

TEACHER'S GUIDE

SEPTEMBER 2011

Guide compiled by Trish Tillman

PREP YOUR STUDENTS FOR THE SHOW—
Book your pre- or post-show Classroom Workshop!
Contact the Artistic Learning Administrator at
510-548-3422 x136 for more info.

the TAMING *of the* SHREW



CRAZY THING CALLED LOVE



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CAL SHAKES
CALIFORNIA SHAKESPEARE THEATER

IN THIS GUIDE:

1. Cal Shakes Overview

- a. Cal Shakes' Mission and Funders..... 3
- b. Artistic Learning Programs at Cal Shakes 4

2.



***The Taming of the Shrew* Overview**

- a. A Note to Teachers 6
- b. Plot Summary 7
- c. Who's Who: The Actors 8
- d. Who's Who: The Characters/ Character Map 11
- e. Seeing the Play: Before and After 12
- f. Shakespeare's Language: Word! 13

3.



***The Taming of the Shrew*: “Crazy Thing Called Love”**

- a. Crazy Thing Called: You Don't Like Someone, but Maybe You Do 15
- b. Crazy Thing Called: A Shrew 16

4.



Elizabethan Culture Overview

- a. William Shakespeare: A Mysterious Life..... 18
- b. Go Girls!..... 19

5.



Resources

- a. *The Taming of the Shrew* on Film 21
- b. Additional Resources: Books and Internet 22

6.



Classroom Activity Guide

- a. Cal Shakes' Mission and Funders..... 24
- b. Social Networking Character Study: “Shakesbook” 25
- c. Dear Diary 29
- d. Twittering Shrews 30
- e. *Shrew* Remix 31
- f. The Dating Game: *Shrew* Style 33
- g. Make it Work: Shakespeare's Runway 34
- h. Musical Interlude 37
- i. Brush Up Your Shakespeare reference sheet..... 39
- j. Cal Shakes Critique: Elementary and Middle School 40
- k. Cal Shakes Critique: Middle and High School..... 41

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CAL SHAKES' MISSION AND FUNDERS

OUR MISSION

We strive for everyone, regardless of age, circumstance, or background, to discover and express the relevance of Shakespeare and the classics in their lives by:

- Making boldly imagined and deeply entertaining interpretations of Shakespeare and the classics.
- Providing in-depth, far-reaching creative educational opportunities.
- Bringing disparate communities together around the creation of new American plays inspired by classic literature.

OUR FUNDERS AND SPONSORS



Our Student Discovery program for *The Taming of the Shrew* is part of *Shakespeare for a New Generation*, a national program of the National Endowment for the Arts in cooperation with Arts Midwest.

Artistic Learning programs are also underwritten by generous support from the Bank of America Foundation, Dale Family Fund, Dodge & Cox, Sidney E. Frank Foundation, Walter & Elise Haas Fund, The Thomas J. Long Foundation, The Drs. Ben & A. Jess Shenson Foundation at The San Francisco Foundation, The Morris Stulsaft Foundation, and numerous donors to our annual Gala Fund-a-Need campaign.

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ARTISTIC LEARNING PROGRAMS AT CAL SHAKES

The vision of the Artistic Learning department of Cal Shakes is to become a leading Bay Area citizen, creating a culture of lifelong learners and nourishing imaginations in preparation for the work of life.

Cal Shakes offers a variety of theater programs taught by theater professionals throughout the school year and summer.

IN-SCHOOL ARTIST RESIDENCIES

With innovative curriculum, Cal Shakes brings working artists into the schools to teach theater arts to develop students' intellectual and social skills. We work with classroom teachers to choose the text—Shakespeare or otherwise—and to align curriculum and methods in conjunction with the classroom teacher's goals. All residencies consist of 8–10 hours of instruction over several weeks.

STUDENT DISCOVERY MATINEES (Field trips)

Our well-rounded approach to Student Matinees consists of multiple offerings, including this free Teacher/Student Guide, optional pre- and post-show classroom visits by teaching artists, a lively pre-performance engagement at the theater, and a Q&A session with actors immediately following the show. This multi-pronged approach offers a unique opportunity for students to develop a lasting appreciation of theater and of Shakespeare through dynamic presentation and the experience of a live work of art.

TEACHER'S GUIDES INCLUDING STUDENT ACTIVITIES

This teaching and student activity guide is available for each Shakespeare Main Stage production. It is available free of charge to all classrooms regardless of whether or not a class attends a Student Discovery Matinee.

AFTER SCHOOL CLASSES After school programs are a popular offering, exploring Shakespeare as well as such aspects of theater as acting, physical comedy, and improvisation. First grade and up.

SUMMER SHAKESPEARE CONSERVATORIES

Cal Shakes hosts Summer Shakespeare Conservatories in which students study with professional Cal Shakes actors and artists. Scholarships are available. Students return year after year to experience the joy of working intensely in theater fundamentals such as acting, improvisation, stage combat, and voice, culminating in a production of a Shakespeare play in original language.

the
TAMING
of the
SHREW
OVERVIEW



NOTES PRINT ON HEAVYWEIGHT BOND
MOUNT TO FRAME
CUT AROUND EDGES OF MODEL

FULL SCALE PRINT

A NOTE TO TEACHERS

“The first and most important lesson... is that there are no rules about how to do Shakespeare, just clues. Everything is negotiable.”

*Antony Sher and Greg Doran in Woza Shakespeare! (1996),
on training in the Royal Shakespeare Company*

Welcome! We are thrilled to have you and your students join us for this season's Student Discovery Matinee production of *The Taming of the Shrew*. Our goal is to engage students with the work on a variety of levels through the live performance and the activities in this Teacher's Guide.

This guide, *The Taming of the Shrew: Crazy Thing Called Love*, is intended to help you guide your students through this particularly challenging story of how one couple finds each other, despite the myriad of obstacles the world puts in their way.

The difficulty in this play for a 21st-century audience is mainly that the play's title and the plot seem to state firmly that a woman's place is to be subservient to a man, and any woman who does not conform to this behavior pattern is worthy only of being called names. A shrew is a small mammal, about the size of mouse, known not only for its particularly aggressive behavior, but also for the fact that some species are actually venomous. Although Katherine's behavior is clearly aggressive at times; unfortunately, the comparison between an unconventional, opinionated woman and a vicious animal comes all too easily, even today.

In Elizabethan times this was not an unusual way to view women; in modern times, the world seems to demand conformity to a certain, almost unattainable beauty standard. In our production, director Shana Cooper highlights Shakespeare's case that Petruchio and Katherine must break the bonds of conventionality to come together in an authentically loving, respectful, playful relationship. This is a quintessential struggle for us all, especially young people looking for identity through contemporary culture.

Enjoy!

