

DANIEL KELLY composer + pianist
PRESENTS:



STUDY GUIDE SECTIONS

Going to the Theater.....	Page 3
Meet Daniel Kelly	4
About the Performance – Who was Shakespeare?.....	5
Things we Say Today, Which We Owe to Shakespeare	7
Shakespeare’s London	8
Hearing a Play	10
Shakespeare’s Verse	11
About the Performance – What is Jazz?	13
Why Shakespeare? Why Jazz?.....	17
About the Performance: The Poetry – Macbeth	18
About the Performance: The Poetry – A Midsummer Night’s Dream	19
Suggested Activities	21
Post-Performance Discussion Questions	24
Post-Performance Assessment	24
Review Sheet	26
Understanding Music	27
Vocabulary – Commonly Used Words in Shakespeare’s Plays	28
Resources	29



GOING TO THE THEATER

YOUR ROLE AS AN AUDIENCE MEMBER

Attending a live performance is a unique and exciting opportunity. Unlike the passive experience of watching a movie, audience members play an important role in every live performance. As they act, sing, dance, or play instruments, the performers on stage are very aware of the audience's mood and level of engagement. Each performance calls for a different response from audience members. Lively bands, musicians, and dancers may desire the audience to focus silently on the stage and applaud only during natural breaks in the performance. Audience members can often take cues from performers on how to respond to the performance appropriately. For example, performers will often pause or bow for applause at a specific time.

As you experience the performance, consider the following questions:

- * What kind of live performance is this (a play, a dance, a concert, etc.)?
- * What is the mood of the performance? Is the subject matter serious or lighthearted?
- * What is the mood of the performers? Are they happy and smiling or somber and reserved?
- * Are the performers encouraging the audience to clap to the music or move to the beat?
- * Are there natural breaks in the performance where applause seems appropriate?

THEATER ETIQUETTE

Here is a checklist of general guidelines to follow when you visit the theater:

- * Leave all food, drinks, and chewing gum at school or on the bus.
- * Cameras, recording devices, and personal listening devices are not permitted in the theater.
- * Turn off and put away all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices before the performance begins.
- * Do not text during the performance.
- * When the house lights dim, the performance is about to begin. Please stop talking at this time.
- * Talk before and after the performance only. Remember, the theater is designed to amplify sound. Other audience members and the performers on stage can hear your voice!
- * Use the restroom before the performance or wait until the end. If you must leave the theater during the show, make sure the first set of doors closes before you open the second — this will keep unwanted light from spilling into the theater.
- * Appropriate responses such as laughing and applauding are appreciated. Pay attention to the artists on stage — they will let you know what is appropriate.
- * Open your eyes, ears, mind, and heart to the entire experience. Enjoy yourself!

GOING TO THE THEATER information is adapted from the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts study guide materials.

MEET DANIEL KELLY: COMPOSER & PIANIST



photo credit: Flynn Larsen

Award-winning composer & pianist Daniel Kelly creates music that has been declared “powerfully moving” by *Time Out New York*. He has performed with Grammy-winning jazz legends Michael Brecker & Joe Lovano, hip-hop star Lauryn Hill, modern classical giants Bang on a Can All-Stars, among many others. He toured throughout Southeast Asia & India as a part of the Kennedy Center/US State Department-sponsored *Jazz Ambassador* program. He has composed for chamber orchestra, string quartet, film & multi-media theater works & has released five CDs of original compositions.

Daniel has traveled throughout the United States collecting stories from people of all ages & backgrounds, transforming their experiences into original music for his ongoing series of interview-based, concert-length compositions titled *Rakonto* (“story” in Esperanto). He has created 13 different *Rakonto* concerts, celebrating the resilience of the human spirit in communities across America. www.danielkellymusic.com

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE: **WHO WAS SHAKESPEARE?**

William Shakespeare is considered by many to be the greatest playwright ever to write in the English language. Read on to learn more about the life and works of the Great Bard.



Painting by anonymous artist
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flower_portrait

EARLY LIFE

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, England, in the year 1564, the son of John and Mary Shakespeare. His actual date of birth is unknown, but it is commonly accepted to be April 23 of that year. His father was a tanner of leathers (a glover) and dealt in farm products and wool. Shakespeare likely began his education at the age of six or seven at the Stratford grammar school. While there, he learned basic reading and writing skills.

Shakespeare was likely removed from the school at the age of thirteen due to his father facing financial and social difficulties. There is little reason to believe that he did not continue his studies elsewhere. After all, we do know that he had a fine mastery of both English and Latin languages.

LOST YEARS

Between the years of 1578 and 1582, little is known of Shakespeare's whereabouts or doings. Some suggest he worked as a butcher, a schoolmaster, or a glover with his father. Others believe he continued to study intensely to become a master at his literary craft and traveled outside of Stratford, working as an actor. About the only thing that is known for certain about Shakespeare's "lost years" is that during the time he married a woman named Anne Hathaway. Together, Anne and William had three children: a daughter, Susanna, born in 1583, and a set of twins, Hamnet and Judith, born in 1585.

CAREER IN LONDON

No one knows for sure how Shakespeare came to start a career in the theater and how he came to leave Stratford for London. Scholars do know that Shakespeare was an established actor in London by 1592. Shakespeare actively took on several roles in the theater during his career:

PLAYWRIGHT

Shakespeare is best known for his work as a playwright, having penned at least 37 plays over a period of twenty years. His famous plays include tragedies, such as *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet*; comedies such as *A Midsummer's Night Dream* and *Twelfth Night*; and history plays such as *Richard III* and *Henry IV*.

ACTOR

Shakespeare not only wrote plays, he performed in many of them as an actor. For much of his career, he was a member of the Chamberlain's Men. The troupe performed regularly for the public at London theaters, toured surrounding areas, and gave regular performances at court for Queen Elizabeth I.

