooer.*
quaffing - drinking in large quantities, *wooer* - a potential husband
- 4) **Sir Toby** 1,3
With drinking healths to my niece.
I'll drink to her as long as there is a passage in my throat and drink in Illyria.
- 5) **Viola** 1,5
Make me a willow cabin at your gate, and call upon my soul within the house;
write loyal cantons* of contemned* love and sing them loud even in the dead of night;
cantons - songs, *contemned* - rejected
- 6) **Viola** 1,5
halloo your name to the reverberate hills and make the babbling gossip* of the air cry out 'Olivia!'
O, you should not rest between the elements of air and earth but you should pity me!
babbling gossip - echo
- 7) **Duke Orsino** 2,4
Then let thy love be younger than thyself, or thy affection cannot hold the bent;*
for women are as roses, whose fair flower being once displayed, doth fall that very hour.
bent - direction
- 8) **Malvolio** 2,2
My masters, are you mad? Or what are you?
Have ye no wit, manners, nor honesty, but to gabble like tinkers at this time of night?
Do ye make an alehouse of my lady's house?
- 9) **Maria** 2,2
He's an affected ass;
so crammed, as he thinks, with excellencies, that it is his grounds of faith that all that look on him love him.
And on that vice in him will my revenge find notable cause to work.
- 10) **Malvolio** 2,5
I will be proud, I will read politic authors, I will baffle Sir Toby, I will wash off gross acquaintance,
I will be point devise* the very man.
point devise - perfectly correct
- 11) **Malvolio** 5,1
You must not now deny it is your hand, or say 'tis not your seal, nor your invention. You can say none of this.
Well, grant it then, and tell me, in the modesty of honor, why you have given me such clear lights of favor?

Hamlet

- 1) **Horatio** 1,1
We do it wrong, being so majestical, to offer it the show of violence,
for it is as the air invulnerable, and our vain blows malicious mockery

- 2) **Laertes** 1,3
For Hamlet and the trifling of his favor,* hold it a fashion and a toy in blood,
a violet in the youth of primy* nature, forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
the perfume of a minute, no more.
the trifling of his favor - his frivolous attention, *primy* - springtime? sexual?

- 3) **Polonius** 1,3
Costly thy habit* as thy purse can buy, but not expressed in fancy;
rich, not gaudy, for the apparel oft proclaims the man.
habit - clothing

- 4) **Polonius** 1,3
Neither a borrower nor a lender be,
for loan oft loses both itself and friend, and borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.*
husbandry - thriftiness

- 5) **Ghost** 1,4
Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate* beast, with witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts—
O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power so to seduce—
won to his shameful lust the will of my most seeming virtuous Queen
adulterate - adulterous

- 6) **Polonius** 2,2
Mad let us grant him then, and now remains that we find out the cause of this effect—
or rather say, the cause of this defect, for this effect defective comes by cause.

- 7) **Polonius** 2,2
Which done, he fell into a sadness, thence to a watch,* thence into a weakness, thence to a lightness,*
and, by this declension,* into the madness wherein now he raves, and all we mourn for.
watch - sleepless state, *lightness* - lightheadedness, *declension* - deterioration

- 8) **Hamlet** 2,2
What a piece of work is a man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculty,*
in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god
faculty - bodily and mental power

- 9) **Hamlet** 2,2
Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed?*
Let them be well used, for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time.
After your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live.
bestowed - lodged

- 10) **Hamlet** 2,2
Am I a coward? Who calls me villain? Breaks my pate* across? Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? Gives me the lie in the throat, as deep as to the lungs?* Who does me this? Ha?
pate - head, *gives me...lungs* - calls me an out-and-out liar

- 11) **Hamlet 2,2**
 I have heard that guilty creatures sitting at a play have by the very cunning of the scene
 been struck so to the soul that presently they have proclaimed their malefactions.*
 For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak with most miraculous organ.
malefactions - crimes
- 12) **Hamlet 3,1**
 Who would fardels* bear, to grunt and sweat under a weary life,
 but that the dread of something after death, the undiscovered country, from whose bourn* no traveller returns,
 puzzles the will and makes us rather bear those ills we have than fly to others that we know not of?
fardels - burdens, *ourn* - frontier
- 13) **Hamlet 3,2**
 Tis now the very witching time of night,
 when churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out contagion to this world.
 Now could I drink hot blood, and do such bitter business as the day would quake to look on.
- 14) **Hamlet 3,3**
 When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage, or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed,
 at gaming, swearing, or about some act that has no relish of salvation in it—then trip him,
 that his heels may kick at heaven, and that his soul may be as damned and black as hell, whereto it goes
- 15) **Hamlet 3,4**
 See what a grace was seated on this brow:
 Hyperion's curls, the front* of Jove himself, an eye like Mars, to threaten and command,
 a station* like the herald Mercury new-lighted on a heaven kissing hill—
front - forehead, *station* - stance
- 16) **Hamlet 3,4**
 Here is your husband, like a mildewed ear blasting* his wholesome brother.
 Have you eyes? Could you from this fair mountain leave to feed, and batten* on this moor? Have you eyes?
blasting - blighting (Claudius is like a diseased cob of corn, infecting his brother), *batten* - glut yourself
- 17) **Hamlet 3,4**
 You cannot call it love, for at your age the hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
 and waits upon* the judgment, and what judgment would step from this to this?
 O shame, where is thy blush?
waits upon - is servant to
- 18) **Hamlet 3,4**
 Nay, but to live in the rank sweat of an enseamed* bed,
 stewed in corruption, honeying and making love over the nasty sty.
enseamed - soaked with grease
- 19) **Claudius 4,5**
 The people muddied,* thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers for good Polonius' death;
 and we have done but greenly,* in hugger-mugger* to inter* him;
muddied - stirred up and confused, *greenly* - foolishly, like a novice, *in hugger-mugger* - secretly; clandestinely, *inter* - bury
- 20) **Hamlet 5,2**
 If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come.
 The readiness is all.

The Merchant of Venice

- 1) **Bassanio** 1,1
 In my school days, when I had lost one shaft*
 I shot his fellow of the self same flight the self same way, with more advised watch, to find the other forth;
 and by adventuring both I oft found both.
shaft - arrow

- 2) **Portia** 1,2
 Why he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, and a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine.
 If a throstle sing, he falls straight a capering; he will fence with his own shadow.
 If I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands.

- 3) **Prince of Morocco** 2,1
 I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine hath feared the valiant.
 By my love I swear the best regarded virgins of our clime have loved it too

- 4) **Prince of Morocco** 2,5
 I would outstare the sternest eyes that look, outbrave the heart most daring on the earth,
 pluck the young sucking cubs from the she bear, yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey, to win thee, lady.

- 5) **Shylock** 2,5
 The patch is kind enough, but a huge feeder, snail slow in profit, and he sleeps by day more than the wildcat.*
 Drones* hive not with me; therefore I part with him
wildcat - a nocturnal animal that sleeps by day, *drone* - a male honeybee that serves only in a reproductive capacity, has no sting and does no work

- 6) **Shylock** 3,1
 Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions,* senses, affections, passions?—
 fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means,
 warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is?
dimensions - bodily parts

- 7) **Shylock** 3,1
 If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die?
 And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that.

- 8) **Shylock** 3,1
 Two thousand ducats in that, and other precious, precious jewels.
 I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear!
 Would she were hearsed* at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin!
hearsed - loaded in the vehicle to carry her to her grave

- 9) **Antonio** 4,1
 I am a tainted wether* of the flock, meetest for death.
 The weakest kind of fruit drops earliest to the ground, and so let me.
tainted wether - diseased, castrated ram

- 10) **Portia** 4,1
 The quality of mercy is not strained,* it droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath.
 It is twice blest; it blesseth him that gives and him that takes.
strained - constrained; forced

- 11) **Lorenzo** 5,1
 For do but note a wild and wanton herd or race of youthful and unhandled colts
 fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud, which is the hot condition of their blood.

King Lear

- 1) **Gloucester** 1,2
 These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us.
 Though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus,
 yet nature finds itself scourged by the sequent effects.

- 2) **Gloucester** 1,2
 We have seen the best of our time.
 Machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders follow us disquietly to our graves.

- 3) **Edmund** 1,2
 This is the excellent foppery* of the world,
 that when we are sick in fortune, often the surfeits* of our own behavior,
 we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars;
foppery - foolishness, *surfeits* - excesses

- 4) **Edmund** 1,2
 as if we were villains on necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion;
 knaves, thieves, and treachers,* by spherical predominance;
treachers - traitors

- 5) **Edmund** 1,2
 drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence;
 and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on.

- 6) **Edmund** 1,2
 An admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish* disposition to the charge of a star.
goatish - lecherous

- 7) **Goneril** 1,4
 Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires, men so disordered, so debauched and bold,
 that this our court, infected with their manners, shows like a riotous inn.

- 8) **King Lear** 1,4
 Hear, Nature, hear; dear goddess, hear: suspend thy purpose if thou didst intend to make this creature fruitful.
 Into her womb convey sterility, dry up in her the organs of increase,
 and from her derogate body never spring a babe to honor her.

- 9) **King Lear** 4,6
 I pardon that man's life. What was thy cause?* Adultery? Thou shalt not die. Die for adultery? No.
 The wren goes to it, and the small gilded fly does lecher in my sight. Let copulation thrive!
cause - offense

- 10) **King Lear** 4,6
 Thou rascal beadle,* hold thy bloody hand! Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back.
 Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind for which thou whipp'st her.
beadle - parish constable

- 11) **King Lear** 4,6
 Through tattered clothes small vices do appear; robes and furred gowns hide all.
 Plate sin with gold, and the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks; arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce.

Short Scenes

ROMEO & JULIET**Act 2, Scene 2 Capulet's orchard**

ROMEO

But soft. What light through yonder window breaks?

(JULIET enters above.) It is my lady. O, it is my love! O, that she knew she were!

She speaks, yet she says nothing. What of that?

Her eye discourses;* I will answer it.

I am too bold. 'Tis not to me she speaks.

See how she leans her cheek upon her hand.

O that I were a glove upon that hand, that I might touch that cheek.

JULIET

Ay me.

ROMEO

She speaks. O, speak again, bright angel!

JULIET

O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo?