The Cal Shakes Artistic Learning Department



PLOT SUMMARY:

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

Katherine and Bianca are sisters, the wealthy daughters of the widower Baptista. Bianca is younger, nicer, and more date-able than her sister Katherine, who is known as a “shrew”—in other words, a woman of very ill temper. Frustrated and eager to get Katherine out of the house, Baptista declares that Bianca will not wed until Katherine, too, has tied the knot. In protest, Katherine declares that she will not marry.

Hope for Baptista arrives in the form of an equally “difficult” person Petruchio, who—appearing on the scene with his complaining servant, Grumio, in tow—hears of Katherine’s wealth and availability. He decides to take on the challenge of convincing her to get married—to him.

Petruchio and Katherine’s first meeting goes poorly. Fighting him every way she can, Katherine refuses to marry Petruchio. But no matter which way she turns, Petruchio matches her every step. Despite her protests, they become engaged.

On the day of the wedding, Petruchio, in the first of his “lessons” for Katherine, arrives late to their wedding, dressed in strange clothing, to upset Katherine and her expectations of what a wealthy and upstanding wedding should be. After they are married, Petruchio insists that Katherine and he return immediately to his home instead of celebrating with her family.

Meanwhile, Lucentio, a young man who has instantly fallen in love with Bianca, disguises himself as a tutor to gain time with her. Another two men court Bianca: Hortensio (a friend of Petruchio) and Gremio, an old man. Hortensio also poses as a tutor, attempting to teach Bianca music while Lucentio teaches her Latin. But Lucentio is really just flirting with her through whispered conversations, and clearly gains Bianca’s favor. Eventually, near the end of the play, Hortensio concedes that Lucentio is the victor.

When Petruchio and his new bride arrive at his home, Petruchio rejects the dinner prepared for them and sends Katherine to bed hungry. Petruchio continues in this vein, refusing to give her food, rest, and new clothes; during an exhausting trip back to her father’s home, Katherine finally gives in and agrees to do whatever Petruchio says.

In the meantime, Lucentio and Bianca have secretly married. Hortensio, likewise, has married a wealthy widow. Petruchio and Katherine arrive in Padua and Baptista holds a banquet for the newlyweds. Once the wives have left the table, Petruchio offers the husbands a bet to see which of the new wives is most obedient. Each husband in turn sends for his wife to return to the table. Lucentio sends for Bianca who refuses, stating she is too busy. Hortensio then sends for his wife who sends word back he should come to her. When Petruchio sends for Katherine she returns immediately. He then sends her to fetch the other two wives. She does and, on her return, instructs the assembly on the duties of a wife.



WHO'S WHO: The Actors

CAST



Dan Clegg*

Tranio

A servant to Lucentio who disguises himself as Lucentio to barter with Baptista for Bianca's hand.



Rod Gnapp*

Baptista

A very wealthy gentleman of Padua and the father of Bianca and Katherine.



Alexandra Henrikson*

Bianca

Baptista's younger daughter. Bianca has many suitors including Hortensio, Gremio, and Lucentio. She may not marry any of them until her older sister, Katherine, is married.



Dan Hiatt*

Grumio

Servant to Petruchio.

Vincentio

Lucentio's father, an old man.

*Denotes member of Actors' Equity Association.



WHO'S WHO: The Actors

CAST



Slate Holmgren*

Petruchio

A down-on-his-luck gentleman from Verona who decides to marry Katherine for her money.



Joan Mankin*

Curtis

One of Petruchio's servants.

Merchant

A traveling salesman who assumes the role of Lucentio's father, Vincentio.

Widow

A woman who has lost her husband; she marries Hortensio.



Nicholas Pelczar*

Lucentio

A young man from Pisa who disguises himself as a tutor to woo the fair Bianca. He is the son of Vincentio.



Erica Sullivan*

Katherine

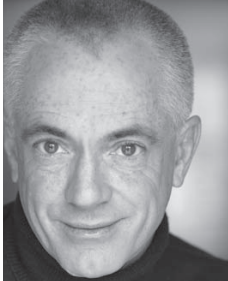
Older daughter of Baptista, Bianca's sister—the "shrew."

Note: Role assignments subject to change.



WHO'S WHO: The Actors

CAST



Danny Scheie*

Gremio

An old man and suitor to Bianca.

Tailor

A person who creates clothing for men.



Liam Vincent*

Hortensio

A friend of Petruchio who is also a suitor to Bianca.