THEATRE OWNER

Shakespeare not only acted in and wrote plays, he was one of the owners of the theater buildings. For seventeen years, he was one of the owners of the Globe Theatre and for eight years he was also one of the owners of the company's second theatre, the Blackfriars.

DEATH

Shakespeare died on his birthday in 1616 of unknown causes at the age of 52. (The average life expectancy in London at the time was 35.) He was buried in his hometown of Stratford.

CREATOR OF WORDS

The English language was forever changed by Shakespeare. He invented over 1,700 of our common words. He changed nouns into verbs, changed verbs into adjectives, connected words never previously used together, added prefixes and suffixes, and created new words entirely. Below are some of the words he invented:

Accused • Addiction • Amazement
Bedroom • Birthplace
Bloodstained • Champion
Compromise • Courtship
Dawn • Deafening • Elbow
Excitement • Eyeball
Fashionable • Flawed • Gloomy
Gossip • Green-eyed • Hint
Jaded • Label • Laughable
Lonely • Majestic • Mimic
Moonbeam • Negotiate
Olympian • Premeditated
Puking • Radiance • Savagery
Scuffle • Swagger • Torture
Tranquil • Undress
Worthless • Zany

Did you know?

Shakespeare is said to have had a vocabulary of 29,066 words. An average person today might use just 2,000 words in everyday conversation

(Who is Shakespeare? is from The Improvised Shakespeare Company Curriculum Guide)

THINGS WE SAY TODAY, WHICH WE OWE TO SHAKESPEARE:

"KNOCK, KNOCK! WHO'S THERE?"
"IN A PICKLE" "SET YOUR TEETH ON EDGE" "HEART OF GOLD"
"FAINT HEARTED" "SO-SO" "GOOD RIDDANCE"
"LIE LOW" "FIGHT FIRE WITH FIRE" "BAITED BREATH" "SEND HIM PACKING"
"COME WHAT MAY"
"WEAR YOUR HEART ON YOUR SLEEVE"
"NOT SLEPT ONE WINK" "FULL CIRCLE" "OUT OF THE JAWS OF DEATH"
"WHAT'S DONE IS DONE" "NAKED TRUTH" "TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING"
"LAUGHING STOCK" "BREADED HIS LAST" "BREAK THE ICE" "WILD GOOSE CHASE"
"HEART OF HEARTS" "VANISH INTO THIN AIR" "LOVE IS BLIND"
"SEEN BETTER DAYS" "MAKES YOUR HAIR STAND ON END"
"DEAD AS A DOORNAIL" "FOR GOODNESS' SAKE"
"GREEN EYED MONSTER" "FAIR / FOUL PLAY / PLAY" "OFF WITH HIS HEAD"
"THE WORLD IS MY OYSTER" "BRAVE NEW WORLD"
"BE ALL / END ALL" "A SORRY SIGHT"

SHAKESPEARE'S LONDON

London, in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, was a bustling urban center filled with a wide variety of people and cultures. Although most life centered around making a living or going to church, the main source of diversion for Londoners was the theatre. It was a form of entertainment accessible to people of all classes. The rich and the poor, the aristocrats and the beggars all met at the theatre. Though often appeasing the church or the monarchy, theatre at this time did experience a freedom that was unknown in previous generations. Evidence of this can be found in the numerous bawdy and pagan references found in Shakespeare's plays. This relative artistic license and freedom of expression made theatre extremely unpopular among certain members of society, and it was later banned entirely by the Puritans. Not until the reign of Charles II (1660-1685) was the theatre restored to the status it held in Shakespeare's day.



Model of the Globe Theatre - <https://www.dkfindout.com/us/music-art-and-literature/shakespeares-globe/>

The **Globe Theatre**, the resident playhouse for Shakespeare's company of actors, was easily accessible to Londoners and an active social center. Actors and performers were also regularly brought to court or to private homes to entertain. Despite their social popularity, actors maintained a relatively low status, sometimes no better than a common beggar or rogue. Most performers were forced to earn a living doing trade work. The aristocracy's desire for entertainment, however, did spur the development of numerous new theatre pieces. Often a

nobleman would become a patron to an artist or company of actors, providing for their financial needs and sheltering them to some degree from official sanctions. In return, the company would adopt the name of the patron. Shakespeare's acting company was originally named "Lord Chamberlain's Men" after their patron, Henry Carey, Lord Chamberlain. Later, under the patronage of King James I, they were known as "The King's Men," an unprecedented honor at the time.

Despite the flourishing of the arts at this time, London was sometimes a desolate place. Outbreaks of the **Black Plague** (the bubonic plague) frequently erupted, killing thousands of citizens. Theatres, shops, and the government were all shut down during these times in hopes of preventing the spread of the disease. Elizabethans were unaware that the disease was being spread by the flea and rat populations, which well outnumbered the human population of London.



The Black Plague - https://vivecamino.com/en/the-medieval-pilgrimage-routes-key-to-the-spread-of-the-black-death_no_372/

