# Page to Stage: Teaching Hamlet

Saturday, April 13, 2019

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<th>Time</th>
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<td>8:00 – 8:30 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Coffee, Conversation, and Conviviality</strong></td>
<td>6th Floor Lobby</td>
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<td>8:30 – 8:45 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Welcome and Introduction</strong></td>
<td>Skyline Room, 6th Floor</td>
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<td>8:45 – 9:35 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Scholarscape</strong>, Regina Buccola</td>
<td>Skyline Room, 6th Floor</td>
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<td>9:35 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Passing Period / Break</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Breakout Session A  9:45 – 10:50 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Text Work 101</strong>&lt;br&gt;Kevin Long&lt;br&gt;Upstairs at Chicago Shakespeare, 6th Floor</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>How can text clues in Shakespeare’s language help us develop</strong></td>
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<td><strong>COMPREHENSION</strong> and <strong>FLUENCY?</strong></td>
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<td>10:50 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Passing Period / Break</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 – 11:30 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Conversation with the Director</strong>, Barbara Gaines</td>
<td>Skyline Room, 6th Floor</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Passing Period / Break</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Breakout Session B  11:40 – 12:45 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Text Work 101</strong>&lt;br&gt;Kevin Long&lt;br&gt;Upstairs at Chicago Shakespeare, 6th Floor</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Hooking Students with Vocal Gestures</strong>&lt;br&gt;Sara B.T. Thiel and Molly Truglia</td>
<td>Skyline Room, 6th Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>“What does my character want? How will they try to get it?” How can these questions help us to craft an INTERPRETATION—rooted in the text—of Shakespeare’s characters?</strong></td>
<td>Yard Lobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:45 – 1:00 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Wrap-up and Evaluations</strong></td>
<td></td>
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To download all of today’s handouts, go to:

Over for more...
Artist and Instructor Bios

Regina Buccola, Ph.D., Professor and Chair of Literature and Languages at Roosevelt University in Chicago, specializes in Shakespeare, non-Shakespearean early modern drama, and Women's and Gender Studies. Her work has appeared in numerous journals, including Early Theatre Journal, Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England, and Borrowers and Lenders: The Journal of Shakespeare and Appropriation. She is the author of Fairies, Fractious Women and the Old Faith: Fairy Lore in Early Modern British Drama and Culture. She is the editor of A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Critical Guide, and co-editor with Peter Kanelos of Chicago Shakespeare Theater: Suiting the Action to the Word.

Tim Duggan, Ed.D., Associate Professor in the College of Education at Northeastern Illinois University, prepares students to teach secondary school English, and also serves as liaison for NEIU's partnership with Amundsen High School. He has taught English at both the high school and college levels, and served as the director of education and outreach for the Nebraska Shakespeare Festival in Omaha, where he managed and performed in a traveling company. He has published teaching guides for Hamlet, Julius Caesar, and Lord of the Flies with Prufrock Press. Tim has been an instructor with CST's professional learning programs for the past ten years. He also has published two recordings of original music inspired by Shakespeare.

Barbara Gaines, Artistic Director/Carl and Marilynn Thoma Chair, has directed nearly sixty productions at Chicago Shakespeare since founding the Theater in 1986, including thirty of Shakespeare’s plays. Honors include the 2008 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre, the prestigious Honorary OBE (Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) in recognition of her contributions strengthening British-American cultural relations, as well as multiple Joseph Jefferson Awards for Best Production and for Best Director. Ms. Gaines has directed at the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-on-Avon, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and The Old Globe in San Diego.

Kevin Long, M.A., Associate Professor of Theatre at Harper College, is the recipient of the Illinois Theatre Association’s 2012 Award for Excellence in College Theatre Teaching, and an associate member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society. He was nominated for The 2015 Tony Award® for Excellence in Theatre Education. Kevin has worked professionally in various equity and summer stock theatres in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Indiana and Illinois. He has been teaching acting and theater classes for over twenty-five years, and has directed over sixty productions. He frequently presents his workshop “Shakespeare Whispers in Your Ear,” which explores the language and theater of Shakespeare through the use of the First Folio.

