A supplement to Yale Rep’s *Cymbeline* Study Guide, this TOOLKIT is designed to further engage your students in our production of Shakespeare’s play. The following pages include theatre games and exercises to prepare students for seeing live theatre, as well as activities, information, and lessons geared specifically to this production of *Cymbeline*.

**EDITORS**
Amy Boratko and Rachel Carpman

**WILL POWER!**
**EDUCATION CONSULTANT**
Nancy Herman

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Taylor Barfield, Asa Benally,
Jennifer Kiger, Kay Perdue
Meadows, Steven Padla, Lynda
A.H. Paul, Catherine Sheehy, and
Evan Yionoulis
An Actor’s World: Vocal Exercises

The following vocal exercises model the preparation an actor might do to get her voice ready for a performance. These activities also work well as ice-breakers to ease students into theatre games and give them a taste of the way that theatre demands an actor to use his voice and body in live performance. These exercises will also give students a chance to hear the human voice in an expanded range of tones beyond everyday conversation.

Relaxing the Jaw

Make as wide a face as possible (wide open mouth, wide eyes). Then scrunch as tightly as possible. Repeat four times.

- Yawn on a descending scale.
- Chew imaginary bubble gum.
- Yawn on a descending scale.
- Chew thick peanut butter.
- Yawn on an ascending scale.
- Chew a hard candy.

Stick the tongue all the way out and pointing down, then up, then left, and then right.

Make as wide a face as possible. Then scrunch your face as tightly as possible. Repeat four times. Leader can call out “Big face! Little face!” as needed.
An Actor’s World: Vocal Exercises

Listening to Sounds, Part One: Name Game

a. Students should stand in a large circle. One by one, they say their names.
b. Next, go around the circle again, but this time everyone should pronounce their names in exaggerated, silly, and/or strange ways. The goal is to elongate vowels and purposefully over-emphasize each consonant. Encourage students to play with the pitch and vocal tone. Ask them to get to know their names as simply a collection of sounds.
c. As the game progresses, ask students to identify any sounds they haven’t heard before and listen for the way a speaker’s changes in pitch and sound-shape affect the way others hear her.

Example:

“Jane Doe” becomes Jjjjjj-ja-ja-jah-nnnnnnuuhhh DDDDooooohuh

Can students still catch each unique syllable? Is anyone noticing the difference between, for example, “ay” and “eh?” Between “oh” and “ooh?” Can anyone feel from exactly where in the mouth certain sounds are made? Do any sounds seem to possess more power than others? Why? How might that power be useful to an actor on stage?

Listening to Sounds, Part Two: Conducting the Symphony of Your Name

a. For this follow-up exercise, one student at a time becomes the “conductor” a makes use of her classmates as “instruments” of the “orchestra.”
b. The conductor assigns different parts of her name to her classmates. Names do not necessarily need to be broken down by syllables. “Jessica,” for example, could become Jess-ih-ca OR Je-sss-ih-cccc-ahh
c. Once parts have been assigned, the conductor points to the instruments, who in turn say the portion of the name assigned to them. Conductors should be encouraged to be creative when composing their name’s symphony: hand gestures indicating, volume, speed, repetition, and rhythm can lead to fascinating sonic discoveries!

This activity is primarily about vocal play, but it is also intended to spur focused collaboration—an essential skill for theatre artists—between students.
An Actor’s World: Vocal Exercises

Listening to Sounds, Part Three: Delicious Words

a. This game will give students the opportunity to consider sound in tandem with their other senses. Begin by having students think of their favorite foods. Go around the room and have each student pronounce their food in such a way that emphasizes its deliciousness. Ask them to communicate the taste and texture of the food through the way they say the words.

EXAMPLES:

If the food is **French fries**, ask the student to see if she can communicate the sizzle of the frying oil, the heat of biting into a hot fry, and the delight of crunching into the golden battered potato.

