

LEEDS MEETS
SHAKESPEARE

GUEST
TAKEOVER
ISSUE

teaching shakespeare

POLICY • PEDAGOGY • PRACTICE

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FIND ACTIVITIES INSIDE FOR YOU TO USE WITH YOUR CLASS
FOLLOW THREE LEEDS PRIMARY TEACHERS INTO THEIR CLASSROOMS
EXPLORE THE LEEDS MEETS SHAKESPEARE PROJECT'S IMPACT ON
LANGUAGE & LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

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BRITISH SHAKESPEARE ASSOCIATION: SHAKESPEARE, RACE, AND NATION

Swansea University, 17–20 July 2019

Shelia Akin as Viola in Shanty Productions 2018 film *Twelfth Night*
Photograph © Shanty Productions



**SATURDAY
20 JULY
FREE ENTRY
FOR SCHOOL
TEACHERS**

PLENARY SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

Prof. Kim F Hall (Barnard College), Prof. Nandini Das (University of Liverpool) and Dr. Preti Taneja (University of Warwick)

BSA 2019 ALSO FEATURES A SCREENING OF *TWELFTH NIGHT* (Shanty Productions, 2018), including a Q&A with the company founders Rakie Ayola and Adam Smethhurst

SWANSEA UNIVERSITY is proud to host the 2019 British Shakespeare Association conference on the theme of “Shakespeare, Race, and Nation”.

The conference aims to bring together academics, teachers, and theatre practitioners to tackle some of the most pressing issues affecting Shakespeare studies today. Teachers are welcome to attend the entire conference but may be especially interested in the final day (Saturday 20 July) when attendance for school teachers will be free.

The conference will feature a range of events, including panel sessions, workshops, and film screenings. Several sessions will be aimed specifically at school teachers. We also welcome proposals from teachers who may wish to speak or run workshops.

Please send an email to bsa2019@swansea.ac.uk if you have any suggestions or inquiries.

The conference will also feature an optional Teaching Shakespeare seminar, led by Helen Mears and Karen Eckersall of the BSA Education Committee. The seminar format involves circulating a short paper (2–3 pages) before the conference and then meeting to discuss all of the papers in Swansea. The seminar will take place on Saturday 20 July. To register interest, please send an email to bsa2019@swansea.ac.uk.

Further information about the conference, including additional events, will be posted on the conference twitter feed [@BSA2019](https://twitter.com/BSA2019) and on the British Shakespeare Association website: www.britishshakespeare.ws/conference/

CLAIRE CHAMBERS is a Senior Lecturer in Global Literature at the University of York, where she teaches twentieth- and twenty-first century writing from South Asia, the Arab world, and their diasporas. She is the author of *British Muslim Fictions: Interviews with Contemporary Writers* and *Making Sense of Contemporary British Muslim Novels*, among other books. Claire has also published widely in such journals as *Postcolonial Text* and *Contemporary Women's Writing*. She is Co-editor (with Rachael Gilmour) of the *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*. Her interest in the literature of the Indian subcontinent and the Muslim world was originally ignited by the year she spent prior to university teaching in Peshawar, Pakistan. It continues to be informed by return visits to the region, and by her engagement with diasporic communities.

The Leeds Meets Shakespeare project uses Shakespeare plays in the classroom to raise the attainment of Year One pupils who have English as an additional language. As I led the project's management, I was joined by some brilliant partners. Some of their voices are showcased below, as well as elsewhere in this special issue. One of the co-investigators on the project was this magazine's usual editor, Sarah Olive. I also want to thank Amy Lancelot from Leeds Playhouse, and Sarah Westaway and Jane Zanzoterra from ArtForms, in addition to the voices showcased here. The project was piloted in six Leeds primary schools with large numbers of British-Pakistani and -Bangladeshi pupils, and is now being rolled out more widely. Research shows the majority of pupils involved in Leeds Meets Shakespeare made significant average gains in both vocabulary and grammar scores. The project raises pupils' confidence and engagement.

This kind of project can have very positive implications for social justice in education, celebrating diversity, and closing the gap. The academic work that I do on representations of religion (specifically Islam and Muslims in Britain)



has generated some long-standing partnerships with educational practitioners, which I value highly. In the case of Leeds Meets Shakespeare, it has led to the development of schools materials. Teachers and others are very welcome to download our free resource packs: www.york.ac.uk/english/schools/shakespeare/teaching-packs/

In the future I hope this work will become a major new narrative being taken up in teaching nationally (it has been so successful that it is now going citywide and being adopted elsewhere in Yorkshire) and internationally (there is also early interest from northwest India).

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THE WINTER'S TALE



Shakespeare's plays capture the imagination. Their characters, settings and stories provide tremendous scope to explore important themes and ideas in an exciting context. The plays also speak to timely issues including caste, class and colour prejudice, pressure around marriage choices, and social mobility.

