

Shakespeare Extravaganza Expanded

"I pray... thou likest it..." Much Ado About Nothing I, 1

Before you produce this project outside of class, in class you will have:

1. Listened to an enjoyable Engle's tape about Shakespeare and Elizabethan theatre (6th grade)
2. Performed a Sonnet and original parody of that sonnet live (6th grade Shakespeare in the Garden)
3. Watched some student projects similar to what you will prepare
4. Read Mrs. Harrell's sample "project outline," Grant's essay, a Macbeth parody, background music and other info, Jewel in the Crown extra credit, and reviewed Renspeak from website
5. Watched the Reduced Shakespeare Company DVD.
6. Perused interesting background books to keep you in the Shakespeare milieu, read the summaries provided in class and/or on-line (the Sonnets site from 6th grade includes summaries of plays and famous quotes. Shmoop covers the plays as only Shmoop can. No Fear Shakespeare will be indispensable. The Shakespeare for Dummies book is helpful too. You readers will enjoy the tales from Shakespeare story versions.)
7. Understood I'll be available to help you decipher your text, approve your summary, parody, quote arrangement, etc, offer costumes, props, ideas, and whatever help and encouragement you need. Be sure to use interesting camera angles, props, slide show pictures, costumes, etc—whatever makes what you do come alive for the audience. Be certain you have all the pronunciations and phrasings perfectly planned and practiced before you do the final production.

Here are options for your Shakespeare Extravaganza:

"Speak the speech, I pray you... trippingly on the tongue...
and do not saw the air too much with your hand..." Hamlet III, 2

- A. Produce a brief plot summary of a play. This cannot be a lengthy regurgitation reading of the plot and should not include every little detail. If you are doing this you were probably inspired by some of the Reduced Shakespeare Company's antics. Take notes from information you gather from various play summaries so you can then prepare your summary in a cool format. Have fun here but be clear! You will need to sketch a story board before you film or make a slide show.
- B. Choose a famous monologue and write a parody of that monologue and perform both. Be sure to introduce the context of your chosen passage—i. e. what play it's from, when it occurs, who was involved, why was it said and what was the effect. Also, before your performance, cleverly present a small glossary of unfamiliar words and definitions that were in the passage.
- C. For you true thespians you may want to present, with high drama, a passage of a play that is not too difficult to understand but includes gorgeous language that is too wonderful to parody—it just needs to stand alone! I'm thinking portions of Romeo and Juliet, Henry V St. Crispin's Day, "What a piece of work is man..." I have of late but wherefore I know not lost all my mirth..." from Hamlet, "This royal throne of kings..." from Richard II (Oh, so many more to discover...) See B above for what to include to set this up.
- D. Finally, it might be fun and educational to gather famous short quotes and/or expressions from Shakespeare and weave them together to summarize the play they are from or juxtapose them as interesting thoughts or in a pattern that seems cool to you. This could be presented as voice over on a slide show of the quotes on visual backgrounds. The "Sonnets" site from 6th grade has collections of such quotes ready-made, or you could choose your own from what you discover from Googling "famous Shakespeare quotes from... whatever play (or focus) you choose." Remember what Eliot did with the 300 words from Shakespeare too. "You're Quoting Shakespeare" is on our website.

You will need to do more research and your filming or slide show production outside of class time. If you have access to equipment, you may film on location (i.e. at home or some setting you choose). If you use school equipment, you'll need to work with the tech teacher or some student tech aides. You will have to adjust to their schedules, which might be after school. The tech folks stay pretty busy during school hours. Please do lots of rehearsing before you begin filming! Also, check sound levels and feedback (esp. if you film outside) before you have spent hours filming only to discover you can't be heard or seen. Sound and lighting are very important. Having to constantly re-do because the performers were not properly prepared or on task frustrates non professionals as much as it frustrates Hollywood producers and directors.

If you wish, you could also prepare a program to accompany your media production. I have a few samples to give you ideas. This is not a requirement; it's just a thought. You can also make various advertising additions that DVDs often include. Just have a ball doing this. Ideas will keep coming as you plan.

"What!...have you not done talking yet?" Troilus and Cressida III.2

"A hit, a very palpable hit." Hamlet V, 2

On Shakespeare Extravaganza day, we will enjoy traditional Globe theatre refreshments while viewing the productions. As soon as possible please sign up for what food you can contribute.

Also let me know the play, passage, performance option you have chosen and let me know how, when, where, with whom, and with what equipment you are planning to proceed. Please do not proceed until you do this. Pre-planning is vital to your success, time management, and your, my, and your parents' mental health.

"fantastical..." Love's Labour's Lost V. 2

"There is no more...It is done..." Richard III IV, 2