THE SONNETS

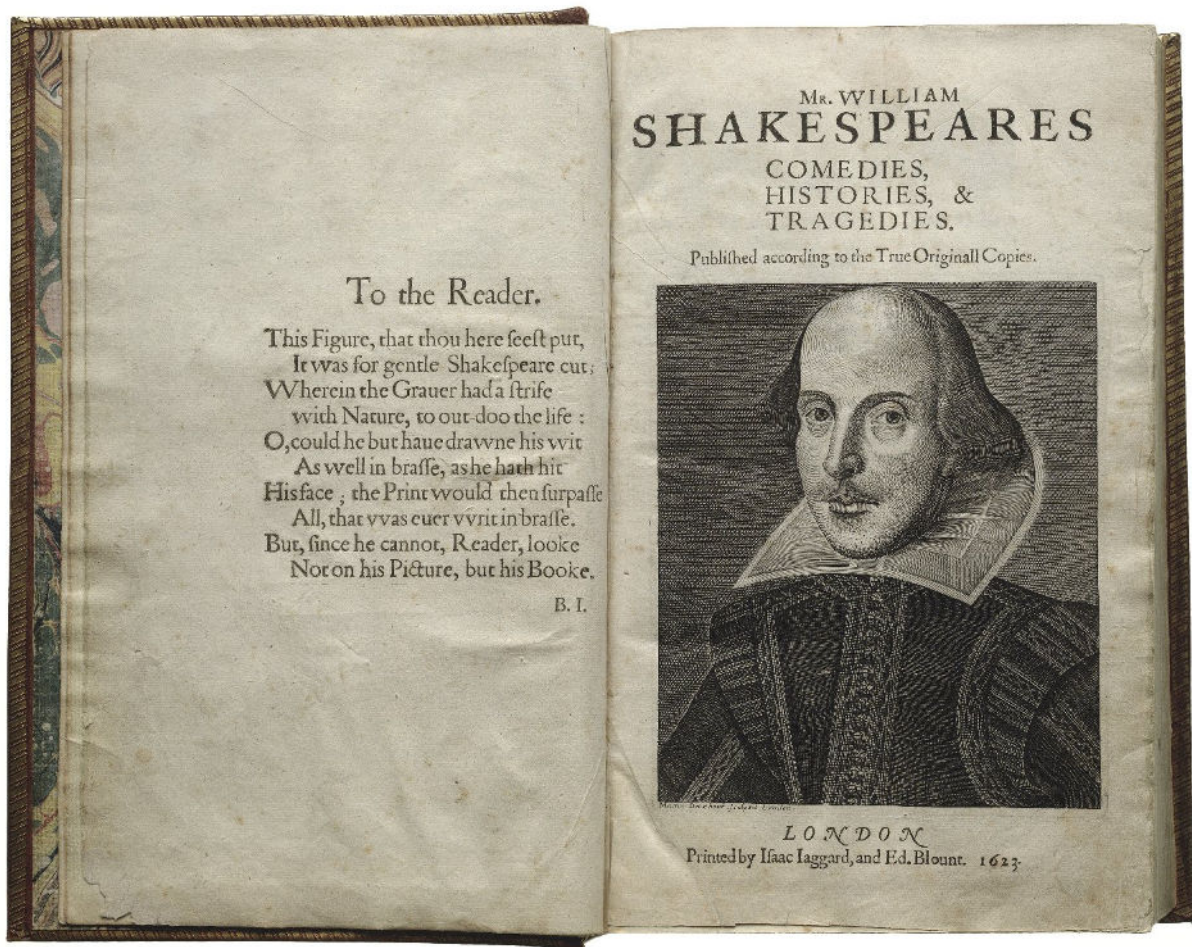
You might have thought that Shakespeare wrote the sonnets earlier in his career, as a type of "stepping stone" to his plays. However, Shakespeare actually penned most of his sonnets during the various outbreaks of the plague in London, when the theatres were closed.

HEARING A PLAY

The Elizabethans were an audience of listeners. They would say, “I’m going to hear a play,” not “I’m going to see a play.” The Elizabethan audience would pick up on words and their various meanings that we wouldn’t.

- Marjorie Garber

Speaking in rhyme is not natural to us, but it was to the Elizabethans, so we have to understand what language meant to them, and what language does not mean to us today. If I were an Elizabethan and I wanted to impress you as a lover, I wouldn’t send you flowers. I would come and woo you at your feet and recite to you a sonnet I had written just for you— no matter how bad it was. Elizabethan England was a world where people sang, talked and breathed language.



<https://www.folger.edu/what-shakespeare-first-folio>

Title page of the First Folio – the first collection of Shakespeare’s plays, published in 1623.

SHAKESPEARE'S VERSE

Shakespeare's plays are written predominantly in "blank verse," a poetic form preferred by English dramatists in the 16th and early 17th centuries. It is a very flexible medium, which, like the human speech pattern, is capable of a wide range of tones and inflections. The lines, which are usually unrhymed, are divided into five "feet," each of which is a two-syllable unit known as an "iamb." Each iamb is made up of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable. Blank verse is technically defined as unrhymed iambic pentameter.

Here is a selection of blank verse from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with the stressed syllables in bold type:

Theseus: To **you**, your **father should** be as a **god**;
One **that** compos'd your **beauties, yea**, and **one**
To **whom** you are but as a **form** in **wax**
By **him** imprinted, **and** within his **pow'r**
To **leave** the **figure, or** disfigure it.
Demetrius is a **worthy gentleman**.

Hermia: So **is** Lysander.

Theseus: **In** himself he **is**;
But **in** this **kind**, wanting your **father's voice**,
The **other must** be **held** the **worthier**.

In this short selection, you can see a variety of speech tones indicated by the verse. The regularity of the rhythmic pattern and the use of full lines to complete his thoughts give Theseus a sense of calm and authority. Hermia's brief response, which breaks the iambic pattern, is only a fraction of a line, suggesting that she is impassioned and saying only a portion of what she is thinking. Theseus, however, completes her line and restores the iambic pattern, indicating his authority and the fact that he is, at this point in the play, literally overbearing her will.

Notice that while the blank verse pattern is generally iambic, even in this short passage there are instances where the pattern of stress is broken. The play would quickly become monotonous if the characters truly spoke in nothing but perfect iambic pentameter—fortunately for audiences, Shakespeare's rhythms often become jagged and jarring to reflect the tension and conflict among his characters. Trying to determine where the rhythm of a line is regular or irregular provides important clues for the actor trying to understand what the character is thinking or feeling. As in real life, choosing to change the stress-bearing syllable may radically alter the meaning of what is being said.

