



## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT CURRICULUM GUIDE TO *LOVE'S LABOR'S LOST*

### About the Folger Shakespeare Library

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

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

### About the Folger Shakespeare Library's Education Department

*"There is much matter to be heard and learned."*  
***As You Like It***

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

For a complete selection of curriculum plans from the Folger Shakespeare Library Education Department, visit [www.folger.com](http://www.folger.com).

## About the Folger Shakespeare Library's Publishing Program

For nearly 70 years, the Folger Shakespeare Library has been the most respected resource for the scholarship and teaching of William Shakespeare. Designed with everyone in mind—from students to general readers—these editions feature:

- Freshly edited text based on the best early printed version of the play
- Modern spelling and punctuation
- Detailed explanatory notes conveniently placed on pages facing the text of the play
- Scene-by-scene plot summaries
- A key to famous lines and phrases
- An introduction to reading Shakespeare's language
- An essay by an outstanding scholar providing a modern perspective on the play
- Illustrations from the Folger Shakespeare Library's vast holdings of rare books
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To receive a complete list of available titles, e-mail your request to [folger.marketing@simonandschuster.com](mailto:folger.marketing@simonandschuster.com).

## The Shakespeare Set Free Workshops

Make meaningful learning fun. Shakespeare Set Free workshops model a fresh approach for teaching Shakespeare in grades 3-12. Based on twenty years of best practices, the Folger method inspires teachers with proven activities that address national and local standards. Schedule a one-day workshop for 20-30 teachers at your school. If you teach in New Jersey, you may be eligible for funding from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation. Contact the Folger Shakespeare Library at 202-675-0380 or by e-mail at [educate@folger.edu](mailto:educate@folger.edu) for more information.

Turn the page for sample curriculum plans that you can find at <http://www.folger.com>  
Additional plans and tools are available on the website.

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## LOVE'S LABOR'S LOST

Dear Colleagues,

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

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

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

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

Judith Elstein

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

Each of the five lesson plans in this packet includes:

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

Contributing Editors:

Jeremy Ehrlich

Janet Field-Pickering

## Curriculum Plan #1

### **Examining Body Language Through Video (A Lesson in Nonverbal Communication) Developed by Heidi Pasternak**

#### **Plays/Scenes Covered**

*Love's Labor's Lost*, 4.3. This technique can be applied to any play available on video.

#### **What's On for Today and Why**

This lesson asks students to interpret nonverbal clues in the video production of *Love's Labor's Lost* in order to consider different character interpretations and uses of subtext. This lesson takes one to two class periods.

#### **NCTE Standards Covered:**

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and nonprint texts.
8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.

#### **What To Do:**

1. Divide students into small groups and have them develop lists of character traits for the characters in the scene.
2. Share these lists as a class. Discuss ways that actors can communicate some of these characteristics silently: through body language, gestures, and glances.

3. Have the students improvise nonverbal scenarios in order to demonstrate communication without language. For example, have a parent and student fighting over the student's homework, or a doctor delivering bad news to a patient: how can the actors portray different emotions without using words?
4. Play a video clip of the scene, having students note all the examples of nonverbal communication that they find.
5. Have students record their observations on one side of a T-chart (see handout.)
6. In small groups or as a class, discuss the ways in which the actors' techniques convey emotions. Have students record this analysis on the other side of the T-chart.
7. As a class, discuss how the actors' nonverbal communication adds additional insight into their characters.

### **What You Need:**

The Folger Shakespeare Library Edition of *Love's Labor's Lost* (ISBN 0-7434-8492-4)  
TV/VCR

Film version of *Love's Labor's Lost* (2000, directed by Kenneth Branagh)

T-chart handout (see last page)

### **How Did It Go?**

Were students engaged in the activity? Were they identifying insight that is not explicitly stated in the text? Can students now apply this technique to other scenes? Can students use nonverbal communication in their own acting? Can students see a wider range of performance possibilities in the text?