Sara B.T. Thiel, Ph.D., Public Humanities Manager at Chicago Shakespeare Theater, manages audience engagement programming, develops and supports the Theater’s extensive work with teachers and students, and provides pre-performance lectures. She earned her Ph.D. in Theatre Studies from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and taught in the Department of Theatre Arts at the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Thiel researches early modern performance practices and contemporary adaptations of Shakespeare. Her publications appear in Renaissance Drama, Puppetry International, Shakespeare Studies, and several edited collections. She is currently writing a book on performances of pregnancy by boy actors in early-seventeenth-century London.

Molly Truglia, Learning Programs Manager at Chicago Shakespeare Theater, joined the Education Department in 2012, where she manages educator professional development and internships—as well as the Theater’s newest education initiative, the Chicago Shakespeare Slam. Prior to that, she led efforts to increase access to the arts for Chicago Public Schools students with Communities In Schools of Chicago. As a teaching artist, she has worked with Montana Shakespeare in the Schools and Montana Shakespeare Company, developing and teaching Shakespeare workshops to students of all ages. Molly is an alumna of the University of Notre Dame, where she holds a BA in anthropology and theater. She is a Creative Schools Fund advisory panel member with Ingenuity.
Teaching Hamlet Workshop  
Saturday, April 13, 2019  
Instructor: Gina Buccola, Ph.D., Roosevelt University

**Suggested Bibliography**


Course Hero: Hamlet Study Guide  
[https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Hamlet](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Hamlet)


[http://www.borrowers.uga.edu/1611/show](http://www.borrowers.uga.edu/1611/show)


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Scoring the Text

“But gold that's put to use more gold begets.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 768

Remember, actors during Shakespeare’s day did not have the luxury of rehearsal as we have today. The text was all they had and it was like gold to the actor. THANK YOU BILL!

Please use your “Text Work Sweep Sheet” and the scored sample text below to help you mine the text for clues.

ROMEO AND JULIET Act III, scene 3; lines 2951 (with cuts)  
Romeo: “Tis torture and not mercy. Heaven is here  
Where Juliet lives, and every cat and dog  
And little mouse, every unworthy thing,  
Live here in heaven, and may look on her, MONO  
But Romeo may not, he is banished.  
And sauest thou yet that exile is not death?  
Hadst thou no poison mixed, no sharp-ground knife,  
No sudden mean of death, though ne'er so mean,  
But ‘banished’ to kill me? ‘Banished’?  
O Friar, the damnèd use that word in hell,  
Howling attends it. How hast thou the heart,  
Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,  
A sin-absolver, and my friend professed,  
To mangle me with that word ‘banished’?  

