

## **Shakespeare and Film: Exploring the World of Shakespeare through Children**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

As a Kindergarten teacher, I am often faced with obstacles when it comes to developing lessons. Gone are the days when Kindergarten students were simply required to learn their numbers, shapes and alphabets. Students are now being held accountable for reading and other academic areas at this level. Because of the vast amount of testing that goes on in today's school systems, it is important that students be prepared at an early age.

When developing lessons for my classes, I would often find the resources limited. Because of the expectations of today's Kindergarten students, it soon became obvious that the Kindergarten level resources available simply would not do. I was often forced to either find resources from a higher-grade level or create my own materials to meet the needs of my students. My students were not considered to be advanced or gifted and talented; they were regular education students.

Ironically, while searching for materials, I was given information about the Houston Teachers Institute. You could imagine my excitement when I found out there was a program that would allow me develop my own curriculum. Not only would I be able to develop a curriculum but also I would be able to share and create ideas with teachers such as myself.

When most people hear that I'm going to be teaching a unit on Shakespeare to primary level students, they seem to think it is impossible. It has been not only my belief but my experience that children are capable of learning most information that is presented to them. At early ages children are most susceptible to learning, more than any other age. Younger children have no idea as to what they should or should not be learning; they, like sponges, soak up the information that is given to them without question as to whether or not they are old enough to have this knowledge. It is with this theory in mind that I have developed a unit that will teach children Shakespeare Readiness through Children's Shakespeare and Film.

### **SHAKESPEARE READINESS**

Most students are not introduced to their first Shakespearean play until late middle school or high school; however, they will probably see their first movie at a much earlier age. The idea of Shakespeare Readiness was developed when I realized that most primary student's grades Kindergarten through Second had no idea of or had seen an actual play. When asking a group of a student if any one knew what a play was one student replied, "Yes, recess." It was then that I decided to teach the world of theatre and literature through children's versions of Shakespeare. Through research I found that there were enough resources and children's versions of these Shakespearean plays in both films and books. Shakespeare Readiness will allow students to learn not only what a play is but also how they are put together. They will journey through the Elizabethan Era and learn of the times and the people of those times. The idea of this unit is to prepare students, so that when they are introduced to Shakespeare and other playwrights at later dates, they are already prepared with a working background knowledge of the subject. This unit

will better prepare students for upcoming future literature lessons. Thus when the time comes, they will be ready for Shakespeare and any other literary work that comes their way.

## **RATIONALE**

It is important for children to begin learning and understanding literature and classics at an early age. I would like to present a unit entitled “Exploring the World of Shakespeare through Children.” With this unit all academic areas will be covered. Students will learn Reading, Language, Math, Science and Social Studies. Over a two-week period I will cover all subjects through the world of Shakespeare – his plays and films made based on his plays.

This unit will be designed for grade levels Kindergarten through second grades. This ten-day unit will begin by exploring the Elizabethan Era. Students will first learn what a theater is and how Elizabethan theaters compare with the modern theaters of today. They will learn that performances were done during the day so the stages would be illuminated by natural light and that these special open-air theaters were designed in such a way to make the natural hit the stage. They will study the Globe Theatre. In this particular portion of the lesson science and math will be introduced. The students will be able to learn about indoor light versus natural light. Students will also be able to experiment with prisms and how natural light reflects color. The students will also be able to design their own outdoor theaters with Popsicle sticks, incorporating geometry and number concepts. While discussing the Elizabethan Era, students will be introduced to monetary system when they learn how patrons had to pay one penny (the equivalent to \$1.66 today) to enter a show. In order to sit in the balcony, they were required to pay one penny more.

Once the scene is set, students will then be introduced to various children’s Shakespeare books. Students will begin by learning the parts of a book. The students will then learn about the different people that make the books possible, such as the author and illustrator. Houston Independent School District’s Project CLEAR states that students must be taught about onset rhymes, word meaning, and listening comprehension. While keeping in line with project CLEAR, students will be introduced to a series of stories from the book, *Tales from Shakespeare* by Tina Packer. This book retells Shakespeare in a language that children will understand; the stories *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Hamlet*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, and *King Lear* come to life in this book. Students will then break up in groups to perform finger plays as they retell and comprehend these stories.

Once students are familiar with various Shakespearian works, students will then participate in a classroom production of scenes from various plays. Before creating the play, students will first learn about the roles people perform when putting together a play. Once the students have a firm understanding of the roles, they will then take turns taking on these various roles. Students will receive the chance to experience roles such as curator, costume designer and play director.

