

21st Century Shakespeare: A Metatheatrical Shadow Puppet Collaboration

"All the world's a stage/ And all the men and women merely players..." *As You Like It* II.vii.139-140



Essential Questions:

- Why Shakespeare? Why, 400+ years later, does the literary world still return to these plays as the pinnacle of human creativity in the English language? (Why are so many people, including your teacher, so obsessed and enamored with these works?)
- How does telling stories through performance differ from written storytelling?
- How can Shakespeare (and stories in general) be adapted across space and time for many audiences?
- What "21st Century" skills and dispositions does it take to collaborate with many people on a large-scale task with lots of moving pieces?

What wilt thou do?

In this project, you will become something of a Shakespeare scholar. Shakespeare DID NOT write these plays so that high school students would struggle through them as books! They are not meant to be read inertly! We will dig in to several plays, mostly through *performance* by actors (ourselves and others). We will study one play in depth and produce it as a metatheatrical shadow puppet show, using Shakespeare's words and our vision. You will collaborate with your peers to accomplish the many parts of this complicated task: script-cutting, directing, acting, puppet and set design, lighting and tech, sound recording and editing, publicity and documentation. You will each become *players* yourselves, voicing at least one part in the final soundtrack. For all of this, you will need to understand the Shakespeare, and you will....

Assessment (link to [RUBRIC](#))

Your Shakespeare Puppet Show grade will be largely based on your application of and your reflection on your growth in the so-called "21st century survival skills." If you are participating whole-heartedly in the production of the puppet show, you will need to use many of your 21st century skills on a regular basis. Throughout the project, we will take time to document the work you put in on the play in class and out. Be sure to document which skills you are using and explain how your work is evidence of that skill. This documentation will help you greatly in your reflection later.

❖ 21st Century Survival Skills.

- Initiative/Resourcefulness
- Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
- Effective Communication
- Curiosity/Creativity/Imagination
- Collaboration
- Adaptability
- Independent Research and Learning
- OTHERS?

Major Assignments:

Shakespeare Journal

Romeo and Juliet Seminar

Small Group Scene Production

Promptbook/Play analysis in Theater Companies

THE SHOW! (whole group)

Project Reflection: 21st Century Skills and Why Shakespeare?

Production Teams

Art Design: Puppets, Sets, Props, Costumes, All visual elements

Crew (Engineering and Tech): Stage Construction, Lighting, Sound

Sound Production: Recording, Editing, Musical Score

Creative (directors and principal cast): Script Cutting, Blocking, Voice Acting, Aesthetics

Puppet Show Roles (*denotes leadership role)

Note: Most of you will have multiple roles in this production. Everyone should stay busy all the time!

***Producer (Puppet Master!)**

- The producer is essentially like a stage manager, coordinating the work of all the teams. You take the lead on both the big picture stuff AND the actual nitty-gritty of the puppet show itself.

***Directors (2-3)**

- The directors are the creative leaders, coordinating the collective vision. They take the lead on cutting the script, blocking the scenes, and incorporating the creative feedback from all teams.

***Art Director**

- The art director takes the lead on the visual elements of the puppet show: the puppets, the sets and the costumes. You will be the person in charge of the shadow sweatshop, and you will coordinate with the tech and creative teams about the overall aesthetic of the play.

***Sound Editor**

- The sound editor is responsible for editing together the entire recorded soundtrack of the play: the voice acting, the sound effects, and the musical score. You will need to master a sound editing program of your choosing!

***Technical Director**

- The technical director is responsible for the construction and the wiring of the puppet theater itself. You are the leader of the lighting and staging crew and will coordinate as needed with the other production teams.

Public Relations

- This small team will be responsible for publicity and community outreach. It will be your job to advertise the show, communicate with the community, and create publicity materials and programs for the show.

Puppet/Set Designers

- Making puppets, sets, costumes, and other visual elements

Crew

- Stage Construction, lighting, wiring, etc.

Sound Tech

- Assists with the recording and sound production

Cast: All of us!!! Everyone will have at least a small part.