If the food is **ice cream**, ask the student if he can convey the smooth texture, the cold temperature, and the joy he feels when the first bite of that sweet treat hits his tongue.

b. Next, have the students invent a nonsense word and speak it aloud. Then have the students put the deliciousness into their new words (particularly into the vowels). Can they achieve the same sensory communication through sound-shaping these nonsense words as they did for their favorite foods?

EXAMPLE: **Ta-sha-koo-za-bee-bee**

c. An alternate option to continue this game is to do a second round with the students' least favorite foods, keeping an ear open for how emotional response affects the way students manipulate their sounds.
An Actor’s World: Vocal Exercises

Enunciation Exercises and Tongue Twisters

Short Phrases #1:
Speak each of the following as clearly and completely as possible five times in a row. Increase the tempo to increase the challenge.

Around the rough and rugged rock the ragged rascal ran.

An annoying noise annoys an oyster.

Who washed Washington’s white woolen underwear when Washington’s washer woman went west?

Slippery southern snakes slide swiftly down ski slopes.

An elephant was asphyxiated in the asphalt.

Zizzi’s zippy zipper zips.

Six thick thistle sticks

What gall to play ball in this small hall!

I cannot shut it any shutter.

A hotch-potch, moss-blotched, botched scotch block
An Actor’s World: Vocal Exercises

Short Phrases #2
The substitution of “n” for “ng” is common in colloquial speech, but an error of articulation. Have students speak aloud the following words. In addition to challenging them to perfect their articulation of the “-ing” (which is its own excellent vocal warm-up), ask what the difference sounds might indicate about a character speaking them. How does articulation affect our understanding of a person’s identity?

Doin’ vs. Doing
Comin’ vs. Coming
Nothin’ vs. Nothing
Walkin’ vs. Walking
Talkin’ vs. Talking

Short Phrases #3:
These phrases focus on repetitive plosive consonant work. Once students have mastered articulating them, challenge them to speak as fast as possible without sacrificing attention to enunciation.

Poppa locka poppa locka poppa locka boo!
Bully bully bully bully bully bully bah!
Digga rigga digga rigga digga rigga roo!
Hobba ninny hobba ninny hobba ninny hah!
An Actor’s World: Getting The Body Ready/Physical Exercises

Another instrument a performer relies on is her body. An actor’s body can tell as much as her voice. Just as an athlete should warm up her muscles to avoid injury, so should a performer. The following exercises are designed to not only raise students’ awareness of this part of the actor’s world, but also to help elevate their comfort level with performing.

Physical Warm-up #1: “How do you do?”

a. Have the group walk around the room. When one student passes another, each must say “how do you do?” and then immediately change direction. Continue until each student has greeted every other student at least once.

b. Play a second round of the game in which each student, rather than changing direction after a greeting, must walk backwards until his next greeting, then forwards, then backwards again, etc.

c. Instruct students to be aware of other people in the space and to make eye contact throughout. It should be one of the goals of the game not to bump into others; students should try to gain a mindfulness of the spatial relationships between the bodies in the room.

Physical Warm-up #2: Around the World

a. Have everyone stand in a circle. As a group, go through the following sequence: stretch up, lean right, lean left, stretch up, lean back, lean forward

b. Then pick someone to start, and instruct the person to her right that he should mimic the movement after the leader performs it. And then the person to his right should follow suit, and on and on around the circle. The idea is to create a “wave” effect of the sequence.

c. Goals to set: no physical contact is made (students must focus on maintaining control of their bodies in space—no bumping!); all eyes should stare straight ahead (everyone should use their peripheral vision to know when it’s their turn to move); gradually speed up to see how fast the group can go as a team while maintaining a cleanly-executed sequence.
Physical Warm-up #3: “Where is everybody?”

a. This game is intended to increase spatial awareness in motion. Everyone should walk slowly around the room. They should fill the space and walk wherever they want (as opposed to forming a large circle or lines).

b. When the leader claps, they must quickly change direction and continue walking. Eyes should always be looking straight ahead.

c. When the leader calls “freeze!” students must immediately stop moving and close their eyes.

d. While the students’ eyes are closed, the leader should instruct them to point at a particular person.

