

FALL FOR SHAKESPEARE

A MENTOR MOM © CLASS

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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.

As You Like It Act 2, scene 7, 139-143

1. Have a plan!

- How many students do you plan on having? Is it your own family or are you opening the class up to a co-op?
- Location! Location! Your home may be too small. Check out libraries and other community rooms.
- Text. (Not cellular!) Pick a Shakespeare play that you want to study.
- Visual Aids. Not all students do well with just listening to "lectures". Having visual aids help students who need to see what you are talking about.
- Group Activities. You can't teach theatre literature without doing some acting!
- Attend a performance. Shakespeare is for all ages and can be seen most anywhere, whether in schools or on the professional stage.

2. Know what you're talking about.

Not everyone has a background in theatre or Shakespeare for that matter. Here are some resources to jump start you or to give you a quick refresher:

[Sparknotes 101 Shakespeare](#)

[The Complete Idiots Guide to Shakespeare](#)

[Shakespeare's Words: A Glossary & Language](#)

[Companion](#) by Crystal & Crsytal

[Shakespeare](#), by Michael Wood

3. Advertise

There are so many resources available for advertising. Check out your local homeschool websites. Once you have taught a class, let the parents spread the word. Recommendations bring in lots of interest.

Pick a Theme: Once you have chosen which text you will be using, ie Hamlet, Othello, etc., pick a theme. Shakespeare's plays are full of them. Limit to just one or two, or your students and you will be overwhelmed.

Who's The Man? Students should get the basics from you about who Shakespeare was, but have them do some research on their own. Who was he? What time period in English history did he live? Have them research the Globe Theatre, Sumptuary Laws, Theatre Troupes of the time. You can't understand Shakespeare until you understand what he was aware of.

Activities: It is a sad Shakespeare class that doesn't have the students up and working on great scenes or soliloquies. There are many activities that can be done that address the themes within Shakespeare's plays.

The key point is to have fun! Let the children know you are there to make it easy to learn. Let them get involved. Activities are KEY to teaching Shakespeare.

CROSS THAT LINE HAMLET! (Hamlet)

Lies! Lies! Lies! (Othello)

The Green Eyed Monster (Othello movie poster)

Giving up the Ghost (Hamlet)

The Great Shakespeare Experiment – Opera,
Western, Horror, Musical, etc

Shakespeare in Parts – NEA

**Don't limit yourself to just the text. Watch and
compare clips of the play on film.**

How does Black and White differ from Color?

Have the students memorize To Be or Not To Be and
perform it in class. Then show Olivier performing it,
and then Brannagh. Compare styles.

Silence the film and allow the students to observe
Hamlet and his reaction as he sees the ghost of his
father.

TAKE FIVE!

Take time to perform and enjoy. Doing is a part of
learning.

Allow students to perform scenes from Shakespeare.
Invite parents and siblings. Charge them the original
penny rates for seats and standing. Have a student
selling oranges.

Perform soliloquies before judges and earn a certificate
from the NEA.