As part of the pilot scheme, we ran a Continuing Professional Development day for teachers, at which they learnt the techniques to teach drama successfully with their Year 1 EAL learners. I presented on my research into postcolonial (Bollywood and other South Asian) Shakespeare, suggesting ways this might help their effectiveness in the multicultural classroom. The project was therefore designed to encourage pupils', parents' and teachers' awareness that bilingual children do not have an educational 'deficit', but can draw on two rich heritages instead of just one. I hope you enjoy reading this takeover of *Teaching Shakespeare* all about it.

ANTHONY HADDEN, DRAMA PRACTITIONER

It has been highly enjoyable finding the point of access into Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale* for four- and five-year-old children with English as an additional language, because it has forced me to look at these plays differently. When the children meet Miranda on the island they know a lot more than she does about what a

palace looks like and what princesses should do. They are just going to have to find the words to explain to this wild child what things are like in the world out there. After all, if things turn out well, she might end up coming back with them. But she'll have to get used to wearing shoes.

TAJPAL RATHORE AND SAMRAN RATHORE, CO-FOUNDERS AND ARTISTIC DIRECTORS, TRIBE ARTS

Most projects that attempt to raise aspirations amongst EAL children, though well-intentioned, in our opinion fall at the first hurdle, when the programmes are led and designed completely by predominantly white organizations, individuals or academics. However, our interest was sparked when Dr Claire Chambers approached us, an Asian-led theatre company making work specifically for the current British Black and Asian generation, to be part of this programme. This indicated a positive and unique step in bringing people of colour into the conversation. Our involvement was intended to empower the children by seeing faces like theirs, in lead roles, on stage, to realign and decolonise traditional comprehensions of Shakespeare. The hope is that this project will spark similar decolonizing projects in the future. We previously produced an adaptation of Shakespeare, amalgamating the essential storylines of six of his major works, and set the story in a familiar Gothic-Mughal world, reflecting our core audiences' British and Asian heritages. This work was adapted for the children to celebrate and mark the end of their project.

GEORGIA ELLINAS, HEAD OF LEARNING, GLOBE EDUCATION AT SHAKESPEARE'S GLOBE

Globe Education created *Children as Storytellers* six years ago to support teachers in using Shakespeare stories with five-year-olds and build their confidence in using drama approaches across lessons. Teacher evaluations identify significant impact on pupils' oral and written narratives, particularly in their use of dialogue and more adventurous vocabulary, as well as behaviour, with drama activities harnessing their energies into playing characters. Our approaches give every pupil a chance to voice opinions and discuss the characters' moral dilemmas: five-year-olds often offer very wise opinions on what they could or should do. Guided by Globe Education Practitioners and our excellent resources, the teachers who write accounts of Leeds Meets Shakespeare in the coming pages now see Shakespeare as an essential part of their teaching.

For more from the Leeds Meets Shakespeare project, including the work of Caroline Lister from Harehills Primary, see the BSA Education network blog www.britishshakespeare.ws/education/education-network-blog/ and future issues'.



CHILDREN just want an invitation to play

**ANDREW PATRICK,
CARR MANOR PRIMARY SCHOOL**

for the last five years ANDY PATRICK has worked in a large Reggio-inspired Early Years setting. He is a huge advocate of promoting creativity and exploration. This year Andy has had the gift of taking his Reception class with him into Year 1. With the support of his Year 1 partner he has learnt how best to deliver a new curriculum whilst capitalizing on his Early Years pedagogy.

I have acted as one of two teachers from Carr Manor Primary School involved in delivering the Leeds Meets Shakespeare project in its first year (2017–2018). In this article, I discuss my experiences in teaching on the project, as well as exploring Leeds Meets Shakespeare's impact on the children's learning and on my teaching.

As a result of the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) session at the beginning of the project, in November 2017, I felt more confident about using drama strategies to teach Shakespeare with my Year 1 pupils. The speakers gave clear messages, and a great deal of information and energy came from the practitioners, who included Tom Davey from Globe Education, Claire Chambers and Sarah Olive from the University of York, and Amy Lancelot from the West Yorkshire Playhouse. Overall, I found the CPD day inspiring. My only recommendation if such a workshop is repeated in the future would be to include some exploration of what could be done to help change or enhance our physical environment within the classroom.

As I started preparing to teach my Year 1 pupils to work with Shakespeare (first *The Tempest* and then *The Winter's Tale*), I felt excited more than apprehensive, because of the confidence-raising of the CPD day.

By the project's midway point I had found that drama is a fantastic driver in the classroom. I already couldn't imagine how we used to teach in any other way before this project started. The children had by then become familiar with the drama approach, and knew what was coming each time. They knew when there was an expectation that they'd be watching a piece of drama and would contribute to it. At Carr Manor we tried to marry up some acting opportunities for them, so they could do small tasks as individuals in some of the literacy lessons, but then we'd

reserve one session a week where we'd actually deliver a piece as a whole group. We put the onus on them to take some responsibility for their learning, which has worked well: they rose to that challenge.