**EXAMPLES**

Point to where you think the tallest person in the room is right now; point to where Christopher is right now; point to where the girl wearing the blue shirt is right now; etc.

e. Keeping their pointing arms outstretched, have them open their eyes and see how well they fared. Continue playing until the group seems to have gained an ability to “see” each other even if they’re not looking at each other.
An Actor’s World: Combining Body and Voice

The game of “Bah!” affords students an opportunity to combine both vocal and physical awareness. It requires focus and asks students to develop their ability to respond to a partner “in the moment.”

Basic “Bah!”

a. Have students form a circle with enough room to safely turn to the side without hitting one another.

b. One student begins by turning to the person on his right and shouting “Bah!” while making a hand gesture that says “I’m passing this word to you.”

c. The person receives the “Bah!” and gesture and delivers it to the person to her right as quickly as possible. Each “Bah!” must be given and received with eye contact.

d. This giving and receiving of “Bah!” continues around the circle. As the game progresses, the group should try to increase speed and intensity while maintaining precise eye contact and the order of the circle (do not anticipate your “Bah!”).

“Bah!” Variations

a. Once the students master the basic game, allow them the ability to change the direction the “Bah!” travels. This will force everyone to stay on their toes.

b. Add a mimicry component. Challenge students to notice and perform every movement, vocal tone, giggle, etc. of the person passing them the “Bah!” This is not to embarrass anyone, but rather because everyone will notice how quickly the sound/gesture will change the more they try to make it the same.

c. With new rounds, pick a student to add a secondary gesture to the “Bah!” that must be repeated by the next person and make at least one complete revolution around the circle.
Lesson: History and Art

This lesson can be used with the Study Guide article “Shakespeare's Staged History” on page 4.

OBJECTIVE:
To understand the relationship between history and art.

William Shakespeare drew the stories for his plays from many different sources: folk tales, fairy tales, poetry and drama, and history. The story of Cymbeline comes from a short, historical anecdote, and Shakespeare takes great liberties with historical fact to tell a compelling and dramatic story.

Inspired by History: One might say that Cymbeline is a text that is inspired by history, rather than based on a true story. Here, students can take their own turn spinning off of history. Have students find a historical anecdote—perhaps even finding a paragraph in their history textbook. Using that paragraph alone, students can write a longer story or short play. Or, storyboard or outline for a piece of creative writing.

Questions: Ask the students where they relied on their knowledge of history and where they departed from it. Why did they make choices either way? Was it for entertainment value? To rewrite the past? To make the story more compelling? To make the story more concise and focused? What is the new line between fact and fiction? If they were doing a version of this story that hewed closely to historical fact, how would it be different?

Shakespeare Flunks History: After seeing the show, or by pulling the program off of Yale Rep’s website, look at the article “Shakespeare Flunks History.” Here, we see how Shakespeare twisted and turned history to write Cymbeline. Can you try this same “Essay Assignment” for other works of art? In pairs, have one student write a plot loosely based on history and a second student “grade” and “correct” it. What do you learn about how art and history are related?
Lesson: Designing Shakespeare

This lesson can be used with the Study Guide article “Director’s Cut: Evan Yionoulis on Cymbeline,” on pages 5–8.

OBJECTIVE: Teach students about the stage design conventions in Shakespeare’s theatre

- Introduce students to the creative process of modern theatre designers and how designers must analyze text to create a visual landscape for a production

- Help students approach the visual world of Cymbeline and exercise their own creative muscles

History: the design conventions of Shakespeare’s theatre

It wasn’t until about a hundred years after Shakespeare’s life that scenery or costumes were added to a production. During the Elizabethan period, playhouses did not use scenery or backdrops—the stages were bare, with minimal furniture for set pieces. This is why, in Shakespeare’s plays, you will note that when a location is important to a scene, it is always mentioned early in the dialogue, to clue the audience in. Similarly, actors did not wear specific costumes for specific parts. They typically wore clothes of their own period, perhaps with fancier decoration for royalty, or plainer clothes for common people. So the role of “Designer,” as we know it, did not exist when Cymbeline was first produced.

