



William Shakespeare's World

[version JUNE 2019 – changes & cuts will be made during rehearsals]

**From the plays by William Shakespeare,
Adapted and written by Marc Zakian from an idea by Lucille O'Flanagan**

NOTE TO TEACHERS, the Shakespearean language will be understood by actions, jokes, tears and the mise en scene. 3 actors live on stage. 1 'William Shakespeare' actor on film using Instagram (called Willstagram). The play will run only 65 minutes and be followed by a 25-minute interactive workshop.

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances.

SCENE I. Chez William Shakespeare

[William Shakespeare appears on film]

Shakespeare: *[singing in the shower]*

When that I was and a little tiny boy,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
A foolish thing was but a toy,
For the rain it raineth every day.

Oh, do you mind! Can a man not wash his privates in private? Ah, an audience. Have you come to see my show? Very well. Let's start. This is the most important story ever told. The story of me. And we'll begin at the best place to begin, the beginning. I was born in Stratford on Avon, right in the middle of England, in 1564. Not bad for a 455 year old.

My father was a glove maker. But he was also the mayor of our town, and when the actors came to Stratford they would knock on the door to our house to ask permission to put on the plays. I loved the actors, I decided I wanted to be an actor much more fun than going to school. I think you know what I mean.

And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail.
Unwillingly to school

This is my school. And I crept there very unwillingly. Six in the morning, rain or shine. 9 hours a day of Latin and Greek. Amo, Ama, Amat. Snore. I had other things on my mind

And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow.

Women. Much more interesting than school. But the course of true love never did run smooth. Who said that? Oh yes, I did. I wrote a play about it: Romeo and Juliet.

[Willstagramme] SCENE II. Capulet's orchard.

Enter ROMEO. JULIET appears.

ROMEO
But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.
It is my lady, O, it is my love!

O, that she knew she were!
She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that?
Her eye discourses; I will answer it.
I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks

See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!

JULIET
Ay me!

ROMEO
She speaks:
O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head
As is a winged messenger of heaven.

JULIET
O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father and refuse thy name;
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

ROMEO
[Aside] Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

JULIET
'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
What's in a name? that which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet;
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,
And for that name which is no part of thee
Take all myself.

ROMEO
I take thee at thy word:
Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized;
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

JULIET
What man art thou that thus bescreen'd in night
So stumblest on my counsel?

ROMEO

By a name

I know not how to tell thee who I am:
My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,
Because it is an enemy to thee;
Had I it written, I would tear the word.

JULIET

My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words
Of that tongue's utterance, yet I know the sound:
Art thou not Romeo and a Montague?

ROMEO

Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike.

JULIET

How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,
And the place death, considering who thou art,
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

ROMEO

With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls;
For stony limits cannot hold love out,
And what love can do that dares love attempt;
Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.

Shakespeare [on screen]: Romeo and Juliet are in love. But their families are enemies and they cannot meet. Juliet is only 14 and her dad is going to force her to marry someone she doesn't like. So Juliet sends her Nurse to Romeo to ask him to marry her. She is waiting for the nurse to come back with the news.

JULIET

The clock struck nine when I did send the nurse;
In half an hour she promised to return.
O, she is lame!
Had she affections and warm youthful blood,
She would be as swift in motion as a ball;
But old folks, many feign as they were dead;
Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.
O God, she comes!

Enter Nurse

O honey nurse, what news?
Hast thou met with him? Nurse
—O Lord, why look'st thou sad?
Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily;
If good, thou shamest the music of sweet news
By playing it to me with so sour a face.

NURSE

I am a-weary, give me leave awhile:
Fie, how my bones ache! what a jaunt have I had!

JULIET

I would thou hadst my bones, and I thy news:
Nay, come, I pray thee, speak; good, good nurse, speak.

NURSE

Jesu, what haste? can you not stay awhile?
Do you not see that I am out of breath?

JULIET

How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath
To say to me that thou art out of breath?
The excuse that thou dost make in this delay
Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.
Is thy news good, or bad? answer to that;
Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance:
Let me be satisfied, is't good or bad?

NURSE

Well, you have made a simple choice; you know not
how to choose a man: Romeo! no, not he; though his
face be better than any man's, yet his leg excels
all men's; and for a hand, and a foot, and a body,
though they be not to be talked on, yet they are
past compare: he is not the flower of courtesy,
but, I'll warrant him, as gentle as a lamb. Go thy
ways, wench; serve God. What, have you dined at home?