Moreover, through this project the children's acting has become more skilful and sophisticated. At first they would stand up in the room, walk around, and they could do an angry face. But by halfway through, we were starting to see some extensions, with them using their bodies more and accelerating the pace at which they were moving. Whereas emotional literacy frustratingly tends to default to the binaries of happy and sad, we were by now unearthing some layers in their language.

“emotional literacy frustratingly tends to default to the binaries of happy and sad, we were by now unearthing some layers in their language.”

For example, we did activities such as looking at a word bank, and we teachers would say, ‘Can you show me what a jealous person might look like?’ Or we might have said, ‘Okay, can three of you come up and show me an interaction around feeling overjoyed? And how does that compare to being unhappy?’ In other words, we did small pieces of impromptu acting, in which the pupils could display how it looks when someone feels a particular emotion. So we were using Shakespearean stories to develop richness in their emotional literacy.

I believe that this richness stems from the depth of Shakespeare's stories and the complexity of his characters; you can really grapple with these because they're far from one-dimensional. Most of these characters might be portrayed in one particular way at one particular moment in the story, but they develop and change over time, so nobody stays just the same. The children have gained a better understanding of how characters see things and what the reality is. They also learn that if characters do bad actions, they behave that way for a reason – one that is to a certain degree justified.

One of the drama practitioners usefully advised that we should set markers that we periodically needed to hit. Knowing roughly what we had to deliver and by when meant that we could think about what props or set design might help with that. These would help bring the drama to life for the children. A lively set and props would also serve to bounce us into the next piece of drama without being

confined to a script, which would be difficult to learn or thus might function as a barrier to our interactions with the children.

Once we moved into the project's second half, our headspace was completely devoted to *The Winter's Tale*. That meant it became quite tricky (for us teachers, at least!) to continue remembering characters' names from *The Tempest*. A few weeks before we had been immersed with Prospero and his name tripped off the tongue. Soon afterwards, this became hard to recall. It was the children having to bail us out with characters' names and plot details, which was terrific.

My only regret at the end of the project's first year is not having had more time to devote to this: time in class with the children, and time around the project for preparation and planning. One of the great things about the project was its cross-curricular nature, in which different types of learning braided together in interesting ways. But this diversity is also hard to manage, especially the first time around. You've got a lot of plates to spin.

This pilot year we had training and support early on from professional drama practitioners, before we as teachers took over from them. We won't have that luxury in the future. So one idea might be for teachers within the same school or from a nearby school to swap over and deliver a session for each other. Any stranger coming in is a magical thing. The novelty factor of a person visiting school to act out new roles might be something positive to consider as the project becomes self-sustaining.

Another idea was something we developed as we became conscious that over sixteen years of imprisonment, Queen Hermione from *The Winter's Tale* would have aged. A quote from the play stated that she had changed and wasn't easily recognisable. At school, we've got an ageing app on the tablets, so each child took a photograph of themselves and aged it, before looking at the differences and creating a piece of artwork about this topic. From that piece of artwork they went on to sketch or paint Hermione. We then created a gallery, so that one of the final pieces of acting was for the children to walk through this gallery and observe King Leontes as he sees how she has changed over time. At the end of the gallery, there was the famous statue of Hermione from the play, and then we recreated the denouement when she comes in to surprise everyone.

A final set of ideas involved setting the scene in Bohemia by playing a particular piece of music. We then asked the pupils to do some acting, and their smiles illuminated the room. It was a hairs on the back of your neck moment,



Photograph © Art Robling

because they'd really sensed that change in the emotional temperature. Next we left Bohemia and went around the school on a secret mission heading back toward Sicilia. We put some PE equipment in random places, in corridors and classroom: I was a complete pain to my colleagues!

We took the children to the conference room and got their imaginary passports stamped. This was all through drama, without any resources or props. We'd say, 'Right, your documents have been stamped; we're leaving Bohemia. Let's go!' And we went on a small journey. At the end, when they got back, they diarised that journey.

Now that we've finished the first year of Leeds Meets Shakespeare, I just think about how much fun it was and feel warm about it. It was a project that I really enjoyed and that the children really enjoyed. I can't wait to teach it again. Next year it should be easier to teach Shakespeare in my Year 1 classroom, because I'll have more knowledge and experience.

"they're not sitting on chairs being talked at; instead, they are part of it and are invested in it. I can't imagine us doing literacy any other way from now on."

To conclude, children just want an invitation to play, especially at Key Stage 1. Simply inviting them into the storyline was all it took to get them involved: they were so willing. We could empower them by saying, 'You're doing Shakespeare. Children in high school learn this, and you're learning it too'. This gives them a sense of pride and of responsibility. They're not sitting on chairs being talked at; instead, they are part of it and are invested in it. I can't imagine us doing literacy any other way from now on.