Introduce students to the modern creative process

In the interview with Cymbeline director Evan Yionoulis on pages 5–8 of the Study Guide, she explains the elements driving the design of the play:

“We’ve been looking at a lot of research of overgrown castle ruins, stones and vines, and broken arches and staircases. Mist. The historical King Cymbeline ruled around the time of the birth of Christ. We’re setting this production not specifically then, but rather in ‘a Far-Away Time.’ There’ll be a space that’s evocative of time past, and then the flesh and blood, passion-filled characters will enter, bringing life and color to it.”
Lesson: Designing Shakespeare

The ideas of “Far-Away Time” and flesh-and-blood characters inspired costume designer Asa Benally as he began the costume design process. He says that as he was planning the costumes for Cymbeline, he thought about “the mixture of the past and the present and looked at modern and historic fashion.”

First, Asa found hundreds of images of fashion that represented these ideas and pulled them together on a Pinterest board. He and Evan looked through the images together and discussed which ones really inspired them. Then Asa began to draw sketches of each character’s costume for Evan to see. On the next page you can see the inspiration photos and the final sketches for Cymbeline, Imogen, and the Queen. While the director and actors are rehearsing the play, Asa and the costume shop staff will find fabrics and make patterns to create all of Asa’s designs.

Before Seeing the Play

Have your students study the images on the next page and talk about what elements feel “modern” and what elements feel “historic” or “fairy tale.” Do the choices speak to the status of each character? What do you learn about the characters by looking at these sketches? What connections can you make to the text, and what do you learn about the characters that might not be as explicit in Shakespeare’s language?

After Seeing the Play

Ask your students if the design was successful in supporting the play—either the text, the action, or both? How did the costumes help tell the story in Cymbeline?
Lesson: Designing Shakespeare

Cymbeline

Sketches courtesy of Asa Benally.

Imogen

The Queen

Sketches courtesy of Asa Benally.
Lesson: Genre

Have students read the article on genre on page 9 of the Study Guide. After reading, share with them this quote from Noah Brody and Ben Steinfeld, who directed the Fiasco Theater’s production of Cymbeline:

“If Romeo and Juliet is a comedy gone wrong, perhaps Cymbeline is a tragedy gone right.”

Have students discuss what these directors might mean about “a tragedy gone right.” Start by listing the major plot points of Cymbeline. The list might look something like:

- Posthumous is banished
- Iachimo bets Posthumous that Imogen is unfaithful
- Iachimo sneaks into Imogen’s bedroom and reports back to Posthumous
- Posthumous renounces his wife, and asks Pisanio to kill her
- Pisanio can’t kill Imogen, so he sends her off into the wilderness
- Imogen finds Belarius and the lost princes
- Cloten tracks Imogen to the cave, Guidarius kills him
- Imogen thinks Posthumous is dead, joins the Roman army
- Rome fights Britian, Britain wins
- The truth comes out and all are reunited.

Have students decide where the action shifts—where does the tragedy begin to “go right?” If this play were a tragedy, what would need to change in the plot or action to make it a tragedy? (Remember hallmarks of a Shakespearean tragedy: plans go awry, characters turn on one another, and in the final scene the hero dies).
Lesson: Genre

2

Using the model of *Cymbeline* as a tragedy gone right, have students restructure the plots of other Shakespeare plays they may be familiar with, or other narratives you have covered together. For example, to restructure *Romeo and Juliet*, students would first list the major plot points. These might include the following:

- Romeo and Juliet meet and fall in love
- Juliet’s parents arrange her marriage to Paris
- Romeo kills Tybalt and is banished
- Romeo and Juliet are secretly married
- Friar Lawrence arranges to fake Juliet’s death
- Romeo hears of Juliet’s death and leaves Mantua, missing the messenger from Friar Lawrence
- Romeo finds Juliet dead and kills himself
- Juliet wakes up and kills herself

Students then discuss: Where does the plot turn from comedy to tragedy? Is it when Romeo kills Tybalt, introducing death into the plot? Is it when the messenger misses Romeo in Mantua, causing a tragic misunderstanding? How would the shift these events to turn the play into a comedy or a romance?