Theo Black

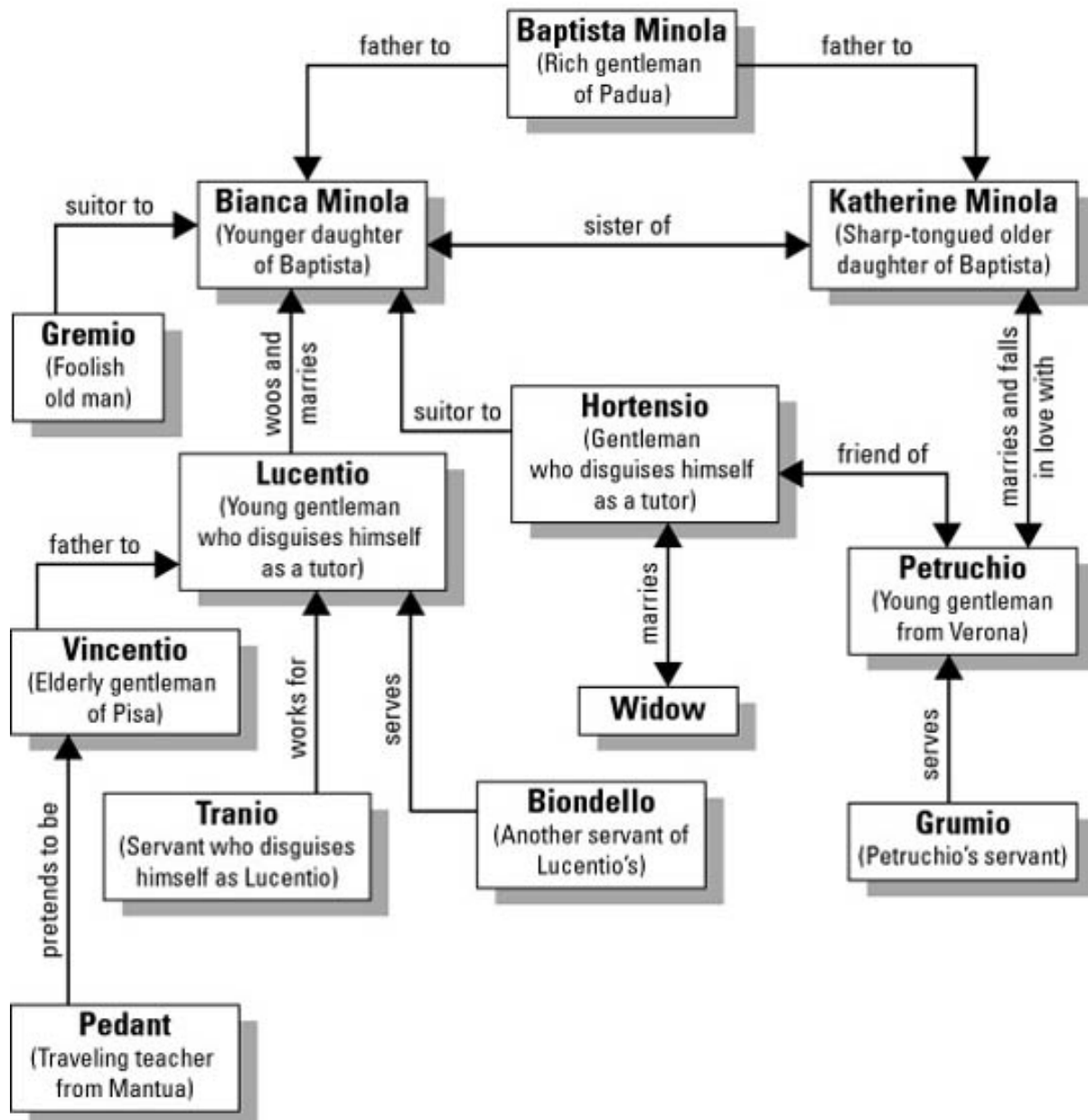
Biondello

A servant to Lucentio.

*Denotes member of Actors' Equity Association.



WHO'S WHO: THE CHARACTERS



SEEING THE PLAY: BEFORE AND AFTER

“Myself am moved to woo thee for my wife”

–Petruccio, Act 2, scene 1

Consider the following questions before and after the show.

BEFORE Viewing the Play

Can you imagine why Kate acts the way she does?

Do you think men and women are equal?

Look for the ways Kate and Bianca are pressured by family and society.

Look for how people use words to express themselves, especially when they are angry.

As you watch the play, try to decide if this kind of story that would happen in real life.

AFTER Viewing the Play

Do you think Katherine and Petruchio are really in love?

What do you think Shakespeare is saying about marriage?

Did the setting and costumes of the characters make sense to you?

Which of the characters do you like best? Why?

Does Katherine really change? How about Petruchio?

Was anyone unfairly treated? If yes, why do you think that happened?

Did you recognize any parts of this story from your own life? Do you know any people like these, or anyone that acts like this in a relationship?

See the “Write Your Own Critique” page in the Activity Appendix for more ideas about what to watch for and how to write about your reactions after the show.



SHAKESPEARE'S LANGUAGE

When asked the number-one challenge with Shakespeare's works, modern-day audiences will almost always respond: "the language." It's true that the language does sound different to our ears and that Shakespeare uses phrases we no longer use in our everyday speech. But think of this: There are phrases that we use today that would baffle Shakespeare, should he magically time-travel to this day and age. That's because language (especially English) is constantly transforming.

Can you match these original quotes from *The Taming of the Shrew* to their modern-day translations?

No shame but mine. I must, forsooth, be forced
To give my hand, opposed against my heart
Unto a mad-brain rudesby, full of spleen
Who wooed in haste and means to wed at leisure
- Act 3, Sc. 2

There's small choice in rotten apples.
-Act 1, Sc. 1

If she do bid me pack, I'll give her thanks,
though she bid me stay by her a week:
If she deny to wed, I'll crave the day
When I shall ask the banns and when be married.
-Act 2, Sc. 1

Moved! in good time: let him that moved you hither
Remove you hence: I knew you at the first
You were a moveable.
-Act 2, Sc. 1

Be thou armed for some unhappy words.
-Act 2, Sc. 1

Of all the men alive
I never yet beheld that special face
Which I could fancy more than any other.
-Act 2, Sc. 1

What, did he marry me to famish me?
Beggars, that come unto my father's door,
Upon entreaty have a present alms;
If not, elsewhere they meet with charity
-Act 3, Sc. 3

Your betters have endured me to say my mind,
And if you cannot, best you stop your ears.
-Act 4, Sc. 3

See Brush Up Your Shakespeare on page 39.

People who are better than you can handle me saying what I really feel. If you can't deal with it, don't listen.

Of all the men I've met, I've never found the one I really loved.

If she tells me to get lost, I'll say "thank you" and stay right here. If she says she won't marry me, I'll ask her when I should book the church for the wedding.

Did he marry me to starve me? Everywhere else beggars find food and help, but not me.

Get ready for some bad news.

You want to marry me? Too bad! Whoever brought you here should take you away now! When I first saw you I knew you were crazy.

I feel so stupid. I have to marry some idiotic, rude guy who has fun dating me but can't bring himself to actually marry me.

When you're stuck with a bunch of bad choices, it's like having a bunch of rotten fruit—nothing's any good.



CRAZY THING



CALLED LOVE

CRAZY THING CALLED: You Don't Like Someone, But Maybe You Do

Remember how, in elementary school, some kids showed that they liked someone by hitting them on the arm or doing something similar? Little children don't know how to ask for positive attention, so they demand it with physical contact. Katherine and Petruchio seem to be stuck in that level of relating to each other. But Shakespeare shows us that they really do like each other by how their dialogue is written. Even though they act like enemies, Shakespeare shows us that these two are so well-matched, verbally, that everyone else in the play and the whole audience knows they are destined to be together, no matter how much they protest. In the following dialogue, note how each person picks up on the words (in bold) the other has used, using them to craft another insult:

PETRUCHIO: Come, come, you **wasp**; i' faith, you are too angry.

KATHERINE : If I be **waspish**, best beware my **sting**.

PETRUCHIO : My remedy is then, to pluck **it** out.

KATHERINE : Ay, if the fool could find **it where** it lies.

PETRUCHIO: Who knows not **where** a wasp does wear his **sting**? In his **tail**.

KATHERINE : In his **tongue**.

PETRUCHIO : Whose **tongue**?

KATHERINE: Yours, if you talk of **tails**, and so farewell.

PETRUCHIO: What, with my **tongue** in your **tail**?

Shakespeare suggests that this couple is well-suited to one another by their shared ability to connect through the wordplay of matching and one-upmanship.

For Students

Do you know someone who tries to get someone's attention by doing things like teasing, pretending to steal things from them, or just hanging around a lot?

Write a six-line argument between Katherine and Petruchio using modern-day insults. Remember to keep it playful and fun—these characters really like each other.

See Resources: Books and Internet on page 22 for a link to a Shakespearan insult page.

See "Go Girls!" on page 19 for further information on women and Elizabethan culture.



CRAZY THING CALLED:



“Katharine the curst! A title for a maid of all titles the worst.”

–Grumio, Act 1, scene 2

The difficulty with this play for a 21st-century audience is mainly that the play's title and the action of the plot appear to state that a woman's place is to be subservient to a man, and that any woman who does not conform to this behavior pattern is to be put down. An example of this is that, throughout the course of the play, Katherine is likened to a shrew. A shrew is a small mammal, about the size of mouse, known for its particularly aggressive behavior; some species are actually venomous. Although Katherine's actions are clearly aggressive at times, so are Petruchio's. Unfortunately, the comparison between an unconventional, opinionated woman and a vicious animal still comes all too easily, even today.

