

Twelfth Night

Diane Wright

Rogers CAPA

- Overview
- Rationale
- Objectives
- Strategies
- Classroom Activities
- Bibliography
- Appendix

Overview

“The written text of a piece of dramatic literature is just a script. It does not become a play until it is performed”

-Dr. John C. Carr (1929-1999)

This unit on Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* was designed for a secondary (grades 7-12) English or equivalent class that might deal with Shakespeare’s plays. It would also be suitable for an after-school drama or Shakespeare club/activity. In addition, it can be modified for a shorter unit by omitting some but not all of the play reading and advancing more quickly to the activities on the selected scenes and monologues.

To begin this unit, students need to explore the Elizabethan Age and develop an understanding of the context in which Shakespeare’s plays were created. Students will briefly explore Shakespeare, the man, the actor, and the playwright, The Globe Theatre and how his plays might have been staged in 1600. Next students will be introduced to how Shakespeare uses sounds and words to create the world of the play. This would include lessons on the key elements of dramatic writing, poetic and figurative language, and meter and iambic pentameter, in addition to the uses of music and movement which Shakespeare employs to engage our senses. A short activity on genre gets us ready to look at individual plays. In addition, since no stage directions are given in Shakespeare’s plays, students will learn how to analyze the text to identify clues that Shakespeare gives us on how to use movement and blocking.

After this background material has been studied, students are ready to begin looking at the play chosen for a performance workshop approach. When I talk about performance, I am not speaking of a formal theatrical performance, rather an “in the classroom” performance. The culminating activity of this unit is having students present the selected scenes and monologues at an informal presentation for invited guests. The

guests can range from simply the other members of the class to a slightly more sophisticated gathering of parents, other students, and/or teachers.

In order to insure student success, I have students read a play synopsis and then quickly discuss key literary elements such as plot, setting, and characters. There are numerous sources for play synopsis that can be used. After making sure students have a grasp of the plot, characters and setting, we begin to read and discuss the play aloud, scene by scene. While reading through the play, students will be keeping a journal regarding selected discussion questions, character studies, and reflections.

The final aspect of this unit is the selection of scenes and monologues for classroom performance. Each student will be part of “an acting company” which will work on these scenes. We want students to experience Shakespeare from the perspective of an actor, who takes the text from the page breathing life into complex characters. Using the play’s dialogue and visual images, students will create meaning as they internalize and synthesize the text, creating a variety of projects to demonstrate understanding of not only the play, but also the entire Shakespearean experience. As students work through this part of the unit, they will use the Stanislavski acting technique to create their characters, find characters’ intentions, motivations, obstacles, and subtext, and block their scenes for presentation. Although costuming is not a mandatory aspect of this unit, students do enjoy using costume pieces and props when they present their final scenes. These props and costume pieces should only include materials that are readily available from the student’s home and should not incur costs from the student, parent, or teacher.

Rationale

This unit will be part of the overall Drama Curriculum at a Creative and Performing Arts Middle School. The Shakespeare component, which includes aspects from the Theatre History, Acting Technique, and Scene Study modules of the curriculum, is a very important one since professional actors must be able to tackle both classical and contemporary acting. As part of our middle school drama curriculum, drama students are required to participate in the Annual Shakespeare Scene and Monologue contest held at the Pittsburgh Public Theatre. The challenge for students to prepare themselves for this event is daunting for young adolescents.

Each year, as I have planned the year’s curriculum units, this particular unit is of concern to me. It has been the culminating event for our Shakespearean study. As I plan this curriculum unit, my goals include giving students an engaging introduction to Shakespeare’s plays as well as creating a lasting appreciation for classical drama. In addition, this unit aspires to help to make students feel successful as they perform their scene and/or monologue.

The students for whom this unit was written have had creative dramatics experience as well as background in dramatic text structures and acting technique classes. Although this background is helpful, it not a prerequisite for the unit since many of these

terms, skills, and strategies are reviewed within the course of the unit. Furthermore, many creative dramatic activities are already used during the implementation of the curriculum of Language Arts classes.

Teachers who use this curriculum unit should possess background knowledge on Shakespeare and the theatre of his era as well as being thoroughly familiar with the play *Twelfth Night*.

What this unit sets out to do is to make Shakespeare's plays more accessible to middle and high school students by letting Shakespeare teach Shakespeare. We need to get students' attention and engage them in the study of the Elizabethan period and of Shakespeare's plays and language. Shakespeare used numerous strategies to get his viewer's attention including dumb shows and clowns and we, too, must employ numerous and varied strategies to engage students of the twenty-first century. Since Shakespeare's words are the power of his work, we want to expose students to the beauty of Shakespeare's language and to put it into their mouths. In addition, part of the staying power of his plays is the universality of his themes. It is through his characters and themes that we hope to engage students. Not through just sitting and reading the text but by transforming our classrooms into performance workshops. After all, Shakespeare's plays were not written to be read but to be acted, watched, and enjoyed.

