About the Folger Shakespeare Library

The Folger Shakespeare Library houses one of the world’s largest and most significant collections of materials pertaining to Shakespeare and the English and Continental Renaissance. The Folger Shakespeare Library editions of Shakespeare’s plays are acclaimed throughout the world by educators, students, and general readers.

The mission of the Folger Library is to preserve and enhance its collections; to render the collections accessible to scholars for advanced research; and to advance understanding and appreciation of the Library and its collections through interpretive programs for the public.

About the Folger Shakespeare Library’s Education Department

“There is much matter to be heard and learned.”
As You Like It

Shakespeare's audience spoke of hearing a play, rather than of seeing one. The Folger Shakespeare Library's Education department believes in active learning, using a performance-based and language-centered approach to teaching Shakespeare. Drawing on the Folger's abundant resources and incorporating opportunities provided by the Web, their activities and workshops present innovative ways to engage children, students, and teachers in Shakespeare's work.

For a complete selection of curriculum plans from the Folger Shakespeare Library Education department, visit www.folger.com.
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Dear Colleagues,

Somewhere along the line, most of my students and probably most of yours have heard about William Shakespeare. Maybe they saw the film *Shakespeare in Love* or heard an answer on *Jeopardy*, but somehow, along with the ozone, they've breathed in that name: Shakespeare. In fact, to many kids Shakespeare is “sposed to be” a part of high-school education, and they expect to read one of his works. If we don’t give them that exposure, they feel vaguely cheated or assume we think they’re incompetent to meet the challenge of something important.

But when that anticipated moment comes and the teenage eye actually meets the Shakespearean page, then, unfortunately, that early interest too often is followed by . . . “Huh? What is this? Why are we reading this?”

The faces of the bored and defiant can make the best of us dread going into the classroom. It’s happened to me, and maybe it’s happened to you, but it doesn’t have to be that way. Incredibly, teaching Shakespeare can actually invigorate both your class and you. . . . You have an intimate knowledge of your teaching style and of the workings of your class. Use that knowledge to select the exercises [from this packet] that you think will provoke excitement, enhance learning, and help ease your students past the language barrier and into the wonder of the play.

Here’s to the magic in the play and to the magic in your classroom.

Judith Elstein
Adapted from *Shakespeare Set Free: Teaching Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth, and A Midsummer Night’s Dream*

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Each of the five lesson plans in this packet includes:

- Step-by-step instructions
- Materials needed
- Standards covered
- Questions students should be able to answer when the lesson is over
- Suggested related lesson plans with directions on how to find them on the Folger Web site.

Contributing Editors:

Jeremy Ehrlich    Janet Field-Pickering
Curriculum Plan #1:

**Cross That Line, Antony!**  
*(A Lesson in Theme)*  
**Developed by Steven Christiansen**

This introduction to *Antony and Cleopatra* gets students thinking about the issues in the play in ways that relate to their own lives and values, accessing prior knowledge of the themes and issues they will read about. It asks students to voice opinions and move around the room to depict those opinions physically.

This activity takes roughly 30 minutes.

**NCTE Standards Covered:**

1. Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

2. Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

**What To Do:**

1. Unroll a big piece of tape (duct tape works well) across the floor, so you divide the room into two equal sides. Move all desks to the edges of the room.

2. Tell the class that today we're going to play a game called "Cross That Line." The teacher will read a statement and students need to choose to stand on one side of the line depending on whether they agree or disagree with the statement. After each statement, ask two or three students on each side why they have chosen to stand where they are. You may choose to let students stand on the line if they are undecided.

3. Use the following statements in the course of the game. Have students who agree with the statement stand on one side of the line, and those that disagree stand on the other.
   
   - The future is predetermined.
• Once a cheater, always a cheater.
• Honor and reputation are everything.
• Adultery is always wrong.
• Duty to others takes precedence over personal desires.
• Without trust, relationships are doomed.
• Women are not trophies.

4. After sharing opinions on these statements, have students return to their desks. Tell students that all of these issues are in the play Antony and Cleopatra. Tell students that you will play the game again once they've finished reading the play, to see if their opinions have changed.