## Curriculum Plan #2

### **Performing Modernized Shakespeare (A Lesson in Performance) Developed by Jeremy Ehrlich**

#### **What's On for Today and Why**

Students will use video clips to help them reflect on the issues surrounding updating and modernizing Shakespeare. Then they will prepare their own text for modernizing or updating. Their performances will spark a discussion on the various ways to present effective Shakespeare today.

This lesson will take two to three class periods.

#### **NCTE Standards Covered:**

1. Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
2. Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.
3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
7. Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and nonprint texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.
8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

#### **What To Do:**

1. Show a few short clips from different modern Shakespeare videos so all the students will be able to discuss modernization of the plays. See film recommendations below.
2. Discuss the ways the directors have updated the plays in these clips and in other films or stage plays the students have seen. Which choices did students think were appropriate and effective?
3. Discuss the process of adaptation. How do directors ensure that their updating concept works for their particular text? Which elements of the play need explanation in the updating? For instance, in the Luhrmann *Romeo + Juliet*, the director uses modern feuds and drug experiences to mimic and explain the feuds and dreams in the original play. He also needs to explain certain elements of the text (mentions of swords and daggers) by updating them (using "sword" and "dagger" as brand names for modern firearms).
4. Discuss which elements of *Love's Labor's Lost* might require explanation in an updated version. How might students begin to develop a concept for modernizing *Love's Labor's Lost*?
5. Divide students into small groups. Have each group pick a place and time in which to set a potential production of *Love's Labor's Lost*. Have them select sets, costumes, and props based on that setting and on the overall text. Be sure students' choices explain any elements of the play that might appear anachronistic (such as swords in a modern setting.)
6. Have students select a piece of text from *Love's Labor's Lost* and prepare it for performance to the class based on their modern setting. While they may not be able to find the costumes, props and sets that would make their selections stage-worthy, they can still make acting choices that reflect the updated world they are creating.
7. After viewing the performances, follow up with a concluding discussion. Which choices worked well with the text, and why? Which choices were more of a stretch? How would students like to see this play performed or filmed?

### **What You Need:**

The Folger Shakespeare Library edition of *Love's Labor's Lost* (ISBN:0-7434-8492-4)  
TV/VCR

Clips from modernized or updated Shakespeare films. Some suggestions are:

Modern productions:

*William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet*, Dir. Baz Luhrmann, with DiCaprio/Danes, 1997.  
*Hamlet*, Dir. Michael Almereyda, with Hawke, 2000.

Modern adaptations:

*10 Things I Hate About You (The Taming of the Shrew)*, Dir. Gil Junger, with Ledger/Stiles, 1999.

*Men of Respect (Macbeth)*, Dir. William Reilly, with Turturro/Borowitz, 1991.

*O (Othello)*, Dir. Tim Blake Nelson, with Phifer/Hartnett/Stiles, 2001.

Updated productions:

*William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Dir. Michael Hoffman, with Everett/Flockhart, 1999.

*Richard III*, Dir. Richard Loncraine, with McKellen/Bening, 1995.

Films directed by and starring Kenneth Branagh: *Much Ado About Nothing* (1993), *Hamlet* (1996), and *Love's Labour's Lost* (2000).

Updated adaptations:

*Throne of Blood (Macbeth)*, Dir. Akira Kurosawa, with Mifune/Yamada, 1957.

*Ran (King Lear)*, Dir. Akira Kurosawa, with Nakadai, 1985.

*A Thousand Acres (King Lear)*, Dir. Jocelyn Moorhouse, with Pfeiffer/Lange, 1997.

### **How Did It Go?**

Were students able to come up with appropriate updating concepts to modernize *Love's Labour's Lost*? Did their performances reflect the new choices that they applied to the text? Were they able to evaluate the effectiveness of the choices they saw? Did they have fun?

## Curriculum Plan #3

### **A Boxful of Character** **(A Lesson in Character Analysis)** **Developed by Linda G. Wolford**

#### **What's On for Today and Why**

In this lesson students will create life boxes based on the text of *Love's Labor's Lost* and present these boxes to the class. A life box is a container with everyday items that relate to a character. Choosing items to represent elements of a character will necessitate careful reading of the text. Using details from the text to explain their choices will require students to use critical thinking. Sharing their creations will expand all of the students' understanding of the characters.