Find out more at: www.york.ac.uk/english/schools/shakespeare/

‘just go for it’: teaching shakespeare to year 1

**NATALIE CLEMENTS,
CARR MANOR PRIMARY SCHOOL**

NAT CLEMENTS received her PGCE in 2013 and began her teaching career in a large primary school in a suburb of Leeds. She has worked in Year One for the past five years and loves working with children of this age. She believes that learning should be fun and engaging to the pupils and the teachers, saying: ‘the best learning happens when you go on a journey with each other!’

Among the pupils in my Year 1 class, there are various Speech, Language and Communication needs. I work with several EAL (English as an Additional Language) learners, and the class as a whole is of mixed ability. There has been some previous Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) intervention with a few of the pupils. Finally, a couple of children have been identified as potentially having dyslexia.

At the start of this project I was fairly confident about my own teaching in terms of speaking and listening skills. I had a little less confidence that all pupils always participated in speaking and listening activities in my class. I had never had drama training or experience before, although I had used the following drama strategies in my teaching: hot seating, role play, freeze frames, and story maps. I hoped that teaching Shakespeare through drama would support the progress of EAL learners in their language development through language acquisition, giving them greater attention-span for listening activities, and engaging them in language and stories.

“I HOPED THAT TEACHING SHAKESPEARE THROUGH DRAMA WOULD SUPPORT THE PROGRESS OF EAL LEARNERS IN THEIR LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION, GIVING THEM GREATER ATTENTION-SPAN FOR LISTENING ACTIVITIES, AND ENGAGING THEM IN LANGUAGE AND STORIES.”

By the middle of the project, having focused on *The Tempest* (the first of our two plays) for a half term, I found that pupil engagement had improved for all pupils. The children had engaged well with our drama practitioner, who had regularly facilitated drama lessons and done role play around *The Tempest*’s characters. The drama practitioner showed me how easy it was to change the classroom environment with something as simple as a rope when rolling out the drama and role play activities in my classroom. The children’s reading and engagement

with texts was functioning at a higher level to what I would usually expect at this point in the academic year.

“THE DRAMA PRACTITIONER SHOWED ME HOW EASY IT WAS TO CHANGE THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT WITH SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS A ROPE WHEN ROLLING OUT THE DRAMA AND ROLE PLAY ACTIVITIES IN MY CLASSROOM.”

However, I still felt some anxiety around my planning of the next term’s work, which I would have to lead on my own and without practitioner support. I also worried about ensuring that curriculum objectives were met. From the practitioner-led sessions I had learnt how to create a space (the island) that the children would get to know well, using very simple resources to capture the children’s imaginations. I had also gained greater confidence to become another character, which would be helpful in planning my independent teaching sessions in the subsequent half term. Furthermore, I had developed some ideas myself which would be useful to share with others, including acting out short scenes from the play, using the children’s creativity to spark discussion, writing questions for hot seating, and feeding all this into guided reading.

It would be lovely if a drama practitioner could regularly come to our school, but it’s unrealistic in the current financial climate. That said, I really enjoy being in role and doing imaginative work. As we moved to our second play, *The Winter’s Tale*, I was doing a lot of the drawing and the writing with children, but letting them offer ideas and make decisions. I’d say, “Okay, so how old is Perdita?” They’d



Photograph © Art Redding



reply, “She’s five,” so I would draw a small girl, and we’d talk about how long her hair might be. Then the children chose a new season and age for Perdita as we progressed chronologically through the play. When she got to the age of sixteen, they decided she would be taller and would drive a car and wear a nice dress. We’d talk about the reasons behind these choices: “Why have I drawn her taller?” They would say, because she’s got older. “Oh, why is her hair so long?” Because your hair grows as you get older.

When we did role play we’d talk about the reactions of the body to particular thoughts and emotions. We’d talk about falling in love and how the heart starts racing. Somebody said, “It’s like when we do PE (Physical Education)!” So they were making connections from their own experiences and applying them to what it feels like to fall in love. And they all shouted out: “With Florizel!”

“they were making connections from their own experiences and applying them to what it feels like to fall in love.”

This level of engagement shows how much they could learn when the teacher doesn’t behave in the conventional pedagogic way. The children were good at sharing their understanding of the story with me, perhaps because I wasn’t their teacher at that point. They were eager to show me that they knew who it was that I, as Perdita, was falling in love with.

The Tempest had been a little claustrophobic with its single island location, even if the characters moved around the island and things happened to them. By contrast, *The Winter’s Tale* allowed us to talk about movement within a

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story, between the settings of Sicilia and Bohemia. This helped the children get used to thinking about a story that doesn’t just happen in one place, but moves around. The play’s locales can be used to set completely different tones within the story. We talked about Bohemia being a happy, jolly place in contrast to sombre Sicilia. Location is key to many of Shakespeare’s works. The fact that my students managed to understand and immerse themselves in this aspect of the plays is staggering.

One day we were discussing emotional literacy, and someone used the word ‘magical’ to denote a positive emotion, as in ‘feeling magical’. I asked whether there was anyone magical in our two Shakespeare stories. They came up with the fact that *The Winter’s Tale*’s Hermione was magical, because she turns into a statue. I had not thought about that at all, because I assumed they’d opt for the predictable option and link magic to *The Tempest*’s Prospero. I thought their choice was fascinating; in fact, they absolutely schooled me!

