

LAMDA

SHAKESPEARE FOR PERFORMANCE

Graded Examinations Syllabus

With first teaching from 1 September 2023
and first examining from 1 January 2024

LAMDA Level 3 Award in Shakespeare for Performance

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About LAMDA

Founded in 1861, the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) is the oldest drama school in the UK. We started to offer examinations in speech and drama to the public over 130 years ago. Since then, we have developed an enviable reputation for delivering excellence in the provision of Communication,

Performance and Musical Theatre examinations in the UK and are rapidly extending our reach internationally.

Why Shakespeare?

In the 16th and 17th Centuries, Shakespeare was considered something of a revolutionary. Indeed, the ideas he highlighted in his work would have raised more than a few eyebrows in Renaissance era Britain.

And as cutting-edge as they may have been then, the stories of Shakespeare's plays have not gone out of style. Two teens, from different backgrounds, falling in love (Romeo and Juliet); a family trying to get ahead (Macbeth); a person dealing with grief (Hamlet): the themes in these stories hold as much meaning today as they did almost 500 years ago.

We believe this is why Shakespeare's work has endured the test of time: because it speaks to the fundamental human condition of love, conflict, death, ambition, power, fate and free will.

So why perform Shakespeare?

The answer to that is simple: Shakespeare's words were not written to be read, they were written to be spoken and heard. And not solely by the Kings and Queens of the English court, but by everyone.

You cannot fully appreciate Shakespeare's use of literary devices and figures of speech – such as how Iago's sibilance speaks to their snake-like cunning –without hissing it aloud. Nor can you understand how perfectly matched Benedick and Beatrice are, without embodying their lightening quick prose. Through studying the LAMDA Shakespeare for Performance qualifications, Learners will discover how to use vocal and physical skills to explore language, before moving onto form. Through this practical execution of language and form, they will then aim to unlock character, story and, eventually, theme.

The LAMDA Shakespeare for Performance qualifications have been designed to take Learners on a journey with Shakespeare: starting with the words and ending, we hope, with a deep and practical understanding of some of the complex, universal and deeply human ideas Shakespeare wanted to share with the world.

Benedict Cumberbatch CBE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Benedict Cumberbatch', with a small plus sign below the end of the signature.

LAMDA President & Graduate 2000

LAMDA Qualifications

LAMDA is recognised as an awarding organisation by Ofqual, the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation in England, Qualifications Wales, and the Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA Regulation) in Northern Ireland.

Qualification Framework

The LAMDA Shakespeare for Performance qualifications reside on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). The qualifications are available at three levels on the RQF: Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3.

The RQF permits direct comparison between academic qualifications (i.e. GCSEs/ A Levels) and vocational qualifications (i.e. LAMDA qualifications and others).

The LAMDA Shakespeare for Performance qualifications also reside on Qualifications Wales' educational framework: the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW).

About this Syllabus Specification

This syllabus specification outlines the specification for LAMDA Level 3 Certificate in Shakespeare for Performance. It is designed for use by Centres, Teachers, Learners, and Parents/ Guardians.

Structure of the Qualification

LAMDA Shakespeare for Performance qualifications are open to all. There are no age restrictions, and the choice of repertoire is intended to appeal to Learners of all ages.

Qualification Name:	LAMDA Level 3 Certificate in Shakespeare for Performance
Qualification Number:	610/2964/6
Level:	RQF Level 3
Guided Learning Hours:	40 (hours)
Total Qualification Time:	130 (hours)
Mode of Assessment:	Examination
Examination Time Allowance:	30 minutes

Introduction and Purpose

The LAMDA Level 3 Certificate in Shakespeare for Performance is designed to enable Learners to develop a wide range of skills in performing Shakespeare. Learners will perform from memory one set speech from a play by William Shakespeare, recontextualising it into a new context. The time period and setting will change in this new context; the time period is changed in order to engage the Learner in how a new social/ historical context can inform a differing understanding of the text and vocal and physical response to

the speech. The setting is changed in order to engage the Learner in how a different location can alter the physical and vocal response to the speech. Learners will integrate their knowledge, understanding and skills to produce a mature understanding of the text and language. The Learner will take ownership and demonstrate a personal interpretation of the text before demonstrating their knowledge of the character and themes of the play. The Learner will also have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills through a piece of sight-reading.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this qualification the Learner will be able to:

Interpretation

LO1: Perform one set speech from memory from a play by William Shakespeare, in a new context, demonstrating an understanding of the material.

Technique

LO2: Use appropriate vocal skills in response to the text. LO3: Demonstrate an effective physical response to the text. Sight-Reading

LO4: Demonstrate sight-reading, sharing the text with the audience.

Knowledge

LO5: Understand the character and situation from the selected speech and sustain character throughout conversation.

LO6: Understand how chosen context can highlight the themes of the selected Shakespearean play.

Qualification Content

Speech (Set Piece): Interpretation and Technique

(LO 1, 2, 3)

Prior to the Examination

The Learner must choose a new context for the set text.

- The context should be chosen to highlight the themes of the play from which the speech is taken.
- The time period must be any time after the 31st of December 1699 including the future (to explore dystopian realities). However, this context must be clearly explained in their introduction.
- LAMDA defines 'new context' as: 'a time period and setting, other than the original context suggested by William Shakespeare.'
- Please consult the Assessment Guidance for further information.

During the Examination

The Learner will perform from memory one set speech from a play by William Shakespeare. The Learner must announce the play title and character name prior to the performance.

The Learner must also introduce the context they have chosen for the piece, and the themes it highlights. The context should be chosen to highlight the themes of the play from which the text is taken.'

- The Learner must select this speech from the list of set speeches provided in this syllabus in Appendix 1.
- A clear, legible copy of the speech should be provided for the Examiner.
- Speeches may not be edited in any way.
- Please note that this introduction is marked.

Sight-Reading

(LO4)

The Learner will read at sight a text provided by the Examiner. The text will be taken from set speeches for this level (but not the one performed by the Learner).

The Learner will be asked to sight-read in the region of 14 lines of text. The Examiner will make clear where the Learner should start and stop.

Three minutes will be given to study the text prior to reading.

Please consult the Assessment Guidance for further information.

Conversation in Character

(LO5)

The Learner will have a 'Conversation in Character' with the Examiner and answer two of the following questions on the character they have portrayed in their Set Speech

- Who are you and where are you?
 - What has just happened?
 - What are your relationships with the other characters in the play?
 - What do you want more than anything?
 - What is the obstacle preventing you from getting what you want?
- The Examiner will select which two questions are to be answered.
 - The Learner will answer in character, using the context described in their introduction to the speech.
 - The Learner will answer questions using the 'first person'. LAMDA defines the 'first person' as: 'a type of narrative in which the protagonist relates their story using the first person, in other words, using the pronoun 'I'.

- The Examiner will refer to the Learner by their character's name during this section.
- The Learner is not expected to speak in Shakespearean English.
- Please consult the Assessment Guidance for further information.

Knowledge Questions

(LO6)

1. The Learner will answer questions on the following:
 - How the chosen context for the speech highlights the themes of the play from which it is taken.
 - Please consult the Assessment Guidance for further information.

Performance Skills and Techniques

Performance skills and techniques that the Learner should develop include:

- Audibility
- Clarity
- Expression
- Fluency
- Focus
- Gesture
- Intentions
- Objectives
- Mood
- Movement
- Spontaneity
- Thoughts
- use of performance space
- vocal performance choices.

Please see the glossary at the end of this syllabus for terminology definitions.

Learners do not need to memorise these definitions.

Assessment and Grading Criteria

Level 3

In order to pass this qualification, the evidence that the Learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the Learning Outcomes. The Assessment Criteria for a Pass grade describes the level of achievement required to pass this qualification.

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
LO1 Perform one set speech from memory from a play by William Shakespeare, in a new context, demonstrating an understanding of the material	1.1 State the new context of the speech and the themes it highlights in the play as a whole 1.2 Demonstrate an understanding of the intentions and objectives of the character in the play 1.3 Demonstrate an understanding of the moods and thoughts of the character

	1.4 Perform from memory with fluency, focus and spontaneity
LO2 Use appropriate vocal skills in response to the text	2.1 Speak with audibility 2.2 Speak with clarity 2.3 Make appropriate vocal performance choices in response to the form of the text and the Recontextualisation
LO3 Demonstrate an effective physical response to the text	3.1 Communicate physicality of the text through effective stance, movement, gesture(s) and expression to portray the period in which the Recontextualisation is set 3.2 Make effective use of the performance space

<p>LO4 Demonstrate sight-reading, sharing the text with the audience</p>	<p>4.1 Sight-read with expression and fluency, sharing the text with the audience</p> <p>4.2 Demonstrate an awareness of the form of the text</p> <p>4.3 Demonstrate an awareness of character</p> <p>4.4 Communicate the meaning and mood of the text</p>
<p>LO5 Understand the character and situation from the selected speech and sustain character throughout conversation</p>	<p>5.1 Demonstrate an understanding of the character portrayed</p> <p>5.2 Demonstrate an ability to sustain the character's opinions throughout conversation</p> <p>5.3 Engage in conversation by responding to questions in a manner appropriate to character choice and text</p>

LO6 Understand how
chosen context can
highlight the themes of
the selected
Shakespearean play

Explain how the chosen
context highlights the
themes of the play

Marking Scheme

ASSESSMENT TASK		MARKS	TOTAL MARKS
Speech	Interpretation	25	50
	Technique	25	
Sight-Reading	15		
Knowledge	Conversation in Character	20	35
	Knowledge Questions	15	
Total Marks	100		

Attainment Bands and Grade Descriptors

AWARD	TOTAL MARKS
Pass	50–64
Merit	65–79
Distinction	80+

Grade Descriptors

The following information describes what skills and knowledge Learners need to present in order to attain marks for Pass, Merit or Distinction for Level 3 Certificate in Shakespeare for Performance.