Follow up discussion questions might include:

- How do a series of actions make up a plot? Where does the plot “turn,” and what events act as hinges to the plot? Where does the fate of the characters seem to be inevitable?
- Why do you think that Shakespeare mixed up elements from comedies and tragedies in this play?
- How does a play that mixes comedy and tragedy make you feel? How does it affect how you see a happy ending?
- What contemporary plays, television shows, movies, or books mix genres?
Lesson: Character Study

This lesson can be used with the Study Guide article “Evil Queens, Loyal Servants, and Royals in Disguise: From Snow White to Imogen,” on pages 10–13.

OBJECTIVE: To recognize and analyze archetypal characters.

The Study Guide article describes the relationship between Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline* with common fairy tales. By tracing the figure of the Evil Stepmother—or, in this play, the Queen, students can use their knowledge of common archetypal characters to follow the story of *Cymbeline*.

1. Fairy Tale Map

   **Step 1:** Think about all the characters in *Cymbeline*. Take the major characters and come up with an analogous fairy tale character. For example: The Queen is like the evil stepmother in *Cinderella*.

   **Step 2:** Compare the fairy tale characters to the character in *Cymbeline*. What do these characters have in common? How might they be different?

2. Character Profiling

   **Step 1:** Have the students divide up the characters in *Cymbeline* into “good” and “bad,” based on their actions in the play. What do the characters in each group have in common? Are there characters in the play that defy an easy label? Who are those characters—the ones in between groups? What are their actions in the play? Why don’t they fit easily into a category?

   **Step 2:** Pick a character. Make a list of everything that he or she does in the play. What does he or she want? How does she get it? What stands in his or her way?
Lesson: Theatre Spaces

This lesson can be used with the Study Guide article “Playing Spaces: How Theatre Buildings Shaped Shakespeare’s Plays,” on pages 18–19.

OBJECTIVES: Teach students about the different types of theatre spaces and how space affects written texts and plays in performance.

- Get students thinking about Shakespeare as text meant to be performed, as opposed to a text meant only for reading.
- Help students think about all the different choices that go into putting on a play.
- Think about the relationship between written text and physical space.
- Prepare the students for seeing a production at the University Theatre.

Theatre Spaces

On page 19 of the Study Guide and on the next page are examples of two of Shakespeare’s theatres: Blackfriars and the Globe.

These theatres are models of two different stage configurations. Blackfriars is an end-stage theatre, which looks much like modern proscenium theatres, while the Globe has a thrust stage. Yale Rep’s production of Cymbeline will take place in the University Theatre, which has a proscenium stage.

End-stage: A theatre with a stage at one end. The audience faces only one side of the stage.

Proscenium: An end-stage theatre with an arch or frame between the audience and the stage.

Thrust: A stage which sticks out into the audience from a back wall. The audience faces the stage on three sides.
Lesson: Theatre Spaces

Questions
What is different about staging a play on an end-stage or a thrust stage? How might an audience relate to the play differently on each kind of stage? Is the action more separate from the audience in one configuration? Is it closer in another? Why might a director choose to put a play on one kind of stage or another?

Using the reconstructions of Blackfriars and the Globe, imagine how Shakespeare’s audiences might have watched his plays. How is this different from how modern audiences watch plays? Do you think this made a difference in the performing of the plays? For example, would having people standing at the foot of the stage require a different style of acting? Why or why not?

How do the settings in *Cymbeline* match up with these theatre spaces? Do you think one type of theatre or another is better for this play? Look at the choices that director Evan Yionoulis makes with her production: how have she and the set designer collaborated to make this production work within the University Theatre.