As teachers, I think that we often forget that these plays were created to be heard and seen and the text we read – some of it corrupted through time by editors and printers – is actually only an attempt to capture that three dimensional event which was performed on those old Elizabethan stages where the action often complemented the word. When we read a play, we miss some of what I call the performance language of the play. A line of text on a page does not exist as a piece of theater. A whole play does not come into being when it is in print. It breathes only when it is performed, and for that moment only.
(O'Brien, 27)

Twelfth Night is comedy about love. Comedy takes us from division to unity. In the beginning of this play, Sebastian and Viola are separated due to a storm at sea and Orsino and Olivia are at odds. By the end of the play, we have the double pairings of Orsino and Viola and Olivia and Sebastian. In the middle we have the complications of relationships between these characters compounded by the fact that Viola is dressed as a boy – another often used convention in Shakespeare's comedies.

Comedic heroines often cross dress as a liberation of the female traditional roles. In *Twelfth Night*, Viola's "boy disguise operates not as a liberation but merely as a way to go underground in a difficult situation" (Bloom, 231).

The other subplot of *Twelfth Night* has to do with the revelers and practical jokers of Maria, Sir Toby Belch, and Sir Andrew Aguecheek and

their target, Malvolio. Maria is the controlling figure in these scenes as is her employer, Olivia, in her interactions with Viola/Cesario. Maria has a personal motive in driving Malvolio mad. Sir Toby and Sir Andrew just go along for the ride.

The glue that holds the plot and characters together is Feste. According to Bloom, Feste is the only sane character in a wild play. He is welcome in both locations of this play and gives us wisdom and foreshadowing.

Most audience members in Shakespeare's day already knew the basic plots before they saw the plays. The significance of Shakespeare's works is his ability to explore human nature. He created complex characters and universal themes that we can as much connect to in 2005 as audience members in 1600. The characters in *Twelfth Night* are still identifiable as is its universal themes of love and the excesses of love.

The Life and Times of William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare was born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, England, which was about 100 miles northwest of London. We are not sure of his exact birthday, but since babies were usually baptized three days after they are born and Shakespeare was baptized on April 26, April 23 has been assigned as being most probable for his birth date. William Shakespeare was the son of a solid middle class family. His father was John Shakespeare, a glove maker and a member of the Stratford City Council and his mother was Mary Arden. John and Mary Shakespeare had eight children, William being the third child and the first son.

Although there are no school records, it is assumed that William attended the new free public grammar school and studied Latin and the works of Greek and Roman writers and philosophers. Some of Shakespeare's plays were later based upon the writings he would have studied in school. He did not attend college and was not considered a man of learning. He was not regarded in the same league as some other writers of his day, such as Ben Jonson or John Milton.

William Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway in 1582. He was 18 and she was 26. After his marriage to Anne, little is known about his activities until 1592 when Robert Greene wrote that Shakespeare was an "Upstart Crow". By this time, William Shakespeare had become well established in the London Theatre scene.

Between the years of 1594 through 1599, Shakespeare produced a steady stream of plays. He was a principal actor and manager of the Lord Chamberlain's Men and in 1599; he became part owner of the Globe Theatre. In 1603, when Queen Elizabeth I died and James VI of Scotland became James I of England, The Lord Chamberlain's Men became the King's Men. The King's Men performed before the King more than any other acting company of the day.

William Shakespeare died on April 23, 1616 and was buried in the chancel of Holy Trinity Church in Stratford, England. On his gravestone, his epitaph reads:

*Good Friends for Jesus Sake Forebear
To dig the dust enclosed here
Blest be the man that spares these stones
And cursed be he that moves my bones*

Seven years after Shakespeare's death, two fellow King's Men, John Heminges and Henry Condell, collected 36 of his plays and published the First Folio. About 240 of the 1,000 copies printed are still in existence today.

The Staging of Plays during the Elizabethan Age

English theatre during the reign of Elizabeth developed into a very popular art form. In the middle ages, theatre was used primarily for religious purposes. As the Renaissance took hold, theatre became more and more secular.

In 1576, the first permanent theatre in England, simply called The Theatre, was built by James Burbage. Prior to this time, plays were performed in temporary theatres constructed in Inn Yards. It was at this theatre that the Lord Chamberlain's men performed most of their plays. Around 1597, James Burbage died and the lease expired on the land where The Theatre stood. The landlord decided that he did not want to renew the lease so Burbage's sons, Richard and Cuthbert, dismantled the theatre, board by board, and transported the materials across the river and rebuilt a new theatre called The Globe in the Southwark district near The Rose and The Bear Garden Theatres.

Although we are not positive as to what the Globe looked like, it was probably round or octagonal, about 80' by 80', and able to accommodate about 2500 spectators. The theatres of the day were constructed of a timber frame covered with a clay plaster. Roofs were thatched with a flagpole on the top. A flag flying on the flagpole announced to the public that a play would be performed that day. Inside, there would have been two tiers of seats lining the interior of the theatre and a large open space in front of the stage for the groundlings to stand to watch the play. The stage itself would have been a covered, raised rectangular platform. The roof over the stage was there to protect the actors from rain and was supported by two large wooden columns painted with a faux marble finish. On the stage, there would have been one or more trap doors for special effects or ghost scenes. At the rear of the stage was a curtained area, used for inner rooms or discovery scenes. Above this area was a balcony that was used as part of the stage for mountain top, castle top, or balcony scenes. The balcony was also used for musicians. In fact, a trumpet sounded three times to signal the start of the play. Trumpets were also used to signal the start of battle scenes.

