

**COME, BEGIN...**

**YOU'VE PICKED YOUR PLAY, CHOSEN YOUR CAST AND NOW YOU NEED TO START REHEARSALS, SO WHERE DO YOU BEGIN?**

**HERE ARE SOME INSPIRATIONAL STARTING POINTS FOR EACH OF OUR ABRIDGED PLAYS.**



# TRAGEDIES

**ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA**

**HAMLET**

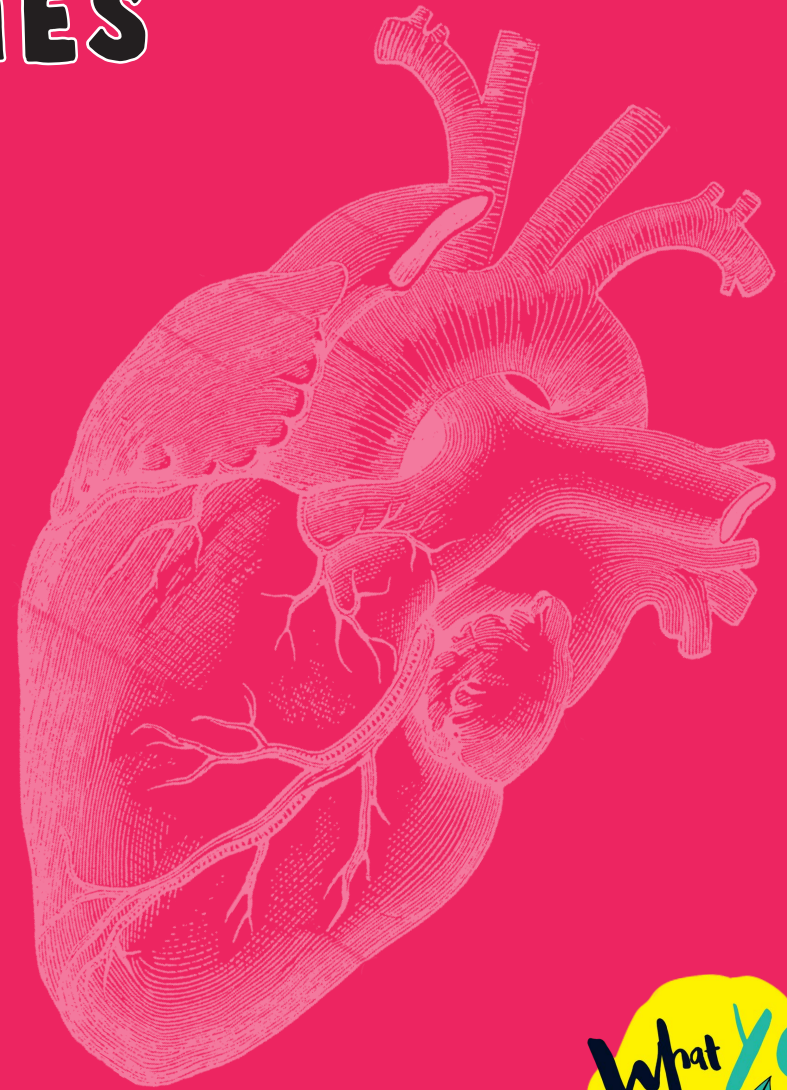
**KING LEAR**

**JULIUS CAESAR**

**MACBETH**

**OTHELLO**

**ROMEO AND JULIET**



## ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

### Films:

Shakespeare's Globe adaptation available on DVD (2014)  
BBC Shakespeare with Jane Lapotaire adaptation available on DVD (1981)  
Cleopatra (1963)

### Books:

'Mr William Shakespeare's Plays' animated stories and  
'Tales from Shakespeare: The Bard's Greatest Plays' both by Marcia Williams  
'The Shakespeare Stories' by Andrew Matthews and Tony Ross  
Reading around the context of writing the play in James Shapiro's book '1606: William Shakespeare and the Year of Lear'

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

Explore the common theme in this play with Macbeth, Othello and King Lear of what happens when the head is overruled by the heart and powerful people give in to their feelings.



## HAMLET

### Films:

The Lion King (1994)  
Kenneth Branagh's version (1996)  
Michael Almereyda's version with Ethan Hawke set in a modern Denmark Corporation in New York (2000)  
Stoppard's 'Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead' for older pupils (1990)  
Andrew Scott's Almeida production is being televised on BBC2 in 2018

### Books:

'Mr William Shakespeare's Plays' animated stories and  
'Tales from Shakespeare: The Bard's Greatest Plays' both by Marcia Williams  
'The Shakespeare Stories' by Andrew Matthews and Tony Ross  
'The Dead Father's Club' by Matt Haig (a modern novel version)  
Reading around the context of writing the play in James Shapiro's book '1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare'

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

Visit a castle and stand on the battlements to imagine keeping watch for the spirit of Elsinore.