In order to bring closure to the unit, students will use knowledge learned throughout the unit to play a game entitled “Who am I?” or “Hot Seat.” In the game “Who am I?” the teacher will give clues about different characters and stories, and the students will be able to tell who the character is. In the game “Hot Seat,” the teacher will show cards of different story characters, and the student is to identify and tell something about him.

I believe that this unit will expose students to language, literature, vocabulary, math, science and social studies. Shakespeare doesn’t have to be taught only in high school or college. With this unit, younger ages will be able to enjoy the same benefits as older children in a method that they can understand and enjoy. Bringing literature to life through hands-on activities will create a great understanding and appreciation for reading and fine arts.

## **ACADEMIC SETTING**

This unit will take place in an elementary classroom setting, with primary age students. Windsor Village Elementary is located in the South District of Houston Independent School District. The school is a Title I school, meaning most of these children come from lower economic families. The population of the school is predominantly Hispanic and African American with a one percentage of Caucasian and other students. The make up of my classroom is racially and economically diverse.

This unit will be geared towards levels Kindergarten through Second Grade. These students attend a very racially and economically diverse school. A large number of these students are ESL students whose parents don't speak English.

Because of their backgrounds, most of these students and especially their parents have not been exposed to literary works such as Shakespeare. Because this unit will be very interactive, students and parents will be afforded the opportunity to experience the world of Shakespeare through the eyes of children.

## **UNIT OBJECTIVES**

The objective of this unit is for students to learn the fundamentals of theatrical productions by using Shakespearean plays. Students will be able to identify items such as what a production is, parts of a book, who and what the author and illustrator are and exactly what part they play in the whole book-writing process. Students will be able to experience The Elizabethan Era through Shakespeare's plays. This unit will cover math, science, reading, social studies and language.

### **Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) Objectives**

The basis of the unit will focus on several English Language Arts and Reading Objectives. The first objective is to develop oral and language skills, listening and speaking for purposes, and listening to get information to solve problems and to enjoy and appreciate. The students will participate in rhymes, songs, conversations and discussions. Students will also listen critically to interpret and evaluate, while listening responsively to stories and other text "read alouds," including classic and contemporary works.

Students will experience listening and speaking culture where the student listens and speaks to gain knowledge of his or her own culture and the culture of others and the common elements of other cultures. Students will compare language and oral traditions (family stories) that reflect customs, regions and cultures.

Students will experience listening, speaking, and oral grammar through speaking appropriately to different audiences for different purposes and occasions. Students should also be able to ask and answer relevant questions and make contributions in small or large group discussions. Once mastering those objectives, students will be able to present dramatic interpretations of experiences, stories, poems or plays.

Under the TEKS Objectives regarding Reading and Print Awareness, by the end of this unit students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of concepts of print. Students will then be able to:

1. Recognize that print represents spoken language and conveys meaning.
2. Know that print moves from left to right and recognize how readers use capitalization and punctuation to comprehend.
3. Recognize the different parts of a book, such as cover, title page, and table of contents, offer information about the book.

Through reading and experiencing these children's plays, students will not only listen and read stories but also be able to understand them. According to the Kindergarten through Third Grade TEKS Objectives regarding Reading Comprehension, students by the end of this unit should be able to use a variety of strategies to comprehend selected Read Alouds. The students will:

1. Use prior knowledge to anticipate meaning and make sense of text.
2. Establish purposes for reading or listening such as to be informed, to follow directions, and to be entertained.
3. Retell or act out the order of important events in stories.

There are also TEKS Objectives to be met regarding the theater. Through discussing the theater, students will be able to increase their understanding of heritage and traditions through historical and cultural studies in theater. Student responses and evaluations should promote thinking and further discriminating judgment, developing students who are appreciative and evaluate consumers of live theater, film, television and other technologies.

### **Vocabulary**

Building and developing vocabulary is an important part of a primary student's academic success. Through out this unit students will be exposed to a vast number of vocabulary words. Not only will students learn the definitions, they will also experience what some of these words actually mean. For example, students will not just learn that an illustrator is the person who draws the pictures; they will also have the opportunity to perform the duties of an illustrator, making these definitions come to life. Young children often memorize things with no real concept of what it is they are memorizing. Throughout this unit students will learn and experience words such as:

Author, Illustrator, Playwright, Play, Globe Theater, Actor, Family Tree, Family Crest, Fairy, Children's Company, Costume, Stage Director and Magic.

