

# Young Audiences of Massachusetts

## *Educational Materials*

Please forward to teachers

8/10/05

### **ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE**

**The Shakespeare Guyz: *Avon Calling!***

**Grade Levels: 5-12**

Take a fresh look at Shakespeare through this innovative program with *The Shakespeare Guyz*, David Zucker and Richard McElvain. This outrageous duo has created a fast-paced performance to engage students in how to explore Shakespeare, how to understand Shakespeare's language, how to get meaning from Shakespeare's context, how to enjoy the Shakespearean insult, how to empathize with Shakespeare's characters and plots, and how to really connect to Shakespeare's works.

### **LEARNING GOALS:**

1. To bring the poetry and the plays of Shakespeare to life and into the lives of students.
2. To combine the study of literature and theater through a performance experience.
3. To encourage students to appreciate and enjoy language and word usage.

### **PRE-ACTIVITY SUMMARY: *Shakespeare's Language***

Share one or more of the enclosed passages with the students, exploring the possible intellectual, emotional and imaginative meanings generated by the words. This exploration can include speaking the words, discussion, movement, visual art, writing and performance. The goal of this activity is to discover that Shakespeare's language can be dynamic and personally meaningful.

### **POST-ACTIVITY SUMMARY: *Shakespeare's Words***

Using words from the enclosed list, have students compose sentences. Next, have them compose sentences that express the same ideas without using those words. Have the students compare their sentences with each other and choose their favorites.

### **CURRICULUM LINKS:**

English Language Arts, Health/Phys Ed, History and Social Science, Theater

# PRE-ACTIVITY: SHAKESPEARE'S LANGUAGE

## LEARNING GOALS:

To become familiarized with Shakespeare's language.

## MATERIALS/PREPARATION:

Enclosed passages or short passages of your choosing

TIME: 45-60 minutes

## TIPS FOR THE TEACHER:

\* Remember that the lines are out of context, and might inspire unexpected or non-traditional interpretations. Unless you want to teach the whole play, let students explore the words. They may have a whole new appreciation of the words the next time they read, hear or speak them.

\* Shakespeare's language is more dense than the language we speak today. If you have students paraphrase or "translate" Shakespeare into their own words, do not end it there. Simplifying or "dumbing it down" might be a way to begin, but is never a worthy goal. This also implies that Shakespeare was written in a foreign language and takes the complexity out of the text.

**STEP 1: Choose** one or more of the enclosed passages to share with the students by distributing copies or writing it on the board. (If you are writing the passage(s) out again, please preserve the structure of the verse, i.e. the ends of the lines.)

**STEP 2: Give** students an opportunity to deliver the passage(s) aloud. Options include repeating lines spoken by the teacher, individual students speaking in turn, or everyone speaking at once. The idea is not to have students deliver the perfect recitation, but rather to give them the physical experience of speaking the words.

**STEP 3: Go through** the passage(s) to identify any unfamiliar words. If students do not know the meanings of certain words, ask them what the words sound or feel like and what they might mean. Help the class arrive at an accurate and satisfying definition for each of the unfamiliar words. Encourage students to consult a dictionary. Some very surprising meanings are often found. Have the students speak the lines again.

**STEP 4: Break** the language down to uncover its meaning. Speak the lines again.

**STEP 5: Have** students choose a single line or phrase, and have them do one of the following activities:

- create a sculpture using their own bodies, which expresses what the line means to them,
- draw a picture that expresses what the words mean to them,
- write in their journals about the words, thoughts, and feelings the line inspires. Invite students to share their work with a partner or with the group. Have them speak the lines again.

## EXTENSIONS:

- Give** the students additional passages or short scenes from Shakespeare to explore and perform.
- Get familiarized with the plots of *HAMLET*, *ROMEO AND JULIET*, *JULIUS CAESER*, *KING LEAR*, *HENRY IV*, and *MIDSUMMER'S NIGHT DREAM* (specifically Pyramus and Thisbe scenes).