Learners who complete the external assessment but who either do not meet the minimum pass criteria mark for a Pass or fail to satisfy one or more of the stated Assessment Criteria, will be graded as a Fail. This is irrespective of the total marks accumulated.

Distinction (80–100 Marks)

A Learner who achieves a Distinction grade will have demonstrated advanced understanding and awareness of the chosen material. The performance will have been innovative and sophisticated, responding vocally and physically to the demands of the text throughout. The Learner will have been expressive and fluent throughout the sight-reading element of the examination. Knowledge and understanding of the chosen material and recontextualisation will have been comprehensive and in-depth, and discussed maturely.

Merit (65–79 Marks)

A Learner who achieves a Merit grade will have demonstrated sound understanding of the material through a mature and

imaginative interpretation, responding with thoughtful physical and vocal techniques most of the time. The Learner will have sight-read securely, with confidence and personalisation most of the time. Knowledge and understanding of the chosen material and recontextualisation will have been well analysed and presented.

Pass (50–64 Marks)

A Learner who achieves a Pass grade will have demonstrated some evidence of a developed understanding of the material. Interpretation of the text will have included some personalisation and self-assurance; responding with some appropriate vocal and physical technique. The sight-reading will have been delivered

in an attempt to share it with the audience. The Learner will have demonstrated some widespread knowledge and understanding of the chosen material and recontextualisation

Fail (0–49 Marks)

A Learner whose examination is graded as a Fail for any Subject and Grade will have demonstrated inaccuracy and lack of fluency in all or most of the components. The Learner will also have failed to communicate, through their performance or presentation, any significant degree of understanding of the repertoire. They will have demonstrated

an unacceptable standard of physical and vocal technique; there will have been lapses in memory (if applicable) and they will have shown little or no evidence of interpretative skills. In the sight-reading, Learners will have failed to communicate, through their performance, any significant degree of understanding of the text. Knowledge in relation to the repertoire performed will have been insufficient for the Grade and Subject of examination being taken.

Examination Regulations

1. It is recommended that the Set Speeches used for study (for all levels) are from The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works as published in this syllabus specification. No edits to any of the Set Pieces are permitted. If the Learner does not present the text, exactly as presented in the Syllabus Specification, their exam may be invalidated.
2. Full costume must not be worn during the examination. Long practice skirts, which allow freedom of movement, may be used together with small items such as scarves, hats, shawls, and gloves. Nudity is not permitted under any circumstances.
3. Hand props are permitted but must be kept to a minimum so as to not overburden the Learner. Please note that real weapons, or props that simulate real weapons (such as fake knives or guns) must not be used in examinations.
4. Electronic devices, such as (but not limited to): mobile phones, smart watches, tablets, e-readers and laptops, are not permitted in the examination room unless pre-approved by LAMDA Exams. Please see the LAMDA Exams policies at www.lamda.ac.uk for more information.
5. The Learner must only play one character in their selected speech.

6. No unauthorised person will be allowed to be present during the examination. An 'authorised person' is a person (that is not being assessed), who has been permitted by LAMDA Exams to enter the examination room in line with the requirements of the Learner's Reasonable Adjustment.
7. Animals are not permitted in the examination room.
8. The examination must be performed in English.

If, during the examination, the Examiner feels that a breach of the regulations poses a safety, security or safeguarding risk, the Examiner may take immediate action and halt the examination.

A breach of any of these Regulations will be referred to LAMDA Exams for consideration. Breaches found to have an impact on the validity of the examination, risk invalidation. Please see the Invalidation Policy section for further information.

Assessment Guidance

Use of the Performance Space

The Learner should try to avoid playing in profile for too long, as this masks facial expression.

The Learner should try not to place themselves too near the Examiner's table for the duration of the speech as this limits their overall use of the performance space.

Focus/Audience during Performance

The Learner should ensure that they perform their speech with appropriate focus.

When performing a direct address to audience, the Learner should focus on the imagined wider audience of which the Examiner is a part, and not directly on the Examiner.

Gender and Casting

Learners do not have to select speeches that are gender specific. Female or non-binary Learners can play male characters, and equally male or non-binary Learners can play female characters. This is the case for all levels of examinations.

No edits to the Set Texts can be made if a Learner would like to play a character of a different gender: they must not change the name of the character or any of the pronouns used.

Accent

We welcome Learners from all over the world to take our examinations and encourage them to perform in their own accents. Whilst taking examinations we encourage Learners to find clarity and intelligibility within their own accent rather than speaking in any particular accent.

Recontextualising the set speech

At Level 3, the Learner is asked to 'recontextualise' their chosen set speech. The goal of this is to:

1. Demonstrate how universally relevant the stories of Shakespeare are, even for modern audiences.
2. Encourage Learners to engage with the wider themes of a Shakespearean play, in order to enhance their understanding of their text.

In preparation for the exam, the Learner is asked to choose a new context for their set text. LAMDA defines 'new context' as a time period and setting, other than the original context suggested by William Shakespeare.

The time period must be any time after the 31st of December 1699. The Learner may use a time period of the future, to explore dystopian realities, however this context must be clearly explained in their introduction.

When choosing their new context, the Learner must consider the central themes of the play from which their speech is taken and choose a context which highlights these themes.

Sight-Reading

- The Learner is required to read at sight a text provided by the Examiner. This text will come from one of the Set Speeches from this Level.

Three minutes may be taken to study the text prior to reading.

Learners can prepare for the sight-reading element of their examination in advance by practising the following:

- sight-reading both verse and prose elements of Shakespeare's text
- sight-reading different genres of Shakespeare's verse and prose, for example comedy, drama, history
- marking punctuation
- looking ahead when reading a text to take in a whole phrase
- looking up and sharing the reading with the imagined audience.

- considering ways of exploring rhythm and form.

Conversation in Character

At Level 3, the focus of LAMDA Shakespeare for Performance qualification, is how an understanding of form and language can be used, together with other techniques, to reveal character.

The Learner is required to 'have a conversation with the examiner in character'. The Examiner will choose and ask the Learner two of the listed questions, referring to the Learner by their character's name.

Preparing for this question:

- To fully prepare for this, the Learner is expected to have studied the whole play from which their speech is taken.
- When answering the questions, Learners should use the context they have chosen for the piece.
- Depending on the character selected, the character may have an opinion or feeling about being 'asked questions by a stranger' (the Examiner). The character cannot refuse to answer the questions, but the Learner may wish to consider how the character would answer the questions. Abuse or mistreatment of Examiners, whilst in character, will not be tolerated, under any circumstances.

- Please ensure the length of answer allows the Learner to meet the Assessment Criteria and complete the exam within the given exam time.

Administrative Arrangements

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations are designed to facilitate access to qualifications for Learners who have particular requirements. Further information can be obtained from LAMDA Exams published Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy, which is available to download from the LAMDA Exams website: Help & Resources | London academy of music & dramatic art (lamda.ac.uk)

Assessment and Grading

The purpose of assessment is to ensure that effective learning has taken place to give Learners the opportunity to meet all the Assessment Criteria and achieve the Learning Outcomes within a qualification.

All LAMDA qualifications require external assessment through Examination. External assessment is a form of independent assessment where Assessment Criteria for each qualification are set by LAMDA and marked by a LAMDA Examiner.

All assessments for LAMDA regulated qualifications are criterion- referenced, based on the achievement of specified

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria. Each qualification has specified Assessment Criteria, which are used for grading purposes. A qualification grade can be awarded at Pass, Merit or Distinction.

Learners must achieve a minimum of a pass for all assessment criteria and meet the minimum overall mark in order to achieve a pass for the whole qualification.

Learners who fail to satisfy one or more of the stated Assessment Criteria (irrespective of the total marks they accumulate) will be graded as a Fail.

A Learner Examination Report (LER) will be completed by the Examiner for each assessment. This will show a result for each Assessment Criteria which could be Distinction (D), Merit (M), Pass (P), Fail (F) or Not Presented (NP).

Invalidation Policy

LAMDA operates an Invalidation Policy for all of its Qualifications.

All Learners must perform to the exact requirements as detailed in this syllabus specification. All Learners must also comply with all LAMDA Examination Regulations as detailed on page 24.

Learners who do not conform to these requirements will be at risk of Invalidation. All potential Invalidations are submitted by the Examiner and are reviewed by LAMDA to ensure fair,

valid and consistent decisions are made. If an examination is Invalidated, LAMDA will issue a result of 'Invalidated' and will not award a certificate for the Learner's assessment.