In order to ensure students' understanding of these words, a variety of methods will be used. The words will be placed throughout the classroom with the coinciding picture to help students gain a mental picture of these words. Before opening a book, the students will review the parts that make up a book using the correct terminology. Before the story begins, the students will have a clear understanding of what it takes to make up the story.

### **UNIT BACKGROUND**

This unit will focus on the plays *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Hamlet*. Students will watch *Shakespeare the Animated Tales*, both *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Hamlet*. These animated versions will tell the stories in a way that the primary level children will be able to understand. Children will be able to watch the films and relate to them. During this unit students will explore the Globe Theater and appreciate the works of the great playwright William Shakespeare. Through the plays, students will be able to collect, organize and interpret information. Students will communicate information in an organized and comprehensible manner. Students will label parts of a Globe Theater and recognize its important elements. Students will also learn the use of acting techniques such as memorization, voice enunciation and stage movement.

### **Shakespeare's Family Life**

The unit will begin with the life of William Shakespeare. The objective of this lesson will be for students to learn about William Shakespeare the man. They are to learn about his family and his family life.

Shakespeare was born April 23, 1564, in Stratford-upon-Avon, England, to John and Mary Arden Shakespeare. Shakespeare was the son of a Stratford businessman and probably attended

the local grammar school. There are very few documented records of William Shakespeare during this time; however, there is available information on his father John Shakespeare. John Shakespeare was a glove maker who held a number of public offices over a twenty-year period of time. He was everything from a Borough Ale-Taster to Alderman to Bailiff (the highest public office in Stratford). In 1577, when William was around thirteen, John Shakespeare suffered a great financial loss, affecting the Shakespeare family greatly.

In 1582 William Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway. They had three children. Little else is known of his life before 1592, when he appeared as a playwright in London. He may have been a member of a traveling theatre group, and some evidence in his early style suggests he may have been a schoolmaster. In 1594 he became an actor and playwright for the Lord Chamberlain's Men (the King's Men under James I). It is thought that he played supporting roles, e.g. the Ghost in *Hamlet*. In 1599 he became a part owner of the Globe Theatre and in 1608 of the Blackfriars Theatre. In later years Shakespeare experienced great success as a shareholder in Lord Chamberlain's Men (his company of actors), which allowed him to restore his father's fortune and the family crest. He retired to Stratford in 1613 and died on April 23, 1616. In his will he left his house and land to his eldest daughter, his wife his "second-best bed," his youngest daughter a silver bowl, and enough money for each of his fellow actors to buy a ring to wear in his memory. He is buried in the Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-Upon-Avon.

## **LESSON PLAN OVERVIEW**

The following lesson plan descriptions and background information correlate to the lesson plan chart at the end of the unit. Students will be completing family trees and a family crest. Other lessons will include a study of the Globe Theatre and the Elizabethan era, including a study of plants mentioned in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Students will delve into the supernatural with a study of fairies in conjunction with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Finally, they will compare and contrast an animated version of *Hamlet* to Disney's *The Lion King*. This thematic unit includes activities related to reading, language, math, social studies, and science. It has everything!

### **Methodology**

The majority of the methods used to create this unit involve hands-on activities. I find that many students are visual and tactile learners. By using activities that students can not only relate to but also experience, I believe that it will increase the retention of the items taught through out this unit.

### **Materials Used to Make This Unit a Success**

- Computers
- Construction Paper
- Paper Dolls
- Transparencies (globe theater, family tree, families crest)
- Overhead Projector
- Markers
- Crayons
- Glue
- Scissors
- Seeds (mustard, peach blossom)
- Soil
- Cups
- Water

## **Family Trees**

Once students have studied a background on William Shakespeare and his family, students will begin discussing their own families and family members. The concept covered in this portion of the lesson is the life of Shakespeare – the poet and playwright. His childhood, early acting career, life as a playwright and personal life will also be covered. While studying Shakespeare's family, students will begin looking into their own families. The students will discuss and identify the roles of the different family members in their own personal families. Students will look at Shakespeare's family tree and then begin to look at their own.

After discussing family and family roles, students will then create their own family trees through illustration. Students will use a tree cut out and either place or draw pictures of their family members in the proper location of the tree location of the tree. This assignment is to be taken home, as students will need to collect photographs of themselves and family members.

Once Family Trees are made, students are to make an oral presentation explaining who each member is and the roles that they play in relation to their family. Students will receive an opportunity to present their Family Tree. Trees can then be displayed around the classroom.