Since the stages during the Elizabethan times were much different than they are today, Shakespeare and his fellow playwrights of the day told the stories of their plays

through dialogue and action. Scenery was not important to Elizabethan theatergoers and so little was used. Elizabethans were more interested in the characters and their relationships. The information regarding the setting was embedded in the text of the play. The playwright's words and the audience's understanding of several theatrical conventions clued the audience to the setting. Sometimes small title boards were used to state where the scene was to take place.

Elizabethan staging was symbolic rather than realistic. Audiences had to work hard at visualizing the spectacles the words described. Unless we can bring to their words a fairly distinct idea of what they and their authors expected, we lose much that was inherent in their scripts.

(Gurr, Andrew and Mariko Ichikawa, 1)

Although scenery was not used, props were. Acting companies owned trunks of props to provide some sense of realism for the actors and audience. Props might include swords, stools, or a throne.

When used creatively, a minimum of objects could suggest a complex setting. For instance, audiences knew that benches, tables, and flagons (cups for ale) indicated a tavern. A small forge indicated the scene as a blacksmith's shop. According to Schelling, 'Books lying confusedly within the curtain were enough for the study of Horace or Faustus; a stool, cushion, looking glass, chafing dish and a couple of vials of cosmetic furnished out the lodgings of a lady of pleasure. White draperies suspended from the ceiling were used for clouds and big drums rumbling behind the scenes symbolized a thunderstorm. (Yancey, 33)

Although most Elizabethans loved the theatre, some worked hard to close them down. One of these groups was the Puritans. The Puritans were a religious sect that held very strict and conservative views on religion and morality. They believed that dancing, singing, and going to the theatre, among other things, were sins because they took people away from church and the Bible.

Genre

Shakespeare wrote his plays in a variety of genres. Some of his plays mix genres and some are even called problem plays because of the mixing of genres. Each of the genres has distinct elements and it is important to understand each genre as they pertain to an individual play for study. The Genres are comedy, tragedy, and history. A genre of Romance was added later.

As with any literature, the study of drama begins with the analysis of plot structure (initial incident, rising action, climax, falling action, and denouement). As we look at Shakespeare's plays, each genre has a slightly different take on this plot structure. Comedies often begin with a separation – husband and wife, siblings, lovers, or parent and child and end with happy reunions and marriage. Tragedies begin with a conflict

with its roots in greed, hate, or ambition and conclude with death. In comedy, the unstable condition is smaller and less deadly. The later genre of romance mixes these two and usually includes devices like mistaken identity, separated twins, gendered crossing disguises, magic, rough fathers/kings, and healing daughters and its plot revolves around generational reconciliation and obstacles to true love.

Twelfth Night is one of Shakespeare's greatest comedies. All of the characters are mad without knowing it except Feste. Even Viola seems to act without any premeditation. She lands on an unknown coast, hears that the prince is a bachelor, and decides to go work for him even though she knows he is in love with another. These matches are some of Shakespeare's silliest. Viola falls in love at first sight. Only Feste has a mind. Orsino is in love with love, music and himself but not with Olivia. Orsino's ranting monologue sets the tone of the play and even though he is totally self absorbed, the audience is moved by him due to the fact that his sentimentalism is universal.

Although no specific reference to *Twelfth Night* is made during the play, we know that *Twelfth Night* is associated with the Carnival season. During the Carnival season, which runs from twelfth night to mardi gras, reversals are celebrated. This reversal is based on the reversal of having kings bow down to a baby. So *Twelfth Night* is a festive play, a play which celebrates reversals, a world turned topsy-turvy.

The play contains many reversals throughout. In the Orsino/Olivia relationship, reversals are the name of the game. Olivia not Orsino is in control. He is the Duke, yet is left powerless because of lovesickness. Olivia has no particular interest in marriage, a reversal on how women of that era should feel.

Sir Toby and Sir Andrew are both aristocrats but do not behave in that manner and are controlled by a social climbing servant girl. They behave in a lower class manner and therefore there is that reversal.

Viola is, of course, the biggest reversal. Not only is she cross dressed, but she also woos Olivia for Orsino and does a better job. Ironically, she is wooing Olivia for the very man that she herself is in love with. Then, Olivia has a reversal of her own as she runs after Cesario/Viola.

The Comedy allows for the reversal of order with no pressure on time and we know that all will be righted at the end.

Twelfth Night is primarily a comedy in which William Shakespeare has added some aspects of romance. Comedy refers to plays that have happy endings with one or more couple marrying which resolves the conflict and restores order.

According to Marjorie Garber in her book, *Shakespeare After All*, *Twelfth Night* has elements of both romance and comedy. Romance elements include shipwrecks, the rediscovery of long lost brothers and sisters, physical marks of recognition, and rebirths from the sea. Romance has elements of epiphany and rebirth. *Twelfth Night*, which actually refers to The Epiphany (celebrated around January 6 when the Wise Men were

said to visit the baby Jesus), has a number of the elements of Romance as well as those of Comedy. The seacoast is a typical romance location which is where *Twelfth Night* takes place.

Illyria and its inhabitants are in need of rebirth. At the beginning of the play, the natural order of things has been disrupted with the death of Olivia's father and brother. There is no one to be Olivia's protector. Orsino is in love with Olivia but she does not return the affection. In fact there is no joy in her house because of these deaths. Illyria is filled with melancholy. Viola and Sebastian are opposite the inhabitants of Illyria. Viola and Sebastian are active, innovative, energetic, and daring in contrast to Olivia and Orsino who are passive. Viola's way of approaching morning is life affirming whereas Olivia's life denying.