JULIET

No, no: but all this did I know before.
What says he of our marriage? what of that?

NURSE

Lord, how my head aches! what a head have I!
It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.
My back o' t' other side,—O, my back, my back!
Beshrew your heart for sending me about,
To catch my death with jaunting up and down!

JULIET

I' faith, I am sorry that thou art not well.
Sweet, sweet, sweet nurse, tell me, what says my love?

NURSE

Your love says, like an honest gentleman, and a
courteous, and a kind, and a handsome, and, I
warrant, a virtuous,—Where is your mother?

JULIET

Where is my mother! why, she is within;
Where should she be? How oddly thou repliest!
'Your love says, like an honest gentleman,
Where is your mother?'

NURSE

O God's lady dear!
Are you so hot? marry, come up, I trow;
Is this the poultice for my aching bones?
Henceforward do your messages yourself.

JULIET

Here's such a coil! come, what says Romeo?

NURSE

Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?

JULIET

I have.

NURSE

Then hie you hence to Friar Laurence' cell;
There stays a husband to make you a wife:
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks,
They'll be in scarlet straight at any news.
Hie you to church; I must another way,
To fetch a ladder, by the which your love
Must climb a bird's nest soon when it is dark:
I am the drudge and toil in your delight,
But you shall bear the burden soon at night.
Go; I'll to dinner: hie you to the cell.

JULIET

Hie to high fortune! Honest nurse, farewell.

Shakespeare: [Romeo and Juliet are married in secret. And after the marriage, they...you know... stray lower, where the pleasant fountains lie, make the beast with two backs, wake to Cock's passion. Alright you don't want to see that, do you? Do you? Sorry. So here's what happened the morning after the rude bits.](#)

JULIET

Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day:
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,

ROMEO

It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale:
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

JULIET

Yon light is not day-light, I know it,
Therefore stay yet; thou need'st not to be gone.

ROMEO

Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death;
I have more care to stay than will to go:
Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.
How is't, my soul? let's talk; it is not day.

JULIET

It is, it is: hie hence, be gone, away!
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,
Straining harsh discords and unpleasing sharps.
Some say the lark makes sweet division;
This doth not so, for she divideth us:
Some say the lark and loathed toad change eyes,
O, now I would they had changed voices too!
Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,
Hunting thee hence with hunt's-up to the day,
O, now be gone; more light and light it grows.

ROMEO

More light and light; more dark and dark our woes!

JULIET

Then, window, let day in, and let life out.

ROMEO

Farewell, farewell! one kiss, and I'll descend.

Shakespeare: [on screen].

After this it doesn't end well. They try to escape their warring families. Juliet takes a potion to make it appear she is dead, and sends a message to tell Romeo. He doesn't get the message and thinks she really is dead and buys some poison, which he takes. She wakes up, discovers he is dead and kills herself. If only they'd had WhatsApp.

I married a woman called Anne. No potions and poisons, but there was plenty of gossip in Stratford because I was 18 and she was 26. Six months after we married she gave birth to our daughter. Six months after we married. You do the maths.

But I could not spend much time at home with my daughter Susanna as I was busy in London writing plays.

Then a soldier,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation

In 1606, I had a big hit with a story about a soldier. My most successful play.
Guess which one. Here's a clue, it is about a Scottish lord who murders his way to
become king. Any ideas? And it all starts with some witches:

Witches:

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

Second Witch

Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake

First Witch

Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg and owlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

ALL

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

MACBETH

How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!
What is't you do?

ALL

A deed without a name.

MACBETH

I conjure you, by that which you profess,
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me.

First Witch

Speak.

Second Witch

Demand.

Third Witch

We'll answer.

MACBETH

Tell me, thou unknown power

Witch

Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!

Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn
The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth.

MACBETH

Where are they? Gone?

Shakespeare: Never take advice from a witch. King Duncan comes to stay with Macbeth and, encouraged by his wife, Lord Macbeth stabs him while he is asleep. The world's worst Air BnB. And as the witches prophesied, Macbeth becomes king.

Macbeth takes over one of the important lord's castles and sends murderers in. They kill everyone, including women and children.

Now Lady Macbeth starts to feel guilty about what they have done. About time, considering Mr and Mrs Macbeth have killed about 30 people. She has a strange habit of sleepwalking. One night she enters in a trance with a candle and tries to wash off the imaginary bloodstains.

LADY MACBETH

Yet here's a spot.

Out, damned spot! out, I say!--One: two: why,
then, 'tis time to do't.--Hell is murky!--Fie, my
lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard?