## **Family Crest**

Once students have a working knowledge about family and family structure, students will then begin to create Family Crest. Students will learn what a Family Crest is and exactly what it is meant to represent. Students will discuss what items might have been on Shakespeare's Family Crest according to the background information they already have on him. Then they will begin to look into their own family to begin to brainstorm what items might represent the honor of their families. The teacher will display a picture of an actual crest on an overhead projector. Students will then be issued a Xerox copy of the same crest, magazine and newspaper clippings. Students are to cut out the crest and place or draw any pictures that are to go inside their crest. Students will then give an oral presentation of their crest. Students, before their peers, will explain why they chose these pictures and why they best represent their family.

## **The Elizabethan Era**

The Elizabethan Era will also be covered in this unit as part of the social studies curriculum. Topics such as Queen Elizabeth I, education, medicine, health, law, punishment, clothing, entertainment, the theater (especially the Globe Theater) will be covered. In Shakespeare Readiness it is important that students receive this background knowledge. Reference materials needed are book such as, *Shakespeare: A Pictorial Study* by F.E. Halliday and *Shakespeare's England* from the American Heritage Publishing Co. A host of transparencies that will reflect pictures such as clothing and other items that help illustrate the era. The teacher will begin with a lecture starting with a general description of Shakespeare and his life. Transparencies of images of Shakespeare and items from the Elizabethan Era would then be shown. Students would then hold an informal discussion of the time period and compare the Elizabethan Era to the current times in which they live. Books and other visuals will be passed around the classroom to depict and illustrate parts of the lecture. Students are to understand the Elizabethan Era and compare and contrast the similarities and differences of that era to the one they live in now. Primary students will be amazed that there was actually a time with no electricity or any of the other modern convinces they are accustomed to now. To end the first day's lesson, students will be instructed to illustrate a description of a day in a life of an Elizabethan.

## **Productions**

Students will then move on to discuss the plays themselves. Most primary students do not know what a play or production is. Students will begin learning about the parts of a book.

Students will learn what an author and illustrator are. This will help them to understand the concept of plays. The objective of this lesson will be for students to understand that a playwright acts as an author and costume and stage directors act as illustrators, because they illustrate the images on the stage. Students are to learn things such as where a play can be found, who and what are actors, and what are acts and scenes. Students are to have a general understanding of the format of a play as a whole.

After the concepts of plays are introduced, students will then begin to learn about the theater. Student will begin by discussing the aspects of a modern theater. Starting with a movie theater, students will talk about things that they might see in a movie theater, such as a screen, lights and cushion seats. Students will then learn how people of the Elizabethan Era did not have movies; they had plays. Students will then begin discussing how people of the time watched their version of what we now call movies. London's Globe Theater, where most of Shakespeare's plays were performed, will now be introduced.

### **The Globe Theatre**

The Globe Theatre in London was where most of William Shakespeare's plays were first presented. Two brothers, Richard and Cuthbert Burbage, owned its predecessor 'The Theatre' at Shoreditch in north London. Before 1599 the Lord Chamberlain's Men performed in public primarily at The Theatre, which had been leased by James Burbage, father of Richard.

In the winter of 1598 the lease on this theatre was due to expire because of an increase in rent to a level that the Globe's company could no longer afford. The landlord was Giles Allen, a puritan who disapproved of theatrical entertainment. The Lord Chamberlain's Men was forced to move to The Curtain, another public playing house near The Theatre. In the meantime the Theatre stood empty. (At this time, while considering alternative playing houses, Burbage purchased the Blackfriars, within the city but under the control of the crown, and not city officials who were almost definitely anti-players. The local residents protested, however, so it would be years before the players were allowed to use the Blackfriars as a playhouse.) Negotiations to move back in to The Theatre were at a halt, the landlord being exceedingly stubborn. In the meantime James Burbage died, leaving the struggle to his two sons. Allen's intentions were to demolish the Theatre and put it to what he called better usage.

The exact physical structure of the Globe is unknown, although scholars are pretty sure of some details because of drawings from the period. The theatre itself was a closed structure with an open courtyard where the stage stood. Tiered galleries around the open area accommodated the wealthier patrons who could afford seats, and those of the lower classes – the “groundlings” – stood around the platform or “thrust” stage during the performance of a play. The space under and behind the stage was used for special effects, storage and costume changes. Although the entire structure was not very big by modern standards, it is thought to have been capable of accommodating fairly large crowds – perhaps as many as 2000 people – during a performance.