## KING LEAR

### Films:

Peter Brook's film adaptation of the RSC's 1962 version (1971)  
Ran (1985)

### Books:

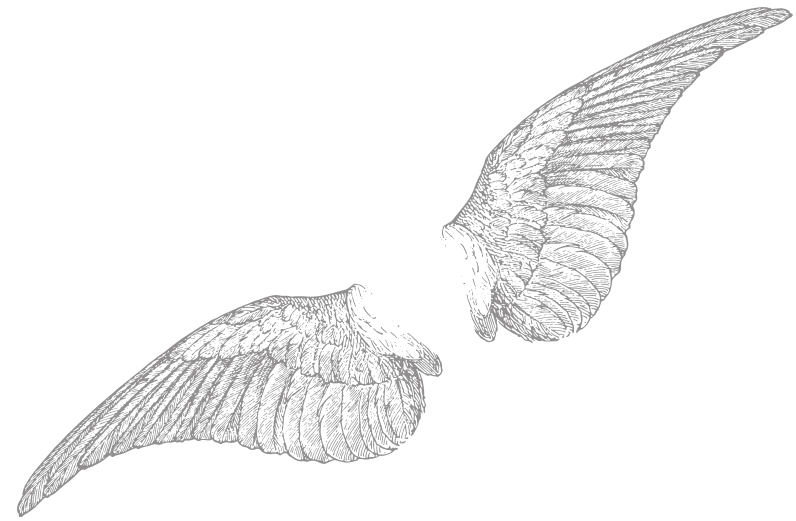
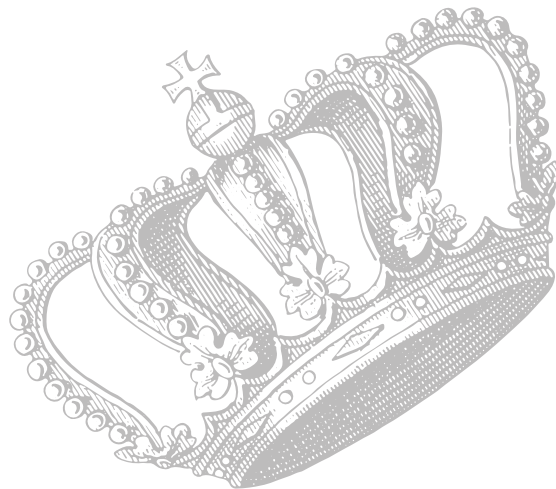
'Mr William Shakespeare's Plays' animated stories and  
'Tales from Shakespeare: The Bard's Greatest Plays' both by Marcia Williams

'The Shakespeare Stories' by Andrew Matthews and Tony Ross  
'Lear's Daughters' by The Women's Theatre Group and Elaine Feinstein. A feminist reading of King Lear for older Secondary School students

Reading around the context of writing the play in James Shapiro's book '1606: William Shakespeare and the Year of Lear'

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

Explore the common theme in this play with Macbeth, Othello and Antony and Cleopatra of what happens when the head is overruled by the heart and powerful people give in to their feelings.



## JULIUS CAESAR

### Films:

Marlon Bando's Julius Caesar (1953)  
John Gielgud's Julius Caesar (1970)

### Books:

'Mr William Shakespeare's plays' animated stories and  
'Tales from Shakespeare: The Bard's Greatest Plays' both by Marcia Williams

'Tales from Shakespeare: Julius Caesar: Retold in Modern Day English' by Timothy Knapman  
Reading around the context of writing the play in James Shapiro's book '1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare'

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

Have a conversation about democracy and/or a current political leader. What makes a good leader? Is it things they do, or things they say, or how popular they are?

## MACBETH

### Films:

Shakespeare Re-Told BBC adaptation with James McAvoy set in a kitchen, with him as a chef (2005)

Inside Number 9 episode 'The Understudy' - a dressing room short play reflecting the themes in Macbeth for older students

Michael Fassbender's Macbeth (2015)