What You Need:

• Thick tape

How Did It Go?

Were students able to express opinions without attacking others’ views? Did standing on the line allow the activity to stay “safe” for students who did not want to take a stand? Did the activity generate interesting discussion? Did it help introduce the issues in Antony and Cleopatra?
Curriculum Plan #2:

The Antony and Cleopatra Tango  
(A Lesson in Interpretation)  
Developed by Phyllis Fields

In an effort to understand the strong personalities of the two main characters, the students will examine how Antony and Cleopatra relate to each other in individual scenes and throughout the play. By taking elements of that relationship and making them physical, students will analyze their relationship on many different levels.

This lesson can be completed in one 75-minute class period.

NCTE Standards Covered:

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

What To Do:

1. Assign each student a partner. If you have an extra student, the teacher should work with that person, but only as performer—not as director.

2. Distribute copies of the handout (attached) of four scenes that highlight Antony and Cleopatra’s interaction throughout the play. Give each team one of the scenes to work through. Don’t worry if two or more teams end up working on the same scene. Ask each team to read and discuss the scene and paraphrase the lines so that the students aren’t initially tied to the text.

3. Have the students prepare the scene as a dance. Each choreographed movement should reflect the characters’ relationship in the scene. It might be helpful to have a CD or tape player and several CDs or cassettes with music appropriate for different kinds of dance: square dance, Latin dances, swing, slow dancing, etc. However, caution the students not to worry about keeping time or choreographing dance steps to the music. The music should only be used to enhance the performance, not to distract from it.

4. Perform the dances for each scene in the order that they appear in the play. As each team dances, the rest of the class acts as the audience. Encourage the students to critique
the work to see if the type or style of dance or specific movements accentuate the dramatic moment in the scene.

5. After all of the pairs have danced, have each team go back to the text and perform the scene again using the original language.

**What You Need:**

- Handout of scenes (attached)
- Several CDs or cassettes with different kinds of dance music
- CD or cassette player

**How Did It Go?**

Were students able to demonstrate Antony and Cleopatra's relationship through their movements? Did the tone of each scene come across in the dance? Did the students' movements suggest any subtext? When the scenes were performed in order, did the dancing reflect the increasing urgency of the situation or changes in the relationship? Were the dances effective in physicalizing the psychology or motivations of the characters?
Curriculum Plan #3:

“Words, Words, Words”  
(A Lesson in Language)  
Developed by Tom Fitzgerald

The students will discuss words that represent the "big ideas" in *Antony and Cleopatra* and that recur throughout the play. They will be assigned words to track throughout the text, recording which character says the word and in what context. (See handout below for a list of these words.)

Students will also look up the meanings of their assigned words using resources like the *Oxford English Dictionary* and The Early Modern English Dictionaries Database Website maintained at the University of Toronto (see URL below). The EMEDD is a database of several dictionaries from Shakespeare's time.

A student who successfully completes this assignment will become aware of the role of diction and voice in character development. Additionally students will understand that a word's meaning may change through context and over time, and these changes and other associative meanings affect our interpretations and understandings of the text.

This assignment will take three weeks: two for recording the development of the words in the context of the play, one to write the essay.

**NCTE Standards Covered:**

1. Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and nonprint texts.

7. Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and nonprint texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.
8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

What To Do:

1. Introduce this project as you begin reading *Antony and Cleopatra*. You should discuss the idea that writers make choices in their diction (especially in poetry) to help develop their ideas. Discuss connotation and denotation.

2. Post the list of words from the teacher reference sheet on the board, on an overhead display, or on butcher paper. Tell students that they are to trace their assigned word(s) throughout the play.

3. Ask students to search the *OED* and the EMEDD for the meanings of their words during the late 1500s and early 1600s. They should print out or copy the most common definition and two or three of the most unexpected definitions.

4. Next, instruct the students to start a journal. The definitions and their sources should be the first page of the journal. For each appearance of the word (they should collect a minimum of eight), students should cite the location of the word, the context of the word, and the speaker. They should also include a short one or two sentence paraphrase/analysis of what the character is saying.