The Globe may have been designed similarly to another of its time – The Fortune. It was said to have been shaped like a cylinder with a thatched gallery roof that was made of straw. The roof had to be coated with a special fire-protectant. In 1613 the roof was accidentally set on fire by a cannon during a performance of Henry VIII. The entire theatre burned in about an hour. The Globe was rebuilt a year later but with a tilted gallery roof and more circular in shape. In 1644, thirty years after it was rebuilt, the Globe was torn down.

The objective of this portion of the unit is for students to develop an appreciation for Shakespeare and his works and to understand how plays were viewed during this time. Students will begin by looking at various overhead projected pictures of the Globe Theater. Students will then learn the different areas of the theater such as the Pit, Lord's Room, Middle Gallery, Hut,

Heavens, Tiring House and Trap Door. After students have identified the different areas of the theater, they will also review the important elements of these parts. After the class has properly labeled the theater, the students will place their class Globe Theater diagram out for display. Later during the week of this lesson, students will also create their own globe theater in groups out of Popsicle sticks, paying special attention to details such as a hole in the roof to illuminate natural light.

At the end of this portion of the lesson, students should be able to answer questions, such as “What was the name of Shakespeare’s Acting Company?”, “How did the Globe Theater burn down?” and “How did the audience know a play would be shown?” During this lesson students will not only be able to compare and contrast but also be able to exercise their comprehension skills.

The Globe Theater portion of this unit is to be used as an introduction that will help students begin to get familiar with Shakespeare, the man, and the Theater system as a whole. Once the students are familiar with the entire Shakespearian Globe Theater set up, students will then move forward to more of some of the actual plays. By starting with *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, students will be able to view and listen to a story that will more than likely spark their interest.

### **Children’s Companies**

Often many actors in the productions of these times were young boys. These young boys were part of Children’s Companies, companies that consisted of mostly young boys. One of the more popular companies was the Choir Boys of Chapel Royal at Windsor, which was performing occasional plays by 1516, and The Choristers of St. Paul’s Cathedral by 1525. Groups known as The Children of the Chapel and The Children of St. Paul’s often did pageants at court during the reign of Henry III. During the reign of Elizabeth I, they performed with professional companies. These boys’ companies usually consisted of 8-12 boys of various ages and “types.” Boys could be “pressed” into service, drafted almost as if for military service if their voices and looks were found appealing to the masters. The masters of the companies trained the boys in singing and acting, as well as in grammar and rhetoric. The masters also served all of the other functions required by a theatrical company; they were managers, directors, designers, and costumers—whatever a given production needed. The boys would play with their companies, as well as at times with other adult companies, often performing the parts of women. Many shareholders in the Lord Chamberlain’s Men, Shakespeare’s company, for example, had been boy actors in their youth. This is how most of these actors received their experience.

### **Fairies**

#### ***Elizabethan Beliefs about Fairies***

A fairy is defined an imaginary being in human form depicted as clever and mischievous, possessing magical powers. One of the most entertaining elements of Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* is the presence of the fairies. Titania, Oberon, Puck, and the attendant fairies all affect the human beings in the woods, and provide glimpses into the fairy realm and way of life. Although Shakespeare applies several important aspects of the Elizabethan belief in fairies to *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Shakespeare alters the conception of fairies.

Fairies in Elizabethan England were basically the same size and shape as humans. People were often mistaken for fairies because the size of a fairy was thought to be that of a short human, so there would be no noticeable difference in physical size. Since Elizabethan fairies looked like humans, they, of course, did not have wings. Elizabethan folk also thought that fairies were beautiful and of dark complexion, which reflected their association with wickedness. They often dressed in green due to their association with nature. Shakespeare, who was familiar with these ideas of fairies, presents the fairies of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* as beautiful and associated



with nature, but this is where the physical similarities to Elizabethan folk beliefs end. In the play, Shakespeare describes his fairies as tiny creatures with wings, and this is the first time in literature that fairies are described in this manner. It is not the last, as the poets and playwrights of his time adopted Shakespeare's diminutive description of fairies.

Shakespeare also alters the Elizabethan conception of the identity and behavior of fairies. One of the most conspicuous aspects of Elizabethan fairy behavior was that fairies were linked closely with the home and the farm. Elizabethan fairies loved cleanliness enough to reward humans for keeping their homes clear of dirt and clutter, and they often punished messy people. They also needed humans for beef, bread, drink, and bath water, which people, fearful of fairy wrath, willingly supplied. What fairies wanted most, however, was milk and cream. Because of this, fairies were often associated with the dairy industry and frequently possessed herds of cattle because of their fondness for dairy.