What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to
account?--Yet who would have thought the old man
to have had so much blood in him.

Wash your hands, put on your nightgown; look not so
pale.--I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he
cannot come out on's grave.

To bed, to bed! there's knocking at the gate:
come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's
done cannot be undone.--To bed, to bed, to bed!

Shakespeare: She is so guilty, so mad, that she kills herself. And when Macbeth is told of his wife's death, he is driven to despair.

MACBETH

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

Shakespeare: *[on screen]* Macbeth is in trouble as the Scottish lords are on their way to get him. But Macbeth is confident, after all the witches told him:

Witch: Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him.

Shakespeare: *[on screen]* but as I said, never trust a witch

MESSENGER

Gracious my lord,
I should report that which I say I saw,
But know not how to do 't.

MACBETH

Well, say, sir.

MESSENGER

As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
I looked toward Birnam, and anon methought
The wood began to move.

Shakespeare: *[on screen]* Birnam is a forest. But you knew that. Macbeth realises that he is doomed, he continues to fight and is killed.

I knew this play would be a success. Elizabethan audience loved murders and good ghost. I found that out when I wrote Hamlet. It all starts when prince Hamlet sees the ghost of his father, the ghost says he been killed by Hamlet's uncle Claudius. What's worse, is that Claudius has married Hamlet's mother Yes, his uncle is now his dad. Hamlet wants to revenge his father, but he just can't make up his mind and wanders around the stage talking, and pontificating, and wondering about death and suicide and the meaning of life.

Hamlet

To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;

But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.

Shakespeare: *[on screen]* Oh, Hamlet. A troubled young man. He drives his girlfriend Ophelia mad . So mad that she end up drowning herself in a river. We couldn't put a river on stage in my theatre *[a giant river appears on screen]*. All right, show off. Anyway I gave a great speech to Hamlet's mother, describing what happened to poor Ophelia.

Queen Gertrude

There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
There with fantastic garlands did she come
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down the weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;

And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up:
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes;
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element: but long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with her drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious buy
To muddy death.

Shakespeare: As you've probably guessed, it doesn't end well. Claudius tries to poison Hamlet, but by mistake poisons his wife Gertrude. Hamlet kills Claudius, but he ends up being slashed by a poison sword.] The play finishes with bodies strewn all over the stage. The audience loved it.

The great thing about them loving my plays is that they kept coming into my theatre, The Globe. Helping make me lots of money. Which is good, because back home in Stratford.... *"Dear William, it's been 9 months since you came home to Stratford, here is quill drawing of your new twin babies, Judith and Hamnet. Send money for their swaddling"*.

I guess I should have spent more time at home but London was full of attractions.

Two loves I have of comfort and despair,
Which like two spirits do suggest me still
The better angel is a man right fair,
The worser spirit a woman coloured ill.
To win me soon to hell, my female evil
Tempteth my better angel from my side,
And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,
Wooing his purity with her foul pride.
And, whether that my angel be turn'd fiend,
Suspect I may, yet not directly tell,
But being both from me both to each friend,
I guess one angel in another's hell.
Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,
Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

The thing is, the ladies loved a poet. And...well...this poet loved the ladies back. Well it would be rude not to. There's one in particular, today people refer to her as the dark lady. Some say she was an Aline Florio, the wife of an Italian translator, others that she was my landlady, or the wig-makers wife, or the fallen woman Lucy Negro, but as I said "cupido got fire", and it would be have been a shame to leave anyone out.

My tragedy Hamlet was a great success. But I didn't just write about young people moaning about life, I also wrote about old people moaning about life. King Lear. And old man who wants to stand down from the throne and pass on his kingdom to his three daughters. The problem is that only one of them is a truly loving daughter, the other two them are only out for themselves. Lear can't work out who the good daughter is.

KING LEAR

Give me the map there. Know that we have divided
In three our kingdom: and 'tis our fast intent
To shake all cares and business from our age;
Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
Unburthen'd crawl toward death.
We have this hour a constant will to publish
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife
May be prevented now.

Tell me, my daughters,--
Since now we will divest us both of rule,
Interest of territory, cares of state,
Which of you shall we say doth love us most?
That we our largest bounty may extend
Where nature doth with merit challenge. Goneril,
Our eldest-born, speak first.

GONERIL

Sir, I love you more than words can wield the matter;
Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty;
Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;
No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour;
As much as child e'er loved, or father found;
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable;
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

LEAR

Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,
With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make thee lady: to thine and Albany's issue
Be this perpetual. What says our second daughter,
Our dearest Regan, wife to Cornwall? Speak.