For all confirmed Invalidation decisions, a letter detailing the reasons for the Invalidation along with the Learner's Examination Report (marked Invalid) will be sent directly to the Centre Coordinator or the named accountable person detailed at the time of examination entry.

A Note on Language

English is used and explicitly expressed in all LAMDA syllabus specifications and assessment materials for the examinations. Examinations are conducted solely in English. The language used in all syllabus specifications, assessment materials and during practical assessment is explicit, plain and free from bias.

While LAMDA offers examinations in Wales and Ireland, it does not offer examinations using Welsh (Cymraeg) or Irish (Gaelige) languages.

Glossary of Terms

A glossary of the terminology used in this Syllabus Specification is available on pages 34-36.

Support Material

LAMDA Exams has provided additional support materials to use when preparing for the LAMDA Shakespeare for Performance qualifications. These include a Knowledge Matters publication. This is available to purchase from the LAMDA Exams online shop.

It is vital that the LAMDA Teacher FAQs and LAMDA Shakespeare for Performance Teacher Support Materials are also consulted in preparation for this examination. These can be found on the LAMDA website at www.lamda.ac.uk.

Glossary of Terms: Syllabus Terminology

Assessment – the process of making judgements about the extent to which a Learner’s work meets the Assessment Criteria or any additional assessment requirements of a qualification.

Assessment Criteria (AC) – descriptions of the requirements a Learner is expected to meet to demonstrate that a learning outcome has been achieved.

Certificate (for a qualification) – a record of attainment of credit or a qualification issued by an awarding organisation.

Guided Learning Hours (GLH) – the activity of a Learner being taught or instructed by a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other provider of education. GLH includes the assessment time.

Learning Outcome (LO) – a statement of what a Learner can be expected to know, understand or do as a result of a process of learning.

Level – an indication of the relative demand, complexity and/or depth of achievement, and/or the autonomy of the Learner in demonstrating that achievement.

Qualification – an award made to a Learner for the achievement of the specified combination of credits, or credits and exemptions, required for that award.

Qualification Syllabus Specification – a detailed statement defining the purpose, content, structure and assessment arrangements for a qualification.

Qualification Title – a short description of the level, size and content of a qualification.

Total Qualification Time (TQT) – guided learning hours (GLH), plus an estimate of the number of hours a Learner will reasonably be likely to spend in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, which takes place as directed by – but not under the immediate guidance or supervision of – a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.

Glossary of Terms: Command Verbs

Communicate – convey ideas to others.

Demonstrate – carry out and apply knowledge, show an understanding and/or skills in a practical situation.

Describe – give a clear, straightforward description which includes all of the main points.

Explain – show and give reasons and/or evidence to support an opinion, view or argument.

Outline – set out main characteristics.

Perform – deliver to an audience.

Select – choose the best or most suitable option related to a specific criteria or outcomes.

State – express in clear terms.

Glossary of Terms: Syllabus Content

Please note the Learner does not need to know these definitions from memory for the examination.

These definitions should only be used as an initial starting place when preparing for the examinations, and Learners are encouraged to explore these terms in greater depth using other sources.

Audibility – using sufficient breath and resonance appropriate to the size of the performance space and for the needs of the character.

Clarity – articulating sufficiently, without losing the sense or flow of the text, in order to be understood by the Examiner (and wider imagined audience).

Communicating text – communicating the meaning of the text (the thoughts spoken aloud by the character); ensuring that this communication is appropriate to the situation and world of the text.

Context – the situation and world of the play. Please see Level 3 Knowledge section in Assessment Guidance for more information on ‘recontextualising’.

Conversation in character – when a character is questioned about their background, behaviour and motivation. Please see

Level 3 Knowledge section in Teacher Guidance for more information.

Express/Expression – use of face, voice and body to make known one's thoughts or feelings.

Facial expression – using the face to express the character's emotions.

First person – a type of narrative in which the protagonist relates their story using the pronoun 'I'.

Fluency – performing with a sense of ease.

Focus – maintaining concentration and involvement with the character being portrayed.

Form (of the language) – the arrangement, shape and structure of the words on the page. This may include iambic pentameter, trochaic metre, blank verse, rhyming couplets, etc. In other words, the devices used to shape the thoughts/phrases of the texts.

Gesture – movement of the hands, arms and/or head to convey an idea or meaning.

Iambic Pentameter – a line of verse with five metrical feet, each consisting of one short (or unstressed) syllable followed by one long (or stressed) syllable.

Intentions – why the character wants what they want in the scene (this could be linked to the character's wider story in the play).

Meaning – clarifying what the character is thinking and the sense behind their words or actions.

Mood – this is determined by how an audience is made to feel by the performer. This would be a combination of the writer's intention and the performer's interpretation.

Movement – the use of the body, in motion or stillness to communicate physicality of the text.

Objectives – what the character wants in the scene.

Obstacle – something (physical or psychological) that prevents a character from achieving their objective.

Place – the physical aspects of where the scene takes place.

Performance space – the area in which the Learner performs.

Phrase – a group of words that form a single idea.

Physical performance choices / physical response / physicality of text – responding to the imagery of the text non-verbally through use of movement, gesture and facial expression.

Sight-read – to read aloud a previously unseen text.

Situation – what is happening in the speech/scene.

Spontaneity – performing a scene with fluency and ease, as if for the first time (as opposed to appearing overly-rehearsed).

Stance – used by LAMDA to mean the position the body takes to allow effective breath control, and communicate physicality of character.

Stress – intensity given to a syllable or word of speech, used to draw attention to a word or idea of importance.

Style – how thoughts are expressed in literary composition; the specific characteristics of the scene, including choice of words, syntax and genre.

Theme – an idea that recurs in or pervades a work of art or literature.

Vocal performance choices / vocal response – transforming vocally according to the style, form and content of the text including appropriate use of pace and pause.

Appendix 1

Set Speeches – Content and Trigger Warnings

Please note that many of Shakespeare's plays contain adult themes and themes that some Learners may find distressing. We advise that extreme care is taken when guiding Learners through this material. For this Level 3 qualification, Learners are required to read the full play. To the best of our ability, LAMDA has selected pieces which do not deal with some of the less

appropriate themes in Shakespeare's work, however care must be taken when Learners read the plays as a whole.

From the Level 3 selection, some themes that appear in the wider plays include: suicide, misogyny, racism, ableism, discriminatory language, sexual innuendo, sexual abuse, and violence.

LAMDA does not endorse any of the discriminatory terminology that appears in some of these works.

LAMDA is constantly exploring ways to make our syllabi as inclusive as possible. We work with the industry to create positive change and encourage conversation around inclusivity. We recommend casting with sensitivity and consideration of the themes and experiences of the character portrayed, particularly in relation to religion, race, gender and disability.

Level 3 Set Speeches

The Learner must choose one of the following speeches to perform for their Level 3 examination.

Helena, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Act 3 Scene 2

Sebastian, Twelfth Night, Act 4 Scene 3

Helena, All's Well That Ends Well, Act 1 Scene 3

Proteus, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act 2 Scene 4

Isabella, Measure for Measure, Act 5 Scene 1

Iago, Othello, Act 2 Scene 3

Joan, King Henry VI Part I, Act 5 Scene 4

Richard, King Richard III, Act 5 Scene 3

Rosaline, Love's Labour's Lost, Act 5 Scene 2

King Henry V, King Henry IV Part II, Act 5 Scene 5

Lady Macbeth, Macbeth, Act 1 Scene 7

Puck, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Act 3 Scene 2

Portia, Julius Caesar, Act 2 Scene 1

Antipholus of Syracuse, The Comedy of Errors, Act 3 Scene 2

Juliet, Romeo and Juliet, Act 3 Scene 2

Angelo, Measure for Measure, Act 2 Scene 2

Emilia, The Two Noble Kinsmen, Act 1 Scene 3

Macbeth, Macbeth, Act 1 Scene 7
Lady Anne, King Richard III, Act 1 Scene 2
Jaques, As You Like It, Act 2 Scene 7
Julia, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act 1 Scene 2
Leontes, The Winter's Tale, Act 1 Scene 2
Rosalind, As You Like It, Act 3 Scene 5
Berowne, Love's Labour's Lost, Act 3 Scene 1
Paulina, The Winter's Tale, Act 3 Scene 2
Hamlet, Hamlet, Act 3 Scene 4
Adriana, The Comedy of Errors, Act 2 Scene 2
Richard, King Richard II, Act 3 Scene 2
Katherine, The Taming of the Shrew, Act 5 Scene 2
Mercutio, Romeo and Juliet, Act 1 Scene 4
Volumnia, Coriolanus, Act 5 Scene 3
Mark Antony, Julius Caesar, Act 3 Scene 2
Ariel, The Tempest, Act 3 Scene 3
Othello, Othello, Act 1 Scene 3
Queen Margaret, King Henry VI Part II, Act 3 Scene 1

The Learner must perform their chosen set speech from memory as it is presented below.

The italicised introductions to the speeches do not need to be spoken by the Learner during the examination.

The Learner is changing the context; no edits may be made to the text. These speeches have been reprinted from © Proudfoot, R., Thompson, A., Kastan, D. S., Woudhuysen H. R. *The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works* (2011), Revised Edition, India: the Arden Shakespeare, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing PLC. Please note that some speeches have been edited by LAMDA Exams.