5. Once the journal is completed, students should begin to make conclusions about their words and their uses. For instance, who uses the word most often? How does the connotation of the word change depending on character, act and/or scene? Which of the definitions from the *OED* and the EMEDD fit the context(s) best? Are there other meanings assigned to the word in the late 15th and early 16th centuries that affect the tone of a scene, an act, or the play as a whole? How do the alternative meanings make sense with the rest of the play?

6. Ask students to write an essay discussing the variety of meanings of the word, citing the *OED* and the EMEDD. They should determine whether the word remains relatively static or changes during the course of the play. Students should also deal with how the word helps to define a character or points to a similarity or difference among characters.

What You Need:

- *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*
- Teacher reference sheet with word groups (attached)
- Student access to computers with Internet capability
- URL for The Early Modern English Dictionaries Database Website: [http://www.chass.utoronto.ca:8080/english/emed/patterweb.html](http://www.chass.utoronto.ca:8080/english/emed/patterweb.html)

**How Did It Go?**

You should take the opportunity throughout the unit to check and comment upon journal entries. The activity should lead to closer readings and give rise to questions and discussions about words, language, and meaning, as well as character, theme, and plot. Ask a couple of students to report on their word trace for three minutes at the beginning of each class over the two-week period. Tell students they will be called on for their reports randomly.

The students' essays should reveal the extent of their understanding of how language choices and shades of meaning affect their understanding of the play.
Curriculum Plan #4:

**Lights, Camera, Action**  
*(A Lesson in Performance)*  
*Developed by Leigh Lemons*

In this lesson students will interpret *Antony and Cleopatra* by creating a silent movie, requiring them to think creatively and enhance their storytelling skills in verbal, nonverbal, and written form.

This lesson will take approximately three class periods.

**NCTE Standards Covered:**

4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and nonprint texts.

8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

**What To Do:**

1. Divide the class into five groups and assign each group one act of the play.

2. Tell students it is their task to create a silent movie of different tableaux to represent the most important developments in their act of the play. The movie must have 5-10 "slides," frozen images that represent individual moments in the text. Each group member must participate.

3. Emphasize the importance of heightened nonverbal communication. Discuss facial expressions, gestures, stance, interaction, and pose.

4. Have students begin by brainstorming ideas for the most important moments in the text, then choose a selective group of those moments for their movie.

5. Next, students should explore ways to represent each moment. Encourage them to experiment with different ideas before settling on one.

6. Allow students time to rehearse their tableaux.
7. Showtime: if your school has a video camera, record the performances. If you have access to a scanner, you could photograph the slides and scan them as well.

8. Using PowerPoint or other presentation software, have students add narration to the slides they have created. Finally, have students complete their movies with slides that introduce their work and its cast.

9. Present the completed movie to the class and print a hard copy for public display. Conclude by discussing the differences in the choices made by the different groups, and the lessons students learned in the creative process.

**What You Need:**

- Video camera or still camera and scanner
- Computer lab access
- Technician or support teacher if necessary

**How Did It Go?**

Did your students come to understand the most critical components of each act? Did they read the text closely and discuss it thoroughly? Did they learn any new technology? Did they learn kinesthetically? Did they work collaboratively? Did they respond positively?
Curriculum Plan #5:

The 32-second *Antony and Cleopatra*  
(A Lesson in Summarization)  
Developed by Janet Field-Pickering

The length of Shakespeare's plays is enough to strike terror into the hearts of most students, especially ones who expect "the two-hours' traffic of our stage" promised by the Prologue in *Romeo and Juliet*. Taking inspiration from The Reduced Shakespeare Company's hilarious and brief *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)* and Cam Magee, an actor and dramaturg from Washington, D.C., we present our own very concise version of Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*.

NCTE Standards Covered:

1. Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

What To Do:

1. Make eleven photocopies of the handout—one each for Antony, Cleopatra and the nine other actors.

2. Have eleven volunteers take their places at the front of the room. Assign roles and let the actors read through the script once, for rehearsal. Then get out your stopwatch and see if your students can make or break the 32-second record. When the script indicates that a character dies, the actor must hit the floor.

3. Then select eleven more volunteers to see if the second group can beat the first group's record. Again, give them a practice run before timing, and cheer for the winners.