This lesson plan will take two class periods.

#### **NCTE Standards Covered:**

1. Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.

#### **What To Do:**

Preparation: students will have read at least halfway through the play.

1. Explain the concept of a character life box. A life box is a container of carefully chosen items that represent a particular character in a play. The box must contain six to eight things the character might use daily or have as a keepsake. A line from the play must be cited to justify each item. The lines can be either spoken by the character or by another character in the play. No photos—items only. A shoe box is a good container, but other appropriate containers are okay (pillowcase, cigar box, purse, etc.), particularly if they support character analysis.
2. Assign students to work in pairs. The students pick a character and gather items to put in their box. They find text to support each item choice and record a description of the

item, an explanation of why it was chosen, and a corresponding phrase or sentence from the play. This list will be handed in.

3. The students bring in the finished projects and present them to the class. They share their items and explanations by holding up and describing each item and reading or telling what lines of text support their choice.

### **What You Need:**

The Folger Shakespeare Library edition of *Love's Labor's Lost* (ISBN 0-7434-8492-4)  
Miscellaneous items for life boxes

### **How Did It Go?**

Did the students find six to eight items? Did the items represent the character appropriately? Could the students support their choices with text?

A discussion of which items clearly defined each character helps students differentiate and understand character motivation and development. If you choose to start this project when the students are only halfway through the play, you could extend the project by having them add more items to the box as they finish the play.

## Curriculum Plan #4

### **Mapping Shakespeare (A Lesson in Analysis) Developed by Paul E. Clark**

#### **What's On for Today and Why**

Each student will focus closely on one character in the play and create a visual representation of that character's language, personality, motivation, and relationships. He or she will then use that visual piece as a jumping-off point for performance. This activity will take between three and five 45-minute class periods. It may be done individually, in pairs, or in groups of three students.

#### **NCTE Standards Covered:**

1. Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

#### **What To Do:**

1. After the class has read *Love's Labor's Lost*, each student should identify a character to analyze and explore more fully. It's all right if more than one student chooses the same character to work with—in fact, the lesson is more effective that way.
2. Ask students to brainstorm about their chosen character. They should identify personality traits, motivations, moods, actions, temperament, and any other significant aspects of the their characters.
3. Discuss the brainstorming results as a class; have each student explain his or her choices and the rationale behind them.
4. Give each student a large sheet of butcher paper or poster board. Ask the class to draw "Mind Maps" of their characters, using the material gathered from their brainstorming session to create a fuller conception of those characters. The maps should use non-linear

connections; students are therefore encouraged to make up their own linking method—for example, a circle, a tree, a web, or some other visual symbol. The easiest way to do this map (which is therefore discouraged) is to draw a straight line, like a time-line, and have students note actions, important speeches, alterations in personality, key events, etc.

5. To keep the process centered on the text, ask your students to incorporate a minimum of three quotations either from or about their chosen characters.

6. It will probably take more than one class period to complete the Mind Maps. When they are done, ask students in turn to tape their maps to the wall, explaining as they do their choice of elements and quotes. As maps are posted, look for common threads, justifications for inclusion, and links among characters; an understanding of the whole play will emerge from these pieces. This process will take about one class period.

7. Finally, small groups will act out selections from the play. Groups should select and edit a portion of the text for performance. Their choices, about language, character, motivation, etc., should be informed by the Mind Maps. The students must use Shakespeare's original words (cuts are allowed); they are encouraged to insert blocking, stage directions, props, and external elements as needed. You may have students memorize selections, but they might also perform with scripts they make up for themselves.

8. Leave the Mind Maps on the wall for several days for reference.

### **What You Need:**

The Folger Shakespeare Library edition of *Love's Labor's Lost* (ISBN 0-7434-8492-4)  
Large pieces of paper  
Drawing materials

### **How Did It Go?**

You may assess this lesson in stages—for example, at the completion of the brainstorming, or at completion of the larger, more complex Mind Map. Evaluation questions for this part of the assignment might include:

- Are the basic parameters of the assignment fulfilled?
- Is the assignment clearly and effectively organized?
- Are basic facts, events, and characterizations accurate?
- Is there evidence of student interpretation that goes beyond facts and surface detail, or is the assignment content sketchy and shallow?
- Is there solid support for analysis and assertions? Are there supporting quotes or key references from the play?