Fairy reward and retribution were often swift and significant because of their wicked ways. The Elizabethans thought that fairies either were fallen angels, the souls of dead humans, or beings without souls that existed between Heaven and Hell. Because of this supernatural status, fairies had magical powers that they put to use for their own benefit. When humans followed fairy dictates, fairies were known to cure diseases, bring an abundance of food, clean houses, protect, bring fortune, and tell the future. However, the foolish mortals who did not appease the fairies could suffer a variety of punishments. The most popular fairy punishment was pinching, which often left victims with blue bruises all over their bodies. Fairies were also known to create changelings (babies who were born one gender and changed to the other), to abduct children and adults, blight crops, destroy livestock, and bring disease. The "commoners" of the Elizabethan period were afraid of fairies and tried to appease them. This representation of fairies as malicious beings is quite different from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where fairies are harmless sprites that may play tricks on humans, but eventually help them without being bribed to do so. Titania cares for the Indian boy out of love for her priestess, and Oberon orders Puck to resolve the Athenians' love situation without any kind of reward. Both rulers even bless the bridal beds at the end of the play. This beneficence is a far cry from the fear-inspiring fairies to which Shakespeare's Elizabethan audiences were accustomed.

One characteristic of fairies that Shakespeare left intact was their enjoyments. Shakespeare's fairies in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* enjoy dancing and music, which were the favorite pastimes of the fairies of Elizabethan folklore. Fairies were thought to dance in fairy circles, which humans were forbidden to see. Pinching would punish any person spying on fairy circles. Shakespeare's correlation of fairies to night is also consistent with the folklore of his time. Although the fairy "hours" were midnight and noon, fairies were occasionally known to work magic in the day; however, the main time for fairies was night.

Another difference in the depiction of fairy characters is Robin Goodfellow or Puck. Robin Goodfellow was a familiar character to the Elizabethans. His laugh, sense of humor, and reputation as a prankster made him a popular folk character. He was not, however, a fairy because his tricks were never fatal. Only practical jokes and humorous accidents were attributed to him. Puck was also a spirit of the home and was often depicted with a candle and a broom because he loved to clean houses as a reward for bread and cream. (This is the reason why he is shown with a broom at the end of the play). While Shakespeare maintains Puck's mischievous personality, he completely changes some significant facets of his character. As mentioned previously, Robin Goodfellow was not a fairy. Shakespeare not only makes him a fairy in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, but he also makes him Oberon's jester and servant. The change of Robin Goodfellow's name to Puck is also significant. A "puck" is a devil, not a joker, which directly contrasts Robin Goodfellow's character not only in Elizabethan folklore but also in the play. Robin has no interest in the humans in the play other than for sport, and he has no association with the home save for

carrying the broom. Although *A Midsummer Night's Dream* marks Robin Goodfellow's first appearance on the English stage, only his sense of humor and prankish nature remain from the famous figure of Elizabethan folklore.

### ***Good vs. Evil***

Because primary students are often mesmerized by the supernatural, I thought this would be a great section to incorporate into this unit. This portion of the unit will begin by reading excerpts from the book *Tales from Shakespeare*, by Tina Packer. The theme of this lesson will be “Good vs. Evil.” The teacher will begin reading the story of two young lovers who decide to meet in the woods to escape the cruel laws of their city. They meet in the woods, where they are accompanied by a series of Fairies who dwell in the woods. Many adventures occur with Puck, the fairy king, Titania, Lysander, Hermia, and Helena. This story best illustrates Good vs. Evil and Fair vs. Unfair behavior.

The teacher will also be illustrating the story through Shakespeare cards. These cards display pictures of each character. With these cards students will be able to receive a better feel of the story. During the days to follow, students will also discuss aspects of the story, such as why Bottom had the Donkey’s head on, and what is a donkey exactly, what does it represent? After the story students will then play the game “Hot Seat.” During this game, the teacher will show the students Shakespeare cards, and they are to name the characters and tell something about them. Student’s will then draw a picture of their favorite character and share with their peers why this is their favorite character.

### ***The Study of Plants Mentioned in A Midsummer Night’s Dream***

During this portion of the unit students will also get a lesson in plants. In *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and other Shakespearean plays, The Green World is mentioned. The Green World is a world full of greenery, plants, love, romance and flowers. It is in this place that we first hear of the two fairies Pease Blossom and Mustard Seed. Both named after plants in nature, these fairies hold significant parts in the play. Flower Fairies, as these two were known, are drawn to Fairy Gardens.