Olivia's life is so joyless that she hires Malvolio, literally "ill wisher," to run her household because he is serious. He is a Puritan and as such would be very moral, serious, and repressive of ordinary pleasures. He is also very egotistical and concerned with self. These traits seem to plague much of Illyria.

In contrast to Malvolio is Feste, who once was welcomed to Olivia's house while her father was alive, Toby, Sir Andrew and Maria. As Malvolio represents the repressed side, the others represent the festive side. Malvolio and Maria loathe each other. Malvolio's downfall is as much his own imagination and egotism as it is Maria and company's trickery.

But like all good comedies, the play ends with marriages which restore harmony and household normalcy.

The Sounds, Words, and Language of Shakespeare

Writing plays in verse was customary for most playwrights during the Elizabethan period. Meter creates a heightened quality to the writing and adds auditory sensuousness. Shakespeare wrote in iambic pentameter, trochaic tetrameter, and prose. In iambic pentameter, each line has five feet, or sections, of iambs. An iamb contains two syllables, the first unstressed and the second stressed. In trochaic tetrameter, each line has four feet of trochees per line. A trochee contains two syllables, the first is stressed and the second unstressed. Shakespeare generally used trochaic tetrameter for magical speeches. Prose is not written in meter. Shakespeare sometimes used prose for lower class characters or for more informal conversations. To check if the passage is written in verse or prose, check to see if the first letter of each line is capitalized. If so, then it is written in verse.

As we are reading the blank verse of Shakespeare, sometimes lines are not the same length. There may be two reasons for that. First, there are times when two characters share a line. That is that one character's lines end in the middle of the line and the next speaker finishes the line of iambic pentameter. Another reason could be that Shakespeare was giving us a clue to the emotional situation of the character or when

some physical action should occur. This emotional character situation could also be the reason for sections of a play in which the meter changes for a foot. This is called a reversed foot.

Another convention that Shakespeare uses is called rhyming couplets, two lines that rhyme. They usually appear at the end of a scene or action and are used for emphasis. It can heighten suspense in a scene or bring closure to the end of the scene or act.

As students study Shakespeare, whether as a literary student or an actor, the verse of Shakespeare is very important. After all, that is one of the elements we stress has contributed to these plays withstanding the test of time. In the classroom, students need to be able to identify which characters speak in verse and those that speak in prose. Students who can identify how Shakespeare uses language to give us clues to the characterization, conflicts, obstacles, and subtext of a character are ahead of the game when we begin to ask them to analyze character whether as an actor or just as a literature student.

In addition to the meter aspects of language, Shakespeare uses linguistic cluster themes in his plays. In *Twelfth Night*, we see a language cluster revolving around water and rebirth. There are numerous water images such as tears, seawater, and rain. There are also a numerous of references to the opposite – dryness for example, dry hands, dry jests, and dry fools.

Shakespeare's era was that of the Renaissance. This world was very ordered with a very rigid social class system. Elizabethans believed in "The Great Chain of Being" which ranked all things in the universe from the lowliest thing to God. This helped Elizabethans cope with the changing world around them. To Elizabethans, anything out of the ordinary, including floods, storms, or unexpected deaths violated this. Shakespeare used this concept throughout his plays.

Objectives:

The objectives of this unit correlate to both Pennsylvania State standards in Reading and in Arts and Humanities, as well as National Standards in Drama. During the course of this unit, students will read and use a variety of methods to make sense of various kinds of complex text. First and foremost, students will be developing strategies to assist in their comprehension of the text as they read and discuss the play in class. In addition, students will be developing their text analysis skills as they use the text to help them develop characterizations, plan the use of props and set pieces, and block their scenes and monologues. Students will also be keeping a journal as they proceed with this unit. In this journal they will respond to the text, use the text to answer inferential and evaluative questions, and reflect on the process they are using to develop their scenes and monologues. There will also be other project oriented assignments (collages, set drawings, writing of additional scenes, etc) that will require students to synthesize

information from the text or from additional research in order to successfully complete the projects.

Students will also be attaining standards 1, 2, & 5 from the National Drama Standards. In working on standard 1, students will write short scene scripts based on Twelfth Night. Standard Two includes students working on developing their basic acting skills. Students will be analyzing the play's dialogue to discover, articulate, and justify their character's motivation, behaviors, and actions. As they prepare their scenes and respond in their journals, they will be demonstrating proficient acting skills (such as sensory recall, concentration, breath control, diction, body alignment, and use of character histories) to develop and portray truthful characterizations that suggest strong artistic choices. They will also demonstrate that they can work as part of an ensemble/cooperative grouping to prepare and present the scenes and monologues. Furthermore, students will satisfy standard 5 as they use information about the Elizabethan age and Shakespearean acting techniques in the preparation of the scenes.

In addition to the Communications and Theatre goals already stated, this unit could be expanded to include other departments in an interdisciplinary unit. Other departments could include but are not limited to History/Social Studies and Vocal/Instrumental Music.

Strategies

In teaching this unit, there are a number of teaching strategies that can be employed to assist students in becoming involved with the text. These strategies borrow aspects from brain based learning, multiple intelligences, cooperative learning groups, and creative dramatics. This unit begins with a fairly traditional approach of reading the play and then uses selected scenes from the text for more in depth study using specific acting techniques. Using these acting techniques forces students to more closely analyze character since this is the driving force for the actor preparing a role.