Other clues are provided by word order and punctuation. There were few established rules for either in Shakespeare's time, so he was free to experiment with unusual syntax. As in our daily speech, the sentence structure (as indicated by both word order and punctuation) helps the

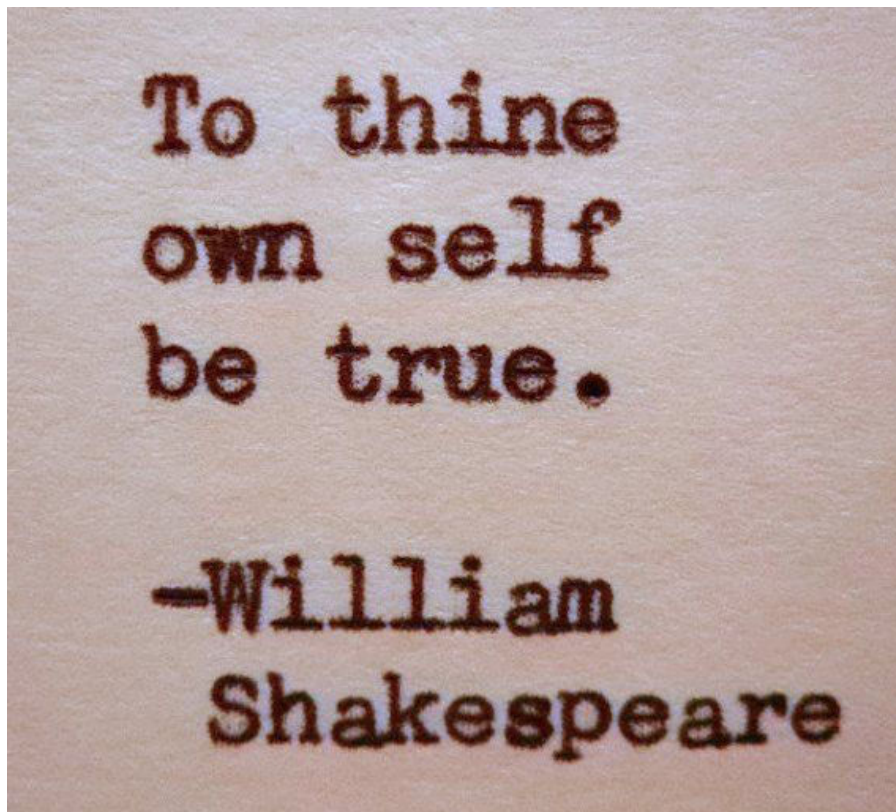
reader or listener understand both the literal meaning of the sentence and the emphasis. A comma may indicate a new portion of the same idea, while a dash breaks into the sentence to insert a new idea, and a period suggests the completion of one idea and the start of another. Editors of Shakespeare over the years have quarreled bitterly about what punctuation the Bard “meant” to use or “should” have used. As an actor or reader of Shakespeare, it is up to you to decide if a comma, dash, or period makes the meaning of the line most clear.

THE HEART OF THE POETRY

The alternating unstressed-stressed pattern of blank verse has often been compared to the rhythm of the human heartbeat. When a character in Shakespeare is agitated, confused or upset, the rhythm of their verse often alters, much in the same way a heartbeat alters under similar conditions.

WHAT DID SHAKESPEARE SOUND LIKE?

While we may associate Shakespeare with the “refined” British accent of an Ian McKellen or Judi Dench, linguistic scholars suggest that the closest approximation to the London accent of Shakespeare’s day is the accent heard nowadays in the Appalachian region of the United States.



Shakespeare’s London, Hearing a Play & Shakespeare’s Verse by Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE: WHAT IS JAZZ?

Jazz is America's music.

1. Jazz was born in the United States.
2. Jazz is really the best music to represent America because:
 - a. It is partly planned and partly **spontaneous**; that is, as the musicians perform a pre-determined tune, they have the opportunity to create their own interpretations within that tune in response to the other musicians' performances and whatever else may occur "in the moment" -- this is called **improvisation** and is the defining element of jazz.
 - b. In everything from regular conversation, to basketball, to everyday life, Americans are constantly improvising.
 - c. Improvisation is the key element of jazz.
3. There is no better example of democracy than a jazz ensemble: individual freedom but with responsibility to the group. In other words, individual musicians have the freedom to express themselves on their instrument as long as they maintain their responsibility to the other musicians by adhering to the overall framework and structure of the tune.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PYIsrfjMBQ>

Charlie Parker (alto saxophone) & **Miles Davis** (trumpet) - two of the greatest jazz innovators.

What is Improvisation?

1. Improvisation is inventing something on the spur of the moment and in response to a certain situation; in jazz, it is when musicians perform a different interpretation each time they play the same tune, i.e., a tune is never played the exact same way twice, whether played by the same musicians or an entirely different group; the improvisation becomes its own musical dialogue between band members without any preconceived notion of what the final outcome will be.
2. Every time you talk to your friends, you are improvising (exactly what you are going to say is not planned ahead of time, it depends on what your friend says, then what you say, then what your friend says, and so on).
3. Jazz musicians do the same with their instruments, but rather than using words to communicate, they use music; it's kind of like musical conversation.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billie_Holiday

Billie Holiday - Her vocal style, strongly inspired by jazz instrumentalists, pioneered a new way of manipulating [phrasing](#) and [tempo](#).

Jazz is like a language.