4. If you wish, ask your students, in groups, to create their own 32-second versions of one act from *Antony and Cleopatra*. Along with selecting short and punchy lines to highlight
the plot, they need to pick the characters that they want to include in their scripts. For example, in "The 32-second Antony and Cleopatra," Actors 1-9 are, respectively, Philo, the Soothsayer, Agrippa, Menas, Enobarbus, Eros, and the three Guardsmen.

What You Need:

- Handout: The 32-second Antony and Cleopatra (attached)

How Did It Go?

Did your students have fun? If you asked them to write their own 32-second versions, were they able to identify and incorporate key lines and characters into effective scripts?
Also Available from the Folger Shakespeare Library

Shakespeare wrote more than twenty plays*, and many are terrific for students. Whether tragedy or comedy, all will teach students about the age of Shakespeare, about the subtle manipulation of language and image, and about the dramatic construction of character in a new and exciting way. Additional titles include:


*Romeo and Juliet* (ISBN: 0-7432-7711-1)


*The Merchant of Venice* (ISBN: 0-7432-7756-1)


*For a complete list of available titles, please e-mail your request to* folger.marketing@simonandschuster.com

If you found this curriculum guide useful, there are many more lesson plans available on the Folger Shakespeare Library website, at: [http://www.folger.edu](http://www.folger.edu)
CLEOPATRA: You must not stay here longer; your dismission
Is come from Caesar. Therefore hear it, Antony.
Where’s Fulvia’s process? Caesar’s, I would say—both?
Call in the messengers. As I am Egypt’s queen,
Thou blushest, Antony, and that blood of thine
Is Caesar’s homager; else so thy cheek pays shame
When shrill-tongued Fulvia scolds. The messengers!

ANTONY: Let Rome in Tiber melt and the wide arch
Of the ranged empire fall. Here is my space.
Kingdoms are clay. Our dungy earth alike
Feeds beast as man. The nobleness of life
Is to do thus; when such a mutual pair
And such a twain can do ‘t, in which I bind,
On pain of punishment, the world to weet
We stand up peerless.

CLEOPATRA: Excellent falsehood!
Why did he marry Fulvia, and not love her?
I’ll seem the fool I am not. Antony
Will be himself.

ANTONY: But stirred by Cleopatra.
Now for the love of Love and her soft hours,
Let’s not confound the time with conference harsh.
There’s not a minute of our lives should stretch
Without some pleasure now. What sport tonight?

CLEOPATRA: Hear the ambassadors.

ANTONY: Fie, wrangling queen,
Whom everything becomes—to chide, to laugh,
To weep; whose every passion fully strives
To make itself, in thee, fair and admired!
No messenger but thine, and all alone
Tonight we’ll wander through the streets and note
The qualities of people. Come, my queen,
Last night you did desire it.
Handout for The *Antony and Cleopatra* Tango

*Antony and Cleopatra* 1.3

CLEOPATRA: I am sick and sullen.

ANTONY: I am sorry to give breathing to my purpose—

CLEOPATRA: Help me away, my dear Charmian! I shall fall.
It cannot be thus long; the sides of nature
Will not sustain it.

ANTONY: Now, my dearest queen—

CLEOPATRA: Pray you stand farther from me.

ANTONY: What’s the matter?

CLEOPATRA: I know by that same eye there’s some good news.
What, says the married woman you may go?
Would she d never given you leave to come.
Let her not say ‘tis I that keep you here.
I have no power upon you. Hers you are.

ANTONY: The gods best know—

CLEOPATRA: O, never was there queen
So mightily betrayed! Yet at the first
I saw treasons planted.

ANTONY: Cleopatra—

CLEOPATRA: Why should I think you can be mine, and true—
Though you in swearing shake the thronèd gods—
Who have been false to Fulvia? Riotous madness,
To be entangled with those mouth-made vows
Which break themselves in swearing!

ANTONY: Most sweet queen—

CLEOPATRA: Nay, pray you seek no color for your going,
But bid farewell and go.
Handout for The *Antony and Cleopatra* Tango

*Antony and Cleopatra* 3.11

ANTONY: O, whither hast thou led me, Egypt? See
How I convey my shame out of thine eyes,
By looking back what I have left behind
’Stroyed in dishonor.