**The Shakespeare Guyz: *Avon Calling!***

**Grade Levels: 5-12**

**ENCLOSURE:**

O, speak again, bright angel, for thou art  
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,  
As is a winged messenger of heaven  
Unto the white-upturned wond'ring eye  
Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him  
When he bestrides the lazy pacing clouds  
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

-----

Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow  
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day  
To the last syllable of recorded time,  
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
The way to dusty death. Out, out brief candle!  
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage  
And then is heard no more. It is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.

-----

These are the forgeries of jealousy:  
And never, since the middle summer's spring,  
Met we on hill, in dale, forest or mead,  
By paved fountain or by rushy brook,  
Or in the beached margent of the sea,  
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,  
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.

-----

To be, or not to be, that is the question  
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune  
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles  
And by opposing end them. To die, to sleep --  
No more -- and by a sleep to say we end  
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks  
That flesh is heir to.

-----

Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more,  
Or close the wall up with our English dead.  
In peace, there's nothing so becomes a man  
As modest stillness and humility.  
But when the blast of war blows in our ears  
Then imitate the action of the tiger:  
Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,  
Disguise fair nature with hard-favor'd rage.

## The Shakespeare Guyz: *Avon Calling!*

Grade Levels: 5-12

### ENCLOSURE:

The following is a list of words and usages, which appear for the first time in Shakespeare's plays:

Accused (as a noun)	Addiction	Amazement	Arouse
Assassination	Bandit	Baseless	Bedroom
Blushing	Bump	Circumstantial	Cold-Blooded
Compromise (as a verb)	Critic	Dawn (as a noun)	Deafening
Dislocate	Dwindle	Elbow (as a verb)	Engagement
Eventful	Excitement	Exposure	Fashionable
Fixture	Flawed	Fortune-Teller	Generous
Gloomy	Gnarled	Gossip	Hint (as a noun)
Hobnob (verb)	Hurry (as a verb)	Impede	Inaudible
Investment	Jaded	Lackluster	Leapfrog
Lonely	Luggage	Lustrous	Madcap
Majestic	Manager	Misgiving	Monumental
Negotiate	Never-ending	Obscene	Outbreak
Premeditated	Puke	Puppy Dog	Quarrelsome
Reinforcement	Remorseless	Retirement	Rival
Sacrificial	Sanctimonious	Shooting Star	Shudder
Skim Milk	Swagger	Tardiness	Threateningly
Torture (as a verb)	Traditional	Tranquil	Unaware
Undress	Varied	Vastly	Vaulting
Vulnerable	Watchdog	Worthless	

McQuain, Jeffrey and Stanley Malless. Coined by Shakespeare. Springfield, Massachusetts: Merriam-Webster, 1998.

#### \*Additional Resource:

*Shakespeare's Coined Words Now Common Currency*, April 2004

[http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/04/0419\\_040419\\_shakespeare.html](http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/04/0419_040419_shakespeare.html)

## The Shakespeare Guyz: *Avon Calling!*

Grade Levels: 5-12

**ENCLOSURE:** The following is a list of Shakespearean Insults

### Column 1

artless  
bawdy  
beslubbering  
bootless  
churlish  
cockered  
clouted  
craven  
currish  
dankish  
dissembling  
droning  
death-token  
dewberryfobbing  
froward  
frothy  
flap-mouthed  
fly-bitten  
impertinent  
infectious  
jarring  
loggerheaded  
lumpish  
mammering  
mangled  
mewling  
paunchy  
pribbling  
puking  
puny  
qualling  
rank  
reeky  
roguish  
ruttish  
saucy  
spleeny  
spongy  
surly  
tottering  
unmuzzled  
venomed  
villainous  
tardy-gaited  
tickle-brained