Deny thy father and refuse thy name;

or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love, and I'll no longer be a Capulet.

ROMEO

(Aside.) Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

JULIET

'Tis but thy name that is my enemy. Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.

What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot, nor arm, nor face, nor any other part belonging to a man.

O, be some other name!

What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.

So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called,

retain that dear perfection which he owns without that title.

Romeo, doff* thy name; and for that name, which is no part of thee, take all myself.

ROMEO

I take thee at thy word! Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized!

JULIET

What man art thou that thus bescreened in night so stumblest on my counsel?

ROMEO

By a name I know not how to tell thee who I am.

My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself, because it is an enemy to thee.

Had I it written, I would tear the word.

JULIET

My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words of that tongue's utterance, yet I know the sound.

Art thou not Romeo and a Montague?

discourses - communicates, *doff* - take off

ROMEO & JULIET

Act 3, Scene 5 **Juliet's window** (*Early morning after their only night together*)

JULIET

Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet near day.
It was the nightingale, and not the lark, that pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear.
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate-tree. Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

ROMEO

It was the lark, the herald of the morn, no nightingale.
Look, love, what envious streaks do lace the severing clouds in yonder east.
Night's candles* are burnt out, and jocund* day stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

JULIET

Yon light is not day-light, I know it, I. It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
to be to thee this night a torch-bearer, and light thee on thy way to Mantua.
Therefore stay yet; thou need'st not to be gone.

ROMEO

Let me be taken, let me be put to death. I am content, so thou wilt have it so.
I'll say yon grey is not the morning's eye,
nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat the vaulty heaven so high above our heads.
I have more care to stay than will to go.
Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.
How is it, my soul? Let's talk; it is not day.

JULIET

It is, it is! Be gone, away!
It is the lark that sings so out of tune.
Some say the lark makes sweet division;* this doth not so, for she divideth us.
O, now be gone! More light and light it grows.

ROMEO

More light and light—more dark and dark our woes.

Night's candles - the stars, *jocund* - cheerful, *division* - melody

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Act 1, scene 1 The palace of Theseus

(Helena wishes Demetrius loved her as he seems to love Hermia.)

HERMIA

God speed fair* Helena. Whither away?

HELENA

Call you me fair? That fair again unsay. Demetrius loves your fair.* O happy fair!
Sickness is catching. O, were favor* so, yours would I catch fair Hermia, ere* I go;
my ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye, my tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.
O teach me how you look, and with what art you sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

HERMIA

I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.

HELENA

O that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill.

HERMIA

I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

HELENA

O that my prayers could such affection move.

HERMIA

The more I hate, the more he follows me.

HELENA

The more I love, the more he hateth me.

HERMIA

His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.

HELENA

None but your beauty. Would that fault were mine.

fair - beautiful (blonde), *your fair* - Hermia's dark complexion, *favor* - looks, *ere* - before

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Act 2, Scene 1 A wood near Athens

(The lovesick Helena is rejected by the unsympathetic Demetrius.)

DEMETRIUS

I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia? The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me.
You told me they were stolen unto this wood;
and here am I, and wode* within this wood because I cannot meet my Hermia.
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more!

HELENA

You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant.*
But yet you draw not iron, for my heart is true as steel.
Leave you your power to draw, and I shall have no power to follow you.

DEMETRIUS

Do I entice you? Do I speak you fair?
Or rather do I not in plainest truth tell you I do not nor I cannot love you?

HELENA

And even for that do I love you the more.
I am your spaniel;
and Demetrius, the more you beat me, I will fawn on you.
Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me, neglect me, lose me;
only give me leave, unworthy as I am, to follow you.
What worse place can I beg in your love, and yet a place of high respect with me,
than to be used as you use your dog?

DEMETRIUS

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

HELENA

And I am sick when I look not on you.

wode - mad, *adamant* - magnet

MACBETH

Act 1, Scene 5 Inverness - Macbeth's castle

(Lady Macbeth prepares herself and Macbeth for Duncan's eventual murder.)

LADY MACBETH

The raven himself is hoarse that croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan under my battlements.
Come, you spirits that tend on mortal* thoughts, unsex me here,
and fill me from the crown to the toe top-full of direst cruelty.
Come to my woman's breasts, and take my milk for gall,* you murdering ministers.
Come, thick night, and pall thee* in the dunnest smoke of hell,
that my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark, to cry, "Hold, hold!"

(Enter MACBETH.)

Great Glamis! Worthy Cawdor! Greater than both, by the all hail hereafter!

MACBETH

My dearest love. Duncan comes here to night.

LADY MACBETH

And when goes hence?

MACBETH

To morrow, as he purposes.

LADY MACBETH

O, never shall sun that morrow see.
Your face, my Thane, is as a book where men may read strange matters.
Bear welcome in your eye, your hand, your tongue; look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under it.
He that's coming must be provided for; and you shall put this night's great business into my dispatch.

MACBETH

We will speak further.

LADY MACBETH

Only look up clear. To alter favor* ever is to fear.*
Leave all the rest to me.

(Exeunt.)

mortal - deadly,

take my milk for gall - exchange my breast milk with gall (green fluid secreted by the liver)

pall thee - shroud thyself, *alter favor* - change countenance, *fear* - incur risk

MACBETH

Act 1, scene 7 Macbeth's Castle

(Lady Macbeth challenges Macbeth to murder Duncan.)

MACBETH
How now. What news?

LADY MACBETH
He has almost supped. Why have you left the chamber?

MACBETH
Hath he asked for me?

LADY MACBETH
Know you not he has?

MACBETH
We will proceed no further in this business.

LADY MACBETH
Was the hope drunk wherein you dressed yourself? Hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale at what it did so freely?
From this time such I account* thy love.
Art thou afeard to be the same in thine own act and valor as thou art in desire?

MACBETH
Prithee, peace!
I dare do all that may become a man; who dares do more is none.

LADY MACBETH
What beast was it, then, that made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst* do it, then you were a man.
I have given suck, and know how tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face, have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums,
and dashed the brains out, had I so sworn as you have done to this.

MACBETH
If we should fail?

LADY MACBETH
We fail.
But screw your courage to the sticking-place,* and we'll not fail.

account - judge, *durst* - dared, *sticking place* - notch that holds the taut string on a crossbow

TWELFTH NIGHT

Act 1, Scene 3 Olivia's house

(Maria chides Sir Toby for his drinking and friendship with Sir Andrew)

SIR TOBY

What a plague means my niece to take the death of her brother thus.
I am sure care's an enemy to life.

MARIA

Sir Toby, you must come in earlier at nights. That quaffing* and drinking will undo you.
I heard my lady talk of it yesterday;
and of a foolish knight that you brought in one night here to be her wooer.*

SIR TOBY

Who, Sir Andrew Aguecheek?

MARIA

Ay, he.

SIR TOBY

He's as tall a man as any's in Illyria.

MARIA

What's that to the purpose?

SIR TOBY

Why, he has three thousand ducats a year.

MARIA

He's a very fool and a prodigal.*

SIR TOBY

Fie, that you'll say so!
He speaks three or four languages word for word without book, and hath all the good gifts of nature.

MARIA

He's a fool, and a great quarreler.
And 'tis thought among the prudent he will quickly have the gift of a grave.

SIR TOBY

By this hand, they are scoundrels and substractors that say so of him.
Who are they?

MARIA

They that add, moreover, he's drunk nightly in your company.

quaffing - drinking in large quantities, **wooer** - a potential husband, **prodigal** - recklessly wasteful person

SIR TOBY

With drinking healths to my niece.

I'll drink to her as long as there is a passage in my throat and drink in Illyria.

What, wench?*

Here comes Sir Andrew Agueface.

(Enter SIR ANDREW.)

SIR ANDREW

Sir Toby Belch. How now, Sir Toby Belch?

SIR TOBY

Sweet Sir Andrew.

SIR ANDREW

Bless you, fair shrew.

MARIA

And you too, sir.

SIR TOBY

Accost, Sir Andrew, accost.

SIR ANDREW

What's that?

SIR TOBY

My niece's chambermaid.

SIR ANDREW

Good Mistress Accost, I desire better acquaintance.

MARIA

My name is Mary, sir.

SIR ANDREW

Good Mistress Mary Accost.

SIR TOBY

You mistake, knight. 'Accost' is front her, board her, woo her, assail her.

SIR ANDREW

Is that the meaning of 'accost'?

MARIA

Fare you well, gentlemen.

What, wench? - perhaps Sir Toby cuddles or hugs Maria on this line

TWELFTH NIGHT

Act 1, scene 5 Olivia's house

(Feste humors Olivia to get back into her good graces.)

OLIVIA

Take the fool away.

FESTE

Do you not hear, fellows? Take away the lady.

OLIVIA

Go to. I'll no more of you. You grow dishonest.

FESTE

Good madonna, give me leave to prove you a fool.

OLIVIA

Can you do it?

FESTE

Dexterously, good madonna.

OLIVIA

Make your proof.

FESTE

I must catechize* you for it, madonna.
Good my mouse* of virtue, answer me.

OLIVIA

Well, sir, for want of other idleness, I'll bide* your proof.

FESTE

Good madonna, why mournest thou?

OLIVIA

Good fool, for my brother's death.

FESTE

I think his soul is in hell, madonna.

OLIVIA

I know his soul is in heaven, fool.

FESTE

The more fool, madonna, to mourn for your brother's soul being in heaven.
Take away the fool, gentlemen.

catechize - teach by a method of question and answer, *mouse* - affectionate nick-name, *bide* - endure

Act 2, Scene 2 A room in the castle

(Polonius attempts to discern Hamlet's state of mind before bringing Ophelia to him.)

LORD POLONIUS

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

HAMLET

Well, God a mercy.

LORD POLONIUS

Do you know me, my lord?

HAMLET

Excellent well. You are a fishmonger.

LORD POLONIUS

Not I, my lord.

HAMLET

Then I would you were so honest a man.

LORD POLONIUS

Honest, my lord?

HAMLET

Ay, sir. To be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

LORD POLONIUS

That's very true, my lord.

HAMLET

Have you a daughter?

LORD POLONIUS

I have, my lord.

HAMLET

Let her not walk in the sun.

Conception* is a blessing, but as your daughter may conceive, friend, look to it.

