

Tales from Shakespeare

a Study Guide
by Matt Whitling

Logos School Literature Series

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Note: This workbook was developed to use with Charles and Mary Lamb's book Tales from Shakespeare. It may be purchased from a number of retailers, including:

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The Works of William Shakespeare

(1564-1616)



Comedy	Tragedy	History	Poetry
All's Well That Ends Well	Anthony and Cleopatra	Henry IV, part 1	The Sonnets
As You Like it	Coriolanus	Henry IV, part 2	A lover's Complaint
The Comedy of Errors	Hamlet	Henry V	The Rape of Lucrece
Cymbeline	Julius Caesar	Henry VI, part 1	Venus and Adonis
Love's Labours Lost	King Lear	Henry VI, part 2	
Measure for Measure	Macbeth	Henry VI, part 3	Funeral Elegy
The Merry Wives of Windsor	Othello	Henry VIII	
The Merchant of Venice	Romeo and Juliet	King John	
A Midsummer Night's Dream	Timon of Athens	Richard II	
Much Ado About Nothing	Titus Andronicus	Richard III	
Pericles, Prince of Tyre			
Taming of the Shrew			
The Tempest			
Troilus and Cressida			
Twelfth Night			
Two Gentlemen of Verona			
Winter's Tale			

Tales from Shakespeare

Introduction

This resource is designed to help students learn about ten Shakespearian plays. The goal is to provide a thorough introduction to these works by having the student read, interact with and memorize the foundational information of each play. First the student will read the adapted text twice, once independently and once out loud in a small group. The second step consists of completing a worksheet and participating in a discussion which addresses each of the following areas: describing characters, summarizing the plot, defining vocabulary and answering comprehension questions. Individual worksheets, a test review, a final exam, answer keys and ideas for integration with writing are all included.

Please note: the vocabulary work references two editions of Charles and Mary Lamb's book; the Signet edition is 1986, the Puffin edition 1987. Your edition may have different page numbers.

Directions

Intro Day

Spend some time talking to the class about Shakespeare. What are the different types of plays that he wrote? Have the students take notes while you define and distinguish between a comedy and a tragedy illustrating each concept by discussing famous plays, books, or movies that the students are already familiar with.

Day One (approximately 45 min.)

1. Give a short introduction to the play which sketches the main plot but doesn't give away the solution or conclusion. It is helpful at this time to prick the student's interest by asking a question that will be answered as he reads or that is related to the theme of the play in an interesting way. For example a teacher might ask, "Does anyone know what a shrew is?" After a definition is given, the attributes of a shrew could be listed on the board and the students would commence reading with the question, "What does this play have to do with taming a shrew?" on their minds.
2. Student reads the play silently.
3. If he finishes early, he will begin to complete the worksheet.

Day Two (approximately one hour)

1. Today the students will read the play again out loud. I break them into groups of two to four students for this activity. They are encouraged to briefly discuss any pertinent questions that come up about the play as they read.

2. Once the group has finished reading, each student is to return to his seat and complete the worksheet individually.
3. Any portion of the worksheet which was not completed in class on days one and two is homework.

Day Three (approximately 15 min.)

1. The teacher leads a discussion; the goal of which is to complete the Plot Summary (class) portion of the worksheet. Once the students have been taught how to summarize a play or book in three short sentences, the teacher can simply ask for suggestions from the class and modify them when needed. The three sentences are to be thought of as the beginning, middle and end of the play. I allow a maximum of four words per sentence. The Plot Summary (class) will be the same for everyone while the Plot Summary (individual) will vary slightly from student to student.
2. Students pass in the worksheet.
3. Teacher briefly discusses the answers to the comprehension questions with the class.

*At this point a new play can be introduced (return to day one) or more time can be spent doing any one of the following activities.

- A. Have the students read the original work.
- B. Have the students listen to an audio tape of the original work while they follow the script.
- C. Show the students a movie of the play or attend a local performance of the play.
- D. Once you have covered a few plays, divide the students into groups and have them do a short pantomime of each play while the audience tries to guess which play is being performed.
- E. Perform the play or part of the play as a class.

Conclusion

As the students work through each of the ten plays they will need to keep their graded worksheets in a binder. Once all ten plays have been covered, it is time for the final test. A study sheet is included to help prepare for the exam. A board game is a fun way for the students to go over pertinent information that will be on the test. If time allows, it would be beneficial to divide the class into groups and have each group create its own board game from the basic information in each play. Once the games are complete, the groups can switch and play.

Integrating Writing

Cover the first three plays (*The Tempest*, *The Winter's Tale* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) then complete a Venn Diagram with the class on the similarities and differences between the three. The students are to select three of the similarities and write a five-paragraph essay on the Similarities of three Shakespearian Comedies. This activity can also be done with the three tragedies (*Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Romeo & Juliet*). See the answer key at the back for examples of Venn Diagrams.

Name: _____

Date: _____

THE TEMPEST

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

I. Statistics

A. Plot Type: _____ (Comedy, Tragedy, History)

B. Time of Plot: _____

C. Locale: _____

D. Theme: _____

II. Principal Characters: Describe the attributes and roles of the following characters.

A. Prospero: _____

B. Miranda: _____

C. Ferdinand: _____

D. Ariel: _____

E. Caliban: _____

F. King of Naples: _____

G. Antonio: _____

H. Gonzalo: _____

III. Plot Summary: Summarize the plot in three three-word sentences (Beginning, Middle, End).

(Individual) A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

(Class) A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

IV. Sketch: Sketch a memorable scene from the play.



V. Vocabulary

		Signet page #	Puffin page #	Guess the meaning from context	Write the dictionary definition
A	advocate	17	17		
B	harpy	20	20		
C	voracious	20	20		
D	immortal	21	21		
E	reconciliation	22	22		

VI. Comprehension Questions: Restate the question, and answer in complete sentences.

A. Why does Prospero test Ferdinand's constancy? How does he do it?

B. Who had imprisoned good spirits in trees?

C. How did Prospero gain such power over the winds and waves of the sea?

D. What enabled Prospero to release many good spirits from the bodies of large trees?

Name: _____

Date: _____

THE WINTER'S TALE

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

I. Statistics

A. Plot Type: _____ (Comedy, Tragedy, History)

B. Time of Plot: _____

C. Locale: _____

D. Theme: _____

II. Principal Characters: Describe the attributes and roles of the following characters.

A. Leontes: _____

B. Mamillius: _____

C. Camillo, Antigonus, Cleomemes, Dion: _____

D. Polixenes: _____

E. Florizel: _____

F. Old Shepherd: _____

G. Hermione: _____

H. Perdita: _____

I. Paulina: _____

III. Plot Summary: Summarize the plot in three three-word sentences (Beginning, Middle, End).

(Individual) A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

(Class) A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

IV. Sketch: Sketch a memorable scene from the play.