### Column 2

base-court  
bat-fowling  
beef-witted  
beetle-headed  
boil-brained  
clapper-clawed  
clay-brained  
common-kissing  
crook-pated  
dismal-dreaming  
dizzy-eyed  
doghearted  
fawning  
elf-skinned  
fat-kidneyed  
flirt-gill  
foot-licker  
gorbellied  
fool-born  
full-gorged  
guts-gripping  
half-faced  
hasty-witted  
hedge-born  
hell-hated  
idle-headed  
ill-breeding  
ill-nurtured  
knotty-pated  
milk-livered  
motley-minded  
onion-eyed  
plume-plucked  
pottle-deep  
pox-marked  
reeling-ripe  
rough-hewn  
rude-growing  
rump-fed  
shard-borne  
sheep-biting  
spur-galled  
swag-bellied  
strumpet  
toad-spotted

### Column 3

apple-john  
baggage  
barnacle  
bladder  
boar-pig  
bugbear  
bum-bailey  
canker-blossom  
clack-dish  
clotpole  
coxcomb  
dread-bolted  
earth-vexing  
flap-dragon  
flax-wench  
gleeking  
goatish  
folly-fallen  
gudgeon  
haggard  
harpy  
hedge-pig  
horn-beast  
hugger-mugger  
joithead  
lewdster  
lout  
maggot-pie  
malt-worm  
mammet  
measle  
minnow  
miscreant  
moldwarp  
mumble-news  
nut-hook  
pigeon-egg  
pignut  
puttock  
pumpion  
ratsbane  
scut  
skainsmate  
warped  
weedy

# POST-ACTIVITY: SHAKESPEARE'S WORDS

## LEARNING GOAL:

To explore words that appeared for the first time in Shakespeare's plays.

## MATERIALS/PREPARATION:

enclosed list of words

## TIME:

30 minutes

## TIPS FOR THE TEACHER:

\* Suit your word choices and the demands of the writing exercise to your students' grade level. Step 3 might be very difficult. Wording the instruction, "See if you can..." gives the students permission to fail. If the students have trouble writing their sentences without the original word, it illustrates the unique value of the word.

## STEP 1:

**Give** each student in the class one of the words on the enclosed list. Make sure they know what the word means.

## STEP 2:

**Have** the students write one to five different sentences using their assigned words in various ways. Encourage them to create dynamic, emotionally charged sentences.

## STEP 3:

**Ask** the students to find a way to rewrite the sentence without using the original word. Have the students compare the sentences. Which do they find more exciting and effective?

## STEP 4:

**Have** students share some of their favorite sentences. Then have each student say his/her word to the class. Explain to the class that these words appeared for the first time in Shakespeare's plays, and that he was inventing and adapting words constantly. Discuss what our language would be like without these words.

## EXTENSIONS:

- 1) **Research** the life of William Shakespeare (years, interests, family, etc.).
- 2) **Research** 16th century England (government, clothing, food, education.)
- 3) **Compare** the way in which Shakespearean plays were performed during his lifetime to the way they are presented today. What do you think Shakespeare would think?
- 4) **Have** students identify usages, words and phrases that are currently new to the English language. For example: "network" as a verb, "surfing" (without water), "spin" as a noun. What examples can they identify? Why are new words and usages coined? How do they affect current language?



## The Shakespeare Guyz: *Avon Calling!*

Grade Levels: 5-12

### RESOURCES:

*Cambridge School Shakespeare* (editions of individual plays which include suggestions for classroom activities). England: Cambridge University Press

*Oxford School Shakespeare* (editions of individual plays which include suggestions for classroom activities). England: Oxford University Press.

*Shakespeare Set Free*, (a series of teachers' resource books on teaching selected Shakespeare plays). Washington D.C.: Folger Shakespeare Library.  
<http://daphne.palomar.edu/shakespeare>