Materials that students will need for this unit are pocket folders, a journal that fits inside the pocket folder, and a copy of the play Twelfth Night. My goals for this unit include the comprehension of the play, the analysis of text for literary elements, student interaction with Shakespeare's verse, and the performance and synthesis of the selected scenes. For this reason I have chosen to work with the Oxford School Shakespeare. Although here are a number of school editions of Shakespearean plays including parallel texts, I have decided against the parallel text because I want to force students to only work with Shakespeare's verse rather than a modern prose interpretation of the play. Also, we will be reading the play aloud in class which will give students an opportunity to ask questions regarding Shakespeare's language. The Oxford School Shakespeare also has a synopsis of each scene, scene commentary and numerous notes on Shakespeare's language with definitions of unfamiliar terms. The notes include more background information than I have found in the parallel texts. This book also includes photographs, drawings, and music. It includes sections on background information and has some suggested classroom activities.

Building Background: Before students can be immersed in the text, they need to understand the context in which it was created (Arts and Humanities Standard 3). I will spend the first week giving students background on Shakespeare, his life, his theatre, and his era. In addition, I will spend time talking about genre and language and how it affects his plays. Part of that week will be spent looking at scansion and allowing students guided practice with scansion using a variety of excerpts from Shakespeare's plays. Specifically looking for typical iambic pentameter excerpts and excerpts that break the rule (Hamlet's "To be or not to be" monologue, for example). As we spend time looking at scansion, we want to try and figure out why Shakespeare broke the pattern: what is happening to this character or how order has been broken, etc. In addition, I want to spend a little time explaining Shakespeare's vocabulary. Students need to know that many words that Shakespeare uses had different meanings than they do today or may not even still exist. I keep several copies of Shakespeare Dictionaries available for use in class both by students and myself.

Previewing the Material: Very often in Shakespeare's day, playgoers came to the theatre already knowing the plot to the play that they would be seeing that day. As mentioned earlier, it is not the plot per se that makes Shakespeare's plays great but what he did with his adaptations of the plot including developing characterization, using linguistic and image cluster, and employing blank verse and prose. It is for this reason that my next strategy for engaging students in the text is to preview the plot.

There are numerous resources for the plot of *Twelfth Night*. Some of the resources that I have successfully used are Lois Burdett's series of *Shakespeare Can Be Fun* and Tina Packer's book *Tales from Shakespeare*. After reviewing the summary of the plot, I have students create a project that demonstrates their understanding of the plot. This could be a time line, a "comic book" rendition of the plot, a poem or rap, or some other project of their own creation. I am looking to make sure that students understand the sequence of events prior to our reading the actual play. This project is due before we begin to read the first act.

Directed Reading Model: As we read through the play together, we will use a modified version of the Directed Reading Model. In this model, the teacher sets a purpose for the reading and then segments the text to improve student comprehension. At the end of each of the segments, the teacher checks for understanding by asking several open ended questions. These questions are designed to get students to synthesize meaning from the passage rather than wait for the teacher to interpret the text for the students. Teachers should segment text where they believe students will need support in understanding the content, making connections, interpreting the text, identifying underlying themes, making important inferences, or using context clues to define unfamiliar vocabulary words or word usages. Students should take notes as they read. As students answer open ended questions, teachers need to make sure that students are going back to the text to support opinions. Using this strategy when reading the play, helps students increase their reading skills and strategies as outlined in Pennsylvania Content Standards 1.1 (Learning to Read Independently), 1.2 (Reading Critically in all Content Areas), and 1.3 (Reading, Analyzing, and Interpreting Literature)

As we read through the play, I assign each student one character whose character traits they will chart throughout the play. They will keep their charts (handout # 2) in their pocket folder to use later when they construct their character histories. On this chart they will document everything that we learn about their character and any unanswered questions they have about the character.

Prior to each day's reading, I ask students to pre-read the scenes that we will be working on and make any notes in their journals as to problems that they had understanding what is happening. At the end of the day's lesson, I will ask students to respond in their journal to what we read during that day. In some cases, I give specific questions for the students to answer, while on other occasions, I may ask them to respond in their own way.

During the day's lesson, I may employ techniques where students visually show me what they understand. This can include illustrating a particular scene, writing (in prose) a scene that Shakespeare did not include, or by having small groups present tableaux which illustrate the action in the scene. A tableau is a frozen stage picture. All characters are frozen in the midst of action and the teacher touches each on the shoulder. When the teacher touches the participant on the shoulder, the student will utter what the character is thinking or saying in this situation.

Scene Analysis and performance: After having read through the entire play, I then want to turn my attention to the performance of selected scenes. In the beginning of this phase, I assign students into cooperative groups (acting Companies) based upon the characters they have tracked during the reading of the play and the scene(s) they will be working on. These groups pick their own Elizabethan acting company name. One activity that is a fun beginning for building cooperative skills is the insult game. Each acting company is given a list of Elizabethan insults (in the appendix). Each acting company verbally hurls insults to another company using the list provided.

The purpose of these acting companies is to work together using the Stanislavski acting system to put together selected scenes. Each group is assigned a scene or scene and monologue to work on. They will work on these excerpts in the way that actors work to put the scenes on their feet.

