

bard core

CURRICULUM!

READING INTO SHAKESPEARE

Choral Poem Montage

What students will learn and be able to do:

- Explore close reading of a text passage
- Collaborate on composition of a group piece
- Practice the process of editing, actively and visually
- Compare two genres of written text

Consider Common Core Anchor Standards: R1; R9; SL1; W5

Step by step:

- Read the passage, circling any words or sections that are confusing.
- Read the passage again, circle any particularly vivid words, phrases or sentences that jump out for you.
- In pairs, exchange texts and read through the passage, noting what your partner circled. Among those circled by your partner, select the phrase, word, or single sentence that you feel best captures the character's or author's voice, mood and tone. [Bracket] your choice.
- Discuss in your pair why you chose to bracket the word/phrase/sentence you did, and how it best reflects the overall tone and "big idea" contained in this passage.
- With your own text back in hand, join forces with 2-3 other pairs (6-8 students).
- Up on your feet so that the words are being spoken and heard as you compose collaboratively!
- Incorporating each person's contribution, work together to compose a group poem. Edit as much as you need in order to create the most powerful, resonant piece. You can also choose to:
 - repeat any words, phrases, sentences
 - choose to speak specific elements in unison
- Get ready for your class presentation. Standing in a line, recite your poem, and if your word/phrase/line is repeated, move down the line as needed.
- The class now serves as the editors of this living poem. Make whatever revisions you feel will help strengthen the writing. As the class revises, group members reposition themselves in the line, reciting the new draft until everyone (or nearly everyone...) agrees that the poem is in its final form.
- Repeat with a second group's composition.

- If working with two different texts (as we did here with *Macbeth* and the podcast transcript), discuss the comparative texts' points of view and the ways in which they are in conversation with another.

Guiding questions:

- What words or phrases struck you most? Why? Did the pairing of these two texts impact the particular words/phrases that you heard?
- How did the discussion with your partner regarding his/her selection of key word/s impact your understanding of the passage?
- What new textual discoveries did you make while working with your choral poem group?
- What did you learn from watching and editing the other groups' poems?
- How can you apply the poem montage revision process to future writing?

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Macbeth

from Act 4, scene 3

MACDUFF

I am not treacherous.

MALCOLM

But Macbeth is.

A good and virtuous nature may recoil
In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon.
That which you are, my thoughts cannot transpose.
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell.
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,
Yet grace must still look so.

MACDUFF

I have lost my hopes.

MALCOLM

Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.
Why in that rawness left you wife and child,
Without leave-taking?

MACDUFF

Bleed, bleed, poor country!

Fare thee well, lord.

I would not be the villain that thou think'st

MALCOLM

Be not offended.

I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke.
It weeps, it bleeds, and each new day a gash
Is added to her wounds. Yet my poor country
Shall have more vices than it had before,
More suffer, and more sundry ways than ever,
By him that shall succeed.

MACDUFF

What should he be?

MACDUFF

I am not treacherous.

MALCOLM

But Macbeth is.

A good and virtuous nature may recoil
In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon.
That which you are, my thoughts cannot transpose.
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell. 5
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,
Yet grace must still look so.

MACDUFF

I have lost my hopes.

MALCOLM

Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.
Why in that rawness left you wife and child,
These precious motives, these strong knots of love, 10
Without leave-taking? I pray you,
Let not my jealousies be your dishonors;
But mine own safeties. You may be rightly just,
Whatever I shall think.

MACDUFF

Bleed, bleed, poor country!

Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure, 15
For goodness dare not check thee. Wear thou thy
wrongs;
The title is affeered.—Fare thee well, lord.
I would not be the villain that thou think'st
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,
And the rich East to boot.

MALCOLM

Be not offended.

20

I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke.
It weeps, it bleeds, and each new day a gash
Is added to her wounds. I think withal
There would be hands uplifted in my right; 25
And here from gracious England have I offer
Of goodly thousands. But, for all this,
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head
Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
Shall have more vices than it had before, 30
More suffer, and more sundry ways than ever,
By him that shall succeed.