### Books:

'The Shakespeare Stories' by Andrew Matthews and Tony Ross

'Mr William Shakespeare's Plays' animated stories and

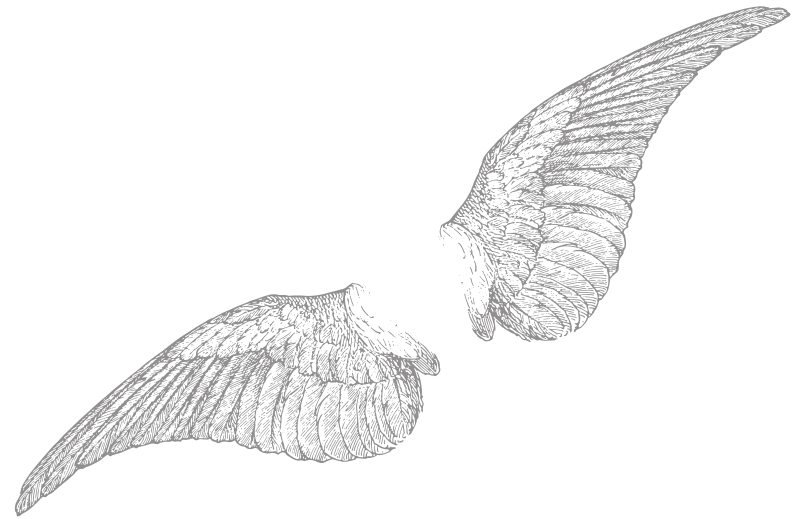
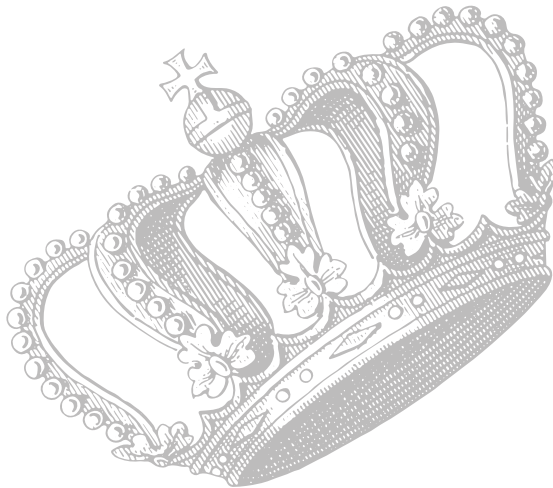
'Tales from Shakespeare: The Bard's Greatest Plays' both by Marcia Williams

Reading around the context of writing the play in James Shapiro's book 1606; William Shakespeare and the Year of Lear

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

SSF scheme of work available to buy for KS2 and KS4.

Explore the common theme in this play with Antony and Cleopatra, Othello and King Lear of what happens when the head is overruled by the heart and powerful people give in to their feelings.



## OTHELLO

### Films:

Josh Hartnet film 'O' (2001)

Andrew Davies ITV adaptation set in the modern police force with Christopher Eccleston (2001)

National Theatre's On Demand service with Rory Kinnear and Adrian Lester (2013)

### Books:

'The Shakespeare Stories' by Andrew Matthews and Tony Ross

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

Explore Venice and Cyprus through images and historical maps - two very different places that inform different parts of the story. Explore the common theme in this play with Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra and King Lear of what happens when the head is overruled by the heart and powerful people give in to their feelings.

## ROMEO AND JULIET

### Films:

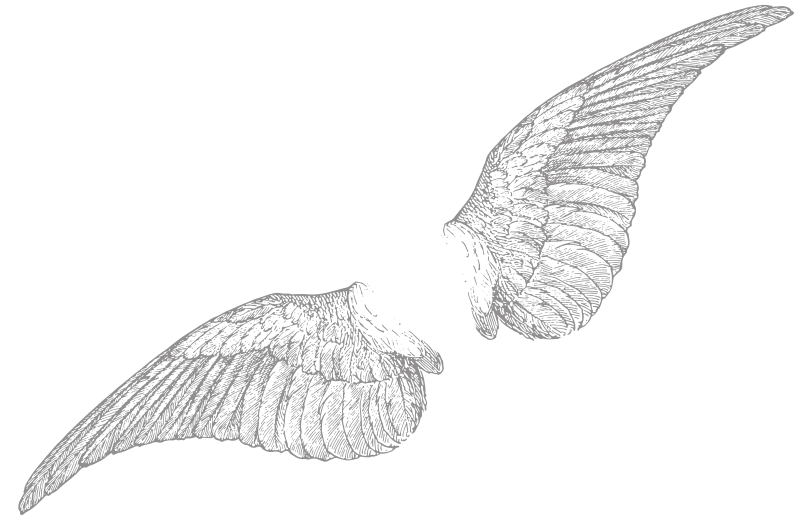
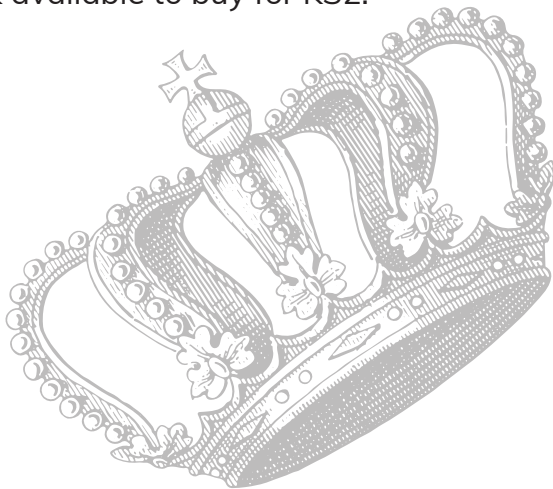
Baz Luhrmann's version with Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes(1996)  
Gnomeo & Juliet for Primary School students (2011)  
Westside Story (1961)  
Franco Zeffirelli's version (1968)  
Romeo Must Die (2000)

### Books:

'Mr William Shakespeare's Plays' animated stories and  
'Tales from Shakespeare: The Bard's Greatest Plays' both by Marcia Williams  
'The Shakespeare Stories' by Andrew Matthews and Tony Ross  
'Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet' by Jane Ray and Michael Rosen - an illustrated version for young children

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

Look at competition in the wider context - from large scale conflict to rivalry that affects the young people.  
SSF scheme of work available to buy for KS2.