The Stanislavski acting system is the acting method most commonly used in the United States by professional actors. It relies on the actor working on character from the inside out. That means by looking at what the playwright gives us, we create the inner life of the character and end with adding the external touches of props and costumes. This system expects actors to complete a significant amount of preparation prior to the rehearsal and blocking of scenes. The most critical aspect of this system is developing the character using the "given circumstances", the information about the individual character give to us by the playwright directly, and then using our prior knowledge and our imagination, we create the inner world of the character in the form of a "character history". This character history is what the "actor" will refer back to in order to help

answer character motivation questions that arise during the scene work. The character history is written in the first person, from the perspective of the character to be played.

After students are finished writing a character history, they will read their scenes aloud with their group. When they read the scenes aloud, they want to interpret what exactly is being said. One activity that is helpful is to have students work as a group to write a modernized language version of the scene. This is not the version that they will be performing but only helps to demonstrate their understanding of the text. It will also help students as they enter into the text analysis activity. As they read the scene together a second time, they want to identify the character's intentions, beats, obstacles, tactics, subtext, and moment before.

The intentions are what the character wants in a scene, the obstacles are what is standing in the way of their getting what they want, and the tactics are the methods that the character uses to get what he wants. When the character's intention changes, the beat changes and there will be many beats within a given scene. All of these things are written on the left hand of the scene copy.

The subtext is the true meaning of what the character is saying. Do they mean what they are saying or do they really mean something else? What exactly do they mean? If a character says "It's raining." do they mean their happy because they won't have to go to the garden party or are they sad because it will mean the party is cancelled? Are they shocked because it never rains at that time of the year? A simple statement has numerous possible subtexts. The subtext is written underneath the line

The moment before refers to what immediately happened before the first line in the scene. Many times the author does not specifically tell us, but the actor must know because it will affect how the scene is played. The moment before is written at the top of the scene.

After creating the inner life of the character the "actor" needs to devise a plan for going from the actor to the character. One way is to decide what aspects of the actor are like the character and what aspects are different from them. Is there anything that the actor can use to help them understand the character and embody him/her? Stanislavski talks about the "Magic If", if I were that character how would I feel or what would I do?

Next, students will work on the blocking, the planned movements for the actors on stage. Students will work as a group to decide where they will move on stage. Each movement must be motivated and students will need to justify the movement if asked by the teacher. This cooperative effort and may need monitoring to make sure that one student is not controlling the group.

Finally students will rehearse their scenes, add costume and prop pieces and prepare scenes for informal presentation for class. Whether students memorize scenes or not is up to the individual teacher. It is not necessary as the important part is putting Shakespeare's words in the mouths of students. The performance for the class is the important activity here. After the performance, I ask specific questions of the actors in

terms of the choices for characterization, text analysis, clocking, costumes, and props. I also collect folders with the journals, modern versions, and scripts with the text analysis and blocking notations.

Classroom Activities

Prior to beginning this unit, my students will already be familiar with dramatic text structures. Students will have previously worked on writing and performing contemporary scenes and monologues as well as working on improvisational exercises.

To begin this unit, I want students to be familiar with Shakespeare and his time period prior to reading and working with his plays. I will spend the first week of the unit talking about Shakespeare and the Globe theatre. One of the lessons will be on the Globe theatre.

Example of an introductory lesson Globe Theatre:

The objective of this lesson is to familiarize students with the Globe Theatre. At the end of this lesson, students will be able to identify the parts of the Globe Theatre and demonstrate this understanding by constructing a replica of the theatre.

I will provide students with textual background information on the Globe. We will look at artist's diagrams of the Globe and visit a virtual Globe website (<http://www.shakespeares-globe.org/navigation/frameset.htm>). Students will do additional research on their own and construct this model of whatever materials they wish. Students will label each area of the model and describe the function of the area. Various students over the years have constructed their models of heavy cardboard, wood, or clay. In grading these models, I look to see that all of the parts of the Globe that we have spoken about are included and that the students have taken the lecture and research information and been able to synthesis it into this project. I do not accept any of the prepackaged Globe model kits that are available for sale.

Directed Reading Model Lesson for Act I, Scenes 1, 2, &3

This lesson would follow all of the contextual and background information lessons. This would be the first lesson on reading the play. Students would come to class with there play script, journal and folder. The lesson would be a whole class lesson with the objective being that the students would be able to understand the characters, setting and plot of the first three scenes of the play. Students would also be able to look at the language used in the text. We would begin by assigning some students to read specific parts for our reading. I change the readers of the parts frequently to give many students oral reading opportunities.

Scene 1

As we read through the first scene we would stop several times to discuss what is happening. The segments would differ depending on the sophistication and reading level of the group. A possible segmentation might include stopping after line 7 (“Stealing and giving odour.”). Then we would first discuss the line *“If music be the food of love...”*. How is music the food of love? Subsequently we would want to discuss where we are, who is there, and what seems to be happening. We also want to look at any unfamiliar words like “surfeiting” (feeding to excess). We would continue through the scene stopping ever so often to make sure that meaning does not break down. In the next section, we would stop to make sure students begin to identify the double meanings that Shakespeare uses throughout his work. In Scene 1, the word hart is used to refer to both a deer and a loved one.