MACDUFF

What should he be?

MALCOLM

It is myself I mean, in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted

MALCOLM

It is myself I mean, in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted
That, when they shall be opened, black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state
Esteem him as a lamb.

MACDUFF

Not in the legions
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damned
In evils to top Macbeth.

That, when they shall be opened, black Macbeth
35
Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state
Esteem him as a lamb, ~~being compared~~
~~With my confineless harms.~~

MACDUFF

Not in the legions
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damned
In evils to top Macbeth. 40

Uncut text: 40 lines

25

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“How Whiteness Dominates the Study of Shakespeare”

Shakespeare's Globe *Such Stuff* podcast, Season 6, Episode 2 (2020)

Farah Karim-Cooper:

You've written really eloquently about the Whiteness of Shakespeare, and I wonder if you could talk a bit more about the way Shakespeare is read, how Whiteness manifests and dominates the reading of Shakespeare.

Ambereen Dadabhoy:

...[P]art of the Whiteness that arises when we are reading Shakespeare, I think, is in how he has been positioned for us as this kind of universal: 'Shakespeare speaks for all of us.' And in having that power to speak for all of us, we never really think about the identity of the speaker. And so, Shakespeare has been positioned as a transcendent figure, without race, without gender, without politics, without anything. And that's an incredible position to be in, so that you are never questioned for your ideological agendas because Shakespeare doesn't have any—it's just Shakespeare.

But if we actually think about the fact that Shakespeare was a white man and that Whiteness was important to the work that he's writing, then we have to actually take seriously those moments in Shakespeare where race comes up and we sort of gloss it over. So, I'm thinking about like moments in like *Much Ado* where Claudio says he would marry Hero's cousin even if she were an Ethiop. What does that mean? If we've read Kim Hall's *Things of Darkness*, we know exactly what that means, but if we haven't read it, we're just maybe in the moment of teaching or in the moment of reading, writing it off as some sort of aberration, or this is some sort of old-fashioned language that's not relevant to us. Or it doesn't mean what we *think* it means. And that instinctual what we think it means and the writing off of it I think is very much the position of reading through Whiteness, which is a position of ignoring race until it becomes something that we can't ignore anymore.

In *Othello* we can't ignore it anymore, and yet I've still seen scholars and I've witnessed productions where people say we didn't want this play to be about race. In which case, I ask why did you decide to do this one instead and not *Cymbeline* if you wanted to talk about violence against women or not *The Winter's Tale* if you wanted to talk about jealousy. You pick up *Othello* for a reason and if you're not going to read race, well, you have to think about what kind of privilege you have in deciding that you can't see race anymore. And that's the same privilege in deciding that Shakespeare gets to

Speak for all of us, because white male position can always be rendered transcendent whereas my position as a Pakistani Muslim woman, I can only ever speak for myself.

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Choral Montage Rubric

Common Core Standard	Proficiency 5 pts	Practicing 4 pts	Primary 3pts
W9-10.5 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.	Students actively engage in the development of a coherent piece of writing through editing and revision by resequencing lines of text to strengthen message, theme and tone , including the incorporation of varied approaches like repetition, unison and echo .	Students engage in the development of a coherent piece of writing through revision by sequencing lines of text to strengthen message , including the incorporation of varied approaches like repetition, unison and echo .	Students engage in the development of a piece of writing through revision by sequencing lines of text.
SL9-10.1.d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.	Students use their voices thoughtfully to both pose and respond to ideas about how the editing and revision should be conducted and organized . Students justify their choices and work to make their ideas clear to others. Students respectfully disagree and ultimately arrive at consensus .	Students use their voices thoughtfully to pose ideas about how the editing and revision should be organized . Students work to make their ideas clear to others. Students respectfully disagree and ultimately arrive at consensus .	Students use their voices to pose ideas about how the editing and revision should be organized . Students attempt to respectfully disagree and arrive at consensus .