### ABOUT THE PERFORMERS:

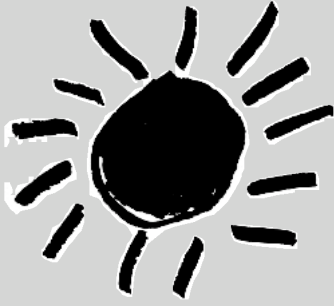
**David Zucker** is an actor, director, playwright, teacher, and mime. He has performed thousands of programs for hundreds of thousands of children with Young Audiences since 1977, and is a popular guest artist with 6 other YA chapters across the U.S.. In 1996 David was chosen from over 900 ensembles across the country and honored with Young Audience's National Artist of the Year award. Mr. Zucker is the author of two original plays and of the children's book, *Uncle Carmello*. In 1987 David won the "Best Director" award from *Dramalogue* magazine for his work on *The Little Prince*, which has been performed in Boston, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and on tour throughout the United States. David has taught T'ai Chi since 1973 and travels internationally conducting workshops. He holds a 6th degree black belt in the Zen martial art of Shim Gum Do, and has a M.F.A. degree in Acting from Brandeis University. For more information, please consult the web site [www.poetry-in-motion.com](http://www.poetry-in-motion.com).

**Richard McElvain**, an actor and director, has appeared in film ("Mermaids") and television ("Spencer for Hire"), as well as on stage throughout the area for the past 20 years. Last fall he directed the critically acclaimed production of *Peer Gynt* at the Boston Conservatory. At the same time he appeared in the world premiere production of Israel Horovitz's *Unexpected Tenderness* at the Gloucester Stage, where he frequently directs. In December of 1994, Richard staged his own adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* at the Merrimack Repertory Theatre. As an actor, he has appeared most recently at the Hasty Pudding Theatre and at the Huntington Theatre, where he was featured in *Bang the Drum Slowly*.

### ABOUT YOUNG AUDIENCES:

Young Audiences of Massachusetts (YA) is the oldest, largest and most utilized arts-in-education organization in the state and one of the largest in a national network of 31 chapters. For 45 years, YA has distinguished itself as the vital link between Massachusetts schoolchildren (K-12) and more than 80 of the region's most accomplished actors, dancers, singers, instrumentalists, and storytellers. Its 36 ensembles offer 57 interactive arts programs that represent a range of cultures, historical periods and artistic disciplines. YA is unique in its flexibility to offer interactive performances, tailor-made residencies, workshops, teacher-training, curriculum planning and multi-year projects. All programs include educational materials and satisfy local, state and/or federal arts education standards.

Young Audiences of Massachusetts  
255 Elm Street, Suite 302, Somerville, MA 02144  
(617) 629-YAMA (9262)  
<http://www.yamass.org>



# Young Audiences of Massachusetts

255 Elm Street, Suite 302, Somerville, MA 02144

(617) 629-YAMA (9262)

[www.yamass.org](http://www.yamass.org)

## MASSACHUSETTS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS CONNECTIONS

### *The Shakespeare Guyz: Avon Calling!*

<i>Language Arts 4</i>	...acquire and use correctly an advanced reading vocabulary of English words, identifying meanings through an understanding of word relationships.
<i>Language Arts 9</i>	...identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read, heard, or viewed.
<i>Language Arts 10</i>	...identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the characteristics of different genres.
<i>Language Arts 12</i>	...identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
<i>Language Arts 14</i>	...identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and theme of poetry.
<i>History 5</i>	Interdisciplinary Learning: Religion, Ethics, Philosophy, and Literature in History...describe and explain fundamental tenets of major world religions; basic ideals of ethics; differing conceptions of human nature; and influence over time.
<i>Arts-Theatre 1</i>	Acting...develop acting skills to portray characters who interact in improvised and scripted scenes.
<i>Arts-Theatre 3</i>	Directing...rehearse and stage dramatic works.
<i>Arts-Theatre 5</i>	Critical Response...describe and analyze their own theatrical work and the work of others using appropriate theater vocabulary.
<i>Arts-Theatre 6</i>	Purpose and Meaning in the Arts...describe the purpose for which works of dance, music, theatre, visual arts, and architecture were and are created.
<i>Arts-Theatre 8</i>	Concepts of Style, Stylistic Influence, and Stylistic Change...demonstrate understanding of styles, influence, change.
<i>Arts-Theatre 10</i>	Interdisciplinary Connections...apply knowledge of the arts to the study of English language arts, foreign languages, health, history and social science, mathematics, and science and technology/engineering.