Over for more...
Bibliography

http://tinyurl.com/shakespeareatoz


http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.03.0079
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Clue</th>
<th>What does this mean?</th>
<th>How do I score the text?</th>
<th>How can I play with these clues to better understand the text?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definitions</td>
<td>Become a “Lexicon Master” by looking up all unfamiliar words in a lexicon—a special dictionary for Shakespeare.</td>
<td>Circle the unfamiliar word. Write the definitions in the margin.</td>
<td>Refer to your definitions as you read the text until you feel confident in your understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Stops</td>
<td>Only three punctuation marks signal the end of a thought when they appear at the end of a verse line: a period, question mark, or exclamation point.</td>
<td>Mark an “F” next to each period, question mark and exclamation point at the end of a verse line.</td>
<td>Question Marks: wait for an answer. Periods and Exclamation Points: formulate your next thought before you continue speaking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-stops</td>
<td>Full stop punctuation (period, question mark or exclamation point) that occurs in the middle of a verse line.</td>
<td>Mark an “M” above each period, question mark and exclamation point in the middle of a verse line.</td>
<td>When a mid-stop occurs, the need to continue is great—do not breathe! Jump to the next thought with a great deal of energy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Lines</td>
<td>Two (or more) characters shared a full verse line (usually, 10 beats between them).</td>
<td>A diagonal line with an arrow connecting the 2 (or 3!) lines</td>
<td>Pick up the cue from your scene partner without a pause!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated Words and Phrases</td>
<td>Words or phrases that are repeated in the text may appear in the same or adjacent lines, but they might even appear in a conversation between two characters.</td>
<td>Underline the repeated word or phrase once the first time it occurs, twice the second time it occurs, and so on...</td>
<td>When you come to a repeated word or phrase, try “lifting” or “punching” the repeated word(s) each time it is repeated to help the repetition stands out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated Sounds</td>
<td>Repeated consonant sounds (alliteration) or repeated vowel sounds (assonance) that appear in the same or neighboring lines.</td>
<td>Please place an accent mark over each repeated consonant sound and a long dash over each repeated vowel sound.</td>
<td>Try exaggerating the repeated sounds. What might the repeated sounds suggest about a character’s emotional state? Playing with the sounds may lead to character insights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antithesis</td>
<td>Words or phrases in the text that have opposite meanings—often used to explain a problem a character is working through.</td>
<td>Circle the two words or phrases that are opposite—draw a line connecting them.</td>
<td>Try stressing the opposites in the lines so that listeners can connect the opposing thoughts with one another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monosyllabic Lines</td>
<td>Lines that contain all (or almost all) one-syllable words.</td>
<td>Write MONO next to each monosyllabic line or phrase.</td>
<td>Take your time as you read, letting the weight of each word resonate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Big But&quot; Words</td>
<td>Small words like “but,” “yet,” “and” and “if” often indicate a character’s thought process taking a turn in direction.</td>
<td>Draw a box around these words.</td>
<td>Stress the small words as you read out loud. Does the character’s argument seem to change direction when you encounter these words?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lists</td>
<td>Sometimes one example isn’t enough! So a character add another and another until the idea has been thoroughly expressed.</td>
<td>Number each new item in the list.</td>
<td>As you read a list, play with stressing each new item with growing urgency. As the character works to be understood, pressure builds on the words used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecphonesis O</td>
<td>An “O” in the script indicates an emotional exclamation.</td>
<td>Draw a circle around each “O.”</td>
<td>Cry out with any sound other than “Oh.”</td>
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Teaching Hamlet Workshop
Saturday, April 13, 2019
Instructor: Kevin Long, Harper College

Hamlet
Act 3, scene 4

HAMLET
Look here upon this picture, and on this, 1
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers. 2
See what a grace was seated on this brow; 3
Hyperion’s curls, the front of Jove himself, 4
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command; 5
A station like the herald Mercury, 6
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill; 7
A combination and a form indeed, 8
Where every god did seem to set his seal 9
To give the world assurance of a man. 10
This was your husband. Look you now what follows. 11
Here is your husband, like a mildewed ear 12
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes? 13
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed 14
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes? 15
You cannot call it love, for at your age 16
The heyday in the blood is tame, it’s humble, 17
And waits upon the judgment; and what judgment 18
Would step from this to this? 19
Catching the Conscience of the King: Activating Analysis

Commonly, English teachers ask students to find connections between text found in different sections of a play, novel, or poem in order to build interpretations of characters, theme, etc. While students often succeed in making claims about text and finding evidence to support those claims, they sometimes find it more difficult to analyze the connections between different pieces of evidence, a skill that leads to deeper understanding of the text. This workshop uses drama activities to set pieces of text side by side, to vocalize and embody those pieces of text, and to analyze their connections.

Activity One: The Public and Private Claudius

For this activity, two speeches by King Claudius are set side by side to examine how he projects his public persona in his first appearance on stage (Act 1, scene 2) compared to his private persona later in the play (Act 3, scene 3). Engage students in analysis of Claudius as a character with the following steps:

1. First Reading. Give students the two speeches and ask them to read them quietly, noticing what they notice. Ask them to mark (underline or highlight) any particular words or lines that stood out to them in the reading. If you want to have a short discussion or give students the opportunity to ask questions, that is your prerogative. I suggest that you keep the discussion brief. Otherwise, proceed directly to step 2.

2. Adding the Voice. Choose two volunteers to read the speeches aloud to the class. You may pick your strongest readers or whomever you wish, but remind your students that the first speech is spoken to a crowd of listeners, and the second speech is spoken with the assumption that no one else is in the room. You may even have more than one student share the reading of each speech. Ask the rest of the class to listen carefully, and then give them the opportunity to annotate and to identify any lines that stood out to them as important.