LORD POLONIUS

(Aside.) How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter.

Yet he knew me not at first. He said I was a fishmonger. He is far gone, far gone.

I'll speak to him again.

(To HAMLET.) What do you read, my lord?

Conception - the ability to form ideas; the ability to become pregnant

HAMLET

Words, words, words.

LORD POLONIUS

What is the matter, my lord?

HAMLET

Between who?

LORD POLONIUS

I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

HAMLET

Slanders, sir, for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams.* All which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down, for yourself, sir, should be old* as I am, if like a crab you could go backward.

LORD POLONIUS

(Aside.) Though this be madness, yet there is method in it.
Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

HAMLET

Into my grave?

LORD POLONIUS

Indeed, that is out of the air.
(Aside.) How pregnant sometimes his replies are.
I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.
(To HAMLET.) My honorable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

HAMLET

You cannot, sir, take from me anything that I will more willingly part with—
except my life, except my life, except my life.

LORD POLONIUS

Fare you well, my lord.

HAMLET

These tedious old fools!

HAMLET

Act 3, scene 2 The palace

(Hamlet tells Guildenstern how he hates being manipulated by him.)

HAMLET

O, the recorders! Let me see one.
To withdraw with you.*
Will you play upon this pipe?

GUILDENSTERN

My lord, I cannot.

HAMLET

I pray you.

GUILDENSTERN

Believe me, I cannot.

HAMLET

I do beseech you.

GUILDENSTERN

I know no touch of it, my lord.

HAMLET

'Tis as easy as lying.
Govern these ventages* with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth,
and it will discourse most eloquent music.
Look you, these are the stops.

GUILDENSTERN

But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

HAMLET

Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me!
You would play upon me, you would seem to know my stops, you would pluck out the heart of my mystery,*
and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak.
'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe?
Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret* me, yet you cannot play upon me.

To withdraw with you. - Let's speak privately, *ventages* - holes, *mystery* - personal secret,
fret - irritate; fret fingering of certain stringed musical instruments

HAMLET

Act 4, Scene 3 Another room in the castle

(Claudius asks Hamlet where Polonius' body is.)

KING CLAUDIUS

Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

HAMLET

At supper.

KING CLAUDIUS

At supper? Where?

HAMLET

Not where he eats, but where he is eaten. A certain convocation of politic* worms are e'en* at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet. We fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots. Your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service,* two dishes, but to one table. That's the end.

KING CLAUDIUS

Alas, alas!

HAMLET

A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

KING CLAUDIUS

What dost you mean by this?

HAMLET

Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

KING CLAUDIUS

Where is Polonius?

HAMLET

In heaven. Send hither to see. If your messenger find him not there, seek him in the other place yourself. But indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

KING CLAUDIUS

Go seek him there.

HAMLET

He will stay till ye come.

politic - shrewd, *e'en* - even; eating, *service* - food served up

HAMLET

Act 5, Scene 1 A churchyard *(Hamlet chats with the grave digger.)*

HAMLET

I will speak to this fellow.
Whose grave's this, sirrah?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

Mine, sir.
(Sings.) A house of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.*

HAMLET

I think it be thine indeed, for thou liest in it.

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

You lie out on it, sir, and therefore it is not yours.
For my part, I do not lie in it, and yet it is mine.

HAMLET

'Thou dost lie in it, to be in it and say it is thine.
'Tis for the dead, not for the quick;* therefore thou liest.

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again from me to you.

HAMLET

What man dost thou dig it for?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

For no man, sir.

HAMLET

What woman then?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

For none neither.

HAMLET

Who is to be buried in it?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

HAMLET

How absolute* the knave is!
How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

Of all the days in the year, I came to it that day that our last King Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

meet - appropriate, *quick* - living, *absolute* - a stickler for accuracy

38 HAMLET
How long is that since?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER
Cannot you tell that? Every fool can tell that.
It was the very day that young Hamlet was born—he that is mad, and sent into England.

HAMLET
Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER
Why, because he was mad. He shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, it's no great matter.

HAMLET
Why?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER
'Twill not be seen in him there. There the men are as mad as he.

HAMLET
How came he mad?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER
Very strangely, they say.

HAMLET
How strangely?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER
Faith, even with losing his wits.

HAMLET
Upon what ground?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER
Why, here in Denmark.
I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

HAMLET
How long will a man lie in the earth ere he rot?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER
In faith, if he be not rotten before he die
(as we have many pocky* corpses now a days that will scarce hold the laying in*)
he will last you some eight year or nine year. A tanner will last you nine year.

HAMLET
Why he more than another?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER
Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade that he will keep out water a great while,
and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body.

pocky - pox-ridden; syphilitic, *hold the laying in* - hold together while being buried

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Act 1, Scene 2 Portia's home

(Nerissa tries to cheer up the weary and dispirited Portia by asking her if she likes any of her suitors.)

NERISSA

But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

PORTIA

I pray thee over name them;
and as thou namest them I will describe them and, according to my description, level at my affection.

NERISSA

First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

PORTIA

He doth nothing but talk of his horse. I am much afeard his mother played false with a smith.*

NERISSA

Then there is the County Palatine.

PORTIA

He doth nothing but frown.
I had rather be married to a death's head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these.
God defend me from these two!

NERISSA

How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

PORTIA

Why he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, and a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine.
If a throstle sing, he falls straight a capering;* he will fence with his own shadow.
If I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands.

NERISSA

What say you then to Falconbridge, the young baron of England?

PORTIA

You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him.
He is a proper man's picture,* but who can converse with a dumb show?
How oddly he is suited!* I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his hose in France, his bonnet in Germany
and his behavior everywhere.

mother played false with a smith - mother was unfaithful to the father with a blacksmith,
capering - leaping, frisking about, frolicking, *proper man's picture* - handsome; hot,
suitied - dressed (the English were known for their eclectic tastes in fashion)

KING LEAR

Act 1, Scene 3 The Duke of Albany's palace

(GONERIL is furious with the behavior of her father and his 100 knights. She instructs her steward, Oswald.)

GONERIL

Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his fool?

OSWALD

Ay, madam.

GONERIL

By day and night he wrongs me.

Every hour he flashes into one gross crime or other that sets us all at odds. I'll not endure it.

His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us on every trifle.

When he returns from hunting, I will not speak with him. Say I am sick.

If you come slack of former services,* you shall do well. The fault of it I'll answer.

(Horns.)

OSWALD

He's coming, madam; I hear him.

GONERIL

Put on what weary negligence you please, you and your fellows. I'd have it come to question.

If he dislike it, let him to our sister, whose mind and mine I know in that are one, not to be over-ruled.

Idle old man, that still would manage those authorities that he hath given away.

Remember what I tell you.

OSWALD

Well, madam.

GONERIL

And let his knights have colder looks among you. What grows of it, no matter. Advise your fellows so.

I'll write straight to my sister to hold my very course.*

Prepare for dinner.

(Exeunt.)

slack...services - serve him less well than before, *hold my very course* - do the same

KING LEAR

Act 1, Scene 4 A hall in the same

(The disguised Kent seeks to become one of Lear's followers)

KING LEAR

How now, what art thou?

KENT

A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the King.

KING LEAR

If thou be as poor for a subject as he is for a king, thou art poor enough.
What wouldst thou?

KENT

Service.

KING LEAR

Who wouldst thou serve?

KENT

You.

KING LEAR

Dost thou know me, fellow?

KENT

No, sir, but you have that in your countenance which I would fain call master.

KING LEAR

What's that?

KENT

Authority.

KING LEAR

What services canst thou do?

KENT

I can keep honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly.
That which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in, and the best of me is diligence.

KING LEAR

How old art thou?

KENT

Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing, nor so old to dote on her for any thing.
I have years on my back forty eight.

KING LEAR

Follow me; thou shalt serve me. If I like thee no worse after dinner, I will not part from thee yet.
Dinner, ho, dinner!

KING LEAR

Act 1 scene 4 A courtyard before Albany's castle

(The Fool makes pointed jokes about Lear giving his kingdom to his daughters.)

KING LEAR

How now, my pretty knave! How dost thou?

FOOL

How now, nuncle?* Would I had two coxcombs* and two daughters.

KING LEAR

Why, my boy?

FOOL

If I gave them all my living, I'd keep my coxcombs myself. There's mine; beg another of thy daughters.

KING LEAR

Take heed, sirrah—the whip.

FOOL

Truth's a dog must to kennel; he must be whipped out, when the Lady Brach* may stand by the fire and stink.

KING LEAR

A bitter fool.

FOOL

Dost thou know the difference, my boy, between a bitter fool and a sweet fool?

KING LEAR

No, lad; teach me.

FOOL

That lord that counselled thee
To give away thy land,
Come place him here by me,
Do thou for him stand.
The sweet and bitter fool
Will presently appear;
The one in motley* here,
The other found out there.

KING LEAR

Dost thou call me fool, boy?

FOOL

All thy other titles thou hast given away; that thou wast born with.

nuncle - mine uncle, **coxcombs** - fool's hats, **Lady Brach** - bitch; female dog, **motley** - a fool's patched clothing

KING LEAR

Act 4, Scene 6 Fields near Dover

(The mad King Lear meets the eyeless Gloucester on the Heath)

GLOUCESTER

I know that voice.

KING LEAR

Ha! Goneril, with a white beard!

They flattered me like a dog, and told me I had white hairs in my beard* ere the black ones were there.

To say 'ay' and 'no' to everything that I said

When the rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter;

when the thunder would not peace at my bidding; there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out.

Go to, they are not men of their words. They told me I was everything. 'Tis a lie—I am not ague proof.*

GLOUCESTER

The trick of that voice I do well remember. Is it not the King?

KING LEAR

Ay, every inch a king.

When I do stare, see how the subject quakes.

I pardon that man's life. What was thy cause?* Adultery? Thou shalt not die. Die for adultery? No.

The wren goes to it, and the small gilded fly does lecher in my sight. Let copulation thrive!

For Gloucester's bastard son was kinder to his father than my daughters got 'tween the lawful sheets.

To it, luxury,* pell-mell, for I lack soldiers.

Behold yond simpering dame, whose face between her forks presages snow,*

that minces virtue, and does shake the head to hear of pleasure's name.

The fitchew* nor the soiled horse goes to it with a more riotous appetite.