### Targeted at Primary Schools

There are radio adaptations of the following stories on BBC School Radio Shakespeare ReTold  
[www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p03dwshd](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p03dwshd)

### Othello

### The Merchant of Venice

### Romeo and Juliet

### Henry V

### A Midsummer Night's Dream

### Hamlet

### The Taming of the Shrew

### The Tempest

### Macbeth

### King Lear

Ten of William Shakespeare's most famous plays become the inspiration for a collection of stories by leading children's writers and read by some famous voices. Writers include Frank Cottrell Boyce, Pamela Butchart and Jamila Gavin; readers include Simon Callow, Shirley Henderson and Julian Rhind-Tutt.

# COMEDIES



**A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM  
AS YOU LIKE IT  
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING  
MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR  
THE COMEDY OF ERRORS  
THE TEMPEST  
TWELFTH NIGHT**



## A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

### Films:

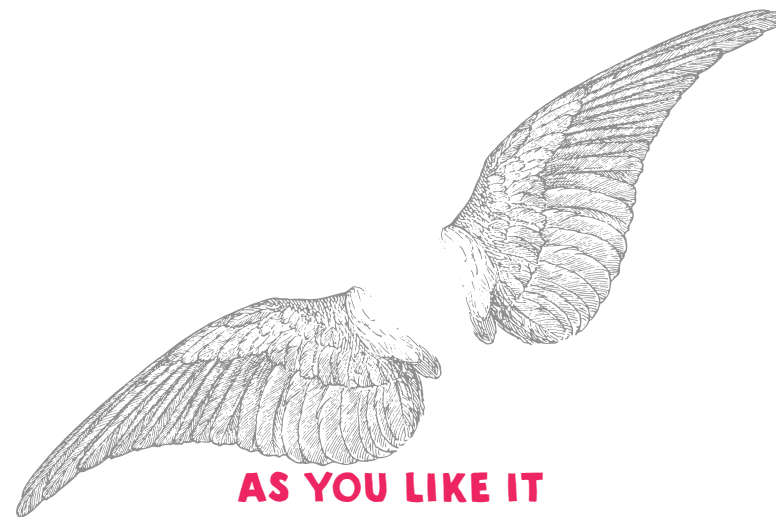
A Midsummer Night's Dream with Kevin Kline and Michelle Pfeiffer (1999)  
Shakespeare Re-Told BBC adaptation with Jonny Vegas (2005)  
BBC adaptation with John Hannah (2016)

### Books:

'Mr William Shakespeare's Plays' animated stories and  
'Tales from Shakespeare: The Bard's Greatest Plays' both by  
Marcia Williams  
'The Shakespeare Stories' by Andrew Matthews and Tony Ross  
'King of Shadows' by Susan Cooper is a historical fiction story  
about a boy called Nat who travels back in time and is mistaken  
for Nat Field - a child actor in Shakespeare's time. He gets to play  
Puck on stage at the Globe theatre

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

SSF scheme of work available to buy for KS2.  
Benjamin Britten's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', available on  
Spotify with around 15 songs per act with titles of lines from the  
text.



## AS YOU LIKE IT

### Films:

BBC Shakespeare adaptation available on DVD - with Helen Mirren (1978)  
As You Like It with Romolai Garai, directed by Kenneth Branagh (2006)

### Books:

'Mr William Shakespeare's Plays' animated stories and  
'Tales from Shakespeare: The Bard's Greatest Plays' both by  
Marcia Williams  
'The Shakespeare Stories' by Andrew Matthews and Tony Ross  
Reading around the context of writing the play in James Shapiro's  
book '1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare'

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

Discussions around the different social classes and  
representations of love within the play. Each of the four couples  
represent a different side of these.  
Wider conversations around women in history who have had to  
assume male identities to progress further in their careers - such  
as Charlotte Bronte (in the first stages of her career), Kathay  
Williams (disguised herself as a man to fight in the American Civil  
War), Katherine Switzer (ran the Boston marathon when woman  
weren't allowed to compete).



## MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

### Films:

Joss Whedon's Much Ado About Nothing for a more modern feel (2012)

The Kenneth Brannagh and Emma Thompson version has a more classical approach (1993)

Shakespeare Re-Told BBC adaptation with Damien Lewis set in a modern TV studio (2005)

### Books:

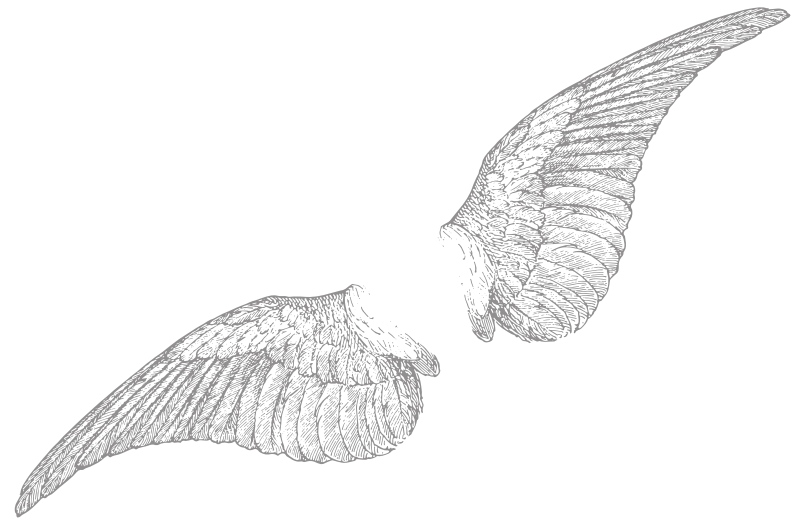
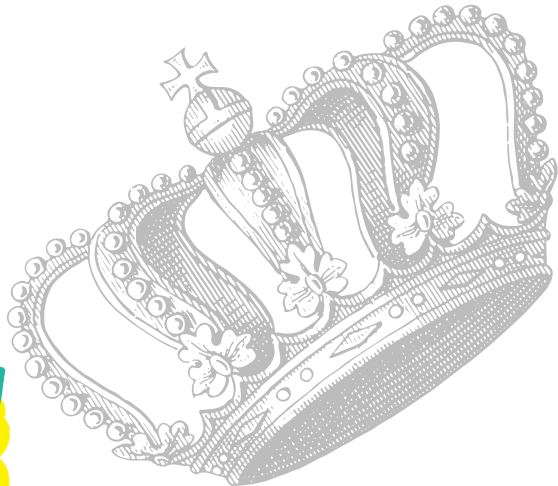
'Mr William Shakespeare's Plays' animated stories and

'Tales from Shakespeare: The Bard's Greatest Plays' both by Marcia Williams

'The Shakespeare Stories' by Andrew Matthews and Tony Ross

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

Research marriage, virtue and women as property in Shakespeare's England.



## THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

### Films:

Shakespeare's Globe adaptation available on DVD (2010)

BBC Shakespeare adaptation available on DVD - with Richard Griffiths and Alan Bennett (1982)

### Opera:

Verdi's 'Falstaff'

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

This is the only play set in Shakespeare's England. Find out as much as you can about 16th Century Windsor. E.g look on a map - it was much further from London!

Look at Shakespeare's other plays which feature these characters and discuss why he may have decided to continue to tell their stories.

## THE COMEDY OF ERRORS

### Films:

Trevor Nunn's musical adaptation with Judi Dench (1978). Full text but with songs added!

National Theatre's On Demand service with Lenny Henry (2011)

The Boys of Syracuse - a musical (1940)

Watch any of the following twin-based farcical capers:

Twins (1988)

The Parent Trap (1961 or 1998)

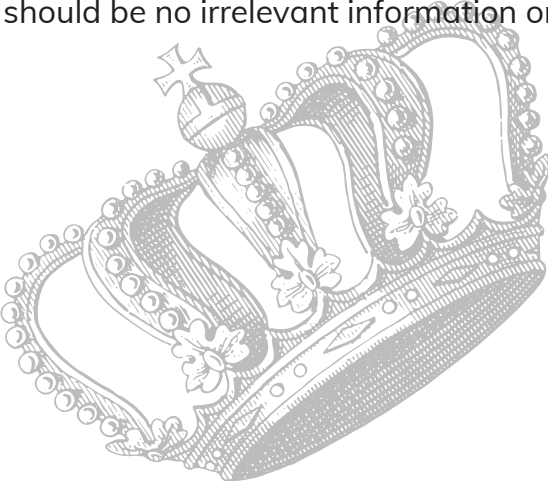
Big Business (1988)

### Books:

The Comedy of Errors: A Shakespeare Children's Story by Macaw Books

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

Wider reading around the fact that Shakespeare follows Aristotle's Three Unities for this play and for only one other in his canon - The Tempest. The principals of which being that they take place in one location, in one day and every incident should contribute to the main plot and there should be no irrelevant information or action.