3. Preparing the Dance of Speeches. Next, split your class into two groups, one to represent the public Claudius and one to represent the private Claudius. Give them the handout that combines the two speeches as a duet piece, with short sections of each speech set in a combined progression. Choose a captain for each group who will facilitate the development of a “game plan” for how their group will speak and perform their speech. The groups may choose to do a choral reading, with all members speaking each line, or they may choose to divide the sections among smaller groups of students. Give them
5 minutes or so to come up with a performance plan, and then another 3-5 minutes to practice speaking the lines.¹

4. Performing the Dance of Speeches. Ask the two groups to face each other and read/perform the two speeches together, in the order suggested by the handout. Following the performance, discuss what they have discovered about Claudius by combining his public presentation with his private speech in this way. Encourage students to identify any additional lines that stand out to them as important or revealing of Claudius’ state of mind.

5. (Bonus round) Pointing. Following the discussion of “The Dance of Speeches,” remind students that Claudius may hold these private thoughts even while projecting his public self. In order to dramatize that interplay of his public and private thoughts, engage students in a pointing activity, using the following directions:

   a. We are going to read the speeches one more time.
   b. This time, however, we are only going to read the individual lines or phrases that you have marked as important.
   c. “The rules:"
      i. Anyone can read any marked phrase or line from either speech
      ii. No one owns a line, so we may hear the same line more than once
      iii. The order is not important, so any line from either speech may be read aloud at any time
      iv. One speaker at a time, please
      v. Listen to each other
      vi. I will stop us when I decide that we’ve “completed” the reading.

6. Debrief. Following the pointing activity, discuss what students have learned about Claudius by examining his public speech and his private speech together. Ask how engaging in the activities aided in their understanding of his character through connections they have made between the two pieces of text.

7. Writing Connection. Think about how students may extend their thinking through writing.

¹ In this activity and the next, adjust the time you give students based on their needs and your understanding of how they work.
Activity Two: The King Speaks First

In this activity, students will study the opening few lines of six scenes from Hamlet that feature King Claudius as the first speaker. In each instance, Claudius is speaking about Hamlet. By performing these short excerpts of text, students will develop an interpretation of Claudius’ thoughts and feelings about Hamlet. They may determine whether Claudius changes over the course of these speeches or whether he is constant (or both). Here’s how it works:

1. Set-up. Split students into groups of 4 - 6 and give them the handout titled “The King Speaks First.” Either ask for volunteers to read the speeches aloud or give them time to read the speeches quietly and annotate.

2. Procedure. Give students the following directions:
   a. The speeches you have been given are excerpts from several scenes in Hamlet that feature King Claudius as the first speaker. Our job is to determine what these speeches reveal about Claudius’ attitude toward Hamlet, and whether it changes over the course of the play. Your job as a group is to study these excerpts and develop a way to perform them with voice and movement. “The rules”:
      i. Everyone in your group must participate in the performance
      ii. You may cut parts of these speeches in your performance, but you must keep some portion of the text of each speech
      iii. You may divide the speeches among yourselves or read together in any combination
      iv. Add movement and expression to fit the language of the speeches
      v. You have 15 minutes. I suggest you use 10 minutes to discuss what you intend to do, and 5 minutes to practice.
       vi. Good luck!

3. Performance. Ask some or all groups to perform their interpretations of the speeches. Perform them without much (or any) discussion in order to prevent groups that haven’t yet performed from veering from what they have practiced.

4. Debrief. Discuss what the students performed and witnessed from their fellow students, and debate the different interpretations of Claudius presented in the performances. Ask students what they understand about his character and how different interpretations may oppose one another and yet both make sense.

5. Writing Connection. Think about how students may extend their thinking through writing.

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2 If you have a number of students that prevents groups of six, you can have smaller groups (say four or five) and have them decide which speeches to cut.
Teaching Hamlet Workshop
Saturday, April 13, 2019
Instructors: Tim Duggan

The Public and Private Claudius

KING CLAUDIUS (1.2, Public)

Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe,
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress to this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,—
With an auspicious and a dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—
Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.

Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
Colleagued with the dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,
To our most valiant brother. So much for him.

KING CLAUDIUS (3.3, Private)

O, my offence is rank it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murder. Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will:
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what's in prayer but this two-fold force,
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd being down? Then I'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? 'Forgive me my foul murder'?
That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition and my queen.
May one be pardon'd and retain the offence?
O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more engaged! Help, angels! Make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the newborn babe!
All may be well.
KING CLAUDIUS (1.2, Public)
1. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
   The memory be green,

2. and that it us befitted
   To bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom
   To be contracted in one brow of woe,

3. Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
   That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
   Together with remembrance of ourselves.

4. Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
   The imperial jointress to this warlike state,
   Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,—

5. With an auspicious and a dropping eye,
   With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
   In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—
   Taken to wife:

6. nor have we herein barr'd
   Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
   With this affair along.

7. For all, our thanks.

8. Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
   Holding a weak supposal of our worth,

9. Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
   Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
   Colleagued with the dream of his advantage,

10. He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
    Importing the surrender of those lands
    Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,
    To our most valiant brother.

11. So much for him.

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1. O, my offence is rank it smells to heaven;

2. It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
   A brother's murder.

3. Pray can I not,
   Though inclination be as sharp as will:
   My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
   And, like a man to double business bound,
   I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
   And both neglect.

4. What if this cursed hand
   Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
   Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
   To wash it white as snow?

5. Where to serves mercy
   But to confront the visage of offence?

6. And what's in prayer but this two-fold force,
   To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
   Or pardon'd being down?

7. Then I'll look up;
   My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
   Can serve my turn? 'Forgive me my foul murder'?

8. That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
   Of those effects for which I did the murder,
   My crown, mine own ambition and my queen.
   May one be pardon'd and retain the offence?

9. O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
   O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
   Art more engaged!

10. Help, angels! Make assay!
    Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart with strings of steel,
    Be soft as sinews of the newborn babe!

11. All may be well.
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The King Speaks First

**Act 2, scene 2**
(to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern)

Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Moreover that we much did long to see you, The need we have to use you did provoke Our hasty sending. Something you have heard Of Hamlet’s transformation—so I call it, Since not th’exterior nor the inward man Resembles that it was.

**Act 3, scene 1**
(to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern)

And can you by no drift of circumstance Get from him why he puts on this confusion, Grating so harshly all his days of quiet With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

**Act 3, scene 3**
(to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern)

I like him not, nor stands it safe with us To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you. I your commission will forthwith dispatch, And he to England shall along with you. The terms of our estate may not endure Hazard so dangerous as doth hourly grow Out of his lunacies.

**Act 4, scene 1**
(to Gertrude)

There’s matter in these sighs, these profound heaves; You must translate. ’Tis fit we understand them. Where is your son?

**Act 4, scene 3**
(alone)

I have sent to seek him, and to find the body. How dangerous is it that this man goes loose! Yet must not we put the strong law on him. He’s loved of the distracted multitude, Who like not in their judgement but their eyes, And where tis so, the ‘offender’s scourge is weighed, But never the offence.

**Act 4, scene 7**
(to Laertes)

Now must your conscience my acquittance seal, And you must put me in your heart for friend, Sth you have heard, and with a knowing ear, That he which hath your noble father slain Pursued my life.
Teaching Hamlet Workshop
Saturday, April 13, 2019
Instructors: Sara B.T. Thiel and Molly Truglia

Vocal Gestures

What students will learn and be able to do:

- Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone. (CCSS RL6, Illinois Arts Learning Standards TH: Re7.1.II)
- Analyze how characters develop and interact over the course of a text. (CCSS RL3)
- Collaboratively participate in discussions with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. (CCSS SL1)

Just as we do in everyday life, characters also speak and act to achieve what they want. The different strategies they use to get what they want are called “tactics” by actors, and in the rehearsal process they will explore many different tactics for a specific moment before landing on a choice that seems to them to fit best. Because there’s no single “right” answer, the same scene can be interpreted in multiple ways and still rooted in the text.

In this activity, students explore, physically and vocally, the possible tactics that lie underneath a line of text by using five distinctly different, non-literal “vocal gestures.” These vocal gestures wouldn’t be part of a finished performance (in the same exaggerated way, at least!), but are a tool to encourage students to play with different ways a character may use the language to affect change in their scene partner.

Learning Vocal Gestures, Applying to an “Open Scene”

- With a partner, practice the following exchange:
  A: Please
  B: No

  [To the teacher: Physically model each vocal gesture one at a time and ask students to practice the vocal gesture with their two lines of dialogue. Encourage students to allow the gesture to impact the way they are saying their line.]
  - **Hook** - Extend the arm and curve the fingers toward your body. Move the hand toward the body.
  - **Probe** - Point the index finger of one hand. Extend the arm forward. Move the finger around and forward as if it is digging into something.
  - **Deflect** - Extend the arm with the palm facing upwards, as if pushing something away.
  - **Punch** - Make a fist and punch the air in front of you.
  - **Flick** - Join your fingertips together and then quickly extend your fingers fully, as though you are flicking water on someone.