Down from the waist they are Centaurs,* though women all above.

But to the girdle* do the gods inherit, beneath is all the fiend's.

There's hell, there's darkness, there's the sulphurous pit;

burning, scalding, stench, consumption. Fie, fie, fie! Pah, pah!

Give me an ounce of civet,* good apothecary, to sweeten my imagination. There's money for thee.

GLOUCESTER

O, let me kiss that hand.

KING LEAR

Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.

GLOUCESTER

O ruined piece of nature. Dost thou know me?

KING LEAR

I remember thine eyes well enough. Dost thou squiny at me?

No, do thy worst, blind Cupid; I'll not love.

Read thou this challenge; mark but the penning of it.

white hairs in my beard - (i.e. I was wise), *ague-proof* - secure against fever, *cause* - offense, *luxury* - lechery, *whose face...snow* - whose demeanor, seen between her legs, promises chaste behavior, *fitchew* - polecat (and slang for prostitute), *Centaurs* - lustful mythological creatures, half human/half beast, *girdle* - waist, *civet* - musk perfume

GLOUCESTER

Were all the letters suns, I could not see one.

KING LEAR

Read.

GLOUCESTER

What, with the case* of eyes?

KING LEAR

What, art mad? A man may see how this world goes with no eyes. Look with thine ears.

See how yond justice rails upon yond simple thief.

Hark in thine ear: change places and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief?

Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

GLOUCESTER

Ay, sir.

KING LEAR

And the creature run from the cur?

There thou mightst behold the great image of authority—a dog's obeyed in office.

Thou rascal beadle,* hold thy bloody hand! Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back.

Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind for which thou whipp'st her.

The usurer hangs the cozener.*

Through tattered clothes small vices do appear; robes and furred gowns hide all.

Plate sin with gold, and the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks; arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.

None does offend, none, I say, none.

Get thee glass eyes and, like a scurvy politician, seem to see the things thou dost not.

Now, now, now, now! Pull off my boots. Harder, harder! So.

case - sockets, *beadle* - parish constable,

the usurer hangs the cozener - the big thief (the money-lending judge) hangs the small thief

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

Act 1, scene 1 Before Leonato's House

(BEATRICE and BENEDICK meet again and can't help sparring.)

BEATRICE

I wonder that you will always be talking, Signior Benedick; nobody marks you.

BENEDICK

My dear Lady Disdain. Are you yet living?

BEATRICE

Is it possible disdain should die while she hath such meet* food to feed her as Signior Benedick?

BENEDICK

It is certain I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted;
and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart, for truly, I love none.

BEATRICE

A dear happiness to women. They would else have been troubled with a pernicious* suitor.
I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.

BENEDICK

God keep your ladyship still in that mind,
so some gentleman or other shall escape a predestinate scratched face.

BEATRICE

Scratching could not make it worse, and 'twere such a face as yours were.

BENEDICK

Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

BEATRICE

A bird of my tongue is better than a beast of yours.

BENEDICK

I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer.
But keep your way, in God's name! I have done.

BEATRICE

You always end with a jade's trick.* I know you of old.

meet - suitable, *pernicious* - wicked; evil; fatal, *jade's trick* - horse joke

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

Act 1, Scene 3 Leonato's house

(Don John is brooding heavily and Conrade tries to persuade him to act more prudently.)

CONRADE

Why are you thus out of measure* sad?

DON JOHN

I cannot hide what I am.

I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests;

eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure;

laugh when I am merry, and claw* no man in his humor.

And though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man,

it must not be denied that I am a plain-dealing villain.

CONRADE

Yea, but you must not make the full show of this till you may do it without controlment.*

You have of late stood out against your brother, and he hath taken you newly into his grace,
where it is impossible you should take true root but by the fair weather that you make yourself.

DON JOHN

I had rather be a canker* in a hedge, than a rose in his grace.

If I had my mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking;

in the meantime let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

Act 3, Scene 5 The street in front of Leonato's house

(Leonato is hurrying to Hero's wedding and Dogberry and Verges want to tell him about how they have apprehended some criminals.)

LEONATO

What would you wish me, honest neighbor?

DOGBERRY

Marry, sir, I would have some confidence* with you that discerns* you nearly.

LEONATO

Brief, I pray you, for you see it is a busy time with me.

DOGBERRY

Marry, this it is sir.

VERGES

Yes, in truth it is, sir.

LEONATO

What is it, my good friends?

DOGBERRY

Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter.

An old man sir, and his wits are not so blunt* as, God help, I would desire they were; but, in faith, honest as the skin between his brows.

VERGES

Yes, I thank God I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man, and no honestest than I.

DOGBERRY

Comparisons are odorous.*

LEONATO

Neighbors, you are tedious.

DOGBERRY

It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poor Duke's officers; but truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a King, I could find it in my heart to bestow it all on your worship.

confidence - he means conference, ***discerns*** - he means concerns, ***blunt*** - he means sharp, ***odorous*** - he means odious

HENRY V

Act 2, Scene 1 London. A street

(Bardolfe wants Pistol and Nym to be friends so they will all go to France, but Nym nurses his grudge.)

BARDOLPH

Well met, Corporal Nym.

NYM

Good morrow, Lieutenant Bardolph.

BARDOLPH

What, are Ancient* Pistol and you friends yet?

NYM

For my part, I care not.

I say little; but when time shall serve, there shall be smiles.

BARDOLPH

I will bestow a breakfast to make you friends; and we'll be all three sworn brothers to France.

Let it be so, good Corporal Nym.

NYM

Faith, I will live so long as I may, that's the certain of it;

and when I cannot live any longer, I will do as I may.

BARDOLPH

It is certain, corporal, that he is married to Nell Quickly,

and certainly she did you wrong; for you were troth-plight* to her.

NYM

Things must be as they may.

Men may sleep, and they may have their throats about them at that time, and some say knives have edges.

It must be as it may. There must be conclusions.

THE TEMPEST

Act 2, scene 2 The island

(The drunken Stephano, Trinculo and Caliban join forces.)

CALIBAN

I'll show thee the best springs; I'll pluck thee berries; I'll fish for thee and get thee wood enough.
A plague upon the tyrant that I serve! I'll bear him no more sticks, but follow thee, thou wondrous man.

TRINCULO

A most ridiculous monster, to make a wonder of a poor drunkard!

CALIBAN

I prithee, let me bring thee where crabs* grow; and I with my long nails will dig thee pignuts,*
show thee a jay's nest and instruct thee how to snare the nimble marmoset;
I'll bring thee to clustering filberts and sometimes I'll get thee young scamels* from the rock.
Wilt thou go with me?

STEPHANO

I prithee now, lead the way without any more talking.
Trinculo, the King and all our company else being drowned, we will inherit* here.
Here, bear my bottle. Fellow Trinculo, we'll fill him by and by again.

CALIBAN

(Sings drunkenly.) Farewell master; farewell, farewell!

TRINCULO

A howling monster! A drunken monster!

CALIBAN

No more dams I'll make for fish,
Nor fetch in firing
At requiring,
Nor scrape trencher,* nor wash dish.
'Ban, 'Ban, Ca-Caliban
Has a new master. Get a new man.
Freedom, high day! High day, freedom! Freedom, high day, freedom!

STEPHANO

O brave monster! Lead the way.

(Exeunt.)

crabs - crab apples, *pignuts* - earth nuts, *scamels* - likely a rock-nesting bird, *inherit* - take possession,
trencher - wooden plate

JULIUS CAESAR

Act 2, Scene 2 Rome. Caesar's house

(Calpurnia fears the wild night presages the murder of Caesar and urges him to stay home that day.)

CAESAR *(in his nightgown)*

Nor heaven nor earth have been at peace to night.

Thrice hath Calpurnia in her sleep cried out, 'Help, ho! They murder Caesar!'

Who's within?

(Enter SERVANT.)

SERVANT

My lord?

CAESAR

Go bid the priests do present sacrifice and bring me their opinions of success.

SERVANT

I will my lord.

(Exit SERVANT.)

(Enter CALPURNIA.)

CALPURNIA

What mean you Caesar? Think you to walk forth?

There is one within, recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch.

A lioness hath whelped* in the streets; and graves have yawned and yielded up their dead.

Fierce fiery warriors fought upon the clouds, in ranks and squadrons and right form of war,
which drizzled blood upon the Capitol.

The noises of battle hurtled in the air,

horses did neigh and dying men did groan, and ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets.

O Caesar! These things are beyond all use,* and I do fear them.

CAESAR

What can be avoided whose end is purposed by the mighty gods?

Yet Caesar shall go forth; for these predictions are to the world in general as to Caesar.

CALPURNIA

When beggars die, there are no comets seen; the heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes.

CAESAR

Cowards die many times before their deaths; the valiant never taste of death but once.

whelped - given birth, *use* - normal experience

AS YOU LIKE IT

Act 2, Scene 4

The Forest of Arden

(Silvius explains his uncontrolled love for Phebe, to Corin.)

CORIN

That is the way to make her scorn you still.

SILVIUS

O Corin, that thou knewest how I do love her!

CORIN

I partly guess, for I have loved ere now.

SILVIUS

No Corin, being old, thou canst not guess,
though in thy youth thou wast as true a lover as ever sighed upon a midnight pillow.
But if thy love were ever like to mine, as sure I think did never man love so,
how many actions most ridiculous hast thou been drawn to by thy fantasy?

CORIN

Into a thousand that I have forgotten.

SILVIUS

O, thou didst then never love so heartily!
If thou rememberest not the slightest folly that ever love did make thee run into, thou hast not loved.
Or if thou hast not sat as I do now, wearying thy hearer in thy mistress' praise, thou hast not loved.
Or if thou hast not broke from company abruptly, as my passion now makes me, thou hast not loved.
O Phebe, Phebe, Phebe!