1. Language is what we use to communicate thoughts and ideas.

2. Languages such as English or Spanish are used to communicate just about everything in life; however, they cannot express emotion (happiness, sadness, anger, and everything in between) in the same way as music; as a singular phenomenon, music communicates emotion to every human being on the planet, regardless of language, culture, or nationality.
3. With jazz, because of its improvisational aspect, the musicians are communicating the “emotion of the moment;” that is, the emotion they are feeling WHILE they are performing (remember, when improvising they are deciding what notes to play as they respond to the music of the moment and of the other musicians).
 - a. In this way, jazz is different from classical music which is written down (composed) ahead of time and played the way the composer wrote it.
 - b. In jazz, most of the music heard during a solo is “spontaneously composed” by the musicians themselves and played the way the musicians feel at that given moment.
 - c. The spontaneity heard (or “felt”) in jazz requires the listener to be alert at all times to the ever-changing aspects of a given interpretation of a tune.
 - d. A helpful analogy: classical music is to jazz as reading a good book aloud is to having a good conversation; while a printed book never changes, a conversation changes according to the situation or moment and depending on with whom you are having the conversation.
 - e. The same jazz tune (song) is never performed the same way twice; while it might start and end the same, the middle part is played differently every time.



<https://fanart.tv/artist/54799c0e-eb45-4eea-996d-c4d71a63c499/fitzgerald-ella/>

Ella Fitzgerald - She was noted for her purity of tone, impeccable diction, phrasing and intonation, and a "horn-like" improvisational ability, particularly in her scat singing.



<http://thejazzlabels.com/artist/duke-ellington/#.WdvNjvMfzI>

*Jazz composer, bandleader and pianist, **Duke Ellington and his Orchestra.***



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Armstrong

***Louis Armstrong** - Trumpeter, composer, singer & one of the most influential figures in jazz.*

(What is Jazz? is from www.jazzinamerica.org & The Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz)

WHY SHAKESPEARE? WHY JAZZ?

Shakespeare is considered one of the greatest authors in the English language. His works have stood the test of time for more than 400 years. The influence of his plays has permeated our culture for centuries and the themes he deeply explores are central to human nature: good and evil, personal transformation, disruption and order, and many others. “Many of the best novels, plays, poetry and films in the English language since Shakespeare’s death in 1616 – from Jane Austen to Charles Dickens, from *Ulysses* to *The Godfather* – are heavily influenced by Shakespeare’s stories, characters, language and themes” (Ken Ludwig).

Personally, I sense the unbounded creativity in his language. Shakespeare truly LOVED words and how weaving them together could reveal the inner nature of his characters – universal emotions to which we all can relate.

Shakespeare had FUN with words! The English language was forever changed by Shakespeare. He invented over 1,700 of our common words. He changed nouns into verbs, changed verbs into adjectives, connected words never previously used together, added prefixes and suffixes, and created new words entirely.



Art by Nathan Gelgud

Reading Shakespeare, I sense that he was playing with the language, the same way jazz musicians play with melodies, harmonies and rhythms when they improvise.

For the most part, plays are performed by a group of people, called a **cast**. Also, for the most part, musicians perform as part of a **group, band or ensemble**.

Performing jazz music in a band is exciting! All the band members are communicating through music, adding their own improvised contributions to the music as it’s being played.

Actors act in **PLAYS!** Musicians **PLAY** music! Although it is a lot of hard work to master the skills of writing and acting in a play or composing and performing music, when the performance is happening, it’s totally fun! Actors don’t act in a “**WORK**.” They act in a **PLAY!** Musicians don’t “**WORK**” music. They **PLAY** music!

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE: THE POETRY

Macbeth – “Double, double toil and trouble” Act 4, Scene 1

'Double, double toil and trouble, fire burn and cauldron bubble' is one of the most popular lines in English literature. These verses are chanted by three witches as they make a potion in a cauldron.

The Witches in Macbeth

Three of the most pivotal characters in the play Macbeth are the **witches**. Throughout the play, the witches, also known as the **weird sisters**, tempt Macbeth to behave in evil ways. At the beginning of the play, the three witches predict and tell Macbeth that he will one day become king. Because of their prophecy, Macbeth and his wife decide to kill the king in order to make the prediction come true. After Macbeth is crowned king, he returns to the witches several times to have them predict the rest of his future.

DOUBLE, DOUBLE TOIL AND TROUBLE

**Double, double toil and trouble,
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.**

Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;

Eye of newt, and toe of frog,
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,

Adder's fork, and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg, and owlet's wing—
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

**Double, double toil and trouble,
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.**

Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

Inquiry:

Can you hear how the musicians turned the lines 'Double, double toil and trouble, fire burn and cauldron bubble' into a **chorus**? (The **chorus** section of a song is the part that contains the hook or title and appears more than once in a song).

What other things did you notice about the performance?

Glossary for this selection:

adder – venomous viper

cauldron – a large metal pot with a lid and handle, used for cooking over an open fire.

fillet of a fenny snake – slice of swamp snake

owlet – a small or young owl

*Macbeth information is from
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macbeth>,
<http://study.com/academy/lesson/double-double-toil-and-trouble-meaning-lesson-quiz.html>*

Midsummer Night's Dream – **“I Do Wander Everywhere”** **Act 2, Scene 1**

Midsummer Night's Dream is one of Shakespeare's most popular works for the stage and is widely performed across the world. The play portrays the events surrounding the marriage of Theseus, the Duke of Athens to Hippolyta, the former queen of the Amazons. These include the adventures of four young Athenian lovers and a group of six amateur actors who are controlled and manipulated by the fairies who inhabit the forest in which most of the play is set.

Who is singing?

One of the main characters, Puck, the mischievous fairy who sets much of the plot in motion, asks a fellow fairy where she is going. Her response is the song: She is traveling everywhere as she serves the fairy queen Titania and organizing fairy dances for her in the grass. She concludes by saying goodbye the informing Puck that the Fairy Queen is arriving soon.

I DO WANDER EVERYWHERE

*Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire,*

***I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moon's sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green.***

*The cowslips tall her pensioners be:
In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies, fairy favors,*

In those freckles live their savors.