Our production takes the view that, although this was not an unusual way to view women in Elizabethan times, Shakespeare also saw that *both* Petruchio and Katherine have to grow up. The only way they can do this is to come together in an authentically loving, respectful, and playful relationship.

For Students

Make a note of some popular books or movies that have a sympathetic female as the main character.

Look up articles on female politicians and how they are described in the media.

Look up the Bechdel Test, which is a way to look at female characters in movies, in relation to men. It consists of three rules:

1. *It includes at least two women...*
2. *who have at least one conversation...*
3. *about something other than a man or men.*

There are a surprisingly number of films that do not pass this test, and several of the ones who do still portray women in an unattractive light, just as Katherine is. Why is this?

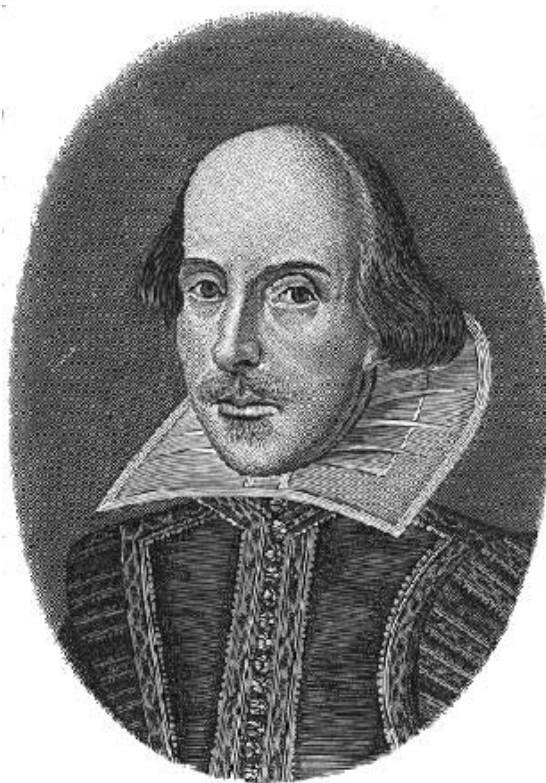
Do you believe that Katherine is “tamed”? From your point of view, what do you think that means?

Do you think people need to be taught lessons on how to live well? What do you think of Petruchio's lessons?

See “Go Girls!” on page 19 for further information on women and Elizabethan culture.



ELIZABETHAN CULTURE OVERVIEW



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: A MYSTERIOUS LIFE

“I will be free, even to the uttermost, as I please, in words.”

—*Katherine, Act 4, scene 3*

Sure, he’s one of the most highly regarded writers of all time. But the really interesting thing is that we don’t actually know if the man known as William Shakespeare—of Stratford-on-Avon, son of a glove-maker—was really the author of all the plays written under his name. A common argument is that a lower middle-class man such as Shakespeare could not have had sufficient education or knowledge of court matters to write so insightfully and profoundly of the human condition and of kings, much less use language so skillfully. Who could have written the plays? Frequently suggested are:

- Queen Elizabeth,
- The Earl of Oxford,
- Sir Francis Bacon,
- And a bunch of other playwrights writing under one name.

Even his real birthday is unsure. (Birth records of the time are rare and unreliable.) Shakespeare was born on April 23, or maybe the 20th, or the 21st, or maybe even May 3. It’s pretty certain that it was in 1564, and that he was baptized on April 26. To add to the confusion, back in Shakespeare’s day there wasn’t actually such a thing as standard spelling—people spelled words as they sounded. Common spellings of “Shakespeare” include “Shakespere,” “Shackspeare,” and “Shakspeare.” Furthermore, only a few samples of handwriting are thought actually to be his—plays were copied out by actors and others in the theater company to carry for rehearsals.

There are a few things about Shakespeare, however, that we do know for sure. A man known as William Shakespeare definitely was involved in the theater: His name is listed among the acting company known as the Lord Chamberlain’s Men in London, which was very popular with the people and with Queen Elizabeth. The company also built the famous Globe Theatre in London, which premiered most of Shakespeare’s plays.

Shakespeare had a son named Hamnet who died young, and is thought to have inspired the name of Hamlet. Shakespeare had two other children: Hamnet’s twin, Judith; and another daughter, Susannah.

Unfortunately, the Shakespeare line ended when his granddaughter Elizabeth died in 1670, having no children of her own. Therefore, there are no descendants who kept records of the time.

Shakespeare is buried in the Holy Trinity Church in Stratford-upon-Avon, his birthplace. On this grave there is an inscription cursing anyone who dares to move his body from that final resting place. To this day his bones remain undisturbed.

What do you think?

For Students

Look up the clues that people have collected about who Shakespeare was. Do you think there really was one man from Stratford-on-Avon who wrote all of the plays, or was the name used to cover up the real author(s)? Why would someone want to cover it up? Does any of this matter in the end?



GO GIRLS!

“I see a woman may be made a fool, if she had not a spirit to resist.”

—*Katherine, Act 3, scene 1*

In Shakespeare’s time, the decision to marry was in the hands of a girl’s father, because it was considered disrespectful for a daughter to communicate her own desires in the process. Furthermore, when a woman married, all of her personal property became the property of her husband. Elizabethans thought women needed a male caretaker (remember, females could not have careers). However, Shakespeare lived during the time of the Renaissance, which was a turbulent and exciting period of history in which many old and accepted ideas were being questioned, examined, and reinterpreted. Shakespeare is known for creating female characters that are just as complex, intelligent, and powerful as the males. Katherine is one of the primary examples of this.

Just like Katherine, Queen Elizabeth herself—for whom the era was named—defied the expectations for women of her time. She never married because she realized early on that marriage meant loss of power. Even though the general opinion of the time was that women’s minds were weak and that a female head of state was “an offense against nature,” she ruled with great political skill and cunning.

Politically, in the United States, a women’s right to vote came in 1920 with the 19th Amendment to the Constitution. Increased debate at that time about where a woman’s “place” is in society has continued through to this day, in matters of what professions women may enter, their role in raising children, and their pay in relation to men, to name only a few. The popularity of *The Taming of the Shrew* rests not only in the fact that it provides delightful comedy, but also in that it keeps us thinking about how men and women relate to each other.

For Students: What about the ending?

Katherine’s final monologue at the end of the play is famously controversial. Do you think she is truly saying that she now believes that a woman should be in all ways inferior to a man? Could there be any other meaning? Rewrite Katherine’s last monologue from your own point of view.