1. A Midsummer Night's Dream, Act 3 Scene 2

Oberon's trickster Puck has placed a love potion on two Athenians. As such, Lysander and Demetrius have both fallen in love with HELENA. Having been abandoned by Lysander, Hermia then threatens Helena. This speech is Helena's response.

Helena

Lo, she is one of this confederacy!
Now I perceive they have conjoin'd all three
To fashion this false sport in spite of me.
Injurious Hermia! Most ungrateful maid!
Have you conspir'd, have you with these contriv'd,
To bait me with this foul derision?
Is all the counsel that we two have shar'd,
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us – O, is all forgot?
All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?
We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,

Have with our needles created both one flower,
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
Both warbling of one song, both in one key,
As if our hands, our sides, voices and minds,
Had been incorporate. So we grew together,
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,
But yet an union in partition,
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem;
So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart;
Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,
Due but to one, and crowned with one crest.
And will you rent our ancient love asunder
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?
It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly;
Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it,
Though I alone do feel the injury.

2. Twelfth Night, Act 4 Scene 3

At the start of the play, SEBASTIAN and his twin Viola are separated in a shipwreck. Sebastian is thought to be drowned but was in fact rescued by Antonio. Sebastian has set out for Illyria, where he planned to meet Antonio by the Elephant. Prior to this speech, Sebastian has met Olivia, who he has fallen in love with.

Sebastian

This is the air, that is the glorious sun,
This pearl she gave me, I do feel't, and see't.
And though 'tis wonder that enwraps me thus,
Yet 'tis not madness. Where's Antonio then?
I could not find him at the Elephant,
Yet there he was, and there I found this credit,
That he did range the town to seek me out.
His counsel now might do me golden service:
For though my soul disputes well with my sense
That this may be some error, but no madness,
Yet doth this accident and flood of fortune
So far exceed all instance, all discourse,

That I am ready to distrust mine eyes,
And wrangle with my reason that persuades me
To any other trust but that I am mad,
Or else the lady's mad; yet if 'twere so,
She could not sway her house, command her followers,
Take and give back affairs and their dispatch,
With such a smooth, discreet, and stable bearing
As I perceive she does. There's something in't
That is deceivable. But here the lady comes.

3. All's Well That Ends Well, Act 1 Scene 3

HELENA is in love with a man named Bertram, but he does not return her affections. In this speech, she is speaking to Bertram's mother – the Countess – about her love for him.

Helena

Then I confess,
Here on my knee, before high heaven and you,
That before you, and next unto high heaven,
I love your son.
My friends were poor, but honest; so's my love.
Be not offended, for it hurts not him
That he is lov'd of me; I follow him not
By any token of presumptuous suit,
Nor would I have him till I do deserve him;
Yet never know how that desert should be.
I know I love in vain, strive against hope;
Yet in this captious and inteemable sieve
I still pour in the waters of my love
And lack not to lose still. Thus, Indian-like,

Religious in mine error, I adore
The sun that looks upon his worshipper
But knows of him no more. My dearest madam,
Let not your hate encounter with my love,
For loving where you do; but if yourself,
Whose aged honour cites a virtuous youth,
Did ever, in so true a flame of liking,
Wish chastely and love dearly, that your Dian
Was both herself and Love – O then, give pity
To her whose state is such that cannot choose
But lend and give where she is sure to lose;
That seeks not to find that her search implies,
But riddle-like lives sweetly where she dies!

4. The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act 2 Scene 4

PROTEUS has been sent away from his home. Before he leaves, he pledges his love for Julia. However, as soon as he lays eyes on Sylvia, he immediately falls in love with her. This speech explores his internal conflict.

Proteus

Even as one heat another heat expels,
Or as one nail by strength drives out another,
So the remembrance of my former love
Is by a newer object quite forgotten.
Is it mine eye, or Valentinus' praise,
Her true perfection, or my false transgression,
That makes me reasonless, to reason thus?
She is fair; and so is Julia that I love –
That I did love, for now my love is thaw'd,
Which like a waxen image 'gainst a fire
Bears no impression of the thing it was.
Methinks my zeal to Valentine is cold,

And that I love him not as I was wont.
O, but I love his lady too-too much,
And that's the reason I love him so little.
How shall I dote on her with more advice,
That thus without advice begin to love her?
'Tis but her picture I have yet beheld,
And that hath dazzled my reason's light;
But when I look on her perfections,
There is no reason but I shall be blind.
If I can check my erring love, I will;
If not, to compass her I'll use my skill.

5. Measure for Measure, Act 5 Scene 1

ISABELLA's brother Claudio has been imprisoned under Angelo's authority. Isabella has been appealing her brother's imprisonment and life, to which Angelo attempts to manipulate Isabella into a sexual relationship. Isabella refuses. In this speech, Isabella exposes Angelo's attempts to violate her. Please note that this speech has been edited by LAMDA Exams.

Isabella

Most strange: but yet most truly will I speak.

That Angelo's forsworn; is it not strange?

That Angelo's a murderer; is't not strange?

That Angelo is an adulterous thief,

An hypocrite, a virgin-violator,

Is it not strange, and strange?

It is not truer he is Angelo,

Than this is all as true as it is strange;

Nay, it is ten times true, for truth is truth

To th'end of reck'ning.

O Prince, I conjure thee, as thou believ'st

There is another comfort than this world,
That thou neglect me not with that opinion
That I am touch'd with madness. Make not impossible
That which but seems unlike. 'Tis not impossible
But one, the wicked'st caitiff on the ground,
May seem as shy, as grave, as just, as absolute,
As Angelo; even so may Angelo,
In all his dressings, caracts, titles, forms,
Be an arch-villain. Believe it, royal Prince,
If he be less, he's nothing; but he's more,
Had I more name for badness.

6. Othello, Act 2 Scene 3

IAGO is plotting the downfall of his commander Othello. He has created a narrative whereby Desdemona, Othello's wife, and Cassio, Othello's lieutenant, are lovers. In this speech, Iago muses on his plan.

Iago

And what's he then that says I play the villain?
When this advice is free I give and honest,
Probal to thinking and indeed the course
To win the Moor again? For 'tis most easy
Th'inclining Desdemona to subdue
In any honest suit. She's framed as fruitful
As the free elements: and then for her
To win the Moor, were't to renounce his baptism,
All seals and symbols of redeemed sin,
His soul is so en fettered to her love
That she may make, unmake, do what she list,
Even as her appetite shall play the god
With his weak function. How am I then a villain

To counsel Cassio to this parallel course
Directly to his good? Divinity of hell!
When devils will the blackest sins put on
They do suggest at first with heavenly shows
As I do now. For whiles this honest fool
Plies Desdemona to repair his fortune,
And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,
I'll pour this pestilence into his ear:
That she repeals him for her body's lust.
And by how much she strives to do him good
She shall undo her credit with the Moor –
So will I turn her virtue into pitch
And out of her own goodness make the net
That shall enmesh them all.

7. King Henry VI, Part I, Act 5 Scene 4

Henry V has just died, leaving Henry VI – a child King – on the English throne. As the English are fighting amongst themselves, JOAN PUZEL builds up France's military strength. Before this speech, she has just been captured by the English and is due to be executed. In this speech, she tries to save her own life. Please note that this speech has been edited by LAMDA Exams.

Joan

First let me tell you whom you have condemned:

Not me begotten of a shepherd swain,

But issued from the progeny of kings;

Virtuous and holy, chosen from above

By inspiration of celestial grace

To work exceeding miracles on earth.

I never had to do with wicked spirits;

But you, that are polluted with your lusts,

Stained with the guiltless blood of innocents,

Corrupt and tainted with a thousand vices,

Because you want the grace that others have,

You judge it straight a thing impossible
To compass wonders but by help of devils.
No – misconceived, Joan of Aire hath been
A virgin from her tender infancy,
Chaste and immaculate in very thought,
Whose maiden-blood, thus rigorously effused,
Will cry for vengeance at the gates of heaven.
Will nothing turn your unrelenting hearts?
Then, Joan, discover thine infirmity,
That warranteth by law to be thy privilege.
I am with child, ye bloody homicides:
Murder not then the fruit within my womb,
Although ye hale me to a violent death.

8. King Richard III, Act 5 Scene 3

At the beginning of the play, RICHARD's brother King Edward IV is on the throne. Richard is plotting to overthrow him and has killed Clarence, Henry VI, and the children of King Edward IV in his attempt to become King. Prior to this speech, Richard has been visited in a dream by the ghosts of those he has murdered.

Richard

Give me another horse! Bind up my wounds!
Have mercy, Jesu! – Soft, I did but dream.
O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!
The lights burn blue; it is now dead midnight.
Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.
What do I fear? Myself? There's none else by;
Richard loves Richard, that is, I and I.
Is there a murderer here? No. Yes, I am!
Then fly! What, from myself? Great reason why,
Lest I revenge? What, myself upon myself?
Alack, I love myself. Wherefore? For any good
That I myself have done unto myself?