HENRY V St Crispian's Day Speech

Iambic pentameter verse

What's he that wishes so?
 My cousin Westmoreland? No, my fair cousin:
 If we are mark'd to die, we are enow
 To do our country loss; and if to live,
 The fewer men, the greater share of honour.
 God's will! I pray thee, wish not one man more.
 By Jove, I am not covetous for gold,
 Nor care I who doth feed upon my cost;
 It yearns me not if men my garments wear;
 Such outward things dwell not in my desires:
 But if it be a sin to covet honour,
 I am the most offending soul alive.
 No, faith, my coz, wish not a man from England:
 Rather proclaim it, Westmoreland, through my host,
 That he which hath no stomach to this fight,
 Let him depart; his passport shall be made
 And crowns for convoy put into his purse:
 We would not die in that man's company
 That fears his fellowship to die with us.
 This day is called the feast of Crispian:
 He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
 Will stand a tip toe when the day is named,
 And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
 He that shall live this day, and see old age,
 Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
 And say 'To morrow is Saint Crispian:'
 Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars.
 And say 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'
 Old men forget: yet all shall be forgot,
 But he'll remember with advantages
 What feats he did that day: then shall our names
 Familiar in his mouth as household words
 Harry the king, Bedford and Exeter,
 Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester,
 Be in their flowing cups freshly remember'd.
 This story shall the good man teach his son;
 And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
 From this day to the ending of the world,
 But we in it shall be remember'd;
 We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
 For he to day that sheds his blood with me
 Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
 This day shall gentle his condition:
 And gentlemen in England now a bed
 Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
 And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
 That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

HENRY V St Crispian's Day Speech Thought verse

What's he that wishes so?
 My cousin Westmoreland?
 No, my fair cousin. If we are marked to die, we are enough to do our country loss;
 and if to live, the fewer men, the greater share of honor.
 God's will! I pray thee wish not one man more.
 By Jove, I am not covetous for gold, nor care I who doth feed upon my cost;
 it yearns me not if men my garments wear; such outward things dwell not in my desires:
 but if it be a sin to covet* honor, I am the most offending soul alive.
 No, faith, my coz, wish not a man from England.
 Rather proclaim it, Westmoreland, through my host, that he which hath no stomach to this fight, let him
 depart; his passport shall be made and crowns for convoy* put into his purse.
 We would not die in that man's company that fears his fellowship* to die with us.
 This day is called the feast of Crispian.
 He that outlives this day, and comes safe home, will stand a tip-toe when the day is named,
 and rouse him at the name of Crispian.
 He that shall live this day, and see old age, will yearly on the vigil* feast his neighbors,
 and say, 'To-morrow is Saint Crispian.'
 Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars, and say, 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'
 Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot, but he'll remember with advantages* what feats he did that day.
 Then shall our names familiar in his mouth as household words-
 Harry the King, Bedford and Exeter, Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester-
 be in their flowing cups freshly remembered.
 This story shall the good man teach his son;
 and Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by, from this day to the ending of the world,
 but we in it shall be remembered-we few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
 for he today that sheds his blood with me shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,*
 this day shall gentle his condition;*
 and gentlemen in England now a-bed shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
 and hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks that fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

covet - crave, *convoy* - transport, *fellowship* - fraternal right, *vigil* - night before,
advantages - embellishments, *vile* - low born, *gentle his condition* - ennoble his rank

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

Once the student/actors become familiar and accurate with the texts they will start to connect with other actors and imagine surroundings, place their thoughts. Since scenes change so often and Shakespeare describes them so well, I prefer only necessary sets: the rest is imagined by the cast, individually and collectively. This can be called the **physical geography** of the scene, and naturally leads to blocking. Trying to block from the beginning, when the thoughts are not yet understood is ALWAYS ruinous to a production. The best plays I have been in have had tons of table-time and have then been blocked easily AND intricately. The more detailed the thought the more obvious where the feet go.

Decisions are also easy to change if your stage is bare; you just imagine something else and let your collective imaginations move you around it. Just tie it ALL to the text.

If you want to give physical geography a good workout try memorizing one of the next two speeches. They are from my show and have demanded quite detailed mental settings. Setting the physical geography can actually be very helpful when memorizing parts as well.

This workbook has been intended to help teachers and students read Shakespeare's plays aloud. Further investigation of physical geography belongs to a workbook about how to stage Shakespeare's plays.

London. Night. Peering out the window. The damp, most insidious of all enemies, swells the wood, furs the kettle, rusts the iron, and rots the stone. The stars reflect themselves in deep pits of stagnant water which lies in the middle of the streets. The black shadow at the corner where the wine shop stands is likely as not the corpse of a murdered man. The cries of the wounded in night brawls, troops of ruffians, men and woman unspeakedly interlaced, lurch down the streets, trolling out old songs, with jewels flashing in their ears, and knives gleaming in their fists. To the north, the outline of Hampstead Forest, contorted, writhing, against the sky. Here and there on the hills above London, a stark gallows tree, with a parched or rotting corpse. Danger and insecurity, lust and violence, poetry and filth, roam the narrow pathways of the city, and buzz and stink.

STENCH

During the period in which we speak, there reigned in the cities a stench barely conceivable to modern men and women. The streets stank of manure, the courtyards of urine, the stairwells stank of moldering wood and rat droppings. The kitchens of spoiled cabbage and mutton fat; the un-aired parlors stank of pale dust, the bedrooms of greasy sheets, damp featherbeds, and the pungently sweet aroma of chamberpots. The stench of sulphur rose from the chimneys, the stench of caustic lyes from the tanneries, and from the slaughterhouse came the stench of congealed blood. People stank of sweat and unwashed clothes; from their mouths came the stench of rotting teeth, from their bellies that of onions, and from their bodies, if they were no longer very young, came the stench of rancid cheese and sour milk and tumorous disease. The rivers stank, the marketplaces stank, the churches stank, it stank beneath the bridges and in the palaces. The peasant stank as did the priest, the apprentice did as his master's wife, the whole aristocracy stank, the King himself stank, stank like a rank lion, and the Queen like an old goat, summer and winter.

SYNOPSIS

Every *Shakespeare Vacuumed* text begins with a concise and accurate synopsis. They provide a good safety-net for students fearing they may get lost.

ROMEO AND JULIET SYNOPSIS

Two noble families of Verona, the Capulets and Montagues, are feuding. To try to put a stop to the constant street fights between the servants and kinsmen of the two families, the Prince of Verona promises a death sentence to those disturbing the peace of his city.

Meanwhile, Romeo, the son of Montague, has become moody and distant because of his unrequited love for Rosaline. Romeo's friend Benvolio hopes to raise his spirits by persuading him to view more attractive girls at the Capulet masked ball. At the ball two things happen: Romeo falls in love with Capulet's daughter Juliet, and Tybalt, Juliet's cousin, recognizes Romeo and swears to get revenge on him for daring to appear at Capulet's party. After the party Romeo evades Benvolio and Mercutio, and climbs over the wall into Capulet's orchard. He speaks to Juliet, who is on her balcony, and they declare their love for each other. With the aid of the Nurse and Friar Laurence, Romeo and Juliet are secretly married the next day.

Later that afternoon, Tybalt is looking for Romeo. Newly and happily married, Romeo declines to fight with Tybalt, who is now a relation to him through marriage. A disgusted Mercutio takes up Tybalt's challenge to Romeo, and is slain by Tybalt when Romeo tries to intervene. Enraged at his friend's death, Romeo then slays Tybalt and is banished by the Prince. Romeo and Juliet are both deeply distraught at this turn of events, but with the help of Friar Laurence and the Nurse, they are able to consummate their marriage, and form a plan whereby Romeo will live in Mantua until the Friar can find a way to reconcile all parties.

Assuming Juliet is in deep despair over Tybalt's death, Capulet arranges Juliet's marriage to Paris to raise her spirits. Already secretly married to Romeo, Juliet enrages her father when she vehemently rejects the idea. At Friar Laurence's cell Juliet threatens suicide if he cannot come up with a plan to reunite her with Romeo. He gives Juliet a potion that will make her seem dead on the morning of her marriage to Paris. When she awakes in the family tomb 42 hours after taking the potion, Romeo will be there to whisk her away to a new life. Friar Laurence's letter to Romeo is delayed and Romeo hears from his man, Balthasar, that Juliet is dead. He buys a poison in Mantua and rushes to the tomb to die with his love. At the tomb he meets Paris, mourning Juliet's death. They fight and Paris is slain. Friar Laurence learns that his letter has not reached Romeo and rushes to the tomb to retrieve Juliet. He is too late to save the poisoned Romeo, and Juliet will not leave with him. She then kills herself with Romeo's dagger. When Capulet and Montague learn the fate of their children, they promise to stop their feud and put up statues so that the people of Verona may always remember the love of their two dead children.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM SYNOPSIS

Duke Theseus of Athens has conquered the Amazons and brought back their Queen, Hippolyta, whom he will marry in four days. Egeus comes before Theseus and complains that his daughter Hermia will not marry Demetrius, the man he has chosen for her. She wants to marry Lysander, the man she loves. Theseus upholds the law of Athens and tells Hermia that in four days she must marry Demetrius, become a nun or die. Left alone, Lysander and Hermia plot to run away and live with Lysander's aunt. Helena, Hermia's best friend and deeply in love with Demetrius who has recently dumped her, enters and wishes that she was more like Hermia. Hermia and Lysander tell Helena of their plans to elope and in the hope of regaining Demetrius' affection, Helena decides to tell Demetrius of their escape plans.

In the woods Oberon, the King of the fairies, and Titania, the Queen of the fairies, are fighting over a human changeling boy in Titania's group of followers. Oberon wants the boy, but Titania is unwilling to part with him because of her loyalty to the child's dead mother. Their discord is causing climatic chaos and much suffering for men, animals and nature. Oberon decides to wreak vengeance on Titania by putting a love potion on her eyes while she is asleep that causes her to fall in love with the first live creature she sees when she awakes.

Demetrius then enters looking for Hermia and Lysander, followed by the lovesick Helena. Demetrius treats Helena very poorly and runs off hoping to lose her in the woods. The heartbroken but still determined Helena follows him. Oberon takes pity on Helena and tells Puck to put some love juice on Demetrius' eyes, so that he may fall in love with Helena.

Lysander and Hermia have become lost in the woods and lie down to sleep. Puck thinks Lysander is Demetrius and puts the love juice on his eyes. Helena stumbles upon Lysander who awakes and falls instantly in love with her. Thinking she is being mocked, she runs off. Lysander runs after her and when Hermia awakes to find she is alone, she leaves in search of Lysander.

Bottom and his amateur acting friends have met in the woods to rehearse the play they hope will be chosen for Theseus' wedding festivities. Puck magically puts an ass's head on Bottom, which frightens his fellow actors away and causes Titania to awake. With the love juice on her eyes she falls instantly in love with this improbable mate, and leads him to her bower.