RESOURCES



The Taming of the Shrew ON FILM

The Taming of the Shrew is as popular onscreen as it is onstage. Many film versions are faithful adaptations and are named directly after the play; there are many more that employ vastly different titles and interpretations, or are simply inspired by the plot of *The Taming of the Shrew*. Many of these films update the play to a modern setting. Here's a few of the most popular:

Kiss Me Kate (1953)

Directed by George Sidney
Starring Kathryn Grayson and Howard Keel
Musical based on the classic

Taming of the Shrew (1967)

Directed by Franco Zeffirelli
Starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton
A visually stunning but straightforward interpretation of Shakespeare's tale

Taming of the Shrew (1979)

Directed by Kirk Browning
Starring Fredi Olster and Marc Singer
Commedia dell'arte telling of the classic, made for American television

The Taming of the Shrew (2005)

Starring Shirley Henderson and Rufus Sewell
Modern telling set in London, England, made for British television, with Katherine a successful politician

Ten Things I Hate About You (1999)

Directed by Gil Junger
Starring Heath Ledger and Julia Stiles
Modern, teen-friendly, set in a high school

Many of the films listed above can be seen, in part, on YouTube. Some examples you might want to look for include:

"Kate Meets Petruchio" - American Conservatory Theater, 1976
The Taming of the Shrew - animated versions
The Taming of the Shrew - Backstage with director Peter Hinton (2008)
The Taming of the Shrew - Lucy Peacock as Grumio (2008)
The Taming of the Shrew: II, 2 - John Cleese

BOOKS AND INTERNET

(page 1 of 2)

Teaching Resources for *The Taming of the Shrew*

Folger Shakespeare Library: Folger.edu

“Life in Elizabethan England”: Elizabethan.org/compendium; Teachit.co.uk/armoore/shakespeare; and Snaithprimary.eril.net/ttss.htm

Activities on Shrew’s plot and character relationships: Collaborativelearning.org/muchadoplplotrelationships.pdf (for Much Ado About Nothing, but can be adapted to any Shakespeare play)

The Stratford Festival's “Tools for Teachers: Stratfordfestival.ca/education/teachers.aspx?id=1096

Shakespeare Resource Center’s “Elizabethan England”: Bardweb.net/England.html

The Kennedy Center’s “The Poetics of Hip Hop”: Artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade9-12/Poetics_of_Hip_Hop.aspx

Shakespearean Insult Worksheet: Gallery.carnegiefoundation.org/collections/quest/collections/sites/divans-hutchinson_yvonne1/Yvonne%20scans/insultsheet.pdf

Shakespeare retold: BBC.co.uk/drama/shakespeare

A list of further Taming resources: Shakespearehelp.com/taming.htm

Women in Today’s Society: Bechdeltest.com; Commonsensemedia.org/advice-for-parents/battling-stereotypes-tips

Books:

Davis, James E., ed. *Teaching Shakespeare Today: Practical Approaches and Productive Strategies*. Urbana, Ill: National Council of Teachers of English, 1993.

Crystal, David, and Crystal, Ben. *The Shakespeare Miscellany*. The Overlook Press, Peter Mayer Publishers, Inc. Woodstock and New York, 2005.

Crystal, David, and Crystal, Ben. *Shakespeare’s Words: A Glossary and Language Companion*. Penguin Books, The Penguin Group. London, 2002.

Papp, Joseph and Elizabeth Kirkland. *Shakespeare Alive!* New York, New York: Bantam Books, 1988.

Epstein, Norrie. *The Friendly Shakespeare: A Thoroughly Painless Guide to the Best of the Bard*. New York, New York: Penguin Books, 1993

Asimov, Isaac. *Asimov’s Guide to Shakespeare*. New York, New York: Random House, 1970.

Bender, Michael. *All the World’s a Stage: A Pop-Up Biography of William Shakespeare*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1999.

Foster, Cass and Lynn G. Johnson. *Shakespeare: To Teach or Not To Teach*. Grades three and Up. Scottsdale, AZ: Five Star Publications, 1992.

Garfield, Leon. *Shakespeare Stories*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998.

Morley, Jacqueline and John James. *Shakespeare’s Theatre: The Inside Story*. East Sussex, London: Simon and Schuster Young Books, 1994.



CLASSROOM ACTIVITY GUIDE

September 2011

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Book your pre- or post-show Classroom Workshop!
Contact the Artistic Learning Administrator at
510-548-3422 x136 for more info.



the
TAMING
of the
SHREW

CRAZY THING CALLED LOVE

Note to Teachers: This guide was created as a supplement for teachers preparing students to see California Shakespeare Theater's production *The Taming of the Shrew*. Worksheets are designed to be used individually or in conjunction with others throughout the guide. While we realize that no aspect of this guide fully outlines a course for meeting a subject area's standards, discussion questions and topics are devised to address certain aspects of California state standards. The activities here can be minimally reproduced for educational, nonprofit use only. All lessons must be appropriately credited.

There are many excellent lesson plans for *The Taming of the Shrew* on the Internet. Please see our "Resources" page for links. This guide concentrates primarily on ideas that help students understand language, plot, and character through activities that get students on their feet and speaking.

If you are interested in a California Shakespeare Theater **Professional Development Workshop**, which provides easy-to-learn tools for teachers to incorporate theater and arts education activities into California standards-based core curriculum, please contact the Artistic Learning Department at 510-548-3422 x136 or learn@calshakes.org.

CAL SHAKES
CALIFORNIA SHAKESPEARE THEATER

CAL SHAKES' MISSION AND FUNDERS

OUR MISSION

We strive for everyone, regardless of age, circumstance, or background, to discover and express the relevance of Shakespeare and the classics in their lives by:

- Making boldly imagined and deeply entertaining interpretations of Shakespeare and the classics.
- Providing in-depth, far-reaching creative educational opportunities.
- Bringing disparate communities together around the creation of new American plays inspired by classic literature.

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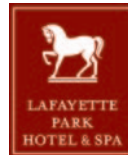
Our Student Discovery program for *The Taming of the Shrew* is part of *Shakespeare for a New Generation*, a national program of the National Endowment for the Arts in cooperation with Arts Midwest.

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SOCIAL NETWORKING CHARACTER STUDY:

Have your students create a Facebook profile for a character from the play.

Overview: Being able to empathize with fictional characters sheds light on our own personal situations, and recast the plot of the play in relevant terms.

Grades: 6–12

Goal: To bring the characters of *The Taming of the Shrew* into a real-world context.

Outcomes: Students will be able to use basic facts from the text to imaginatively enter into the thoughts, feelings, and motivations of fictional characters by creating a mock Facebook page.

Activity: Familiarize students with the profile layout of a social networking site page, such as Facebook. (See following examples.)

1. Ask the students to fill in the profile with
 - a. vital statistics
 - b. likes and dislikes
 - c. friends

Note: Students should use information drawn from their knowledge of the play (for example, Petruchio seems to like to mess with people), filled out by their imaginations (for example, when Petruchio was a teenager he was always in trouble for playing practical jokes on the teacher).