*I must go seek some dewdrops here
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.
Farewell, thou lob of spirits; I'll be gone:
Our queen and all our elves come here anon.*

Inquiry:

Can you hear how the musicians turned the **stanza** that begins, ‘I do wander everywhere’ into a **chorus**?

What other things did you notice about the performance?

Glossary for this selection:

dale - valley

thorough - through

brier - prickly thorny shrubs

pale – fenced-in spaces

swifter than the moon's sphere - faster than the moon revolves around the Earth

orb - dewdrops

cowslips – a type of flower

pensioners - bodyguards

thou lob of spirits – you dumb old spirit

anon - soon

NIGHTTIME IN SHAKESPEARE'S DAY

The Elizabethans believed that night was the time of spirits and demons. Though many contemporary thinkers would scoff at such a notion, one must consider what nighttime was like for the Elizabethans. In pre-modern times, the night lacked the artificial glow that chases away complete darkness today. Only the moon, stars and scattered lanterns and candles illuminated the Elizabethan night.

In the dim flicker of these limited light sources, it is easy to imagine supernatural encounters. A dead tree jostled in a breeze

can be transformed into a hideous monster, a darting bird can become a fleeing spirit. Because these sights were never seen in the bright daytime, Elizabethans believed that ghosts held domain over the night, and the first signs of the dawn (such as the crowing rooster) chased evil spirits away.

MIDSUMMER'S EVE

Midsummer Eve, the Vigil of St. John the Baptist, June 23, was traditionally a time of magic, when spirits supposedly walked abroad and played their tricks upon mortals. It was a time for certain traditional rites, such as the burning of bonfires, which go back to the fertility celebrations of pre-Christian Britain. By using certain magical charms, it was believed maidens on Midsummer Eve might have dreams of who their true loves were to be. In general, the season was associated with love and marriage, and it is appropriate that Shakespeare would choose such a title for a marriage play.

Midsummer Night's Dream information is from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Midsummer_Night%27s_Dream and from *Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey*



Picture of Nick Bottom, a character in Midsummer Night's Dream whose head is transformed by the fairies into a donkey head.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1 – Everyday Shakespeare:

Try exploring Shakespeare’s language by speaking everyday statements and questions in **iambic pentameter**. A line of iambic pentameter has ten **syllables** that can be broken into five pairs of unstressed and stressed syllables in the following pattern:

ta-DUM ta-DUM ta-DUM ta-DUM ta-DUM

(An *iamb* is the rhythm “ta-DUM.” The prefix *pent-* means “five.” **iambic pentameter** is the type of poetic meter with 5 *iamb*s per line).

As a class, sit in a circle and hold a conversation by passing sentences around that scan (meaning follow the rhythmic pattern) as iambic pentameter.

For example:

A: May I please **have another piece of pie?**

B: Of **course**. You **did not have to ask** for it.

C: I’ll **get the coffee ready while** I’m **up**.

D: Please **don’t forget the sugar and the cream**.

And so on. As the exercise continues, you will become more accustomed to the rhythm of the language and will develop greater comfort with reading plays written in verse.

2 – Create your own potion song:

Write your own verses to the song “Double, Double Toil and Trouble”

The witches named the ingredients they were putting in the cauldron. Make a song about your own potion. What does the potion do and what are the ingredients? You can be funny! See if you can chant them in rhythm.

The phrase Double, Double Toil and Trouble can serve as the **chorus** (the part of the song that keeps recurring throughout the piece). Or you can create your own chorus!

3 – Write a poem:

Don’t worry about iambic pentameter for this one! Here are a few exercises from poet Stacie Naczelnik to get your creative poetry-writing muscles in gear:

Exercise #1 – Lists

This exercise requires you write a title at the top of your page, and then create a list down to the bottom of the page. You may find the beginnings of a poem, or a wonderful line, in some of your lists.

Make a list of fears, losses, happy memories, accomplishments, dreams—whatever you can think of. Take some of the ideas from these lists, and see if you can expand upon them.

Example: “Feeling tired, like an ant trying to carry a rock.”

List of happy memories -

- Cooking a birthday dinner for mom
- Feeling great about scoring winning goal in soccer game
- Family trip to the beach last summer

Exercise #2 – Making Similes

Look through a book of poems you like, and find a few similes to use as inspiration. (A **simile** is a figure of speech in which two things that are not alike are compared to each other, as in “she is like a rose”).

Go someplace where you can observe nature, people, traffic, or something. Based on what you notice, begin listing some similes. They don’t have to make complete sense. Don’t think about what else you would write with them. Just write whatever you think of.

Some inspiring similes I’ve written in my journal:

“Sounds of leaves moving overhead like so many whispered conversations.” –Jane Kenyon

“He slumps like the very meaning of surrender.” –Ted Kooser

Now, start making your own. Some from my journal:

Ivy creeping like silent footsteps.

A breeze gentle as a child wakening.

Leaves rustling like distant voices.

Go back and read what you wrote to see where the opportunities are. Sometimes, you simply need to close your journal. You can come back to the list another day, with fresh eyes and you may be surprised by what you find.

Exercise #3 – Sensory Observations

Poetry is truly indefinable, but there are a lot of things poetry can do. It can describe a feeling, make a reader see a sight, help you smell a smell, and make something inanimate come to life. Sometimes, a poet has trouble finding ways to describe what she wants to express. This exercise will help you stop and pay attention to the smaller things around you. Go out into the world, and make observations. Wherever you go, make five sensory observations for each sense.

Examples from my journals:

At the bookstore this evening, **I see**...white, square tiles; the backs of strangers; endless rows of books; a lonely microphone; shadows of chairs.

I hear...chattering voices; dishes clattering, softly, just clinking together; laughter; the crinkle of newspapers.

I feel...brick wall under my arm; a warm cup in my hand; hot air blowing against my face; the hard seat against my bottom; a wooden curve across my back.

I smell... coffee; used books; cinnamon; baking bread.