- Now that you know the vocal gesture vocabulary, let’s move on to a more complex text:
  A: Please
  B: No
  A: Why
  B: Because

- Read through this longer open scene, trying out different vocal gestures each time, to see how that changes the meaning of the scene, and the intentions of your character.
• After reading through 2 – 3 times, close your eyes and go through the exercise again. Because your partner can’t see your gesture, make sure the physical gesture affects your voice.
• As a class, share a few examples, and reflect on the different interpretations and the process:
  o Who do you imagine these two characters are based on the tactics we saw played out? What’s their relationship? What does each character want? Why do you think so?
  o How did layering vocal gestures onto the text affect your interpretation of the scene?

Applying Vocal Gestures to a Scene from Shakespeare
• In pairs, decide who will read each character.
• Read the scene with your partner, circling any words that are confusing.
• As a class, discuss words that are unclear and try to reach consensus on meaning, using lexicons if helpful.
• Back with your partner, explore your scene using vocal gestures.
  o Suggested approach:
    ▪ So that the text isn’t too overwhelming, break it down into smaller chunks, tackling one chunk at a time.
    ▪ With each chunk, work through the text a number of times, trying out different vocal gestures in each read-through. Keep in mind that less obvious vocal gestures can lead to interesting interpretations—try to surprise yourself by trying a vocal gesture that doesn’t seem as obvious to see what that might reveal.
    ▪ After you’ve gone through the first chunk about 3 times, take a moment to annotate your text with the gestures that worked best for you and your partner.
  o Keep in mind:
    ▪ This is an on-your-feet and out-loud exploration. (No sitting and reading silently!)
    ▪ Choose one gesture per sentence (or consecutive sentences), to start. When your students have more experience with this exercise, they can explore “gear shifts” within a single sentence.
    ▪ Just as we did when we were practicing with the “open scene,” allow the gesture to affect how you’re saying the lines.

Comparing Different Interpretations
• Show several scenes and discuss. [To the teacher: consider “chunking” the performances as you did with the text, to make it easier to compare and contrast different interpretations.]
• How did different choices lead to different interpretations of the same scene?
• Which vocal gesture/s did each character use most in this scene? What might that tell you about the character or situation they are in?
• What have you discovered about the characters in this scene as a result of this exercise? Do others in the room have a different interpretation?

Extension:
Ask the students if they felt there was a vocal gesture they felt was missing, and if so, create a vocal gesture to add to your options. Go back to the scene and add in the additional vocal gesture. Discuss what new insight they now have about that character or the scene. And ask them to be sure to cite evidence.
Teaching Hamlet Workshop  
Saturday, April 13, 2019  
Instructors: Sara B.T. Thiel and Molly Truglia

Hamlet  
Act 3, scene 1

OPHELIA  
Good my lord,  
How does your honor for this many a day?

HAMLET  
I humbly thank you, well, well, well.

OPHELIA  
My lord, I have remembrances of yours,  
That I have longèd long to re-deliver.  
I pray you now receive them.

HAMLET  
No, not I,  
I never gave you aught.

OPHELIA  
My honored lord, you know right well you did,  
With them, words of so sweet breath composed  
As made the things more rich. Their perfume lost,  
Take these again, for to the noble mind  
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.  
There, my lord.

HAMLET  
Ha, ha, are you honest?

OPHELIA  
My lord?

HAMLET  
Are you fair?

OPHELIA  
What means your lordship?

HAMLET  
That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should  
Admit no discourse to your beauty.

OPHELIA  
Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than  
with honesty?

HAMLET  
Ay, truly, for the power of beauty will sooner transform  
Honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of  
Honesty can translate beauty into his likeness. This was  
Sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof.  
I did love you once.

OPHELIA  
Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.
OPHELIA
I was the more deceived.

HAMLET
Get thee to a nunnery—why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest, but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

HAMLET
You should not have believed me, for virtue cannot inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it. I loved you not.

OPHELIA
I was the more deceived.

HAMLET
Get thee to a nunnery—why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest, but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves all, believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?