2. Profile photos may be drawn or cut out from magazines, or an actual photo of the student could be used and attached to the page. Remember, many actual Facebook profile pages do not have an actual photo of the person who made them—Facebook members sometimes choose a picture of something they feel represents them, e.g., a tree or a poster they like.
3. Share the pages you have created in student pairs or in a group discussion.

Reflection:

- Name one thing you had to imagine about your character that you think is really interesting.
- Was it easy to imagine beyond the play—for instance, what Grumio's activities and interests might be? Or do you feel the play did not provide enough information? How so?
- How easy was it to decide who your character's friends are? Would your character ignore a friend request from other characters in the play? Why or why not?

Extension exercise in writing dialogue:

Beyond the basic profile information, a further way to extend the activity is to have the students write on each other's profile "walls." A wall is the area on a profile page where friends can write short messages to each other that are posted directly on the page for others to view.

Note: Require the students to fill out the worksheet manually, rather than actually filling out a public profile online. If you can post their mock profile pages onto your school website or blog for students to fill out within the framework of this project, that would work as well, but false profiles in a public space should be actively discouraged. Student examples should show a deep understanding of the plot and qualities of the character. Some examples follow.



Bianca Minola SHOPPING!

Studied Latin

Married to/in a relationship with it's complicated

Write something...

Share

Friends (899)



Hortensio



Katherine Minola



Baptista



Gremio

RECENT ACTIVITY



Bianca Minola
SHOPPING!



Bianca wrote on Katherine Minola's Wall



Bianca wrote on Baptista Minola's Wall



Bianca and Lucentio are now friends



Baptista Minola

Bianca! Who is this young man!?



Hortensio

Bianca, what are you doing tonight?
Want to go to dinner with me?



Gremio

Bianca, want to dine with me tonight?



Bianca likes boys and high fashion





Katherine Minola (Kate) I officially hate men!

Studied Lute

Married to Petruchio

Write something...

Share

Friends (2)



Bianca Minola



Baptista

RECENT ACTIVITY



Katherine Minola

I officially hate men!



Katherine Minola wrote on Petruchio's Wall



Katherine went from "married" to "it's complicated"



Katherine is now listed as "married" to Petruchio

Baptista Minola and Bianca Minola like this



Hey sis! Congrats on the wedding!
Now I get to get hitched! YAY!

Lucentio, Hortensio, and Gremio like this

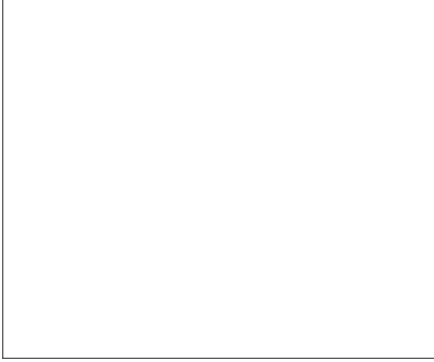


Katherine is now friends with Petruchio



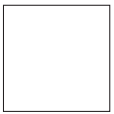
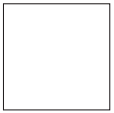
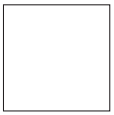
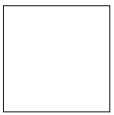
Katherine likes nothing





Share

Friends



DEAR DIARY

Overview: Writing a diary, blog, or journal entry from the perspective of one of the play's characters creates empathy with fictional characters, sheds light on our own personal situations, and recasts the plot of the play in relevant terms.

Grades: 6–12

Goal: To bring the characters of *The Taming of the Shrew* into a real-world context.

Outcomes: Students will be able to use facts from the text to imaginatively enter into the thoughts, feelings and motivations of fictional characters by writing a diary entry about an off-stage moment from the perspective of a character in the play.

Activity:

1. Ask the students to write a diary, blog, or journal entry from the point of view of a character in *The Taming of the Shrew*: describing a moment when that character is not seen onstage.

2. Ask the students to choose a character and a moment to write about. Examples: What happens on Petruchio's first journey with Grumio to Padua at the beginning of the play? Where is Katherine and what is she doing between her argument with Bianca and her meeting with Petruchio? What happens on the horseback journey to Petruchio's house after the wedding? What is Petruchio doing that makes him so late for the wedding? What was the morning of the wedding day like in Baptista's house?

Think about: What is happening when the character is in this offstage situation? What is the character thinking and feeling?

Reflection:

-Name one thing you had to imagine about your character that you think is really interesting.

-Was it easy to imagine beyond the play—for instance, what Bianca's thoughts and impressions might be? Do you feel the play did not provide you with enough information? How so?

-How easy was it to decide which character to write an entry for? Are there characters who you think might be more likely to keep a diary or blog?

Extension Exercise:

Do the same writing exercise, but have one student write about the same incident from multiple characters' points of view. Alternatively, have many students describe the same incident from one character's viewpoints.

Instead of a written piece, do a vlog (video blog) from the point of view of one character, or featuring two characters talking about the incidents and expressing their opinions and feelings about what happened.



THE TWITTERING OF THE SHREW

Overview: Using the social network Twitter, have your students create a list of tweets from different characters, tracking their progress throughout the play. Have them go a step further to create dialogue between characters.

Grades: 6-12

Goal: To bring the characters of *The Taming of the Shrew* into a real-world context. To increase understanding of how the characters interact and feel towards one another.

Outcomes: Students will be able to use specific facts and lines from the play to make clear the relationships between characters.

Activity: Familiarize student with the layout of a twitter post—a tweet—and its character limit (140, including spaces).

1. Ask the students to create a Twitter name (also called a “handle”) for their character.
2. Ask students to create a list of tweets that their character would post throughout the play.
3. Have students create Twitter names for other characters in the play and have them talk to one another via Twitter. Examples:
 - a. @Gremio: @Bianca4realz I will come to woo, my lady!
 - b. @Hortensio93: I think not! Unless you plan to tutor her...
 - c. @Lucentiodawg: Hmmm, is @Tranio thinking what I'm thinking?

Reflection:

- Was it easy to decide what the characters' Twitter names were? Did you try to make the Twitter names reflect something about the character?
- Was it easy or fun to pick out lines from the play to use in a tweet?
- Were some relationships easier to convey via tweets than others? Why?

SHAKESPEARE REMIX

(Page 1 of 2)

PART ONE: RECAST

Overview: Have your students cast *The Taming of the Shrew* with characters and people from pop culture.

Grade: 6–12

Goal: To use clues from the text to relate Shakespeare's characters to currently popular fictional characters, celebrities, and other famous people.

Outcomes: Students will research the play for clues about who should play each character. Critical thinking skills will be used to determine choices.

Activity: 1. Students will cast *The Taming of the Shrew* with characters and figures from pop culture. Examples:

- a. Which Disney character would play Petruchio?
- b. Would Hermione Granger make a good Katherine?

Reflection:

- Which characters were the easiest to cast?
- Does your cast list point to a specific interpretation of the story?

PART TWO: RESET

Overview: Have your students pick a scene from the play and place it in a different setting. Students can play director and change the time, place, and context of the scene.