“I thought their choice was fascinating; in fact, they absolutely schooled me!”

The children were so engaged with both the stories. The way that they could talk about the characters in the stories and discuss many complex themes amazed me. In *The Winter’s Tale*, for example, we touch on the suspected infidelity between Hermione and King Polixenes. Obviously, it wouldn’t be appropriate to go too far down that path with young children. However, they know that a character has potentially fallen in love with someone they shouldn’t have



done, and that it is a touchy subject. As such, they have grappled with some intricately layered themes.

I now believe that we should not shy away from teaching demanding texts with small children. Leeds Meets Shake-speare has made me more aware of the range of stories that I can work on with the children, despite their complicated language and themes. I am also aware of the diverse and positive impacts the drama work has had on the children. For instance, teaching Shakespeare through drama has supported the progress of EAL learners in their language development by giving all the children a level playing field. It has promoted engagement for all lower threshold learners. All children were encouraged to contribute, especially because many of the characters' names were foreign and therefore were unfamiliar to all on an equal basis.

As teachers, we're control freaks and we like to have command of a situation. In this kind of project, there's a

need to relinquish some of that control. We have to let the children guide us, while remaining prepared for the places they are going to take us. We teachers have to decide that we are throwing ourselves into the story 100 per cent and be entirely flexible about what happens next. There should be none of our usual self-consciousness: "I'm embarrassed about this" or "I'm worried about that". You have to jump in feet first and just roll with the story.

"we have to Let the CHILDREN guide us, while REMAINING prepared for the places they are going to take us. we teachers have to decide that we are THROWING OURSELVES INTO THE STORY 100 PER CENT AND BE ENTIRELY FLEXIBLE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS NEXT."

This kind of project is invaluable. For teachers wanting to do this kind of work in the future, my top tip would be just go with it. And go for it!

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RAISING the attainment in arooj schools

**THÉRÈSE O’SULLIVAN,
LEARNING IMPROVEMENT CONSULTANT,
LEEDS CITY COUNCIL**

THÉRÈSE O’SULLIVAN is a Learning Improvement Consultant in Children’s Services, Leeds City Council. She has worked within the field of language development at LCC since 2003 following many years of teaching experience in the classroom and at senior management level. She is an experienced trainer and specialist in the area of English as an additional language pedagogy and practice. Within this broad area she offers expert support and guidance on: strategies for increasing attainment for both new to English and advanced learners of English, culturally inclusive learning, language development across the curriculum and meaningful approaches to teaching grammar as part of the writing process. Thérèse is an accredited moderator for KS2 writing and frequently sits on the Standards and Testing Agency’s expert panel offering advice and guidance on for KS1 and KS2 SATs materials. Thérèse is passionate about inclusion and diversity and supports schools to recognise and celebrate the rich culture and educational advantages of their multilingual pupils.

THE AROOJ COLLABORATIVE

The Arooj collaborative is a long-standing partnership between Leeds City Council and a group of 14 primary schools working to raise the attainment of Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage pupils in Leeds. Arooj is an Urdu word meaning ‘ascendancy’. Pakistani heritage pupils are the largest ethnic minority group in Leeds, accounting for 6% of the overall school pupil population and are a key priority for the council as attainment levels for these pupils remains below their peers both in Leeds and nationally. Fortunately, attainment levels for these key groups are rising as a result of this focused work and the gap in attainment is gradually narrowing.

Further work remains to be done to close this gap, however; and all opportunities to do so are readily embraced by both Leeds City Council and the schools within the Arooj collaborative. Therefore, when the opportunity arose to develop an existing partnership with Dr Claire Chambers at the University of York to introduce our young English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners to the work of Shakespeare, Arooj schools were delighted to participate in this exciting project.

WHY SHAKESPEARE?

Curriculum development is one of the key foci and most successful aspects of the Arooj collaborative. Innovative and creative curriculum development enables primary schools to rethink, revisit, and change the curriculum so that it taps into the cultural capital of its pupils and the communities it serves. In doing so, the widened teaching provision maximises learning opportunities for its pupils as well as having the added benefit of actively engaging its communities.

Much of what is central to the self-perception of these pupils has not tended to be included within the curriculum offering. On reflection, it seemed logical that if schools included and celebrated the rich language, customs, clothing, religion, and culture of these young people, then they would likely feel positive about themselves and their learning which would lead to accelerated attainment. Ofsted also recognise the benefit of collaboration and curriculum development activities: ‘Engaging teachers in curriculum development activities, especially through a process of collaborative professional enquiry, is one of the most powerful ways of improving schools’ (Curriculum Innovation in Schools, Ofsted 2008).

“ON reflection, it seemed logical that if schools included and celebrated the rich language, customs, clothing, religion and culture of these young people, then they would likely feel positive about themselves and their learning which would lead to accelerated attainment.”