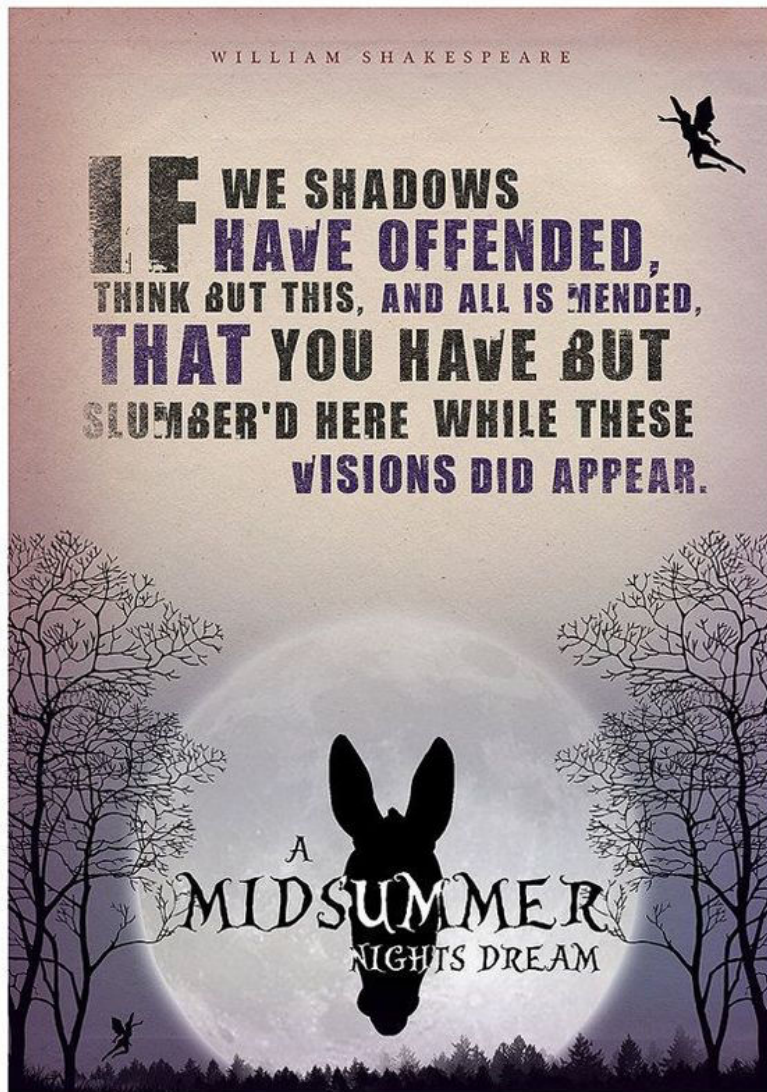
I taste... a hint of honey; the thickness of hot air; the ink of a fresh pen.

You can do this exercise anywhere at any time. Try it on the bus, at work, in a classroom, on a park bench. You may be surprised at the observations you make, and the opportunities for poetry that you find.

Exercise #4 – Describing a Scene or Picture

Either choose a physical place to observe, or find an interesting picture, and fully describe everything you experience. Don't forget to include all of the senses, but also describe any action taking places. Get nitty gritty about the details—don't leave anything out.

Afterwards, go through what you have written to see what stands out. Some detail, description, or word might be the beginning of a poem. You can also try to write a quick poem based on solely on the scene you choose.



POST-PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Language

1. Have you ever heard Shakespeare's poetry before? Do you think music is a good way to be introduced to his words? Why?
2. Was it difficult to understand the Elizabethan-style language used in the performance? Why or why not?
3. If you didn't understand some of the language, were you still able to understand what was happening? Did you get clues from the vocalists (facial expression, words they stressed) so you could figure out what they were saying?

The Music

1. Can you recall any of the songs? The words? The music? Can you sing the chorus of one of the songs?
2. Did the mood of the music match what was being said?
3. Did you notice how the composer used tempo (fast/slow), dynamics (loud/soft), tonality (major/minor key)?

The Musicians

1. What special skills or knowledge do the musicians need to have in order to do what they do?
2. What do you think the musicians do to prepare for their performances?

General Reactions

1. What did you like about the performance?
2. What surprised you in the performance?
3. What was the most memorable moment of the performance?
3. If you were one of the musicians, what would you have changed about the performance that you saw?
4. What were your impressions of Shakespeare before we attended this performance? What do you think of when you think about Shakespeare now? Why?

POST-SHOW ASSESSMENT:

1. Write a Letter to the musicians

In this assessment, students will write letters to the musicians about their reaction to the performance.

Twists:

- Have your students write their letter in Shakespearean-style prose or verse.
- Encourage students to use one or two words from the Shakespearean Glossary list on page 29.
- Have your students recall specific songs, poems, or moments that they enjoyed.

2. Report and Review

Students will reflect on the performance experience by writing a review.

- Invite students to write a review of the performance as if they were writing for a school newspaper.
- In their review, they should report on the vocalists, pianist and band and mention particular songs.
- In addition, have them review the performance: What did they like? What would they change?
- Remind students that they must paint a picture of the experience with their words so that others who did not see the performance can imagine it as vividly as possible.

'Write a Letter' and 'Report and Review' activities adapted from *The Improvised Shakespeare Company Shake It Up! Study Guide*



Painting by Jane Tomlinson

My Review!

Name: _____

You are a reporter for your school's newspaper!

Write and illustrate a review article to inform others about the performance you just saw.