## THE TEMPEST

### Films:

The film with Helen Mirren as Prospera - great for showing different gender roles (2010)

Shakespeare's Globe adaptation with Roger Allam available on DVD (2013)

The Forbidden Planet (1956)

### Books:

'Mr William Shakespeare's Plays' animated stories and

'Tales from Shakespeare: The Bard's Greatest Plays' both by Marcia Williams

'The Shakespeare Stories' by Andrew Matthews and Tony Ross

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

Gather descriptions of the island from the text and use them to draw/map it. You could do a similar thing for Caliban.

Research colonisation and slavery in relation to Caliban.

Wider reading around the fact that Shakespeare follows Aristotle's Three Unities for this play and for only one other in his canon - The Comedy of Errors. The principals being that they take place in one location, in one day and every incident should contribute to the main plot and there should be no irrelevant information or action.

## TWELFTH NIGHT

### Films:

Twelfth Night directed by Tim Supple (2003)

She's the Man (2006)

Twelfth Night - Trevor Nunn film featuring Imogen Stubbs and Stephen Mackintosh as Viola and Sebastian (1996)

### Books:

'The Shakespeare Stories' by Andrew Matthews and Tony Ross

'Tales from Shakespeare: The Bard's Greatest Plays' by Marcia Williams

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

Send your class off to find versions of the songs (or compose them, if you have musical students). Vote on which ones you would like to use in your show.

Wider conversations around women in history who have had to assume male identities to progress further in their careers - such as Charlotte Bronte (in the first stages of her career), Kathay Williams (disguised herself as a man to fight in the American Civil War), Katherine Switzer (ran the Boston marathon when woman weren't allowed to compete)



### Targeted at Special Educational Needs Schools

We are proud that our Festival process is fully inclusive and supportive, meaning that we get to work with a wide range of students with Special Educational Needs (SEN). Through this work with these Teacher Directors, the residential workshops we run in SEN schools and the experience of our internal team, we have picked up some inspiring ways to begin the process with SEN students.

**Allow your students to play - use games and improvisation to begin to introduce the story. As you do this, notice what your students respond to and enjoy. You might start to see a Romeo emerge!**

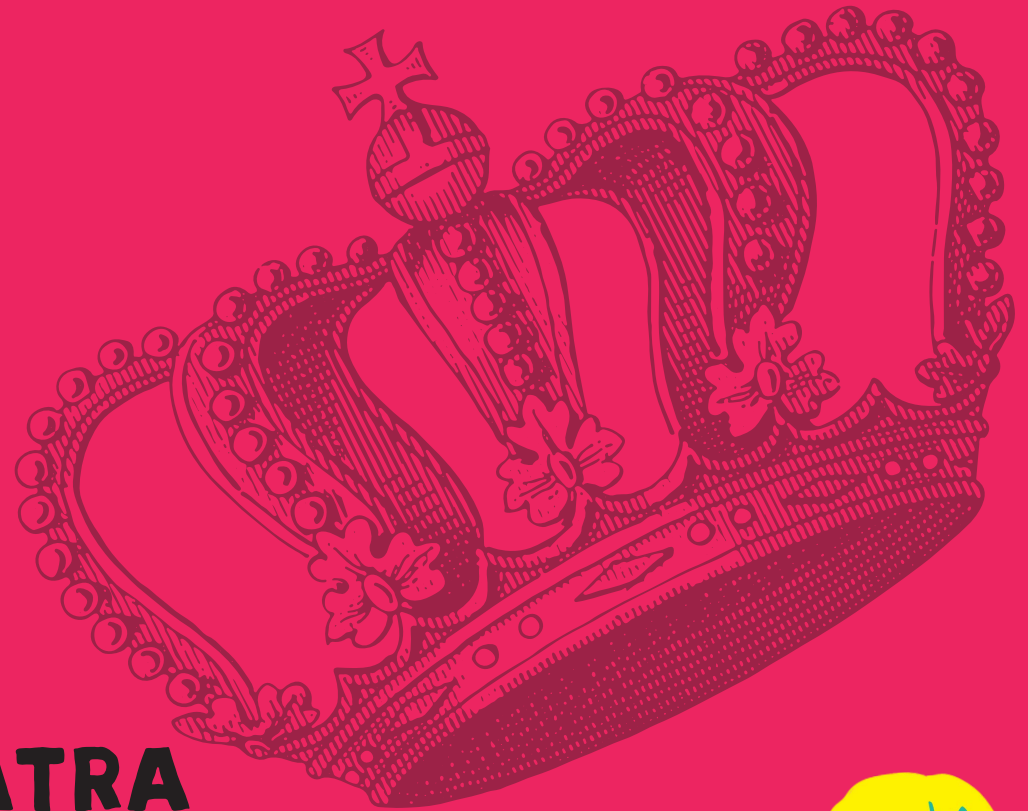
**Explore the world of the play. Bring the setting into (or indeed out of) your classroom using sensory activities. Include objects to touch, such as sand to set the scene of the Tempest and smells to create the atmosphere of the place. Music can be a great way to access a world, a feeling or a character.**

**Use pictograms - (the Widget software 'Communication in Print' is great for this). Create an action and a sound for every pictogram and tell the story in an interactive way.**

You can find out more from our Inclusion Coordinator Joanne Skapinker, in her article for 'Innovate My School' [here](#).