Photograph © Art Redding



Research conducted by Dr Claire Chambers (the Principal Investigator on the Leeds Meets Shakespeare project) has demonstrated the extent to which Shakespeare translates across cultures. There have been many Bollywood films and other Indian cultural productions which adapt Shakespeare to explore elements of Hindi-Urdu culture and universal themes of love, loss, revenge, and so on.

To increase pupil engagement in their own learning, all Arooj schools ensure that each curriculum topic has a 'wow' factor to hook the children in. It could be argued that teachers sometimes need a 'wow' factor themselves to engage and excite them in what can be a very demanding job. What better 'wow' factor than teaching Shakespeare's plays to five- and six-year-olds? Year 1 EAL pupils are often still at the early stages of learning English and there is sometimes a reluctance to expose them to challenging language for fear of overwhelming them.

"to increase pupil engagement in their own learning, all AROOJ SCHOOLS ensure that each CURRICULUM topic has a 'wow' factor to hook the CHILDREN in."

Teachers in this project were delighted to see how well their pupils rose to the challenge of studying *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale*, receiving Shakespearian language very warmly, with names like Prospero, Caliban, Polixenes and Leontes readily tripping off their tongues! These five- and six-year-old EAL pupils in Arooj schools have a greater metalinguistic awareness than their peers because of their multilingual skills. As an EAL specialist who has long championed the advantages of multilingualism, I am delighted that this project has helped to highlight this important advantage for EAL pupils.

It is widely acknowledged that a focus on speaking and listening is an excellent tool to support EAL learners to access the curriculum and to support language development. For example, having pupils talk about their ideas before writing supports them to produce longer pieces of coherent work. This drama project did just that, as was evidenced in the quality of pupils' verbal and written responses.

IMPACT

The project has been hugely successful in a variety of ways. The project has had a significant impact on pupils' progress. The Renfrew Action Picture Test (RAPT) – which measures vocabulary and grammar scores for young children – was used to test three target pupils (a top, middle and lower ability pupil) from each participating class as well as three pupils from a control school with a similar intake of pupils. Pupils were tested before and after the project, and the results indicate that the majority of pupils made significant average gains in both vocabulary and grammar scores during the project period (particularly in terms of the development of grammatical structures). Grammatical fluency is a key area of development for EAL learners and one in which they often face significant challenges. All teachers noted that pupils' vocabulary skills had improved as a result of being exposed to the complex themes in Shakespeare's plays. The use of drama to explore these complex themes within an exciting story plot helped them to develop a good understanding of concepts such as 'jealousy', 'evil', and 'revenge'.

The project has also had a marked impact on pupils' confidence and engagement, particularly for lower ability and less confident pupils. Within the drama approach,



the ethos of there being no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answer gave these more vulnerable pupils the confidence to participate which they eagerly accepted. One teacher remarked, ‘Many of my less confident pupils (largely to do with their command of English or their more passive involvement in lessons) have found their voice and have been invigorated’.

“pupils were tested before and after the project, and the results indicate that the majority of pupils made significant average gains in both vocabulary and grammar scores during the project period (particularly in terms of the development of grammatical structures).”

Teacher expectations are now higher; as teachers they have seen how well their pupils have responded to the complex language and ideas in Shakespeare’s plays. A quote from one teacher captures this very effectively: ‘I used to be wary of using words that are “too difficult” for the children; however, now I don’t hold back. Instead we discuss the word and its meaning in its entirety. This shows in the children’s writing. Instead of using words such as “sad” or “happy”, children now use words such as “evil” and “frustrated”’.

Teachers all stated that they feel far more confident about teaching drama and now see it as an integral part of their teaching repertoire because it has such an impact on engagement and outcomes for pupils. ‘This project has made me put drama at the forefront of my teaching. Each story we do begins with a story whoosh in order to increase understanding of the key themes. Before I

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www.york.ac.uk/english/schools/shakespeare/teaching-packs/

NEXT STEPS

Staff from the six Arooj schools (Bankside, Carr Manor Primary, Harehills, Hunslet Moor, Kerr Mackie, and New Bewerley) who participated in this year’s project will mentor a further six teachers from Arooj schools in the next academic year to enable this excellent practice to be spread more widely across the collaborative.

Participating schools intend to incorporate this project into their curriculum plans so that it can be revisited annually. Indeed, some schools have formulated plans to include a Shakespeare play in other year groups as well.

The teaching resource pack created as a result of this project will be available in hard copy and online for all schools to use and thus increase engagement with drama as an effective vehicle for school improvement. It will also be used to develop and deliver workshops at national conferences to extend the reach more widely across the country.

Leeds Playhouse will develop an offer which all Leeds schools can buy into to avail themselves of the considerable expertise of the drama practitioners involved in the original project.