Scene 2

Read scene 2 segmenting the text just as was done with scene 1 changing parts often. Some of the aspects that need to be brought out are the setting of the seacoast as this is considered one of the aspects of romance. Also, look at what might have happened to Viola’s brother.

One literary element used frequently in Shakespeare is allusion. In scene 2 beginning with line 15, there is an allusion to Arion who was saved from drowning by a dolphin in mythology. Shakespeare often uses allusion to Greek and Roman mythology. Discussion to this literary device should be brought out.

Also in this scene there is exposition given that is needed to understand the characters. Students who are tracking characters mentioned in this scene need to take note of this information (given circumstances). At the conclusion of this scene, it is important for students to retell the situation thus far.

Scene 3

As we read through scene 3, we will specifically be looking for imbedded stage directions. As we read through the text, we will stop and discuss what is happening, where we are, and character relationships and motivations. In addition, we want to stop and call attention to what the blocked scene might look like since students will later be doing this on their own. Questions to ask might include questions on the setting and stage design and movements, both large and small that characters might make as they say the words.

Lesson assessment

After reading through the three scenes, students will be working in their journals and folders. First students will want to take notes on their handout for the character they are tracking. In their journal, they will answer specific comprehension questions (see appendix journal questions) as well as responding to the reading for they day. This response could be illustrating a scene from the reading, creating a blocking plan for the scene, or responding to specific lines that they found that appeal to them for any reason (beauty, humor, etc)

Scene Work

After the play has been read and understood, students will begin to work in their “Acting Companies”. Acting Companies will contain three to five students each that will work together to analyze, block and perform the scenes/monologues. Each group will be responsible for performing at least one monologue and one scene. Every member of the group must perform in one or both. Students will also be responsible for bringing in costume pieces and props for the performance.

I break the scene lessons up to include lessons on writing character histories, finding beats, intentions, obstacles, tactics, and subtext, creating blocking, and presenting the scenes. Each one of these phases may take more than one lesson.

Character Histories: The key to truthfulness in acting is the creation of a complete character history. The character history not only defines the character traits of your character, but also helps the actor to answer all “unanswered” questions that might come up during the analysis and blocking of scenes. During the course of reading the play, I have each student keep a running log (see attached character chart) on their chosen/assigned character. This is the character that the student will now be using to write a character history and it will be the character that they will portray in their scene/monologue.

To write the character history we first begin by writing in the first person, as if the character were writing his/her own autobiography. Using their character charts as a basis they begin with the “Given Circumstances”, the information that the playwright has given us. We will then add to that information that will round out our characters. This information will come from our inferences or what this character’s life would have been like. During this lesson, it can be helpful to have all of the Viola’s working together, all the Orsino’s working together, etc. Be sure to caution students that although the given circumstances may be alike, the inferences may not be exactly the same.

The character history should include: physical description, family background, educational background, social class and friends, emotional make-up, what the character wants from life, the character’s ideals and idiosyncrasies, detailed relationships with the other characters including how they feel about that person, what motivates/drives this character, etc. This character history is the basis for all unanswered questions (the why’s) in the text. Although, we are only performing scenes, the students will use the entire play to create the character history.

To accompany this, students should create a character collage using pictures and words to visually show these aspects of their character. On the due date, students will present their collages and sit “on the hot seat”. The student will sit at the front of the room while the other students will interview them as their character focusing on the unanswered questions of the text.

Text Analysis:

For this group of lessons, I give students a suggested list of scenes. They will choose a scene from the list or one of their own to work on for text analysis. As students

work through the text they will be asking the following questions as the character for each of their lines: what am I saying, what do I want (intention), what is standing in my way(obstacle), what am I doing to get what I want (tactics), why am I saying or doing this (motivation), do I really mean something other than I am saying?(subtext)

A good activity for subtext is to look at Act I scene 5 where Olivia and Viola meet for the first time. Students will work in groups of 4. One pair takes the part of Olivia (the first person delivers her lines and the second person delivers her thoughts) and one pair takes the part of Viola.

Act I, Scene 5	Olivia, Viola	“The honourable lady of the house...”
Act II Scene 2	Viola, Malvolio	“Were not you ev’n now with the Countess Olivia?”
Act II Scene 3	Maria, Sir Andrew, Sir Toby	“Go shake your ears”
Act II, Scene 4	Orsino; Viola, Feste	“Come Hither, boy”
Act II Scene 5	Maria, Malvolio, Sir Toby, Sir Andrew	“ Get ye all three into the box-tree”
Act III, Scene 1	Viola, Feste	“Save thee, friend,..”
Act III, Scene 3	Sebastian, Antonio	
Act III, Scene 4	Malvolio, Olivia, Maria	“How now, Malvolio”
Act IV, Scene 1	Feste, Sebastian, Sir Andrew, Sir Toby	

Scene Preparation: Students will work in their groups on their scenes adding blocking, set pieces, props, costume pieces, etc. As the teacher, I circulate to groups to watch the rehearsals and give advice. Some scenes are not as funny on the page as they are after they are blocked. Have students visualize the scene in their mind before blocking. What actions will bring out the humor in this scene?

Scene Presentation: On the due date, student groups will present scenes to the whole class. After the scene presentation, I will ask for critique from the scene participants first, and then from the other members of the class. They must give two positive critiques and one way in which the scene could be improved. Finally, I give my critique. As a culminating activity, students will reflect on the unit and their participation in the scenes.