O, no, alas, I rather hate myself
For hateful deeds committed by myself.
I am a villain – yet I lie, I am not!
Fool, of thyself speak well! Fool, do not flatter.
My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain:
Perjury, perjury, in the highest degree;
Murder, stern murder, in the direst degree;
All several sins, all us'd in each degree,
Throng to the bar, crying all, 'Guilty, guilty!'
I shall despair. There is no creature loves me,
And if I die, no soul will pity me –
And wherefore should they, since that I myself
Find in myself no pity to myself?
Methought the souls of all that I had murder'd
Came to my tent, and every one did threat
Tomorrow's vengeance on the head of Richard.

9. Love's Labour's Lost, Act 5 Scene 2

Four young men have sworn to withdraw from the world for three years, promising that they will not fall in love. However, upon the arrival of the Princess of France and her friends, all four men fall in love. Amongst these are Lord Berowne and ROSALINE. In this speech, Rosaline tests Berowne's love. Please note that this speech has been edited by LAMDA Exams.

Rosaline

Oft have I heard of you, my Lord Berowne,
Before I saw you, and the world's large tongue
Proclaims you for a man replete with mocks,
Full of comparisons and wounding flouts,
Which you on all estates will execute
That lie within the mercy of your wit.
To weed this wormwood from your fruitful brain,
And therewithal to win me, if you please –
Without the which I am not to be won –
You shall this twelvemonth term from day to day
Visit the speechless sick and still converse

With groaning wretches; and your task shall be
With all the fierce endeavour of your wit
To enforce the pained impotent to smile.
Why, that's the way to choke a gibing spirit,
Whose influence is begot of that loose grace
Which shallow laughing hearers give to fools.
A jest's prosperity lies in the ear
Of him that hears it, never in the tongue
Of him that makes it. Then, if sickly ears,
Deafed with the clamours of their own dear groans,
Will hear your idle scorns, continue then,
And I will have you and that fault withal;
But, if they will not, throw away that spirit,
And I shall find you empty of that fault,
Right joyful of your reformation.

10. King Henry IV Part II, Act 5 Scene 5

KING HENRY V (formerly Prince Hal) has just been crowned King. Prior to his coronation, Prince Hal had a close friendship with Sir John Falstaff. In this speech the newly crowned King cuts ties with his former friend.

King Henry V

I know thee not, old man. Fall to thy prayers.
How ill white hairs becomes a fool and jester!
I have long dreamt of such a kind of man,
So surfeit-swell'd, so old, and so profane;
But being awak'd, I do despise my dream.
Make less thy body hence, and more thy grace;
Leave gormandizing; know the grave doth gape
For thee thrice wider than for other men.
Reply not to me with a fool-born jest;
Presume not that I am the thing I was;
For God doth know, so shall the world perceive,
That I have turn'd away my former self;
So will I those that kept me company.

When thou dost hear I am as I have been,
Approach me, and thou shalt be as thou wast,
The tutor and the feeder of my riots.
Till then I banish thee, on pain of death,
As I have done the rest of my misleaders,
Not to come near our person by ten mile.
For competence of life I will allow you,
That lack of means enforce you not to evils;
And as we hear you do reform yourselves,
We will, according to your strengths and qualities,
Give you advancement.
(to the Lord Chief Justice.) Be it your charge, my lord,
To see perform'd the tenor of my word.
Set on.

11. Macbeth, Act 1 Scene 7

At the beginning of the play, Macbeth hears a prophecy from three Witches stating that he will become 'Thane of Cawdor' and 'King hereafter'. To achieve this, Macbeth and LADY MACBETH plot to kill King Duncan. Just before this speech, Macbeth tells Lady Macbeth that they will no longer proceed with their plan.

This speech is Lady Macbeth's reaction. Please note this speech has been edited by LAMDA Exams.

Lady Macbeth

Was the hope drunk,
Wherein you dress'd yourself? Hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valour,
As thou art in desire? Would'st thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would,'

Like the poor cat i'th'adage?
What beast was't then,
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time, nor place,
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn
As you have done to this.

12. A Midsummer Night's Dream, Act 3 Scene 2

Oberon's trickster PUCK has turned Bottom's head into a donkey. Queen Titania, under the influence of a magical anointment, awakens and immediately falls in love with Bottom. In this speech, Puck delights in the mischief they have caused.

Puck

My mistress with a monster is in love.
Near to her close and consecrated bower,
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,
A crew of patches, rude mechanicals,
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
Were met together to rehearse a play
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial day.
The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,
Who Pyramus presented in their sport,
Forsook his scene and enter'd in a brake.
When I did him at this advantage take:
An ass's nole I fixed on his head.

Anon, his Thisbe must be answered,
And forth my mimic comes. When they him spy –
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,
Or russet-pated choughs, many in
Rising and cawing at the gun's report,
Sever themselves, and madly sweep the sky
So, at his sight, away his fellows fly;
And at our stamp, here o'er and o'er one falls.
He murder cries and help from Athens calls.
Their sense thus weak, lost with their fears thus strong,
Made senseless things begin to do them wrong:
For briars and thorns at their apparel snatch;
Some sleeves, some hats, from yielders all things catch.
I led them on in this distracted fear,
And left sweet Pyramus translated there;
When in that moment, so it came to pass,
Titania wak'd, and straightway lov'd an ass.

13. Julius Caesar, Act 2 Scene 1

PORTIA is Brutus' wife. Brutus has been contemplating joining the conspirators to kill Julius Caesar. Alarmed by Brutus' mood and demeanour, Portia questions him. Please note that this speech has been edited by LAMDA Exams.

Portia

Is Brutus sick, and is it physical
To walk unbraced and suck up the humours
Of the dank morning? What, is Brutus sick?
And will he steal out of his wholesome bed
To dare the vile contagion of the night?
And tempt the rheumy and unpurged air
To add unto his sickness? No, my Brutus,
You have some sick offense within your mind
Which by the right and virtue of my place
I ought to know of: and upon my knees
I charm you, by my once commended beauty,
By all your vows of love, and that great vow
Which did incorporate and make us one,

That you unfold to me, your self, your half,
Why you are heavy – and what men tonight
Have had resort to you: for here have been
Some six or seven who did hide their faces
Even from darkness.

Within the bond of marriage, tell me, Brutus,
Is it excepted I should know no secrets
That appertain to you? Am I your self
But as it were in sort or limitation,
To keep with you at meals, comfort your bed
And talk to you sometimes? Dwell I but in the suburbs
Of your good pleasure? If it be no more,
Portia is Brutus' harlot, not his wife.

14. The Comedy of Errors, Act 3 Scene 2

Two sets of identical twins are roaming the city: Antipholus and Dromio of Ephesus, and Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse. Adriana is married to Antipholus of Ephesus. ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE has fallen in love with Adriana's sister Luciana. In this speech, he expresses his love for Luciana.

Antipholus of Syracuse

Sweet mistress, what your name is else I know not,
Nor by what wonder you do hit of mine;
Less in your knowledge and your grace you show not
Than our earth's wonder, more than earth divine.
Teach me, dear creature, how to think and speak;
Lay open to my earthy-gross conceit,
Smother'd in errors, feeble, shallow, weak,
The folded meaning of your words' deceit.
Against my soul's pure truth why labour you
To make it wander in an unknown field?
Are you a god? would you create me new?
Transform me then, and to your power I'll yield.

But if that I am I, then well I know
Your weeping sister is no wife of mine,
Nor to her bed no homage do I owe;
Far more, far more to you do I decline;
O, train me not, sweet mermaid, with thy note
To drown me in thy sister's flood of tears;
Sing, siren, for thyself and I will dote;
Spread o'er the silver waves thy golden hairs,
And as a bed I'll take thee, and there lie,
And in that glorious supposition think
He gains by death that hath such means to die;
Let Love, being light, be drowned if she sink.

15. Romeo and Juliet, Act 3 Scene 2

Romeo and JULIET are in love and have married. Romeo is a Montague and Juliet is a Capulet: two families who are sworn enemies. Therefore, their love and marriage are forbidden. Before this speech, Romeo has killed Juliet's cousin Tybalt and has subsequently been banished. This is Juliet's reaction to the news.

Juliet

Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?

Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy name

When I thy three-hours wife, have mangled it?

But wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?

That villain cousin would have kill'd my husband.

Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring,

Your tributary drops belong to woe

Which you mistaking offer up to joy.

My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain,

And Tybalt's dead, that would have slain my husband.

All this is comfort. Wherefore weep I then?

Some word there was, worser than Tybalt's death,

That murder'd me. I would forget it fain,
But O, it presses to my memory
Like damned guilty deeds to sinners' minds:
Tybalt is dead and Romeo – banished.
That 'banished' that one word 'banished',
Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts: Tybalt's death
Was woe enough, if it had ended there.
Or if sour woe delights in fellowship
And needly will be rank'd with other griefs,
Why follow'd not, when she said 'Tybalt's dead',
Thy father or thy mother, nay or both,
Which modern lamentation might have mov'd?
But with a rearward following Tybalt's death,
'Romeo is banished': to speak that word
Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,
All slain, all dead. Romeo is banished,
There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,
In that word's death. No words can that woe sound.

16. Measure for Measure, Act 2 Scene 2

Isabella's brother Claudio has been imprisoned under ANGELO's authority. Isabella has been appealing her brother's imprisonment and life. Although Angelo refuses to relent, in his attraction to Isabella he decides to consider her plea.

Angelo

From thee: even from thy virtue!