Here are some pieces of theatre architecture students will see in the University Theatre:

- **Proscenium**
  The arch or frame that divides the audience and the stage.

- **Apron**
  The part of the stage that sticks out past the proscenium.

- **Wings**
  The backstage areas on the left and right of the theatre where the actors wait before going onstage.

- **House**
  The showbiz term for the place where the audience sits.
Lesson: Theatre Spaces

Globe Theatre
The following handouts were designed by Nancy Herman to accompany her presentation “Playing with Shakespeare” during the Teachers’ Workshop.
TRANSLATION EXERCISE

Durst thou make assay to glean the words which follow hard upon? So please you, readeth these lines and closely followeth with care each various instruction.

1. With thy partner readeth in turn this scant interlude, aloud with booming voice.
2. Scribe thy gleaning word by word, neatly 'neath each line below.

Teacher: Student, hast thou brought thy homework to our meeting? Thou art as tardy as a wayward child!

Student: I pray you, could'st thou repeat thy query? Mine ear did not attend thy words. What wishest thou?

Teacher: Be not a rudesby! List' with care! Thy homework, knave! Be brief!

Student: Forsooth, I have it not.

Teacher: Alas! Thy words like daggers enter in mine ear!
Student: Last even’night, as I my task completed, my mind was grown-over with weariness, and ere I it stowed in my packback, alas, I fell to sleeping!

Teacher: Fie on thee! Thrice before this very week hast thou come hither unprepared! What say’st thee? What offer of excuse can’st thou to me make?

Student: ’Tis at home. Shall I repair me thither and bring it hither?

Teacher: ’Zounds! Miscreant, would’st thou add absence to thy list of sins? Thou shalt be punished hereafter!

Student: I entreat thee, sweet madam/sir, allowest thou me my homework to bring hither. Punish me not. My guilt sits heavy on my shoulders and whispers scolding in mine ear, and I am sick at heart for my offense.

Teacher: Aye me, thou art a slippery eel that hast a silken tongue... yet I am moved. Hie thee home, then, and fetch what thou hast left behind. Make haste! Make haste! But list' with care.... If ever thou again com’st hither unprepared, thou wilt wish thyself begotten in another century!
1. Are there any words or phrases you were unable to translate, or about whose meaning you are uncertain? If so, write them here.

2. Language conventions are the formally and informally agreed-upon ways in which we use language, whether spoken or written. Some of these conventions have changed since Shakespeare's time. What language conventions did you notice in the dialogue which are unfamiliar to you, or different from the way we speak today?
3. Based upon the language in the exercise, what do you think the following words or phrases mean:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rudesby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forsooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hither/thither</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repair me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zounds!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Can you find/identify any figures of speech in the dialogue? Write them here. (Hint: look for a metaphor, a simile, some personification.)
In Act I, Scene IV of *Cymbeline*, from which the excerpt on the next page is taken, Posthumus, Imogen’s husband, has been sent into exile. Imogen discusses his leave-taking with Pisanio, Posthumus’s servant.

1. With your partner, choose parts and read the brief excerpt aloud.

2. Switch parts and read it aloud again.

3. Decide who is best suited for each part and read it aloud one more time.

4. With your partner, discuss the excerpt in order to answer these questions:
   - What is the meaning of their lines?
   - What do you not understand? What confuses you?
   - What do you understand the tone of the scene to be?

5. Read the scene aloud one more time.

6. Act out each of the following brief moments, as they are described in the excerpt:
   - Posthumus and Pisanio, during the departure
   - Posthumus and Imogen, as she describes what she’d have done had she been present at his departure.
IMOGEN
I would thou grew’st unto the shores o’ the haven,
And question’dst every sail: if he should write
And not have it, ’twere a paper lost,
As offer’d mercy is. What was the last
That he spake to thee?

PISANIO
It was his queen, his queen!

IMOGEN
Then waved his handkerchief?

PISANIO
And kiss’d it, madam.

