

Shakespeare's Runway

Overview: To delve into the understanding of character through translating the text into a design concept.

Goal: Students will use contextual clues and their understanding of text to inspire an original, artistic representation of the character.

Outcomes: Students will gain personal understanding of the characters by relating the text through the group process to create an original interpretation of the character.

Materials

- A scene featuring each of the three characters being studied
- A variety of art supplies: markers, scissors, tape, etc.
- About 40 clothing items that can create a wide variety of looks
- Safety pins and/or binder clips to adjust fabric to fit
- Body templates for design sketching (see Male and Female Templates on following page) and scrap paper for notes

HOW TO PLAY: to study one of the characters from the play in order to outfit this character in a way that reflects who they are, based on your study of the text.

1. You are provided text that will give character clues for each person. Read the selected scene, taking note of words or character clues in the text as you go. Share with your group the images that popped out at you, seeming to best describe the character.
2. As a group, select three key words that inspire you in your design process.
3. Individually within your group, create a rendering of your character using various art supplies and the template provided for you.
4. Join your group again and, as a team, select one rendering to be brought to life. Elements may be combined from multiple drawings, but be prepared to explain your choices in the design presentation.
5. Now that your team has agreed, the group must choose a “shopper” to go get the items needed from the box of clothing including hats, shoes, skirts, etc.; choose the items that represent your character. The shopper may not be able to find the exact match—your job is to get items that match the illustration as closely as possible. Groups may also use



found objects, their own clothing, and other assorted art supplies on hand.

6. **Presentation:** One person from your team will serve as the model, one person will serve as the main presenter to tell the class what line from the text most fully embodies your look, and each member of the team must explain how the words are reflected in the clothing choices you made. The model must perform this line of text. If possible, take a photo of the model next to the design ideas to complete the activity.

Reflection

1. Were there things about the character that you did not recognize until you were looking at the text from a designer's perspective?
2. How did your group arrive at the design concept that you ended up modeling? Did you have to make some compromises?
3. When looking at the other groups' designs, what do you think they most successfully represented about their given character? When you see their word choices, what costume item most embodies one of those words to you.
4. What element of the character's costume do you find the most intriguing or thought-provoking?

Note: Students do not need to be worried about a look that would go well in a magazine, i.e., one that could have commercial appeal. It might be easy for some students to fall into this way of thinking as this kind of advertising is seen everywhere, but this exercise is only about physically embodying the character's personality.

- **Extension activities:** Those who are fashion- or artistically-oriented might want to base a clothing line on all of the main characters in the play, presented as a runway.

Scrapbooking or creating a collage from different magazines or drawing a costume rendering first provides the opportunity for students to share their own ideas about their character with their classmates.





Male and Female Templates