What's this? What's this? Is this her fault, or mine?

The tempter, or the tempted, who sins most, ha?

Not she; nor doth she tempt; but it is I

That, lying by the violet in the sun,

Do as the carrion does, not as the flower,

Corrupt with virtuous season. Can it be

That modesty may more betray our sense

Than woman's lightness? Having waste ground enough,

Shall we desire to raze the sanctuary

And pitch our evils there? O fie, fie, fie!

What dost thou, or what art thou, Angelo?

Dost thou desire her foully for those things
That make her good? O, let her brother live!
Thieves for their robbery have authority,
When judges steal themselves. What, do I love her,
That I desire to hear her speak again?
And feast upon her eyes? What is't I dream on?
O cunning enemy, that, to catch a saint,
With saints dost bait thy hook! Most dangerous
Is that temptation that doth goad us on
To sin in loving virtue. Never could the strumpet
With all her double vigour, art and nature,
Once stir my temper: but this virtuous maid
Subdues me quite. Ever till now
When men were fond, I smil'd, and wonder'd how.

17. The Two Noble Kinsmen, Act 1 Scene 3

At the start of the play, Duke Theseus and King Creon go to war. Cousins and soldiers Palamon and Arcite are imprisoned. Over the course of the play, both men fall in love with EMILIA. Speaking to her sister Hippolyta, Emilia recalls a friendship she shared with Flavina when they were both young girls.

Emilia

You talk of Pirithous' and Theseus' love.
Theirs has more ground, is more maturely seasoned,
More buckled with strong judgment, and their needs
The one of th'other may be said to water
Their intertangled roots of love – but I
And she I sigh and spoke of were things innocent,
Loved for we did and like the elements
That know not what nor why, yet do effect
Rare issues by their operance; our souls
Did so to one another. What she liked
Was then of me approved; what not, condemned –
No more arraignment. The flower that I would pluck

And put between my breasts (then but beginning
To swell about the blossom), O, she would long
Till she had such another, and commit it
To the like innocent cradle, where phoenix-like,
They died in perfume. On my head no toy
But was her pattern; her affections – pretty,
Though happily hers careless were – I followed
For my most serious decking; had mine ear
Stol'n some new air or at adventure hummed one
From musical coinage, why, it was a note
Whereon her spirits would sojourn – rather, dwell on,
And sing it in her slumbers. This rehearsal,
Which fury-innocent wots well, comes in
Like old importment's bastard, has this end:
That the true love 'tween maid and maid may be
More than in sex dividual.

18. Macbeth, Act 1 Scene 7

At the beginning of the play, MACBETH hears a prophecy from three Witches stating that he will become 'Thane of Cawdor' and 'King hereafter'. To achieve this, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth plot to kill King Duncan. In this speech, Macbeth contemplates what a terrible deed this is.

Macbeth

If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly: if th'assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With his surcease success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all – here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the life to come. – But in these cases,
We still have judgment here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague th'inventor. This even-handed justice
Commends th'ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips. He's here in double trust:

First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongu'd, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off;
And Pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's Cherubins, hors'd
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind. – I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on th'other -

19. King Richard III, Act 1 Scene 2

At the beginning of the play, Richard's brother King Edward IV is on the throne. Richard is plotting to overthrow him and has killed Clarence, Henry VI, and the children of King Edward IV in his attempt to become King. In this speech, LADY ANNE mourns her father-in-law, Henry VI's death.

Lady Anne

Set down, set down your honourable load

(If honour may be shrouded in a hearse)

Whilst I awhile obsequiously lament

Th'untimely fall of virtuous Lancaster.

Poor key-cold Figure of a holy king,

Pale ashes of the House of Lancaster,

Thou bloodless remnant of that royal blood:

Be it lawful that I invoke thy ghost

To hear the lamentations of poor Anne,

Wife to thy Edward, to thy slaughter'd son,

Stabb'd by the selfsame hand that made these wounds.

Lo, in these windows that let forth thy life

I pour the helpless balm of my poor eyes.
O, cursed be the hand that made these holes;
Cursed the heart that had the heart to do it;
Cursed the blood that let this blood from hence.
More direful hap betide that hated wretch
That makes us wretched by the death of thee
Than I can wish to adders, spiders, toads,
Or any creeping venom'd thing that lives.
If ever he have child, abortive be it:
Prodigious, and untimely brought to light,
Whose ugly and unnatural aspect
May fright the hopeful mother at the view,
And that be heir to his unhappiness.
If ever he have wife, let her be made
More miserable by the death of him
Than I am made by my young lord, and thee.
Come now towards Chertsey with your holy load,
Taken from Paul's to be interred there;
And still, as you are weary of this weight,
Rest you, while I lament King Henry's corse.

20. As You Like It, Act 2 Scene 7

Duke Senior has been banished from his hometown and now lives in exile with his companions, including JAQUES. In this speech, Jaques muses upon the stages of life.

Jaques

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players.
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
Then, the whining school-boy with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then, a soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden, and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation

Even in the cannon's mouth. And then, the justice,
In fair round belly, with good capon lin'd,
With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws, and modern instances,
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side,
His youthful hose well sav'd, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank, and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

21. The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act 1 Scene 2

Proteus has been sent away from his hometown. Before he leaves, he pledges his love for JULIA in a letter. In front of Lucetta, Julia tears up the letter, feigning disdain for Proteus. Now alone, Julia expresses her true feelings towards Proteus.

Julia

Nay, would I were so anger'd with the same!
O hateful hands, to tear such loving words;
Injurious wasps, to feed on such sweet honey,
And kill the bees that yield it, with your stings!
I'll kiss each several paper, for amends.
Look, here is writ 'kind Julia': unkind Julia!
As in revenge of thy ingratitude,
I throw thy name against the bruising stones,
Trampling contemptuously on thy disdain.
And here is writ 'love-wounded Proteus'.
Poor wounded name: my bosom, as a bed,
Shall lodge thee till thy wound be throughly heal'd;

And thus I search it with a sovereign kiss.
But twice, or thrice, was 'Proteus' written down:
Be calm, good wind, blow not a word away,
Till I have found each letter, in the letter,
Except mine own name: that some whirlwind bear
Unto a ragged, fearful, hanging rock,
And throw it thence into the raging sea.
Lo, here in one line is his name twice writ:
'Poor forlorn Proteus', 'passionate Proteus'.
'To the sweet Julia': that I'll tear away.
And yet I will not, sith so prettily
He couples it to his complaining names.
Thus will I fold them, one upon another:
Now kiss, embrace, contend, do what you will.

22. The Winter's Tale, Act 1 Scene 2

LEONTES is the King of Sicilia, and is hosting his friend Polixenes, King of Bohemia. Leontes is growing jealous of his wife Hermione's friendship with Polixenes and starts to believe that she has been unfaithful to him. Leontes expresses his suspicions to his son Mamillius.

Leontes

Gone already!

Inch-thick, knee-deep; o'er head and ears a fork'd one.

Go, play, boy, play: thy mother plays, and I

Play too; but so disgrac'd a part, whose issue

Will hiss me to my grave: contempt and clamour

Will be my knell. Go, play, boy, play. There have been,

(Or I am much deceiv'd) cuckolds ere now,

And many a man there is (even at this present,

Now, while I speak this) holds his wife by th' arm,

That little thinks she has been sluic'd in's absence

And his pond fish'd by his next neighbour, by

Sir Smile, his neighbour: nay, there's comfort in't,

Whiles other men have gates, and those gates open'd,
As mine, against their will. Should all despair
That have revolted wives, the tenth of mankind
Would hang themselves. Physic for't there's none;
It is a bawdy planet, that will strike
Where 'tis predominant; and 'tis powerful, think it,
From east, west, north, and south; be it concluded,
No barricado for a belly. Know't,
It will let in and out the enemy,
With bag and baggage: many thousand on's
Have the disease, and feel't not. How now, boy?

23. As You Like It, Act 3 Scene 5

ROSALIND has been banished from her hometown. Residing in exile with her cousin Celia, Rosalind disguises herself as a man called Ganymede. Prior to this speech, Rosalind comes across Phebe and Silvius, who are having an argument because Phebe will not accept Silvius' love. In this speech, Rosalind scolds Phebe's disdain towards Silvius.

Rosalind

And why I pray you? Who might be your mother,
That you insult, exult, and all at once,
Over the wretched? What though you have no beauty –
As by my faith I see no more in you
Than without candle may go dark to bed –
Must you be therefore proud and pitiless?
Why what means this? Why do you look on me?
I see no more in you than in the ordinary
Of Nature's sale-work. 'Od's my little life,
I think she means to tangle my eyes too!
No faith proud mistress, hope not after it.
'Tis not your inky brows, your black silk hair,

Your bugle eyeballs, nor your cheek of cream
That can entame my spirits to your worship.
You foolish shepherd, wherefore do you follow her
Like foggy South puffing with wind and rain?
You are a thousand times a properer man
Than she a woman. 'Tis such fools as you
That makes the world full of ill-favour'd children.
'Tis not her glass but you that flatters her,
And out of you she sees herself more proper
Than any of her lineaments can show her.
But mistress, know yourself. Down on your knees
And thank heaven, fasting, for a good man's love;
For I must tell you friendly in your ear,
Sell when you can, you are not for all markets.
Cry the man mercy, love him, take his offer;
Foul is most foul, being foul to be a scoffer.
So take her to thee shepherd. Fare you well.