Grade: 6–12

Goal: To have students think about the importance of setting. Students will consider how the time, place, and location of a scene change the meaning of character and relationship.

Outcomes: Students will gain understanding of how a cultural milieu affects personality and action.

Activity:

1. Ask students to pick a favorite scene from the play.
2. Ask your students to pretend they are the director and put the scene in a different time, place, and context.
3. Ask them to think about how this changes and affects the characters, text, and scene. For example:



SHAKESPEARE REMIX

(Page 2 of 2)

- a. What would Katherine and Petruchio say to each other in marriage counseling?
- b. How might Katherine's character change if the play was set during the women's suffrage movement? In contrast, how would this affect Bianca's character?
- c. Do the play's themes change drastically if the action is moved to another country with a completely different social context, e.g., feudal Japan or post-World War II France? Why or why not?

Reflection:

- What did you learn about the importance of setting?
- Did you visualize what the stage would look like if your interpretation of the show was actually produced?
- Does the play provide enough clues to spark your imagination? Why or why not?

Idea Generator:

Some past production concepts for *The Taming of the Shrew*:

- Modern-day Las Vegas – Shakespeare on the Green, NE
- Modern-day London – BBC (2005, Kate is a politician) and Theatre Pro Rata (2010)
- Commedia del'Arte – American Conservatory Theater
- 1930s Hollywood – Cincinnati Shakespeare
- The Wild West – Utah Shakespeare Festival
- Pirates! – Marin Shakespeare
- *Mad Men* 1960s – Theatre By the Bay
- Bollywood – Francis Marion University
- Minimalist – Guerrilla Shakespeare Project, The Medicine Show Theater

Extension Exercise:

Collaborate with your students' history teacher to set the play in the specific time period they are studying. Stage one or two scenes in that time period using specific and accurate details about the concerns and/or behaviors of that time. Remember that limitations or advancements in communication technology, especially, might connect the students to how the characters' various relationships manifest themselves through language.

Setting the play, again, in the specific historical setting, rewrite the scenes in the English of that time period (as much as possible). For example, a 2011 time period might feature all the characters "speaking" in email and text messages. A 1920s time period would include typical slang of the period ("doll" for girl; "the cat's pajamas" for something good, etc.).



THE DATING GAME *SHREW*-STYLE

Overview: Have your students play a dating game wherein Bianca is looking to choose from among *Shrew*'s three suitors. Three actors will play her suitors, each competing for her hand.

Grade: 6-12

Goal: To use contextual clues to come up with questions and answers about specific characters in the show.

Outcomes: Students will research the play for clues to the characters, and be able to fully differentiate between some of the play's smaller characters.

Activity: This activity will have four actors and one host.

1. Cast one person as Bianca and three people as Lucentio, Hortensio, and Gremio. Cast one person as the host.
2. Have Bianca question her suitors. Questions may include:
 - a. Why do you desire my hand in marriage?
 - b. What is your profession?
 - c. What do you think of my sister, Kate?
 - d. How long have you lived in Padua?
3. Let Bianca guess which bachelor is which.

Reflection:

- Was Bianca able to figure out which suitor was which?
- Which clues were useful? Which were not? Why?
- Was it interesting to pretend and embody a certain character?

MAKE IT WORK!

SHAKESPEARE'S RUNWAY

(Page 1 of 2)

Note to teachers: We are not, necessarily, promoting the watching of reality shows, but rather capitalizing on the excitement of competition that reality shows utilize and that are prevalent in today's popular culture.

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 page 36) and scrap paper for notes

HOW TO PLAY: 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. On your own, create a rendering of your character using various art supplies and the template provided for you. 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.
4. You will have a box of clothing including hats, shoes, skirts, etc.; choose the items that represent your character. You may also use found objects, your own clothing, and other assorted art supplies on hand.
5. 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.

MAKE IT WORK! SHAKESPEARE'S RUNWAY

(Page 2 of 2)

Reflection:

- Were there things about the character that you did not recognize before when you were looking at the text from a designer's perspective?
- How did your group arrive at the design concept that you ended up modeling? Did you have to make some compromises?
- When looking at the other group's 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?
- 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:** For those who are fashion or artistically oriented, they 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.





MUSICAL INTERLUDE: THE PLOT OF THE PLAY THROUGH POP CULTURE

(Page 1 of 2)

Overview: Write the story of the play through song titles.

Grade: 6–12

Goal: To use contextual clues to relate the Shakespeare text and current songs.

Outcomes: Students will research the play for clues to the characters, fully describe the arc of the play through modern lyrics and mood of the music played, and engage critical thinking skills to determine their choices.

Activity:

1. Students will research current music to find connections of meaning through lyrics and musical expression to the plot of the play
2. Students will create a list of song that accurately describes the story arc of the play, paying attention to particular words and moods that connect the song and the original text.
3. Have students share their lists, playing a few selections in class as time permits.

Reflection:

- What difficulty did you have finding the right songs, if any?
- Were certain points of the play harder than others for which to find a current expression?
- Does your soundtrack point to a certain interpretation of the story as you see it?
- Were there certain characters you chose to highlight? Why?

See example of music titles summarizing *Romeo and Juliet* on the next page.

THE PLOT OF SHAKESPEARE'S ROMEO AND JULIET

(Page 2 of 2)

The Plot of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*

by Daniel Moattar, from Urban High School, Cathleen Sheehan's English class, April 2009

- Act I: 1. "Unnecessary Trouble" (Hard-Fi, *Stars of CCTV*)
2. "Older Guys" (Teenage Fanclub, *Thirteen*)
3. "The Wrong Girl" (Belle and Sebastian, *Fold Your Hands Child You Walk Like a Peasant*)
4. "Fresh Feeling" (Eels, *Souljacker*)
- Act II: 5. "Does He Love You?" (Rilo Kiley, *More Adventurous*)
6. "Hesitating Beauty" (Billy Bragg & Wilco, *Mermaid Avenue*)
7. "Marry Me" (St. Vincent, *Marry Me*)
- Act III: 8. "Sugar Assault Me Now" (Pop Levi, *The Return to Form Black Magick Party*)
9. "The Payback" (James Brown, *Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* OST)
- Act IV: 10. "Vengeance Is Sleeping" (Neko Case, *Middle Cyclone*)
11. "I Love You Always Forever" (Donna Lewis, *Now in a Minute*)
- Act V: 12. "We Will Not Grow Old" (Lenka, *Lenka*)
13. "Brand New Colony" (The Postal Service, *Give Up*)
14. "Arms Tonite" (Mother Mother, *O My Heart*)
15. "O My Heart" (Mother Mother, *O My Heart*)
16. "How to Fight Loneliness" (Wilco, *Summerteeth*)
17. "Adventures in Solitude" (The New Pornographers, *Challengers*)
18. "The Ghost of You Lingers" (Spoon, *Ga Ga Ga Ga Ga*)
19. "Heaven Knows I'm Miserable Now" (The Smiths, *Hatful of Hollow*)
20. "Bad Day" (Daniel Powter, *Daniel Powter*)

BRUSH UP YOUR SHAKESPEARE REFERENCE SHEET

Below are some commonly used, but unfamiliar, Shakespearean words.