After Puck has delighted Oberon with what has happened to Titania, Hermia and Demetrius enter. Hermia accuses Demetrius of having killed Lysander. Hermia leaves, and a dispirited Demetrius decides to sleep. Oberon chastises Puck for his mistake and orders him to put the love juice on Demetrius' eyes. When Helena appears and Demetrius awakes, both boys are now in love with Helena. Hermia then enters and confusion reigns as accusations fly. The boys then seek a place to fight for Helena. Puck manages to get them all to sleep without any harm being done, and uses the juice of another flower to free Lysander of the love juice's power.

MACBETH SYNOPSIS

Three witches plan to meet with Macbeth.

We first hear of Macbeth from the bloody sergeant, who describes his hacking through an army to slay its rebellious leader. Macbeth then saves the day again by defeating the rebellious Thane of Cawdor. Duncan the King decides to reward Macbeth with Cawdor's titles and lands, and sends Ross and Angus to Macbeth with this news.

Banquo and Macbeth meet the witches on the heath. They hail Macbeth Thane of Fife, which he already is, then Thane of Cawdor, and future King. Banquo is hailed as the father of many kings. The witches vanish. When Macbeth is greeted as Thane of Cawdor by Ross, both Banquo and Macbeth reflect on the witches' prophecies. After greeting and thanking Macbeth, Duncan names his first born, Malcolm, heir to his throne. Macbeth then regards Malcolm as an obstacle to his own destiny of becoming king.

On reading this news in a letter from Macbeth, Lady Macbeth resolves to propel her husband to the throne by any means. Macbeth resists her murderous ideas as Duncan and his train visit Macbeth's castle. Near the end of a celebratory banquet, Lady Macbeth privately persuades Macbeth to kill Duncan. She plans to get Duncan's guards drunk and blame the murder on them. Macbeth does murder Duncan, but not before seeing an imaginary dagger. He also hears voices that say he will never sleep peacefully again. Macduff discovers Duncan's body in the morning and Duncan's sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, fearing for their own lives, flee for England and Ireland. Their flight puts suspicion of Duncan's murder upon them, and Macbeth is named King.

Banquo is suspicious of Macbeth's rise to the throne but also hopes that his sons may one day become kings. He promises Macbeth to attend the evening's banquet and goes for a ride with Fleance. Macbeth, fearing he will someday lose his crown to Banquo's children, coerces two murderers to kill Banquo and his son Fleance. With Seyton, the murderers lay an ambush outside the castle. Banquo is killed but Fleance escapes. Macbeth receives this news at the beginning of the banquet. Banquo's ghost appears to him during the banquet and his reactions are so violent and fearful Lady Macbeth sends the guests home. He then determines to be ruthless in his self-preservation, and to revisit the witches to learn more of his fate.

When Macbeth revisits the witches an apparition tells Macbeth to beware of Macduff. A second apparition tells him not to fear any man born of a woman, and a third apparition tells him not to fear until Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane Hill. Emboldened by these encouraging predictions he demands to know whether Banquo's children will ever be kings. He is shown that eight future Kings spring from Banquo's family line. After the witches and apparitions vanish, Macbeth learns that Macduff has fled to England. He realizes he must be completely ruthless to survive and decides to seize Macduff's castle and kill all his family. His murderers carry out this deed

TWELFTH NIGHT SYNOPSIS

Viola is shipwrecked on the shores of Illyria and fears her twin brother Sebastian has drowned. With the help of a sea captain, she disguises herself as a young man and becomes a page at Duke Orsino's court. As Cesario, she/he quickly becomes a favorite of the Duke. Orsino is in love with the beautiful Countess Olivia, who mourning over the deaths of her brother and father, has declared she will not allow suitors for seven years. Thinking Cesario's youth will be persuasive to Olivia, Orsino sends Cesario to woo Olivia on his behalf. Olivia believes 'Cesario' is a male and falls in love with 'him.'

Sir Toby Belch, Olivia's alcoholic uncle, has persuaded the silly, foppish Sir Andrew Aguecheek that he has a chance to marry Olivia. While Sir Andrew attempts to woo Olivia, Sir Toby stays drunk at Sir Andrew's expense. Their late night carousing inflames Olivia's puritanical steward Malvolio, who threatens Sir Toby with eviction from the household. Seeking revenge on this self-important prude, Maria, Olivia's maid who loves Sir Toby, comes up with a plan. She writes a letter that Malvolio finds and believes is from Olivia. In it 'Olivia' reveals her secret passion for Malvolio and implores him to act superior, wear cross-gartered yellow stockings and smile a lot. When Malvolio follows the instructions in the letter, Sir Toby has him locked in a dark room as a madman.

Meanwhile Sebastian, Viola's twin brother, has also survived the shipwreck. He is befriended and helped by Antonio, who at one time fought against Orsino, and therefore must be careful not to be captured in Illyria.

Olivia continues to woo Cesario which makes Sir Andrew jealous. Sir Toby convinces Sir Andrew to challenge Cesario to a duel. With the help of Fabian, Sir Toby manages to get both Cesario and Sir Andrew terrified of each other, yet forced to fight. His fun is spoiled however when Antonio, thinking Cesario/Viola is Sebastian, intervenes. Antonio is easily recognized however, and promptly arrested. When Viola does not recognize or help Antonio, his outrage at being betrayed gives Viola hope Sebastian may be alive.

Sebastian, meanwhile, has met the beautiful Olivia and though somewhat bewildered, has agreed to her marriage proposal. When later attacked by Sir Andrew and Sir Toby, he beats them both soundly. Orsino arrives and realizes Olivia is now in love with Cesario. Just as he is about to leave to punish Cesario, Sebastian enters. Brother and sister are reunited and Olivia realizes she has fallen in love with a woman, yet betrothed herself to a man. Orsino decides to marry Viola, who has loved him all along. In recompense for his treatment of Malvolio, and to save his skin, Sir Toby finally marries Maria. The happy ending of three marriages is only marred by Malvolio's oath to be revenged on the whole pack of them.

HAMLET SYNOPSIS

Hamlet's father, the King of Denmark, has died. Hamlet has returned from his studies in Wittenberg to attend his father's funeral and his mother Gertrude's subsequent marriage to his uncle, the newly crowned, King Claudius. Bernardo and Francisco, two soldiers who guard the palace at night, have invited the scholar and friend of Hamlet, Horatio, to verify what looks like the nightly appearance of Hamlet's dead father's ghost. They once again encounter this frightening apparition and Horatio tells Hamlet of their experience.

After attending the coronation of King Claudius, Laertes, the son of Claudius' first minister, Polonius, is about to return to school. Before he leaves he advises his sister, Ophelia, not to take Hamlet's romantic overtures to her seriously. Polonius questions Ophelia about her conversation with Laertes and then orders her to stay away from Hamlet.

When Hamlet watches with Horatio and Marcellus at night, he talks to what appears to be his father's ghost, learning that his uncle Claudius has murdered his father, stolen the crown and seduced his mother. He pledges to revenge his father's death and swears his companions to silence.

Hamlet's behavior becomes erratic, which causes Claudius and Gertrude to summon two of his old school chums, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Claudius and Gertrude implore them to discover what ails Hamlet and to entice him to participate in activities that might lighten his dark and disturbing moods. Polonius is convinced that Hamlet is deeply depressed at being spurned by Ophelia, and hopes to prove his hypothesis by secretly witnessing an encounter between Hamlet and Ophelia. A group of actors that Hamlet admires arrive at court, and the leading actor performs a passionate speech for the Prince. Left alone, Hamlet chastises himself for his lack of passion and action, but also reveals that he is unsure whether the Ghost is really his father's spirit or a demon sent to trick him and capture his soul. He plots to have the actors perform a play reenacting his father's murder, whereby watching Claudius' reactions he can become certain of the King's guilt.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are unable to discover what ails Hamlet. When observed being alone with Ophelia, Hamlet's cruelty to her convinces Claudius that spurned love is not the cause of Hamlet's growing madness. King Claudius plans to send his disturbing young nephew to England for supposed rest and relaxation. Hamlet gives the players some acting advice before they begin. During their performance Claudius becomes highly agitated and angrily leaves for his chamber. Hamlet and Horatio celebrate the fact that their suspicions appear true. Hamlet is summoned to his mother's bedchamber. Claudius then plots to have Hamlet executed when he arrives in England. On his way to visit his mother, Hamlet comes across Claudius unsuccessfully trying to pray for forgiveness. Hamlet passes up the excellent opportunity to kill Claudius, reasoning that killing him while he is praying will only send his soul to heaven.

Polonius has hidden himself behind an arras in Gertrude's room, and when he cries out, fearing for her safety, Hamlet stabs him with his sword, hoping he is Claudius. While Hamlet is then chastising his mother for her lustful behavior, his father's ghost appears and warns him to leave Gertrude to heaven's judgment and to carry through with his pledge to exact revenge on Claudius. After finally revealing where he has hidden the body of Polonius, Hamlet is sent to England with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Ophelia has become mad with the death of her father and Hamlet's rejection of her. Laertes returns in open rebellion, swearing revenge for his father's death. Ophelia drowns herself and Claudius turns Laertes' anger at losing his sister and father against Hamlet. They plan to murder Hamlet with a poisoned rapier Laertes will use while fencing, or a poisoned cup of wine that Claudius will prepare. Hamlet returns to Denmark with the help of pirates just as Ophelia is being buried. He later reveals to Horatio Claudius' plot to have him executed in England and his own forgery and switching of Claudius' letter. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are to be executed in England in his place.