24. Love's Labour's Lost, Act 3 Scene 1

Four young men have sworn to withdraw from the world for three years, promising that they will not fall in love. However, upon the arrival of the Princess of France and her friends, all four men fall in love. Amongst these is BEROWNE, who has fallen in love with Rosaline.

Berowne

And I, forsooth, in love! I, that have been love's whip,
A very beadle to a humorous sigh,
A critic, nay, a night-watch constable,
A domineering pedant o'er the boy,
Than whom no mortal so magnificent!
This wimpled, whining, purblind, wayward boy,
This Signior Junior, giant dwarf, Dan Cupid,
Regent of love-rhymes, lord of folded arms,
Th'anointed sovereign of sighs and groans,
Liege of all loiterers and malcontents,
Dread prince of plackets, king of codpieces,
Sole imperator and great general

Of trotting paritors – O my little heart!
And I to be a corporal of his field
And wear his colours like a tumbler's hoop!
What? I love, I sue, I seek a wife?
A woman that is like a German clock,
Still a-repairing, ever out of frame
And never going aright, being a watch,
But being watched that it may still go right!
Nay, to be perjured, which is worst of all;
And among three, to love the worst of all,
A whitely wanton with a velvet brow,
With two pitch-balls stuck in her face for eyes;
Ay, and by heaven, one that will do the deed
Though Argus were her eunuch and her guard.
And I to sigh for her, to watch for her,
To pray for her! Go to, it is a plague
That Cupid will impose for my neglect
Of his almighty dreadful little might.
Well, I will love, write, sigh, pray, sue, groan.
Some men must love my lady, and some Joan.

25. The Winter's Tale, Act 3 Scene 2

Over the course of the play, Leontes grows jealous of his wife Hermione's friendship with his friend Polixenes, and starts to believe that she has been unfaithful to him. After Leontes accuses her of infidelity in an open court, Hermione faints and is presumed dead. In this speech, PAULINA reports Hermione's death to the court.

Paulina

What studied torments, tyrant, hast for me?
What wheels? racks? fires? what flaying? boiling?
In leads or oils? What old or newer torture
Must I receive, whose every word deserves
To taste of thy most worst? Thy tyranny,
Together working with thy jealousies
(Fancies too weak for boys, too green and idle
For girls of nine) O think what they have done,
And then run mad indeed: stark mad! for all
Thy by-gone fooleries were but spices of it.
That thou betray'dst Polixenes, 'twas nothing;

That did but show thee, of a fool, inconstant
And damnable ingrateful: nor was't much,
Thou would'st have poison'd good Camillo's honour,
To have him kill a king; poor trespasses,
More monstrous standing by: whereof I reckon
The casting forth to crows thy baby daughter,
To be or none or little; though a devil
Would have shed water out of fire, ere done't:
Nor is't directly laid to thee the death
Of the young prince, whose honourable thoughts
(Thoughts high for one so tender) cleft the heart
That could conceive a gross and foolish sire
Blemish'd his gracious dam: this is not, no,
Laid to thy answer: but the last – O lords,
When I have said, cry 'woe!' – the queen, the queen,
The sweet'st, dear'st creature's dead: and vengeance for 't
Not dropp'd down yet.

26. Hamlet, Act 3 Scene 4

The play begins with the death of King Hamlet. His son Prince HAMLET is grief stricken. Hamlet learns that his mother Gertrude has rapidly remarried her brother-in-law, Hamlet's uncle Claudius. In this speech, Hamlet is speaking to Gertrude. He forces her to compare two pictures: his father's, and his uncle Claudius'.

Hamlet

Look here upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See what a grace was seated on this brow,
Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself,
An eye like Mars to threaten and command,
A station like the herald Mercury
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill,
A combination and a form indeed
Where every god did seem to set his seal
To give the world assurance of a man.
This was your husband. Look you now what follows.
Here is your husband, like a mildew'd ear

Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed
And batten on this moor? Ha, have you eyes?
You cannot call it love; for at your age
The heyday in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment, and what judgment
Would step from this to this? Sense sure you have,
Else could you not have motion; but sure that sense
Is apoplex'd; for madness would not err,
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd,
But it reserv'd some quantity of choice
To serve in such a difference. What devil was't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope. O shame, where is thy blush?
Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax
And melt in her own fire; proclaim no shame
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,

Since frost itself as actively doth burn
And reason panders will.

27. The Comedy of Errors, Act 2 Scene 2

Two sets of identical twins are roaming the city: Antipholus and Dromio of Ephesus, and Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse. ADRIANA is married to Antipholus of Ephesus. However, in this speech she interacts with Antipholus of Syracuse, who denies their marriage. Adriana is outraged and betrayed.

Adriana

Ay, ay, Antipholus, look strange and frown,
Some other mistress hath thy sweet aspects;
I am not Adriana, nor thy wife.
The time was once when thou unurg'd wouldst vow
That never words were music to thine ear,
That never object pleasing in thine eye,
That never touch well welcome to thy hand,
That never meat sweet-savour'd in thy taste,
Unless I spake, or look'd, or touch'd, or carv'd to thee.
How comes it now, my husband, O, how comes it,
That thou art then estranged from thyself? –
Thyself I call it, being strange to me,

That undividable, incorporate,
Am better than thy dear self's better part.
Ah, do not tear away thyself from me;
For know, my love, as easy mayst thou fall
A drop of water in the breaking gulf,
And take unmingled thence that drop again
Without addition or diminishing,
As take from me thyself, and not me too.
How dearly would it touch thee to the quick,
Shouldst thou but hear I were licentious?
And that this body, consecrate to thee,
By ruffian lust should be contaminate?
Wouldst thou not spit at me, and spurn at me,
And hurl the name of husband in my face,
And tear the stain'd skin off my harlot brow,
And from my false hand cut the wedding-ring,
And break it with a deep-divorcing vow?
I know thou canst; and therefore, see thou do it!
I am possess'd with an adulterate blot,
My blood is mingled with the crime of lust;
For if we two be one, and thou play false,
I do digest the poison of thy flesh,

Being strumpeted by thy contagion.

Keep then fair league and truce with thy true bed,

I live unstain'd, thou undishonored.

28. King Richard II, Act 3 Scene 2

At the start of the play, RICHARD's cousin Henry Bolingbrook is exiled. However, following claims that Bolingbrook is the rightful heir to the throne, Bolingbrook returns with an army. Prior to this speech, King Richard has been informed of Bolingbrook's return. Here, he muses on the fate of Kings.

Richard

No matter where – of comfort no man speak.
Let's talk of graves, of worms, and epitaphs,
Make dust our paper, and with rainy eyes
Write sorrow on the bosom of the earth.
Let's choose executors and talk of wills.
And yet not so – for what can we bequeath
Save our deposed bodies to the ground?
Our lands, our lives, and all, are Bolingbroke's,
And nothing can we call our own but death;
And that small model of the barren earth
Which serves as paste and cover to our bones.
For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground

And tell sad stories of the death of kings:
How some have been depos'd, some slain in war,
Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed,
Some poisoned by their wives, some sleeping kill'd,
All murdered – for within the hollow crown
That rounds the mortal temples of a king
Keeps Death his court, and there the antic sits,
Scoffing his state and grinning at his pomp,
Allowing him a breath, a little scene,
To monarchize, be fear'd, and kill with looks;
Infusing him with self and vain conceit,
As if this flesh which walls about our life
Were brass impregnable; and humour'd thus,
Comes at the last and with a little pin
Bores thorough his castle wall, and farewell king!
Cover your heads, and mock not flesh and blood
With solemn reverence; throw away respect,
Tradition, form, and ceremonious duty;
For you have but mistook me all this while.
I live with bread like you, feel want,
Taste grief, need friends – subjected thus,
How can you say to me, I am a king?

29. The Taming of the Shrew, Act 5 Scene 2

KATHERINE is the eldest daughter of Baptista, who has decreed that Katherine must get married before her younger sister Bianca. Although Katherine is opposed to this, she is relentlessly pursued by Petruchio. This speech takes place after Katherine and Petruchio's marriage, when Katherine considers a woman's role in society.

Katherine

Fie, fie! Unknit that threatening unkind brow,
And dart not scornful glances from those eyes,
To wound thy lord, thy king, thy governor.
It blots thy beauty as frosts do bite the meads,
Confounds thy fame as whirlwinds shake fair buds,
And in no sense is meet or amiable.
A woman mov'd is like a fountain troubled,
Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty,
And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty
Will deign to sip or touch one drop of it.
Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,
Thy head, thy sovereign; one that cares for thee,

And for thy maintenance; commits his body
To painful labour both by sea and land,
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,
Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe;
And craves no other tribute at thy hands
But love, fair looks, and true obedience;
Too little payment for so great a debt.
Such duty as the subject owes the prince
Even such a woman oweth to her husband.
And when she is froward, peevish, sullen, sour,
And not obedient to his honest will,
What is she but a foul contending rebel,
And graceless traitor to her loving lord?
I am asham'd that women are so simple
To offer war where they should kneel for peace,
Or seek for rule, supremacy, and sway,
When they are bound to serve, love, and obey.
Why are our bodies soft, and weak, and smooth,
Unapt to toil and trouble in the world,
But that our soft conditions and our hearts
Should well agree with our external parts?
Come, come, you froward and unable worms,

My mind hath been as big as one of yours,
My heart as great, my reason haply more,
To bandy word for word and frown for frown;
But now I see our lances are but straws,
Our strength as weak, our weakness past compare,
That seeming to be most which we indeed least are.
Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,
And place your hands below your husband's foot.
In token of which duty, if he please,
My hand is ready, may it do him ease.

