



**Title: “On With My Speech”**

**Scope:** This playshop is appropriate for students Grades 4-12.

**Content and Educational Value: Explore Wild and Whirling Words**

Shakespeare is much more poetry, passion, and wit than he is tights, kissing, and funny accents. This fun and revealing playshop will excite your students about Shakespeare’s language, his relationships, the secrets in his text, and his writer’s voice.

**During this playshop, students will:**

- Work collaboratively;
- Actively engage their minds, bodies, and hearts in a fully integrated learning experience;
- Discover commonalities between Shakespeare’s characters and themselves;
- Hear and speak classical text from multiple Shakespeare plays;
- Gain a visceral understanding of how Shakespeare used its structure to create emphasis, clarify meaning, and convey powerful emotions.

**Curriculum Standards:**

**6-12.L.KL.3** Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening; consult references for guidance; and apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts.

**4-12.RL.CS.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings and language that is stylistically poignant and engaging.

**4-12.RI.IKI.8** Evaluate how an author incorporates evidence and reasoning to support the argument and specific claims in a text.

**4-12.SL.CC.1** Initiate and participate effectively with varied partners in a range of collaborative discussions on appropriate 11th - 12th grade topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing one’s own ideas clearly and persuasively.

**4-12.SL.CC.3** Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric; assess the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

**Structure and Materials:**

It is not necessary for students to have any previous experience with Shakespeare; this playshop serves as a wonderful initial encounter. No materials are required – just students who are ready to play and dressed in a way that allows them to move. This playshop can be done virtually or in-person. Session length times vary but range from 30-50 minutes.

**Activities:**

***Check in: Who are you? How are you feeling?***

Check in is an opportunity for everyone in the room to speak about themselves in order to be more fully present in the room for the planned activity. Check in is an opportunity to practice empathy, to listen, to speak, to be human. This careful attention to the language we use creates



better communication, better learning, and develops emotional vocabulary and quite literally gets us warmed up to dive into Shakespeare's specificity.

***Who is Shakespeare? What did he do? Discussion:***

This is their opportunity to speak and be honored and bold. They delight and surprise us constantly.

***Walkabout:*** This exercise gets them up and moving, responding physically to ideas, then beginning to allow Shakespeare's text affect us. We process after done, and introduce the constant presence of onomatopoeia in Shakespeare.

***Contrapuntal Arguments with Caesar text: Exploring pentameter, proximity, bigger thoughts, and rhetoric:***

The students choose a partner to work with. The students decide on a genuinely boring topic. (Dust, the color beige and linoleum are wonderfully boring topics). The more genuinely boring the topic, the more the imagination has to be engaged. Partner A is PRO the topic. Partner B is CON. We then start to get valuable feedback on how energy, specificity, and rhetoric allows us to really engage about our topic. We gather strategies from them for 'winning', and then talk about Ethos, Pathos and Logos. We then introduce *Julius Caesar* text.

***Side of fries evolving into Imagistic Shakespeare Verse Romeo and Juliet:***

We introduce ourselves as a worldly traveler, a photographer, and an adventure seeker who is trying to get the most dynamic pictures of extraordinary people, places, and things. We name those things (A day at the beach, a barnyard, Paris) and the students create those pictures with their bodies. We then make the pictures out of text from *Romeo and Juliet*.

***Text Circle Hamlet:***

Students form a circle. One student comes to the center of the circle and is 'fed in' a line of Shakespeare's text with clarity. They then "perform" that line of text to their peers in a way that is big and bold, and pleasing to them. We then encourage uproarious applause from the circle.

***Reinforcement/Celebration:***

Celebration (Grades 4-7)/Reinforcement (Grades 7-12) allows people to speak about themselves, to reinforce something positive in the meeting, to say thank you, to express gratitude or positive feelings about the session. This is another opportunity to practice empathy, to listen, to speak, to be specific, and to be human.

***Methods of Assessment:*** Teaching-Artists lead review of material covered post-lesson and evaluate, as well as reinforce, lessons/material learned; Real-world connections to the material that students are encouraged to make are noted by Teaching-Artists; Teaching-Artists note effectiveness of lesson plan delivery through supported classroom dialogue regarding material.