Hamlet welcomes the opportunity to test his fencing skills with Laertes. During the bout both Laertes and Hamlet are scratched by the poisoned rapier and Queen Gertrude drinks from the poisoned wine. Laertes confesses the plot and accuses Claudius of treachery. Hamlet kills Claudius, stops Horatio from committing suicide and dies. The newly arrived English ambassador reports the executions of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and Fortinbras, who is returning home from a battle in Poland, is now the likely successor to the throne of Denmark.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE SYNOPSIS

Bassanio, a noble but indebted Venetian, asks to borrow three thousand ducats from his wealthy friend Antonio, so that he may court the beautiful and rich heiress of Belmont, Portia. Antonio's money, unfortunately, is invested in merchant ships that are presently at sea. To help his beloved friend, Antonio arranges for a short-term loan from Shylock, a Jewish moneylender he despises. Instead of the usual forfeiture of goods if the loan is not repaid, Shylock jokingly suggests that if Antonio does not repay the loan in three months, he will be entitled to a pound of Antonio's flesh. Confident his ships will safely return to port, and despite Bassanio's misgivings, Antonio agrees to Shylock's terms. Shylock's daughter, Jessica elopes with the Christian gentleman, Lorenzo. Bassanio, accompanied by his friend Gratiano, departs for Belmont.

According to her father's will, Portia must marry whichever man chooses the right casket (box), out of a choice of gold, silver or lead. If a suitor chooses incorrectly, he is condemned to remain unmarried forever. The Prince of Morocco chooses the gold casket and fails; the Prince of Arragon chooses the silver casket and fails; Bassanio, with whom Portia has already fallen in love, chooses the lead casket and wins Portia and her fortune. Gratiano marries Portia's maid, Nerissa. The husbands pledge lifelong fidelity when given rings by their wives.

Word then comes that none of Antonio's ships has arrived in port. Shylock's hatred of Christians has been magnified by his daughter's elopement and her theft of his money and jewels. He decides to seek revenge upon Antonio and appeals to the Duke for his pound of flesh. Bassanio and Gratiano hurry back to support their friend. Portia and Nerissa follow, disguised as a judge and a clerk.

With a letter of introduction from the respected Dr. Belario, Portia (Balthasar) is given the responsibility of judging the case. Her appeals to Shylock for mercy are unsuccessful. Even when offered nine thousand ducats as payment, the vengeful Shylock insists on the letter of the law: the payment is late and he demands justice (a pound of Antonio's flesh). After Shylock refuses to supply a doctor to save Antonio's life, Portia grants Shylock his bond. Just before he cuts Antonio's flesh, Portia points out, on pain of death, that the pound must not include one drop of blood. Shylock relents but is then charged with plotting the death of a Venetian citizen. Ultimately, he is forced to relinquish half of his wealth, will all he owns to his son-in-law, Lorenzo, and become a Christian. Before parting for home, both 'judge' Portia and 'clerk' Nerissa request (as tokens of gratitude for saving Antonio's life) the rings they gave their husbands.

Once back in Belmont the two young women tease their husbands by accusing them of giving away their rings to women. They then reveal the whole story of the disguises and the trial, and produce the rings, which their husbands swear once again to keep forever. Portia also reveals to Antonio that three of his ships have come safely to harbor and Lorenzo learns of Shylock's will. The play has a bitter-sweet ending, for although there is now plenty of money to go around and three new marriages to celebrate, Antonio has lost his best friend to Portia, Jessica must now negotiate a life between two very different worlds and Shylock must renounce his faith.

KING LEAR SYNOPSIS

King Lear, the aged monarch of Britain, has decided to unburden himself from the cares of rule and avoid future conflict by dividing his kingdom among his three daughters before his death. However, prior to formally giving each daughter her share, he demands they prove their worth by publicly declaring their love for him. His two eldest daughters, Goneril and Regan, humor the old man with their effusive protestations of adoration and worship, but his youngest daughter, Cordelia, truthfully declares she loves her father only according to her bond. She also declares that half of her love will naturally go to her future husband. Whether publicly embarrassed by her refusal to play along, or jealous of Cordelia's affections, Lear, in a fit of rage, disinherits her and divides her portion between Goneril and Regan. Kent tries to reason with his impetuous master and is banished for his troubles. Although she is now disinherited, the King of France realizes Cordelia's noble character, and takes her for his queen. Goneril and Regan worry about future reckless actions by their father.

Edmund, the Earl of Gloucester's bastard son, believes men should prosper according to their natural gifts and not because of their lineage or the order of their birth. By tricking his father into believing his legitimate son Edgar is plotting against his life, Edmund hopes to one day become the Earl of Gloucester. The superstitious old Earl falls for Edmund's machinations and Edgar is forced to flee, disguising himself as a mad beggar.

Part of the bargain for dividing his kingdom is that Lear, with a train of a hundred knights, will live with Goneril and Regan by monthly turns. Lear's demanding and imperious character, not to mention his knights' crude and debauched behavior, make life very difficult for Goneril and the people of her household. When she demands that he cut his followers to fifty, Lear curses her and leaves for Regan whom he assumes will punish Goneril. Warned by Goneril of Lear's intentions, Regan and Cornwall have removed themselves to Gloucester's castle where they have put the belligerent Kent in the stocks. The next day there is a confrontation between the two daughters and Lear. Stripped of his followers and powers, Lear threatens revenge, and goes raging into a terrible storm. Although ordered not to assist Lear, Gloucester finds crude shelter for the old man, the Fool and Kent, as well as the disguised Edgar from whom Lear will not be parted. Fearing for Lear's life, he then helps him to escape to Dover, where Cordelia and the French have returned to help the beleaguered King. Edmund betrays his father to Cornwall and becomes the new Earl of Gloucester. Old Gloucester has his eyes gouged out by Cornwall and is thrown out of his castle. Cornwall is killed by a servant and Edmund becomes the desired mate of both Regan and Goneril.

Believing Edgar is Mad Tom, Gloucester persuades him to guide him to Dover, where he plans to commit suicide. Edgar tricks him into believing he has survived a terrible fall from the cliff and that the gods want him to live. Now believing Edgar to be a peasant, Gloucester allows himself to be led onwards. After meeting the mad Lear, Edgar defends his father from the opportunistic Oswald, and discovers Goneril's plot to have Albany murdered and marry Edmund.

Cordelia and Lear are united and reconciled before the battle. The English, led by Edmund, are victorious. Informed by Edgar, Albany accuses Edmund of being a traitor. Edmund duels the disguised Edgar, and is mortally wounded. Goneril has poisoned Regan in her attempt to secure Edmund and then kills herself when she sees Edmund's fate. Attempting to redeem himself, Edmund admits to ordering the deaths of Lear and Cordelia. Lear slays the soldier hanging Cordelia and then enters carrying his dead child. As Gloucester died, hearing the truth from his son Edgar, so Lear dies of a broken heart. Albany and Edgar are left to mourn and rule.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING SYNOPSIS

Before the play begins, Don Pedro and his troops have re-supplied with Leonato of Messina on their way to engage Don Pedro's rebellious brother Don John in battle. In Act 1, Scene 1, we learn they have been victorious with very few losses, and are once again invited by Leonato to stay with him before returning home. The sharp-witted Beatrice and Benedick renew their prickly relationship, while Leonato's daughter Hero and the much decorated Claudio fall in love. With Don Pedro's assistance, and despite Don John's meddling, a marriage date for Claudio and Hero is set. Don Pedro then plans that the week before the marriage is to be spent tricking Beatrice and Benedick into falling in love.

The nasty and disenchanted Don John hates Claudio and wants to ruin the intended marriage. With the help of Borachio, Claudio is led to believe that Hero has been unfaithful to him. Deeply hurt, he denounces her at the altar. Friar Francis hatches a plan that might restore Hero's virtue by pretending that she has died. Beatrice then persuades Benedick to challenge Claudio to a duel.

While bragging of receiving a thousand ducats from Don John for his part in the trickery, Borachio is arrested by the city watch. The self-important Constable Dogberry and his aged sidekick Verges examine Borachio and Conrade and uncover the deception. When informed he has wrongfully accused Hero, the repentant Claudio agrees to marry yet another of Leonato's nieces, who turns out, of course, to be the original Hero. Benedick and Beatrice are also finally cajoled into marriage. Don John is captured while attempting to flee and the play ends happily with a dance.

JULIUS CAESAR SYNOPSIS

Victorious first over the Gauls, and then over the Roman general Pompey, Julius Caesar enters Rome on the Feast of Lupercal as a hero beloved by the common people. Individuals in the upper class of Rome fear Caesar's ambition to become Emperor, which would not only destroy the republic, but could also diminish the power and wealth of those not closely connected to Caesar. In the first scene the tribunes Flavius and Marullus, whose job it is to protect the laws of the Republic, chastise and disperse a group celebrating Caesar's triumphant return.

While offstage, Caesar is being offered a mock crown by Marc Antony. Cassius, the leader of a growing conspiracy to thwart Caesar's ambition, makes overtures to Marcus Brutus, a nobleman admired for his integrity and idealism. Brutus, who admits to being "at war with himself" and deeply concerned about the subversion of the republic, promises to speak further with Cassius the next day.

As a metaphor for the coming action, a great storm besets Rome that night. As Brutus wrestles with the dilemma of killing his personal friend for the good of the general population, the conspirators visit him, and they all pledge to kill Caesar the next day at the Senate. Brutus' beloved wife Portia, who has become deeply concerned with the conflict she senses within her husband, finally persuades Brutus to share his secret with her. Human voices as well as cataclysmic signs in nature sound warnings of danger to Caesar. He is, however, so self-confident that next morning he pays a visit to the Senate. There he is stabbed to death by Brutus, Cassius and the rest.

Mark Antony, whom Cassius could not convince Brutus to assassinate with Caesar, strikes a truce with the conspirators, asking to accompany Caesar's body and speak at his funeral. Although Brutus with his straightforward rhetoric is able at first to convince the crowd that Caesar's death was necessary, Marc Antony uses his personal grief and political savvy to inflame the emotions of the crowd. In an instant, the hunters become the hunted. Marc Antony leads a military campaign to revenge Caesar's death and the conspirators and their allies either die on the battlefield or are executed. The ultimate irony is that the spirit of Julius Caesar survives, as Octavius becomes Caesar Augustus, the first in a long line of Emperors.

AS YOU LIKE IT SYNOPSIS

Duke Frederick has usurped and banished his older brother, Duke Senior. Duke Senior and some followers have gone to enjoy the rustic life in the Forest of Arden. Duke Senior's daughter, Rosalind remains behind at court because of her devotion to Duke Frederick's daughter, Celia.