To find out more about Dr Chambers’ work, see the following Open Source publications:

“‘To Love the Moor’: Postcolonial Artists Write Back to Shakespeare’s *Othello*’ in *Postcolonial Interventions* 1.2, June 2016. <https://postcolonialinterventions.files.wordpress.com/2015/05/postcolonial-interventions-vol-i-issue-2.pdf>

‘Shakespeare or Shaikh Zubair?’ in *Dawn*, 8 May 2016. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1256675>

LEEDS MEETS SHAKESPEARE

AUTHORS: ELLA HAWKINS, CLAIRE CHAMBERS, SARAH WESTAWAY, THÉRÈSE O'SULLIVAN, ANTHONY HADDON, LOUISE CLARK, KITTY MUIR

The resource pack brings together key elements of the pilot phase of *Leeds Meets Shakespeare*. The activities included are those designed and trialled as part of the initial part of the project. The pack is intended to support teachers by providing useful teaching resources and guidance. It introduces KS1 pupils to Shakespeare, and can also be adapted to suit higher and lower year groups. This teaching resource pack provides materials for KS1 teachers to lead a range of activities relating to two of Shakespeare's plays: *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale*.

The pack is divided into two main sections: the first section focuses on *The Tempest*, and the second on *The Winter's Tale*. An age-appropriate synopsis and list of key themes is provided for each play, along with sample teaching



Photograph © Art Rolling

plans for five or six individual workshop sessions. Each individual workshop session lasts for approximately one hour. Information linking the content of the workshops to specific National Curriculum Objectives (NCOs) from the Y1 English programme of study is included throughout. While the activities included in the pack cover the majority of English (Speaking & Listening, Reading – comprehension, and Writing – composition) NCOs, the key objectives for each workshop have been specified. The pack can also be adapted for use with NCOs for other year groups in the primary phase. The user is free to follow the entire multi-session format detailed in the pack or to take specific activities and use them individually.

No previous experience in drama is necessary to use this pack as a teaching resource. Detailed explanations of how to lead each activity feature alongside the teaching plans, and links to other resources (including video demonstrations) are included where possible. The sections of the workshops that involve any form of acting or role play are scripted to help the user lead the activities without any in-depth preparation. A list of suggestions for additional activities can be found at the end of the pack. The activities included in this pack have been designed to require minimal physical resources. A few props – such as cloak, shell, hat – are suggested for working with each play.

Access the resources in their entirety free online at:
www.york.ac.uk/english/schools/shakespeare/teaching-packs/



Mapping the Island

🕒 5-10 mins

This activity provides a gentle introduction to the location in which the story is set, and is useful for demonstrating that all contributions are valuable; none are wrong.

- Create the outline of the island with a piece of rope. Discuss the edges of the island. Which parts are rocky or sandy? Where are the easy or difficult places to land in a ship?
- Create card signs for each of the places on the island. The leader is free to invent these places themselves, and/or to invite the children to suggest what might be found on the island. Examples might include: rocky coastline, forest, sandy beach, river, mountain, cave.
- Establish where Ariel's tree is on the island. Create card signs to specify where this tree and other features are.

In Role as Ariel and Physical Storytelling

🕒 10 mins

This activity explores physically the concepts of freedom and being trapped or imprisoned. It also involves story-telling Ariel's history as a group, and imagining what it must have been like to be trapped in a tree.

- Talk with the children as Ariel:
 - *"If you could go anywhere where would you go? I would go up into the stars, twice round the moon, and plunge down into the sea. If you could go anywhere where would you go?"*
 - Use this opportunity for children to explore physical journeys with their hands or bodies.
- Explain Ariel's history from the character's perspective:
 - *"I have to do what Prospero says because I promised I would. He freed me from the T-R-E-E." (Spell out the word 'tree', letter by letter. Extend your arms outwards and spread your fingers.) "My arms were the branches, my body was the trunk, and my toes were the roots. Do you want to know how I got trapped in this tree? Do you? Do you? There was a witch called Sycorax, do you know what a witch looks like?"*
 - Invite the children to make witch faces/poses.
 - *"That's exactly what she looked like. I made her very cross. I didn't do what she wanted me to do. So she used her magic. Show me Sycorax using her magic."*
 - Invite the children to bring their witch characters to life by casting spells around the room.
 - *"She used her magic to trap me in this T-R-E-E. You can have a rest from being a witch now and I'll tell you what happened next. She said you will be stuck in this tree for twelve years, but then she died and there was no one to set me free. Put your arms up. I couldn't move, I couldn't move my mouth, I couldn't blink my eyes... tick, tock, tick.....time goes so slowly when you're stuck in a T-R-E-E."*
- Ask the children:
 - *"Put your arms back down now. How did that make you feel? How did you think that made me feel after twelve years?"*
 - Discuss their thoughts as a group.
- End the story:
 - *"Do you want to know how I got out of this T-R-E-E? It was Prospero. He came to this island with his daughter Miranda. He could hear my cries for help. He opened his book and he read out some powerful words which made the tree open up and I was freeeeeeeeee."*
 - Move your body around freely to show that you are no longer trapped in the tree.