<p><i>addition</i> - title</p> <p><i>affined</i> - bound by duty</p> <p><i>alarum</i> - call to arms with trumpets</p> <p><i>anatomize</i> - to analyze in detail</p> <p><i>ancient</i> - ensign</p> <p><i>anon</i> - until later</p> <p><i>arrant</i> - absolute</p> <p><i>aroint</i> - begone</p> <p><i>assail</i> - to make amorous siege</p> <p><i>attend</i> - to await</p> <p><i>aye</i> - yes</p> <p><i>baffle</i> - to hang up (a person) by the heels as a mark of disgrace</p> <p><i>baggage</i> - strumpet, prostitute</p> <p><i>balk</i> - to disregard</p> <p><i>barm</i> - the froth on ale</p> <p><i>belike</i> - maybe</p> <p><i>belov'd</i> - beloved</p> <p><i>blank</i> - a target</p> <p><i>bolted</i> - refined</p> <p><i>brach</i> - bitch hound</p> <p><i>brake</i> - bushes</p> <p><i>brave</i> - fine, handsome</p> <p><i>bum</i> - backside, buttocks</p> <p><i>caitiff</i> - a wretched humble person</p> <p><i>catch</i> - song</p> <p><i>character</i> - handwriting</p> <p><i>cousin, ' coz</i> - relative, good friend</p> <p><i>chuck</i> - term of endearment, chick</p> <p><i>clout</i> - a piece of white cloth</p>	<p><i>cog</i> - to deceive</p> <p><i>coil</i> - trouble</p> <p><i>cousin</i> - any close relative</p> <p><i>descant</i> - improvise</p> <p><i>discourses</i> - speaks</p> <p><i>dispatch</i> - to hurry</p> <p><i>e'en</i> - evening</p> <p><i>enow</i> - enough</p> <p><i>fare-thee-well</i> - goodbye</p> <p><i>fie</i> - a curse</p> <p><i>fustian</i> - wretched</p> <p><i>got</i> - begot</p> <p><i>grammarcy</i> - thank you</p> <p><i>halter</i> - noose</p> <p><i>honest</i> - chaste, pure</p> <p><i>heavy</i> - sorrowful</p> <p><i>housewife</i> - hussy, prostitute</p> <p><i>impeach</i> - dishonor</p> <p><i>list</i> - listen</p> <p><i>mayhap</i> - maybe</p> <p><i>mess</i> - meal, food</p> <p><i>mew</i> - confine</p> <p><i>minister</i> - servant</p> <p><i>moiety</i> - portion</p> <p><i>morrow</i> - day</p> <p><i>nay</i> - no</p> <p><i>ne'er</i> - never</p> <p><i>office</i> - service or favor</p> <p><i>oft</i> - often</p>	<p><i>passing</i> - surprisingly, exceedingly</p> <p><i>perchance</i> - maybe</p> <p><i>perforce</i> - must</p> <p><i>politician</i> - schemer</p> <p><i>post</i> - messenger</p> <p><i>power</i> - army</p> <p><i>prithee</i> - please</p> <p><i>quest</i> - a jury</p> <p><i>recreant</i> - coward</p> <p><i>resolve</i> - to answer; reply to</p> <p><i>but soft</i> - be quiet</p> <p><i>soundly</i> - plainly</p> <p><i>stale</i> - harlot</p> <p><i>subscription</i> - loyalty, allegiance</p> <p><i>tax</i> - to criticize; to accuse</p> <p><i>troth</i> - belief</p> <p><i>teem</i> - to give birth</p> <p><i>thee</i> - you (informal)</p> <p><i>thou</i> - you (informal)</p> <p><i>thy</i> - your (informal)</p> <p><i>tucket</i> - trumpet flourish</p> <p><i>verge</i> - edge, circumference</p> <p><i>verily</i> - truly</p> <p><i>villain</i> - common person, not noble</p> <p><i>want</i> - lack of, don't have</p> <p><i>well-a-day</i> - alas</p> <p><i>wherefore</i> - why</p> <p><i>yea</i> - yes</p> <p><i>zounds</i> - by his (Christ's) wounds</p>
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YOU'RE THE CRITIC: CAL SHAKES PLAY CRITIQUE (Elementary and Middle School)

NAME: _____

1. Circle the number of stars that best matches how you'd rate this performance. (One star is the lowest rating and five stars is the best rating.) Then write a paragraph on the back of the paper that specifically describes why you gave it that rating. Do not simply say "I didn't like it," but say why. For example, "I didn't like the fact that the director changed the setting to New York" or "I loved the way the actors made me believe that they were really going to kill each other."



2. Outline the main actions that happened in the plot (what were the big events in the story?).

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

f.

3. What is the central idea or theme of the play?

4. Describe what the actors did to help you understand the Shakespearean language.

5. What did you particularly like or dislike about the staging (set design, lights, costumes, music, etc.)?

6. Shakespeare writes about feelings that we all experience. In *The Taming of the Shrew*, we see people with feelings like love, jealousy, anger, frustration, and many others. Pick one of these emotions that you've experienced strongly and write what happened in your life to make you feel that way and what happened because of it.



YOU'RE THE CRITIC: CAL SHAKES PLAY CRITIQUE (Middle and High School)

Give this production a rating of one to five stars. (One star is the lowest rating and five stars is the highest.) On a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph review of the play. In other words, describe why you gave it that rating. Give specific examples to support your reasons. On the same sheet of paper, reflect on the following questions:



1. How would you describe the character of Katherine as she is portrayed in this production?
2. Does Shakespeare give any reasons as to *why* Katherine behaves so badly? What justifications can you find?
3. Why are we still staging this play 400 years since Shakespeare wrote it? Why do you think the director chose *this* play?
4. Which character did you sympathize with most? Why?
5. Think about and describe:
 - i. The vocal and physical actions of the actors (characterization)
 - ii. The set
 - iii. The costumes
6. What do you think are some of the themes of the play?
7. Did the elements of characterization, set, and/or costumes reinforce any of these themes?
8. Shakespeare writes about things that we all experience: love, jealousy, death, anger, revenge, passion, misunderstandings, etc. Write a paragraph about one big emotion in the play that you've also experienced in your life.
9. Now, imagine you are the director of *The Taming of the Shrew*, and use a new sheet of paper to create your new production.
 - Cast the characters of Katherine and Petruchio with famous actors. Why would you choose these two people?
 - Many directors set Shakespeare plays in eras other than the Renaissance. In what other time period could you place the play that would make sense? Why?
 - How about costumes? Imagine how the characters in your new production would be dressed that would illustrate the kinds of characters they are and in the setting you have put the play.