There are numerous herbs and plants associated with fairies. Thyme is a must; this herb is where Titania sleeps in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. Fox glove is where fairies are known to sleep inside their bell shaped petals and wear them as gloves. Fairies were also known to use saffron for flavoring cakes and dyeing cloths. Rosemary and roses were also used for their beauty and fragrance.

Once students have been presented with the background knowledge of the herbs and flowers, they will be asked to predict which will grow faster. Students will then be introduced to the parts of a plant (roots, petal, stem, leaf). Using an overhead projector students and teacher will label the parts of a plant. Later students will label their own copies of the parts of a plant. Students will then discuss what is needed for a plant to grow and survive. Students will identify that a plant needs plenty of water and sunlight to grow and survive.

During the next phase of this section students will then begin to plant two different seeds in two different cups. One cup will contain rose or rosemary seeds, while the other will contain thyme or saffron seeds. Students will log their predictions on paper. Students will attend to their individual plants daily. They will also keep a daily log of the progress that their plant has made. At the end of the unit, students will then observe which one of their plants blossomed first. Students will then log using pictures and writing at least one sentence (for younger levels) about their observations.

## **The Films**

The lesson for week one will conclude with the showing of the DVD, *Shakespeare: The Animated Tales*. From this series of movies *A Midsummer Night's Dream* will be shown. The story that they have heard and imagined will then come to life for these students. Before the movie begins, students will rely on some of the things that they have previously learned about the theater. Students will be given a nickel each. The students will be required to pay the penny entrance fee into the theater/classroom. They are to also count the correct change. Students requesting to sit in special seating will be required to pay one penny more.

### ***Lion King versus Hamlet***

The second week of this unit will include the final story in the lesson: *Hamlet*. This lesson will begin somewhat differently. Students will begin the unit by watching the movie *The Lion King*. Students will watch as Simba fights to avenge his father's death, while others are trying to take over the king's throne. Students will watch the movie over a two-day period, each day discussing what they have observed. Students will once again discuss the theme of Good vs. Evil. At the end of this lesson students will illustrate their favorite scene in the movie and write one to two sentences about that scene.

On the third day the teacher will review play format and Shakespeare. Students will then be introduced to *Hamlet*. As the play is being read, Shakespeare cards will be in use. Students will use the cards to identify characters as the story is being read. The teacher will then refer back to the movie *The Lion King*.

*The Lion King* is a story of a young lion cub named Simba who, like Hamlet, loses his father at the hands of his evil uncle wanting desperately to be king. Because Simba is the heir to the throne, his evil uncle Scar goes to great lengths to make sure that Mustafa (the King) and Simba are gone. Scar knows that with Mustafa dead and Simba gone that he is next in line to be King.

The students will then begin to compare and contrast the similarities and differences between the two stories. Before the lesson is concluded, *Shakespeare: The Animated Version: Hamlet* will be shown. Students will pay their entrance fees in order to see the movie. After the movie students will participate in the game "Who Am I?" In this game the teacher will give clues about the character and the students are to tell by holding up the Shakespeare card who that character is.

## **UNIT CONCLUSION**

To conclude this unit, students will create a book report. In this book report students are to illustrate and write one to three sentences about their favorite Shakespeare play and character. This final assessment will be a project that the students are to take home and do with a parent. These students will be required to create a poster with all of the following information: the name of the play, why you liked the play, and your favorite character. Assignments will be issued on Monday and should be turned in on Friday. Student's work will then be put on display throughout the hallway. The unit will take place during the month of April, Shakespeare's birth and death month.

**LESSON PLAN CHARTS ON A *MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM* AND *HAMLET***

<p><b>Reading</b></p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature and the arts</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> A Midsummer Night's Dream</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature and the arts</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> A Midsummer Night's Dream</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature and the arts</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> A Midsummer Night's Dream</p>	<p>Objective: To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature and the arts</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> A Midsummer Night's Dream</p>	<p>Objective: To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature and the arts</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> A Midsummer Night's Dream (DVD)</p>
<p><b>Language</b></p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature and the arts through written expression</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> students will draw a picture of their favorite character</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature and the arts through written expression</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> students will draw a picture of their favorite scene from the story</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature and the arts through written expression</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Students will learn the parts of a book</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature and the arts through written expression</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> students will learn components of a play</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature and the arts through written expression</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> students will play game " Hot Seat"</p>
<p><b>Math</b></p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Counting Money and correct change using nickels and pennies</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Students will learn about the prices of a play during Elizabethan times</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Counting Money and correct change using nickels and pennies</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Students will learn about the prices of a play during Elizabethan times</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Counting Money and correct change using nickels and pennies</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Students practice counting coins and telling their value</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Counting Money and correct change using nickels and pennies</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Students practice counting coins and telling their value</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Counting Money and correct change using nickels and pennies</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Students will pay for their entrance into the movie and count their change</p>