Prospero and Ariel After the Storm

🕒 5-10 mins

This activity concludes the main part of this workshop session, and allows the children to think through the complicated situation they have been introduced to.

- Tell the children:
 - "Ariel, you have done well." (Tear the paper boat into two pieces.) *"The ship has broken in two but no one was harmed, and they have all jumped into the sea and swum to the island. Just like I had to do so many years ago – but don't forget, I had a three-year-old daughter with me. Tell me, Ariel – can you mend the ship for me?"* (Wait for the children to say 'yes'.) *"Good. You have done well, Ariel. I know you want your freedom, and soon you shall have it. You have been good to me, Ariel, and I will miss you when you've gone. I just have one more job for you to do and then you will be free."*
- Step out of role by taking off Prospero's cloak.
 - *"I am no longer Prospero, and you are no longer Ariel. I bet Ariel can't wait to get **his** freedom. What do you think **he'll** do when **he's** free? Does **he** mind doing one last job for Prospero? I wonder what it is going to be..."*
 - *"What do you think is going to happen next? How do you think the ending is going to come about? Will it be a happy ending or not? What do you want to happen? Who would stay on the island?"*
- Discuss these questions with the children to encourage them to think through this complex situation and their feelings towards it.

Visual Conclusion

🕒 5 mins

This activity involves repeating the birdcage image to connect Ariel, Caliban, and Miranda with the theme of freedom and prison, and to add Prospero into this image.

- Using the birdcage:
 - *"Here is Ariel trapped in the T-R-E-E. If only **he** could be free. Prospero released **him** from the tree."*
- Open the cage slightly but then snap it shut.
 - *"But Prospero did not set **him** free. He used Ariel for himself."*
- Show the children the miniature footprint inside the cage.
 - *"Here is Caliban's footprint. Caliban, born on this island, free to go wherever he wanted until Prospero arrived and punished him."*
- Show the children the small shell.
 - *"Miranda's shell. Ferdinand has unlocked Miranda's heart but Prospero is not ready to let go."*
- Pick up Prospero's cloak.
 - *"Now we have Prospero's magic cloak. Prospero has been trapped on this island being a father to Miranda and waiting, waiting, waiting for revenge."*

Closing Ritual

🕒 0-5 mins

This activity brings the session to a close with a ritual that will be repeated at the end of each workshop.

- Ask the children to stand in a circle and pick up the rope from the floor. Have the children pass the rope around the circle towards you as you collect it in a pile at your feet.

Remembering Hermione

🕒 5-10 mins

This activity provides an opportunity for the children to imagine what Hermione and Leontes' life might have been like before the story began.

- Explain to the children that they are going to help Paulina keep the memory of Hermione alive by making portraits of the Queen in happier times.
- Invite the children to create pictures with their bodies through **freeze frames**:
 - Leontes and Hermione getting married
 - Leontes and Hermione on holiday
 - Leontes and Hermione entertaining guests at a feast
 - Leontes dancing with Hermione at a ball
- You could now go **into role** as Paulina and have the children show these portraits back to you. You (as Paulina) could then tell them what you remember about the occasions shown in the portraits. For example: *"Everyone looked on them as the perfect couple. Who would have thought we would end up here? Which is why I need you, Story Fixers."*

Confronting the King

🕒 5-10 mins

This activity provides an opportunity for the children to compare Leontes, and Hermione's former happiness with the sorrow and repentance now felt by Leontes as a result of his behaviour, and it also encourages them to think carefully about Paulina's actions.

- Still **in role** as Paulina, tell the children:
 - *"Those portraits remind the King of what he has lost, but there are some other portraits that I show the King to make sure he doesn't forget what he has done. They are very difficult for him to look at, but if he is going to change then he needs to look at them every day."*
- Invite the children to make **freeze frames** of the following scenes:
 - King Leontes shouting at Hermione
 - King Leontes pointing at his best friend Polixenes and telling Camillo to poison him
 - King Leontes tearing up the oracle
 - King Leontes saying horrible things to Hermione in front of everyone.
- You might talk to the children (in role as Paulina) about how King Leontes reacts when he sees himself like this. Alternatively, you could **mime** how the King might react when he sees these pictures (sorry and repentant).
- Indicate the children that you are no longer in role as Paulina (or King Leontes). Ask the children:
 - *"What is Paulina trying to teach the King? Why is she doing this?"*

Keeping Hermione Hidden

iden

🕒 5-10 mins

In this activity, the children help Paulina to enact her plan and are given opportunities to make suggestions as to how Hermione might be hidden from Leontes.

- Explain to the children that their next task is to help Paulina keep Hermione hidden away from Leontes. Ask the children:
 - *"What could Hermione dress up as so nobody knows it is her?"*
 - *"If the King calls at her door, where can Hermione hide?"*
 - Listen to the children's suggestions for disguises and hiding places around the house. Discuss their thoughts.