# HISTORIES

**HENRY V**  
**RICHARD III**  
**JULIUS CAESAR**  
**ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA**



## HENRY V

### Films:

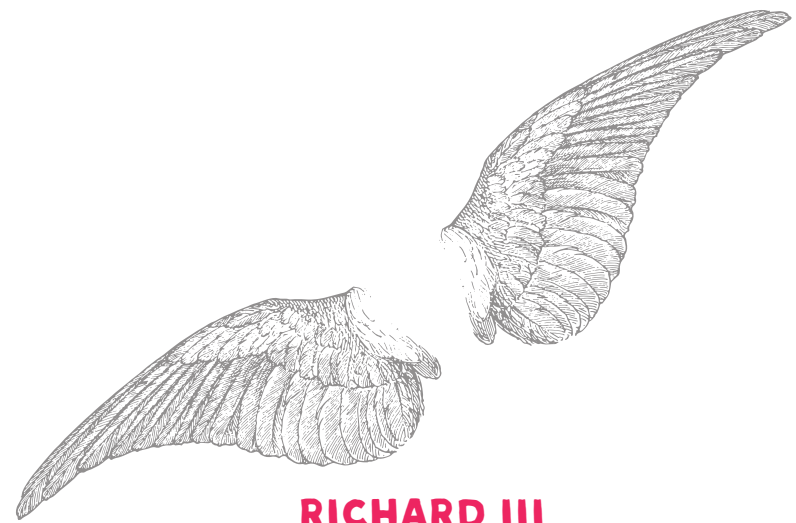
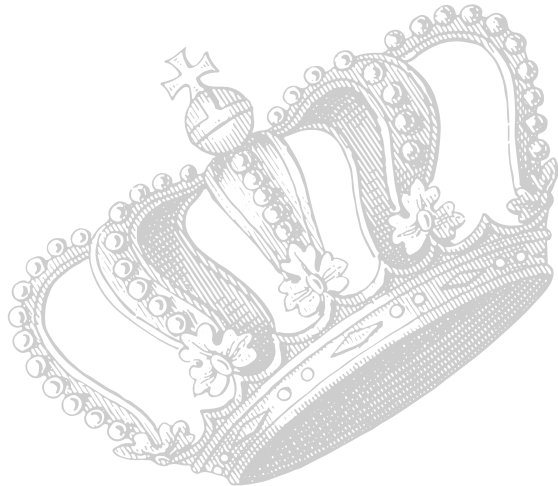
Laurence Olivier's version (1948)  
BBC's The Hollow Crown with Tom Hiddleston (2012)  
Kenneth Branagh's version (1984)

### Books:

'The Shakespeare Stories' by Andrew Matthews and Tony Ross  
'Inspirational Leadership: Henry V and the Muse of Fire - Timeless Insights from Shakespeare's Greatest Leader' by Richard Olivier  
'1415: Henry's year of Glory' by Ian Mortimer  
Reading around the context of writing the play in James Shapiro's book '1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare'

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

Play a game of rugby in a muddy (ideally wet) field - then imagine how much worse the conditions were in Agincourt.  
Conversations around leadership and the makings of a good leader.  
Look at some key speeches delivered in history by inspiring leaders  
E.g Nelson Mandela, Steve Jobs, President Barack Obama, Martin Luther King Jr., Sheryl Sandberg, Winston Churchill.



## RICHARD III

### Films:

BBC's The Hollow Crown with Benedict Cumberbatch (2016)  
Ian McKellen version set during WW2 (1995)  
Laurence Olivier version (1955)  
The White Queen (BBC Drama) for historical reference/context  
Looking for Richard with Al Pacino (1996)

### Books:

'Mr William Shakespeare's Plays' animated stories and  
'Tales from Shakespeare: The Bard's Greatest Plays' both by Marcia Williams  
'The Shakespeare Stories' by Andrew Matthews and Tony Ross

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

'Richard III; The King in the Carpark & The Unseen Story' - A documentary  
Research Richard III being dug up in the carpark in Leicester.  
Take a trip to Leicester cathedral and visit Richard's resting place.  
Look at the family tree and timeline of events - there are a lot of families coming together in this play!