<p><b>Social Studies</b></p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about the Elizabethan Era costumes, culture, Laws, Punishment, Entertainment</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> The Globe Theater; students will identify the parts</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about the Elizabethan Era costumes, culture, Laws, Punishment, Entertainment</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> The Globe Theater; students will identify the parts</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about the Elizabethan Era costumes, culture, Laws, Punishment, Entertainment</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> The Globe Theater; students will label the parts</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about the Elizabethan Era costumes, culture, Laws, Punishment, Entertainment</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> The Globe Theater; students will label the parts</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about the Elizabethan Era costumes, culture, Laws, Punishment, Entertainment</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> The Globe Theater; students will label the parts and create their own Globe Theater</p>
<p><b>Science</b></p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about Shakespeare's family tree</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> What is a Family Tree</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about Shakespeare's family tree</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> What is a Family Tree</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about Shakespeare's family tree</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Family Roles</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about Shakespeare's family tree</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Students will create their own family tree</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about Shakespeare's family tree</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Students will create their own family tree</p>

<b>Thematic Unit</b> Shakespeare	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>Reading</b>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature and the arts</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Hamlet</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature and the arts</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Hamlet</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature and the arts</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Hamlet</p>	<p>Objective: To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature and the arts</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Hamlet</p>	<p>Objective: To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature and the arts</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Hamlet (DVD)</p>
<b>Language</b>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature, and the arts through written expression</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> students will draw a picture of their favorite character</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature, and the arts through written expression</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> students will draw a picture of their favorite scene from the story</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature, and the arts through written expression</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Students will learn the parts of a book</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature, and the arts through written expression</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> students will learn components of a play</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To develop an appreciation of Shakespeare and his impact on American literature, and the arts through written expression</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> students will play game "Who Am I?"</p>

<b>Math</b>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Counting Money and correct change using nickels and pennies</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Students will learn about the prices of a play during Elizabethan times</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Counting Money and correct change using nickels and pennies</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Students will learn about the prices of a play during Elizabethan times</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Counting Money and correct change using nickels and pennies</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Students practice counting coins and telling their value</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Counting Money and correct change using nickels and pennies</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Students practice counting coins and telling their value</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Counting Money and correct change using nickels and pennies</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Students will pay for their entrance into the movie and count their change</p>
<b>Social Studies</b>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about the Elizabethan Era costumes, culture, Laws, Punishment, Entertainment</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> The Globe Theater; students will identify the parts</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about the Elizabethan Era costumes, culture, Laws, Punishment, Entertainment</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> The Globe Theater; students will identify the parts</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about the Elizabethan Era costumes, culture, Laws, Punishment, Entertainment</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> The Globe Theater; students will label the parts</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about the Elizabethan Era costumes, culture, Laws, Punishment, Entertainment</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> The Globe Theater; students will label the parts</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about the Elizabethan Era costumes, culture, Laws, Punishment, Entertainment</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> The Globe Theater; students will label the parts and create their own Globe Theater</p>
<b>Science</b>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about natural light and prisms</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Light Vs. Dark</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about natural light and prisms</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Light Vs. Dark</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about natural light and prisms</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Natural Light</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about natural light and prisms</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Natural Light</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> Students will learn about natural light and prisms</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Students will make sure Globe Theaters have a big enough hole to illuminate natural light</p>

## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Deary, Terry. *Top Ten Shakespeare Stories*. New York: Scholastic, 1998.  
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- Egan, Loraine Hopping. *Teaching Shakespeare-Yes You Can!* New York: Scholastic, 1998.  
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This DVD collection is a series of Shakespeare plays animated by cartoons and puppets. These stories are told in ways that younger audiences can appreciate and understand. This set of DVD's is a must for anyone teaching Shakespeare on a primary level. These movies bring these mere words to life for children.