IMOGEN
Senseless Linen! happier therein than I!
And that was all?

PISANIO
No, madam; for so long
As he could make me with this eye or ear
Distinguish him from others, he did keep
The deck, with glove, or hat, or handkerchief,
Still waving, as the fits and stirs of ’s mind
Could best express how slow his soul sail’d on,
How swift his ship.

IMOGEN
Thou shouldst have made him
As little as a crow, or less, ere left
To after-eye him.

PISANIO
Madam, so I did.

IMOGEN
I would have broke mine eye-strings; crack’d them, but
To look upon him, till the diminution
Of space had pointed him sharp as my needle,
Nay, follow’d him, till he had melted from
The smallness of a gnat to air, and then
Have turn’d mine eye and wept…..
Choose a lengthy speech by any character in *Cymbeline* and have students read it aloud while walking around.

- Students should physically change direction every time they reach a comma, colon or full stop. This frequent change in direction will illustrate how each clause in a sentence suggests a new thought or idea for a character.

- Repeat this exercise, but instead of changing direction, have students say the words “comma” and “full stop” out loud when they encounter punctuation. This exercise helps heighten awareness of where there is punctuation in our speech and what its purpose is.

- Using the same text, have students underline what they think are the natural stress words. If they spot an often repeated word, they should underline that as well. Then students can practice speaking the text with an emphasis on these key stress words.

- Using the same speech, have students speak it aloud forcing themselves to make a physical gesture on every single word. This gesture can be clearly connected to the word (for example a finger point on “him”) or can be more abstract. This exercise helps students to value every word in the text. Students will prioritize the correct stresses because they will naturally gesture more when saying key words.
You must accomplish the following tasks.

All work is due on ____________________

1. Update (the play under study) by choosing a time and place other than (the play’s setting) in which to stage the play. (For example, a number of years ago I directed *The Tempest* by Shakespeare in which, in the original, a father and daughter are shipwrecked on a deserted island inhabited by sprites and fairies. In my production it took place on another planet; the storm that shipwrecked the characters was a meteor storm and the indigenous creatures were other-worldly aliens. Just two years ago I directed *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* but placed it first in a country club and then—later in the play—in Central Park. In each case these choices were not arbitrary, but worked to emphasize certain ideas in the text that I thought were important.)

2. Write a concept statement (1–2 pages) that describes your vision of the play. You might start by answering questions such as: what is the primary conflict in the play? What is the world of the play like? What other time and/or place might be suitable for the story? What other time/place might be suitable to highlight the big ideas and themes? In other words, the time and place you choose may/can certainly be creative and unique, but should not be totally arbitrary. You’ll need to think about why your updated vision is appropriate to the original text. This should be the product of a group effort.

3. Choose a specific scene in the play that is of great interest to you. That scene will be the basis for this project.

4. For that scene, you must create the following. One person should take ultimate responsibility for each area.
   a. A set design: you may create both an elevation (front view) and a ground plan (top-down view) drawing of the design OR you may construct a 3-dimensional
model of the design. This should be accompanied by an explanation of why your group chose this particular location in place and time, including the specific choices behind your set design.

b. **Casting:** You must cast an actor for each of the characters in the scene. Then in a substantive paragraph (one per character), describe that character’s personality, citing evidence from the text, and explain why the actor you have “cast” is a good match.

c. **Costume design:** You must sketch/design/find an image that represents a costume for each character in the scene. Each image should be accompanied by an explanation of the specific choices that make the costume a good one.

d. A prompt book of the scene which is an annotated copy of the text that provides a detailed description of what happens in the scene. This will include information regarding the subtext within the scene and the specific lines; the action in the scene (blocking, business, etc.); the relationships between and among the characters, etc. This is a great place to use your imagination to consider all the possible poses, gestures, actions, expressions, reactions, and so on that the characters might have at various points in the scene.

Your group will then present the highlights of these projects to the class. I suggest using a PowerPoint presentation full of images for this.