Title:

I saw _____

I heard _____

The music made me feel _____

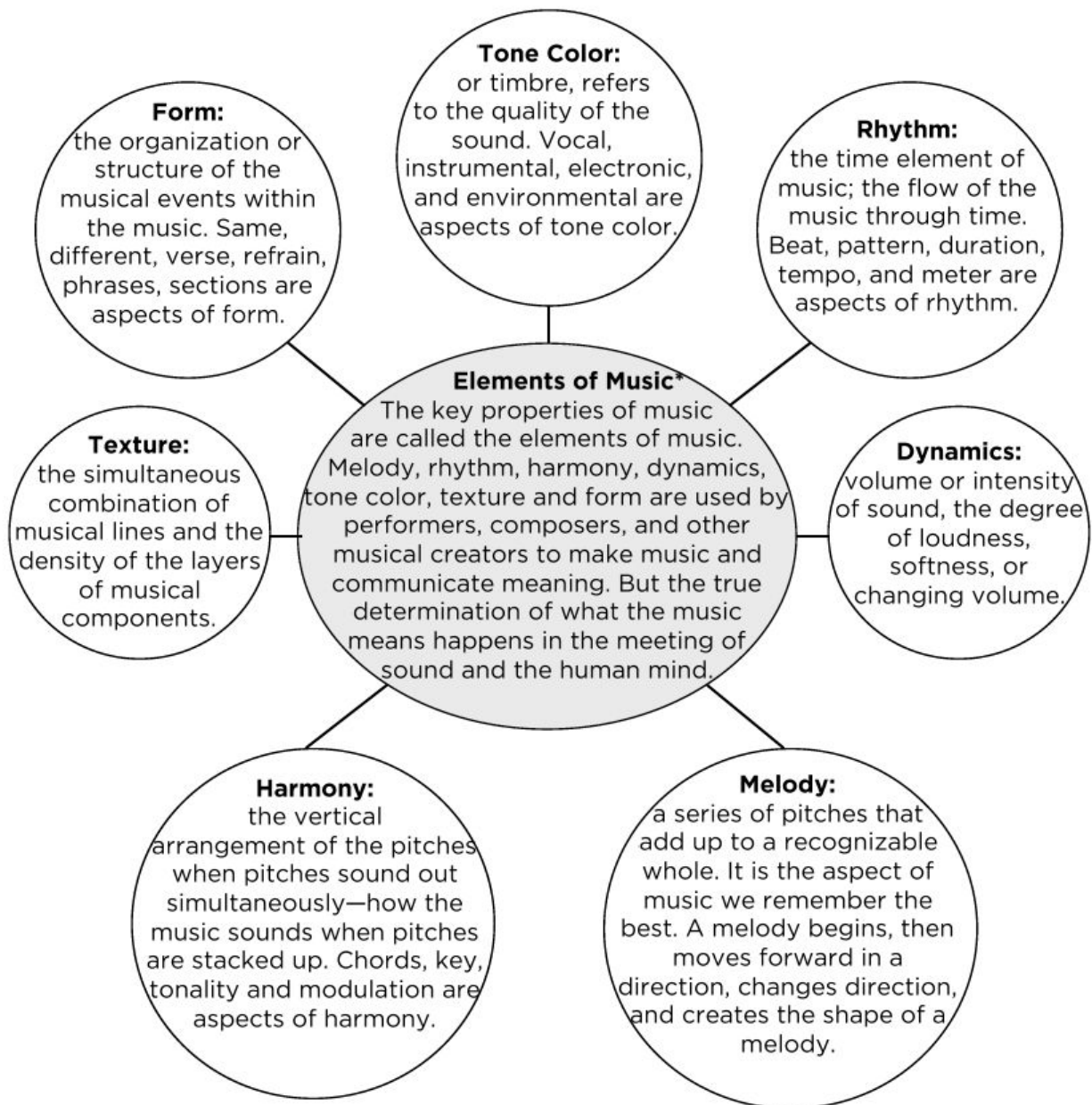
The performance reminded me of _____

My favorite part of the music was

I wish I had seen more

Understanding Music

Music Elements Web Diagram



Understanding Music by Joanna Cortright, Music Education Consultant

VOCABULARY – COMMONLY USED WORDS IN SHAKESPEARE’S PLAYS

- **alack** - expression of dismay or shock
- **anon** - soon, right away
- **ere** - before
- **hath** - has
- **hence** - away (from here)
- **henceforth** - from now on
- **hither** - here
- **lest** - or else
- **naught** - nothing
- **oft** - often
- **perchance** - by chance, perhaps, maybe
- **sirrah** - “hey, you” as said to a servant or someone of lower status
- **thee** - you
- **thence** -away, over there
- **thine** - yours
- **thither** - there
- **thou** - you
- **thy** - your
- **whence** - where
- **wherefore** - why
- **whither** - where

RESOURCES

Shakespeare study - BOOKS

- Bate, Jonathan and Russell Jackson. The Oxford Illustrated History of Shakespeare on Stage.
- Bloom, Harold. Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human, 1998.
- Boose, Lynda E. and Richard Burt. Shakespeare, the Movie: Popularizing the Plays on Film, TV and Video. Routledge, 1997.
- DK Publishing. The Shakespeare Book, 2015.
- Ludwig, Ken. Teach your children Shakespeare, 2013.
- Orgel, Stephen. Imagining Shakespeare. Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
- Rosen, Michael. Shakespeare: His Work and His World. Candlewick Press, 2001.
- Wells, Stanley. Shakespeare in the Theatre: An Anthology of Criticism. Oxford University Press, 1997.

Websites: - check to credit references.

<http://www.sparknotes.com/shakespeare/> - No Fear Shakespeare – Shakespeare’s plays with side-by-side version of the play in modern everyday English

<http://www.shakespearestudyguide.com>

<https://www.bard.org/education/study-guides/>

http://www.folger.edu/education/sfk_kids/

*Web links were active when preparing this guide

Online videos:

<http://www.sparknotes.com/sparknotes/video/hamlet> - Video synopsis of Shakespeare’s famous plays.

<http://www.sparknotes.com/sparknotes/video/romeojuliet>