Evaluation: In evaluating scenes, I look at the logs and preparation work like the character histories and collages. As I view the scenes, I look at how the student understood the character, plot, and language of the play. I also look at their planning of the movements and the use of costumes and props. I require students to memorize lines because I teach a Drama class. If this were part of an English class, I would give extra credit for line memorization.

Unit Timeline

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	Shakespeare and his era Globe theatre Assignment	Shakespeare and his era	Shakespeare and Genre	Shakespeare's language	Twelfth Night Summary Summary Assignment
Week 2	Twelfth Night – Summary	Summary Assignment due Act 1.1, 1.2, & 1.3	Act 1.4, 1.5	Act 2.1, 2.2, & 2.3	Act 2.4, 2.5 Globe Theatre Assignment due
Week 3	Act 3.1, 3.2, 3.3	Act 3.4	Act 4.1, 4.2	Act 4.3, 5.1	Act 5.1
Week 4	Wrap up	Character Histories	Character Histories	The Scenes Read through	The Scenes– Text Analysis
Week 5	The Scenes– Text Analysis	The Scenes - The Rehearsal	The Scenes– The Rehearsal	The Scenes The Rehearsal	The Scenes– The Performance

Works Cited and Additional Reading List

Barton, John. *Playing Shakespeare: An Actor's Guide*. New York: Anchor Publishing, 2001

Barton offers advice on tackling Shakespeare as a performer. He offers tips on exploring the characters, understanding the language, and handling speeches and soliloquies.

Berry, Cicely. *The Actor and the Text*. New York: Applause Books, 1992

This book explores the idea of actors studying the text of the play rather than just the action. She gives detailed examples of exercises that can be very useful to actors attempting to decipher the language of Shakespeare.

Bloom, Harold. *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*. New York: Riverhead Books, 1999

Bloom devotes an essay to analyze each of Shakespeare's plays, emphasizing their originality and their influence on subsequent literature, feeling and thought. Bloom is considered one of the foremost Shakespearean scholars.

Brine, Adrian and Michael York. *A Shakespearean Actor Prepares*. New York: Smith and Kraus, 2000

*This book is geared to actors studying and performing Shakespeare. This book includes practical commentaries on language, verse, and soliloquies and a chapter on Stanislavsky, from whose acting text, *An Actor Prepares*, the title is taken.*

Burdett, Lois and Christine Coburn. *Twelfth Night*. Buffalo: Firefly Books, 1999

A child centered version of the story of Twelfth Night told in verse. This book is used in Elementary schools in Stratford, Canada to introduce kids to Shakespeare. Part of a series

Crystal, David and Ben Crystal. *Shakespeare's Words: A Glossary and Language Companion*. New York: Penguin Books, 2002

A Shakespearean dictionary of over 14,000 words that can cause difficulty while reading Shakespeare. It also includes a section that has summaries and lists of dramatis personae for each of the plays.

Dunton-Downer, Leslie and Alan Riding. *Essential Shakespeare Handbook*. New York: D K Publishing, 2004

This is an excellent reference book on both the works of Shakespeare as well as his life and times.

- Easty, Edward Dwight. *On Method Acting*. New York: Ivy Books, 1981
This book breaks down the various steps in the Stanislavski method of acting to assist actors in portraying truthful characters
- Garber, Marjorie. *Shakespeare After All*. New York: Anchor Books, 2004
Critical analysis of Shakespeare's plays by a Shakespearean scholar.
- Gurr, Andrew. *Staging in Shakespeare's Theatres*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000
A very interesting book specifically about the theatres of Shakespeare's times and how plays were staged in the Elizabethan times.
- Kaiser, Scott. *Mastering Shakespeare: An Acting Class in Seven Scenes*. New York: Allworth Press, 2004
- McDonald, Russ. *The Bedford Companion to Shakespeare: An introduction with Documents*. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001
A companion to Shakespeare in that it gives background information needed to understand his works.
- O'Brien, Peggy, Michael Tolaydo and Nancy Goodwin. *Shakespeare Set Free: teaching Twelfth Night*. New York: Washington Square Press, 1995
One of three books written by the faculty from the Folger Shakespeare Library's Teaching Institute. The book includes essays on Shakespeare and teaching strategies for teachers wanting to teach Shakespeare through performance.
- Packer, Tina. *Tales From Shakespeare*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2004
A retelling of 10 of Shakespeare's plays suitable for students to understand the plot prior to reading the play.
- Rozakis, Laurie. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Shakespeare*. Indianapolis: Alpha Books, 1999
Reference book on Shakespeare, his life and times and his plays.
- Shakespeare, William. *Twelfth Night*. Oxford: Oxford Press, 2001
- Yancey, Diane. *Life in the Elizabethan Theatre*. San Diego: Lucent Books, 1997
A good book for students. It talks about what life was like in Elizabethan times and about the Theatre of the time. Part of "The Way People Live" series

Character Chart

Given Circumstances or Personality Trait	Quote from the play	Act; scene; Line #	Unanswered character questions

Journal Questions Suggestions

Act 1.1, 1.2, 1.3

1. Who is Orsino? What is his problem? How do others regard him?
2. What are your first impressions of Viola, and Olivia? What clues in the text did you find to help you understand their characters?
3. What kind of a place is Illyria?
4. Explain the opening monologue of Orsino.