You might also want to ask the student audience to help evaluate the student performances. In any case, grades for effort and participation should weigh heavily in evaluation by the teacher.

Students should, in both their maps and performances, demonstrate a clear understanding of the text, relationships, plot, and staging elements.

## Curriculum Plan #5

### **Jottings from Jacquenetta (A Lesson in Writing) Developed by Deborah Joy**

#### **What's On for Today and Why**

Each student will assume the persona of a character in *Love's Labor's Lost* and create an appropriate diary. The diary entries will reflect the character's unique traits: sex, rank, and social position, as well as personality and temperament. Through this written exploration into character, students will deepen their understanding of motivation, causality, and the conflicts within the play; they will also exercise and expand their creative writing abilities.

This lesson stretches over the entire study of the play; it takes about ten minutes at the end of each period, plus an extra class period at the end of the unit.

#### **NCTE Standards Covered:**

1. Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
5. Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

#### **What To Do:**

1. Introduce *Love's Labor's Lost* and its major characters; make sure that students have read the first few scenes and understand the action that has taken place to that point.
2. Gather some of the materials students might need to make the diaries themselves. You might want to get colored paper (including card stock if available), leftover yarns and

ribbons, and other art supplies. Be sure to have both lined and unlined paper. As you work on this project, you'll want to encourage students to use their artistic abilities; steer them away from computer-generated fonts and the like.

3. Explain the assignment to the class. Each student should create a diary for the character of his or her choice and decorate it as appropriate for that character. (It's nice to show a model or two.) Students must write a minimum of five entries; the entries should show change and growth based upon what each character knows at certain points in the play.

4. Discuss the various styles of language that students might choose: present day English, a mixture of their own English and common Shakespearean vocabulary, or some form of poetry—their own or Shakespeare's.

5. Students should include as much information from Shakespeare's text as possible in their journal entries. They should quote the text directly at least once in each entry; that quotation can be a jumping off point for a creative exploration of the scene.

6. After students write a first draft of their initial entry, divide them into small groups to share their work. They should look for ways both to praise and to improve the drafts by making helpful suggestions.

7. Tell the students to revise their first entries; after they are done, ask for volunteers to share the revisions with the class.

8. From this point on, allow a bit of time at the end of every other class period for students to work on additional entries.

9. First drafts of all entries are due the day after the class has finished reading the entire play. (If the character dies or disappears early in the play, the student should also create a letter from another character who has "found" the diary and written an explanation of what has happened to the character.) Allow one or two more days for the revision of these drafts.

10. On the final due date, share the diaries and celebrate the end of the unit.

### **What You Need:**

The Folger Shakespeare Library edition of *Love's Labor's Lost* (ISBN:0-7434-8492-4)

Student- or teacher-made samples of diaries

A variety of colored papers, including card stock and construction paper

Art supplies

### **How Did It Go?**

Do the students' diaries reflect a good understanding of the character and the play itself? Can you see a real progression in the characters' voices? Is there evidence of creativity that starts from Shakespeare's language but also moves beyond the text? If so, then the students have a good grasp of how their characters have developed through the course of the play. In assessing the students, give daily grades for the drafts, looking at both art and

writing; then give a final grade for the finished product. You may also choose to have the students write an assessment of how they liked the whole play unit, including the journal assignment.

**If you found these lesson plans useful, there are many more lesson plans available at [www.folger.edu](http://www.folger.edu) in the K-12 Teachers Lesson Plan Archive.**

### **Also Available from the Folger Shakespeare Library**

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

Hamlet (ISBN: 0-7432-7712-X)

Romeo and Juliet (ISBN: 0-07432-7711-1)

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**Nonverbal Communication T-Chart**

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