30. Romeo and Juliet, Act 1 Scene 4

Romeo is of the house of Montague, sworn enemies of the Capulet family. MERCUTIO is Romeo's friend. Prior to this speech, they approach the Capulet's household with the intention of breaking into the Capulet's ball. In this speech, Mercutio muses on Queen Mab, the dream-giving Queen of the fairies.

Mercutio

O then I see Queen Mab hath been with you.
She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate stone
On the forefinger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomi
Over men's noses as they lie asleep.
Her chariot is an empty hazelnut
Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,
Time out o' mind the fairies' coachmakers;
Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs,
The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,
Her traces of the smallest spider web,

Her collars of the moonshine's watery beams,
Her whip of cricket's bone, the lash of film,
Her waggoner a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid;
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;
O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on curtsies straight;
O'er lawyers' fingers who straight dream on fees;
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues
Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are.
Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;
And sometimes comes she with a tithe-pig's tail,
Tickling a parson's nose as a lies asleep;
Then he dreams of another benefice.
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscados, Spanish blades,
Of healths five fathom deep; and then anon
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,

And being thus frightened swears a prayer or two
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab
That plaits the manes of horses in the night
And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs,
Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes.
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,
That presses them and learns them first to bear,
Making them women of good carriage.
This is she –

31. Coriolanus, Act 5 Scene 3

Coriolanus has been banished from the city following his corrupt politics. In revenge, Coriolanus joins forces with his previous enemy Tullus Aufidius, and together they march on the city. In this speech, Coriolanus' mother VOLUMNIA persuades him to cease his attack.

Volumnia

Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment
And state of bodies would bewray what life
We have led since thy exile. Think with thyself
How more unfortunate than all living women
Are we come hither; since that thy sight, which should
Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with comforts,
Constrains them weep, and shake with fear and sorrow,
Making the mother, wife and child to see
The son, the husband and the father, tearing
His country's bowels out. And to poor we
Thine enmity's most capital. Thou barr'st us
Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort

That all but we enjoy; for how can we,
Alas! how can we for our country pray,
Whereto we are bound, together with thy victory,
Whereto we are bound? Alack, or we must lose
The country, our dear nurse, or else thy person,
Our comfort in the country. We must find
An evident calamity, though we had
Our wish, which side should win: for either thou
Must as a foreign recreant be led
With manacles through our streets, or else
Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin,
And bear the palm for having bravely shed
Thy wife and children's blood. For myself, son,
I purpose not to wait on fortune till
These wars determine. If I cannot persuade thee
Rather to show a noble grace to both parts,
Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner
March to assault thy country than to tread –
Trust to't, thou shalt not – on thy mother's womb
That brought thee to this world.

32. Julius Caesar, Act 3 Scene 2

Julius Caesar has been stabbed in the Senate by conspirators including Brutus and Cassius. As Caesar is buried, MARK ANTONY speaks to the citizens.

Mark Antony

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears:

I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.

The evil that men do lives after them:

The good is oft interred with their bones.

So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus

Hath told you Caesar was ambitious:

If it were so, it was a grievous fault,

And grievously hath Caesar answered it.

Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest

(For Brutus is an honourable man;

So are they all, all honourable men)

Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.

He was my friend, faithful and just to me;

But Brutus says, he was ambitious,

And Brutus is an honourable man.
He hath brought many captives home to Rome,
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill.
Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?
When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept:
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff.
Yet Brutus says, he was ambitious,
And Brutus is an honourable man.
You all did see, that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?
Yet Brutus says, he was ambitious,
And sure he is an honourable man.
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
But here I am to speak what I do know.
You all did love him once, not without cause:
What cause withholds you then to mourn for him?
O judgment, thou art fled to brutish beasts
And men have lost their reason. Bear with me.
My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,
And I must pause till it come back to me.

33. The Tempest, Act 3 Scene 3

At the start of the play, Alonso, Antonio and Sebastian are shipwrecked on Prospero's magical island. It is revealed that Prospero set this storm in motion as an act of revenge on his brother Antonio, who usurped his dukedom twelve years ago. In this speech, Prospero's spirit ARIEL threatens Alonso, Antonio and Sebastian with a fate worse than death.

Ariel

You are three men of sin, whom destiny,
That hath to instrument this lower world
And what is in't, the never-surfeited sea
Hath caused to belch up you, and on this island,
Where man doth not inhabit – you 'mongst men
Being most unfit to live – I have made you mad;
And even with such-like valour, men hang and drown
Their proper selves.

(Alonso, Sebastian, and Antonio draw their swords.)

You fools! I and my fellows

Are ministers of Fate. The elements
Of whom your swords are tempered may as well
Wound the loud winds, or with bemocked-at stabs
Kill the still-closing waters, as diminish
One dowl that's in my plume. My fellow ministers
Are like invulnerable. If you could hurt,
Your swords are now too massy for your strengths
And will not be uplifted. But remember
(For that's my business to you) that you three
From Milan did supplant good Prospero,
Exposed unto the sea, which hath requit it,
Him and his innocent child; for which foul deed,
The powers delaying, not forgetting, have
Incensed the seas and shores – yea, all the creatures –
Against your peace. Thee of thy son, Alonso,
They have bereft, and do pronounce by me
Ling'ring perdition, worse than any death
Can be at once, shall step by step attend
You and your ways, whose wraths to guard you from –
Which here, in this most desolate isle, else falls
Upon your heads – is nothing but heart's sorrow
And a clear life ensuing.

34. Othello, Act 1 Scene 3

OTHELLO and Desdemona have recently married. Desdemona's father Brabantio accuses Othello of bewitching Desdemona into marriage. In this speech, Othello describes how they fell in love.

Othello

Her father loved me, oft invited me,
Still questioned me the story of my life
From year to year – the battles, sieges, fortunes
That I have passed.

I ran it through, even from my boyish days
To th' very moment that he bade me tell it,
Wherein I spoke of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field,
Of hair-breadth scapes i'th' imminent deadly breach,
Of being taken by the insolent foe
And sold to slavery; of my redemption thence
And portance in my travailous history;
Wherein of antres vast and deserts idle,

Rough quarries, rocks and hills whose heads touch heaven
It was my hint to speak – such was my process –
And of the cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders. This to hear
Would Desdemona seriously incline,
But still the house affairs would draw her thence,
Which ever as she could with haste dispatch
She'd come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse; which I, observing,
Took once a pliant hour and found good means
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something heard
But not intentively. I did consent,
And often did beguile her of her tears
When I did speak of some distressful stroke
That my youth suffered. My story being done
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs,
She swore in faith 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange,
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful;
She wished she had not heard it, yet she wished

That heaven had made her such a man. She thanked me,
And bade me, if I had a friend that loved her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story
And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake:
She loved me for the dangers I had passed
And I loved her that she did pity them.
This only is the witchcraft I have used:

35. King Henry VI Part II, Act 3 Scene 1

King Henry VI is married to Margaret of Anjou (QUEEN MARGARET). Margaret's lover Suffolk attempts to influence the King through his relationship with Margaret. The Duke of Gloucester – the King's uncle and Lord Protector – is a major obstacle to their conspiracies. In this speech, Queen Margaret tries to turn King Henry VI against his own uncle.

Queen Margaret

Can you not see, or will ye not observe
The strangeness of his altered countenance?
With what a majesty he bears himself,
How insolent of late he is become,
How proud, how peremptory, and unlike himself.
We know the time since he was mild and affable;
And if we did but glance a far-off look,
Immediately he was upon his knee,
That all the court admired him for submission.
But meet him now, and be it in the morn,
When everyone will give the time of day,
He knits his brow and shows an angry eye

And passeth by with stiff unbowed knee,
Disdaining duty that to us belongs.
Small curs are not regarded when they grin,
But great men tremble when the lion roars;
And Humphrey is no little man in England.
First note that he is near you in descent,
And should you fall, he is the next will mount.
Meseemeth then it is no policy,
Respecting what a rancorous mind he bears
And his advantage following your decease,
That he should come about your royal person
Or be admitted to your highness' Council.
By flattery hath he won the commons' hearts;
And when he please to make commotion,
'Tis to be feared they all will follow him.
Now 'tis the spring, and weeds are shallow-rooted;
Suffer them now and they'll o'ergrow the garden
And choke the herbs for want of husbandry.
The reverent care I bear unto my lord
Made me collect these dangers in the Duke.
If it be fond, call it a woman's fear;
Which fear if better reasons can supplant,

I will subscribe and say I wronged the Duke.
My Lord of Suffolk, Buckingham and York,
Reprove my allegation if you can,
Or else conclude my words effectual.