CLEOPATRA: O, my lord, my lord,
Forgive my fearful sails! I little thought
You would have followed.

ANTONY: Egypt, thou knew’st too well
My heart was to thy rudder tied by th’ strings,
And thou shouldst tow me after. O’er my spirit
Thy full supremacy thou knew’st, and that
Thy beck might from the bidding of the gods
Command me.

CLEOPATRA: O, my pardon!

ANTONY: Now I must
To the young man send humble treaties, dodge
And palter in the shifts of lowness, who
With half the bulk o’ th’ world played as I pleased,
Making and marring fortunes. You did know
How much you were my conqueror, and that
My sword, made weak by my affection, would
Obey it on all cause.

CLEOPATRA: Pardon, pardon!

ANTONY: Fall not a tear, I say; one of the rates
All that is won and lost. Give me a kiss.
Even this repays me.—
We sent our schoolmaster. Is he come back?—
Love, I am full of lead.—Some wine
Within there, and our viands! Fortune knows
We scorn her most when most she offers blows.
Handout for The *Antony and Cleopatra* Tango

*Antony and Cleopatra* 4.15

**CLEOPATRA:** O sun,
Burn the great sphere thou mov’st in. Darkling stand
The varying shore o’ th’ world! O Antony, Antony,
Antony! Help, Charmian! Help, Iras, help!
Help, friends below! Let’s draw him hither.

**ANTONY:** Peace!
Not Caesar’s valor hath o’erthrown Antony,
But Antony’s hath triumphed on itself.

**CLEOPATRA:** So it should be that none but Antony
Should conquer Antony, but woe ‘tis so!

**ANTONY:** I am dying, Egypt, dying. Only
I here importune death awhile until
Of many thousand kisses the poor last
I lay upon thy lips.

**CLEOPATRA:** I dare not, dear,
Dear my lord, pardon, I dare not,
Lest I be taken. Not th’ imperious show
Of the full-fortuned Caesar ever shall
Be brooched with me; if knife, drugs, serpents have
Edge, sting, or operation, I am safe.
Your wife Octavia, with her modest eyes
And still conclusion, shall acquire no honor
Demurring upon me. But come, come, Antony.—
Help me, my women!—We must draw thee up.—
Assist, good friends.

**ANTONY:** O, quick, or I am gone.

**CLEOPATRA:** Here’s sport indeed. How heavy weighs my lord!
Our strength is all gone into heaviness;
That makes the weight. Had I great Juno’s power,
The strong-winged Mercury should fetch thee up
And set thee by Jove’s side. Yet come a little.
Wishers were ever fools. O, come, come, come!
And welcome, welcome! Die when thou hast lived;
Quicken with kissing. Had my lips that power,
Thus would I wear them out.
**Teacher Reference Sheet, “Words, Words, Words”**

You have 8 different word groups to assign (you can shift some of the groups around to meet your needs). Make sure that all groups get assigned, then have students double or triple up on the same word groups.

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<th>(# of variant references)</th>
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<td>(7)</td>
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<td>(20)</td>
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Handout for the 32-second Antony and Cleopatra

Actor 1  The triple pillar of the world transformed into a strumpet’s fool.

Cleopatra  As I am Egypt’s queen,

Antony  Let Rome in Tiber melt

Actor 2  I make not, but foresee.

Cleopatra  O, never was there queen so mightily betrayed!

Actor 3  Rare Egyptian! Royal wench!

Actor 4  Wilt thou be lord of all the world?

Antony  If I lose mine honor, I lose myself

Cleopatra  I will not stay behind.

Antony  O, whither hast thou led me, Egypt?

Actor 5  I am alone the villain of the earth (dies)

Actor 6  Farewell, great chief. (dies)

Antony  Let him that loves me strike me dead.

Actor 7  Not I. (exit)

Actor 8  Nor I. (exit)

Actor 9  Nor anyone. (exit)

(Antony dies)

Cleopatra  I will not wait pinioned at your master’s court. (dies)