Orlando's older brother Oliver has pocketed Orlando's inheritance, treated him like a servant, and not educated him as their late father had decreed in his will. When Orlando demands his rights, Oliver persuades Charles, Duke Frederick's prize wrestler, to disable or kill Orlando in their upcoming bout. At the wrestling match Rosalind and Orlando fall in love after Orlando unexpectedly defeats Charles. Rosalind is then banished by the mistrustful Duke Frederick. Unable to be parted from her friend, Celia decides to flee to the Forest of Arden with Rosalind. For protection on their journey, and because she is uncommonly tall, Rosalind disguises herself as a young man. They also take Touchstone, the court jester with them, for company and entertainment. Orlando, who is warned of Oliver's plan to kill him, also journeys to The Forest of Arden with his faithful servant, Adam. When Duke Frederick learns of his daughter's and Rosalind's flight and suspects that Orlando may be with them, he seizes Oliver's lands and possessions until Oliver can bring back Orlando and Celia or prove he had nothing to do with their running away.

Once in the Forest of Arden, Rosalind and Celia buy a cottage, a herd of sheep and employ Corin to tend their flock. They also meet the lovesick Silvius and the scornful Phebe. Orlando, who has joined Duke Senior's band, begins leaving love poems to Rosalind in the trees. Rosalind, Celia and the melancholy Jaques find these poems and eventually meet Orlando. He doesn't recognize Rosalind in men's clothes. She tells Orlando that his love for Rosalind is only madness. She offers to cure him of his lovesickness by pretending to be Rosalind and allowing him to court her. He agrees to meet her everyday.

Meanwhile Touchstone, who wants to marry an ugly woman so she will always be faithful to him, courts the country maid, Audrey. The reformed Oliver is saved from a lion by Orlando, and falls instantly in love with Celia. Phebe falls desperately in love with the disguised Rosalind. The various exiles and lovers gather and Rosalind promises she will return the next day and resolve everyone's love affairs.

True to her promise, Rosalind returns and eventually reveals her true identity to Orlando, her father and a surprised Phebe. By the play's end, all the couples are happily united. The multiple weddings of Orlando/Rosalind, Oliver/Celia, Touchstone/Audrey, and Silvius/Phebe are presided over by Hymen, God of marriage. In the midst of the celebrations, the newlyweds learn that Duke Frederick has repented and has restored all possessions and estates to their rightful owners.

KING HENRY V SYNOPSIS

In the Shakespearean history plays before Henry V, we learn that Henry IV, the father of Henry V, obtained his crown by taking it from Richard II. To hold on to his crown Henry IV had to fight battles and constantly deal with shifting allegiances within his kingdom. Just before he dies in The Second Part of King Henry IV, Part II he tells Prince Henry to make friends of his friends, and unify his warring nobles through wars fought against foreign enemies.

At the beginning of Henry V the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Ely discuss the proposed law that would strip the church of great wealth and power. To counter this disastrous legislation the Archbishop plans to give King Henry V a great sum of money for the proposed war with France, as well

as a legal technicality (the Salic law) that will justify Henry's claim to the throne of France. Henry accepts the logic and gold of the churchmen, and determines to take only $\frac{1}{4}$ of his forces to France while leaving $\frac{3}{4}$ to defend against the opportunistic Scottish. The French ambassador then enters and gives Henry a cask of tennis balls from the French Dauphin. This present is intended to remind Henry of his misspent youth and humiliate him in front of his court. Henry informs the ambassador that his wayward youth taught him to greatly value his crown. He then warns the ambassador that if the French King does not relinquish his crown he will take it by brute force. Henry then orders his nobles to prepare for war and march to Southampton.

We learn from the Chorus that all the youth of England are on fire to follow their young King and become rich fighting in France. Once Bardolfe, Nym and Pistol stop fighting amongst themselves, they also plan to go to the wars.

At Southampton we learn that Henry has discovered three traitors who have been paid by France to assassinate him. After they show no lenity to an outspoken drunk, Henry condemns them to death, not for wanting to kill him, but for plotting the ruin of his subjects and his kingdom. Before the army sets sail for France we also learn of Falstaff's death.

At the battle of Harfleur, Henry motivates his troops with his words and deeds. Pistol, Nym and Bardolfe all prove they are cowards, and we meet the enthusiastic and knowledgeable Welsh Captain, Fluellen. The Governor of Harfleur finally surrenders after Henry threatens the rape and butchery of his citizens. Henry then orders Essex to secure the town with a small force and to show mercy to all its citizens. The next day Henry leads the bulk of his sick and diminished army back towards Calais where they plan to set sail for England. Katherine, the French Princess, learns some English vocabulary from her maid and the King of France orders his troops to the field to capture Henry and destroy his weakened army.

While marching to Calais, Fluellen tells Gower of a well executed battle by the Duke of Exeter to secure a bridge. Pistol then unsuccessfully pleads with Fluellen to help save Bardolfe's life, who is to be hanged for stealing a cross out of a church. The French herald Montjoy arrives and warns Henry he and his followers will be defeated and killed if Henry doesn't ransom himself. Henry refuses to submit, admits his army is small and weak but warns the herald they will fight valiantly if attacked.

The night before the battle the confident and eager French fantasize about their assured victory while the English quietly dread the approaching dawn. Henry walks disguised amongst his troops and quarrels with one who doesn't trust the King. He realizes the terrible burdens of kingship and envies the common man with simple desires and nightly sleep. At daybreak he gives a rousing Saint Crispin's Day speech to his troops just before they head into battle. During the battle Pistol captures a French soldier, and French soldiers kill the English boys protecting the luggage. Against huge odds, and with the help of the undisciplined French, a muddy field and the English longbow, thousands of French nobility are slaughtered with almost no loss of life to the English forces. Henry then rewards the common soldier, Williams, whom he argued with the night before, and Fluellen humiliates Pistol for being a boastful coward and for denigrating the Welsh.

Henry then secures a peace with the French King and successfully woos Princess Katherine for his wife, hoping that together they will produce a warrior son who will eventually unite the two kingdoms.

THE TEMPEST SYNOPSIS

A tempest batters the ship of the King of Naples, who is returning from his daughter's wedding in Africa. On the island, Miranda hears the distressed cries from the passengers and sailors and pleads with her father, Prospero, to calm the seas with his magic powers. Prospero promises her that nobody will be hurt and then reveals to her the events that caused them to live on the island. Prospero tells Miranda that twelve years ago he was the Duke of Milan. Being consumed with the study of magic arts he trustingly left the governing of his dukedom to his brother Antonio. Wanting to become the real duke, Antonio plotted with Prospero's enemy, Alonso, the King of Naples, to have Prospero and Miranda abandoned on the high seas in a small rotten boat. Only the generosity of the faithful Gonzalo, who provided Prospero with food, water, his books and other necessities, prevented them from perishing at sea. Having made it to the island Prospero enslaved the vicious Caliban, freed the delicate Ariel, educated his beloved daughter and furthered his magical arts. He tells Miranda that fate has brought all his enemies near to his island and if he doesn't take this opportunity to right the injustices he has suffered his fortunes will ever decline. Prospero then plots with Ariel about how to deal with the various groups landed on the island and promises to set Ariel free when his work is done. Ariel then charms Ferdinand, Alonso's son, to Prospero's cell where Miranda, who has never seen another man besides Prospero and Caliban, falls instantly in love. Ferdinand also falls in love with Miranda but Prospero, who has engineered the match, feigns disapproval and presses Ferdinand into strenuous labor.

Meanwhile, Alonso, Antonio, Sebastian (Alonso's brother), Gonzalo and various other lords reach shore and wander the island, looking for Ferdinand, who many presume is dead. Good Gonzalo tries to give comfort, and conjectures that Ferdinand may still be alive since they miraculously survived the shipwreck. Ariel lulls all to sleep, except Sebastian and Antonio, who immediately conspire to murder Alonso and deliver the kingdom of Naples to Sebastian. Ariel, cloaked in invisibility, overhears the plot and wakes Gonzalo, who warns Alonso before Antonio's blade strikes. Later, to torment the famished nobles, Ariel and other spirits reveal a lavish banquet that vanishes as they try to eat. Ariel appears in the form of a Harpy to rebuke them for their cruel treatment of Prospero, declaring their past actions the cause of their current distress.

On another part of the island, Trinculo, servant to Alonso, stumbles across Caliban while attempting to escape the remnants of the storm. Another servant, Stephano, who has recovered a cask of wine from the wreck, drunkenly mistakes the pair for a four-legged monster. After tasting Stephano's "spirits," Caliban declares him a god and vows devotion. Caliban tries to convince Stephano to murder Prospero, marry Miranda, and become ruler of the isle. Ariel overhears their plotting and warns his master.

Back at his cell, Prospero watches as Miranda and Ferdinand exchange vows of love and promise to marry. Prospero, pleased with the match, blesses their union. Remembering Caliban's plot, Prospero and Ariel hang gawdy clothes outside Prospero's cell to divert the would-be murderers.

When Stephano, Trinculo and the distressed Caliban seize the goods they are attacked and driven out by spirits in the shapes of hunting dogs. The royal party is brought, spellbound, to Prospero's cell, where Prospero renounces his magical powers and forgives his tormentors for their misdeeds. He reveals the supposedly dead Ferdinand and his daughter Miranda-both safely playing chess and newly engaged. Father and son reunite, Alonso restores Prospero's dukedom, and Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo repent their scheming. Before everyone departs Prospero promises fair seas and good winds that will allow them to catch their fleet before it arrives home. Prospero then sets Ariel free and asks the audience to set him free by clapping their hands.

One final word about speed

To achieve clarity directors often encourage a slow delivery of lines, which is sometimes mistakenly reasoned to be integral to iambic pentameter verse. Anyone who had witnessed a great Shakespearean actor colorfully tear through a speech however, knows that real speed of thought and tongue can be truly thrilling. There are certain passages in Shakespeare that absolutely demand a lightening quick mind and tongue; characters like Hamlet that fresh-mint white-hot off the mind. This is not speed for its own sake, but the nature of the thought that Shakespeare has written.

So don't assume going slower will make the text clearer, a short-cut bad directors too often resort to: its hard to be clear to an audience when they are asleep. Shakespeare's language and thought is always complex; there is always a lot of work necessary to fully realize performances. When the work is done however, and many decisions agreed upon, the actor/student will naturally gain speed. I believe speed brings clarity with much Shakespearean text, but just like the piano, this speed must be earned with technique. When all that happens the actor-craftsman can then begin becoming the actor-artist.