REGAN

Sir, I am made
Of the self-same metal that my sister is,
And prize me at her worth. In my true heart
I find she names my very deed of love;
Only she comes too short: that I profess
Myself an enemy to all other joys,
Which the most precious square of sense possesses;
And find I am alone felicitate
In your dear highness' love.

CORDELIA

[Aside] Then poor Cordelia!
And yet not so; since, I am sure, my love's
More richer than my tongue.

KING LEAR

To thee and thine hereditary ever
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom;
No less in space, validity, and pleasure,
Than that conferr'd on Goneril. Now, our joy,
Although the last, not least; to whose young love
The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
Strive to be interest'd; what can you say to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.

CORDELIA

Nothing, my lord.

KING LEAR

Nothing!

CORDELIA

Nothing.

KING LEAR

Nothing will come of nothing: speak again.

CORDELIA

Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
My heart into my mouth: I love your majesty
According to my bond; nor more nor less.

KING LEAR

How, how, Cordelia! mend your speech a little,
Lest it may mar your fortunes.

CORDELIA

Good my lord,
You have begot me, bred me, loved me: I
Return those duties back as are right fit,
Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say
They love you all? Haply, when I shall wed,
That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry
Half my love with him, half my care and duty:
Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all.

KING LEAR

But goes thy heart with this?

CORDELIA

Ay, good my lord.

KING LEAR

So young, and so untender?

CORDELIA

So young, my lord, and true.

KING LEAR

Let it be so; thy truth, then, be thy dower:
Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
And as a stranger to my heart and me
Hold thee, As thou my sometime daughter.

Shakespeare: *[on screen]*. So the kingdom goes to Goneril and Regan, and Cordelia is cast out. King Lear soon discovers that, by passing his lands to his daughters, he has damaged his relationship with them so much that he is refused a home with either of them. He finds himself alone into the country side in a storm with only his Fool - a jester - for company. The fool tries to persuade the King return to his daughter's house.

KING LEAR

Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
Smite flat the thick rotundity o' the world!
Crack nature's moulds, an germens spill at once,
That make ingrateful man!

FOOL

O nuncle, court holy-water in a dry
house is better than this rain-water out o' door.
Good nuncle, in, and ask thy daughters' blessing:
here's a night pities neither wise man nor fool.

KING LEAR

Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! spout, rain!
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
You owe me no subscription: then let fall
Your horrible pleasure: here I stand, your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man:
But yet I call you servile ministers,
That have with two pernicious daughters join'd
Your high engender'd battles 'gainst a head
So old and white as this. O! O! 'tis foul!

I will be the pattern of all patience;
I will say nothing.

FOOL

He that has and a little tiny wit--
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,--
Must make content with his fortunes fit,
For the rain it raineth every day.

Shakespeare: [on screen] King Lear finally has a moment of lucidity and realises that Cordelia was his only true loving daughter. She showed her love by actions, not words. As Hamlet says, suit the action to the word. But it's too late, when Lear arrives to reconcile with her, she is dead.

KING LEAR

Howl, howl, howl, howl! O, you are men of stones:
Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so
That heaven's vault should crack. She's gone for ever!
I know when one is dead, and when one lives;
She's dead as earth. Lend me a looking-glass;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.

This feather stirs; she lives! if it be so,
It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt.

I might have saved her; now she's gone for ever!
Cordelia, Cordelia! stay a little. Ha!
What is't thou say'st? Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman.

Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never!
Pray you, undo this button: thank you, sir.
Do you see this? Look on her, look, her lips,
Look there, look there!

[he dies]

Shakespeare: [on screen] Old age can be hard. King Lear lost his mind and lost his favourite daughter. I was lucky, in my old age I had made money with my plays in London. I retired to Stratford to my wife and children and bought the second biggest house in town. But eventually the years caught up with me.

Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

In 1616 I was 52. In April I caught a cold. A bad one. It killed me. They buried me in the same church where I was baptised. But the great thing about being a writer is you never die. My words are here today. Every moment of every day, somewhere, somebody in the world performing one of my plays. My last play was The Tempest. It is set on a remote island, where the wizard Prospero, the Duke of Milan, plots to restore his daughter Miranda to her place in society. He conjures up a storm, the Tempest, to cause his bad brother Antonio to believe he is shipwrecked and marooned on the island. The play is a reminder that stories are like dreams, and when we dream, anything can happen.

PROSPERO

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air;
And like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep

Fin