# PROBLEM PLAYS



**MEASURE FOR MEASURE**  
**THE MERCHANT OF VENICE**  
**THE TAMING OF THE SHREW**  
**THE WINTER'S TALE**



## MEASURE FOR MEASURE

### Films:

The Globe's version directed by Dominic Dromgoole (2015)  
The full version isn't available online - but you can see selected scenes from the 2016 Cheek By Jowl production on YouTube - together with cast and creative interviews

### Books:

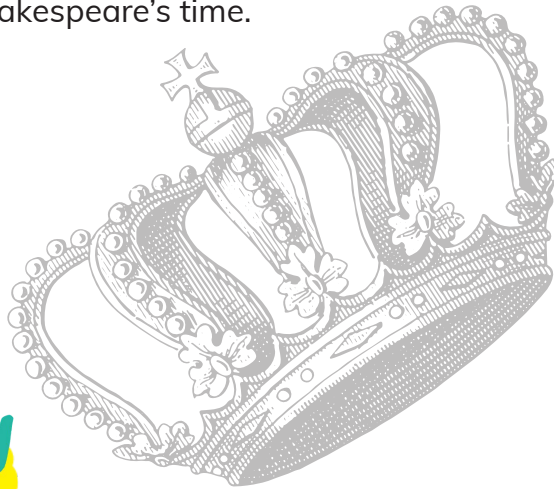
The British Library has a series of interesting articles online about the play and the challenges it holds

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

Have a philosophical conversation about whether, and when, the end justifies the means.

Discussion around the 'Bed Trick' and how it was used in Shakespearean and Jacobean writing.

Discussions and research based on public executions and punishments in Shakespeare's time.



## THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

### Films:

The Merchant of Venice with Al Pacino and Jeremy Irons (2004)  
BBC Shakespeare adaptation available on DVD - with Warren Mitchell (1980)  
Shakespeare's Globe adaptation with Jonathan Pryce available on DVD (2015)

### Books:

'Mr William Shakespeare's plays' animated stories and  
'Tales from Shakespeare: The Bard's Greatest Plays' both by Marcia Williams  
'The Shakespeare Stories' by Andrew Matthews and Tony Ross

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

Discussion about Anti-Semitism and other types of discrimination.  
Look at Marlowe's play 'The Jew of Malta' as a contemporary of Shakespeare's.  
Look at the theme of antithesis in the play.

## THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

### Films:

10 Things I Hate About You (1999)  
Kiss Me Kate (1953)  
Shakespeare Re-Told BBC adaptation with Rufus Sewell set in the modern world of politics (2005)  
Deliver Us From Eva (2003)  
The Taming of the Shrew with Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton (1967)

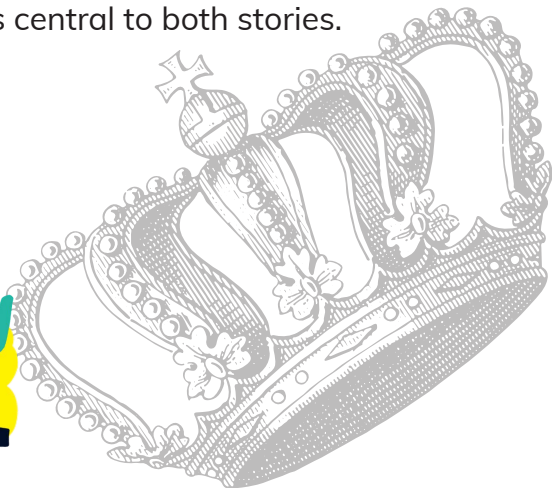
### Books:

'The Shakespeare Stories' by Andrew Matthews and Tony Ross  
Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew for Kids by Brendan P Kelso  
Pygmalion by George Bernard Shaw

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

Look at John Fletcher's play 'The Woman's Prize, or The Tamer Tamed' where Petruchio's second wife turns on him and treats him just like he treated Katherine.

Draw comparisons between this play and Much Ado About Nothing, which was written around six years later. Compare the quarrelling couples central to both stories.



## THE WINTER'S TALE

### Films:

BBC Shakespeare adaptation available on DVD - with David Burke and Anna Calder-Marshall (1981)

### Books:

Mr William Shakespeare's plays by Marcia Williams animated stories  
'Tales from Shakespeare: The Bard's Greatest Plays' by Marcia Williams

### Experiences/School trips/Talking points/Music:

Reading around Fairy Tales for grown ups - where real people get taken to dream countries - E.g Gulliver's Travels, Mr Ben and Dr Who.

There is a short four minute film inspired by The Winter's Tale by Frank Cottrell Boyce as part of Shakespeare Lives (British Council)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGD\\_mHOZAM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGD_mHOZAM)

A common theme runs through these problem plays - in that they raise really important issues, all of which warrant good quality conversations about the key themes. Whether discussing gender, religion or punishment, a good way into these plays is to ask your young people to talk about the worlds created by Shakespeare. They can then compare them to any news stories they have heard from around the world. This may well help them to understand the context of the plays and encourage conversations about challenging subject matters.