



ON  
THE  
MARK  
P122



OTM-1868

# SHAKESPEARE SHORTS

## READERS' THEATER SERIES

TEACHER  
**Rubrics**  
INCLUDED!  
STUDENT

- 8 Five To Twenty-Minute Plays
- Program For Easy Staging & Costumes
- 21 Reading Comprehension & Writing Activities



Reproducible  
  
Activities

Hamlet

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# Henry V

Reading Level	Reading-Only Performance Length	Number of Parts	Genre
Easy	5 Minutes	13 (or whole class)	History

## Synopsis



Long ago, the young king of England, Henry V, decided that he would sail to France and claim the land and the throne that had once belonged to his family. He took with him a small army men, and soon came upon a defending French army that numbered in the thousands. Even though they were greatly outnumbered, King Henry and his English soldiers won the day, and a new era of peace dawned on both countries as King Henry married Katharine, the daughter of the King of France, to bind the two countries together.

## Characters



Henry V, King of England  
Montjoy, Herald of France  
Soldiers of England (4 or more)  
Narrator

Charles VI, King of France  
Katharine, Princess of France  
Soldiers of France (4 or more)

## Pronunciation Guide

**Montjoy** (mont'-joy - the "t" is pronounced)

## Staging & Costumes



This is a play in which an entire class can participate. If not in the above cast, then the rest of the class can enter and position themselves around the outside of the audience's seating area, divided into English and French soldiers. As the rallying cheer of each side is given, the students in the audience lend their voices to heighten the effect of the opposing armies. For a reading-only performance, have the 13 cast members sit in a semi-circle facing their audience, with the English on one side and the French on the other. Royals will need crowns.

## Vocabulary

**breach:** used here to mean "a quarrel" (i.e., the battle itself) or an opening in a wall damaged during the fighting

## Teaching Tips

- **Introducing the Play:**  
Discuss the tensions and the relationship between England and France long ago.
- **Pre-Reading Language Activity:**  
Create a list of verbs that are used to describe the actions of people in adventure stories (i.e., running, smiling, shouting, etc.)
- **Discuss:**  
What do we mean by a brave person? Who are people that we can look up to? Make a list.

## Extension Activities

- Make and post a list of battle stories, or of stories that show the negative affects of war, that members of the class might read.
- What kind of music would be best for battle scenes? Play a few selections (i.e., one happy, one romantic, and one action-filled) and graph each student's choice.

Ghost: I am the ghost of your father.  
I was murdered!

The ghost  
should be spooky!  
Shine a flashlight  
on its face!

Hamlet: Murdered? Who did it?

Ghost: Your uncle murdered me! He poured poison  
in my ear while I was asleep. You must get  
revenge! I must go now because it is also  
morning. Goodbye! Remember me!



Hamlet: I will get revenge!

In another part of the castle, Claudius' friend and advisor, Polonius, was saying goodbye to his son, Laertes, who was going to France to go to school. Polonius' daughter, Ophelia, was also there. She was a girl who Hamlet loved.

Polonius: Aboard, for shame! Go with my blessing, but take this advice:  
this above all, to thine own self be true.

Laertes: Most humbly do I take my leave. Goodbye, Father.  
Farewell, Ophelia, and remember well what I have said to you.

Polonius: What did he mean, Ophelia? What has he said to you?

Ophelia: Something touching the Lord Hamlet. He has made many tenders  
of his affections to me.

Polonius: Do not trust him, daughter. I charge you.

Ophelia: I shall obey, my lord.

Meanwhile, Hamlet decided to pretend that he had gone mad so that he could watch his uncle. Everyone noticed it, and they blamed it on his sadness over his father's death, and his love for Ophelia. But Claudius was worried about Hamlet's actions, so he and Polonius hid and watched how Hamlet acted around Ophelia.

At first, Hamlet was alone, thinking about life and death, because the ghost had worried him so. When he saw Ophelia, his mood changed, he acted strangely, and he told her he did not love her.

# King Lear



## Dramatis Personae

- Lear, King of England – \_\_\_\_\_
- Faithful servants to the King:*
- Gloucester – \_\_\_\_\_
- Kent – \_\_\_\_\_
- His daughters:*
- Regan – \_\_\_\_\_
- Goneril – \_\_\_\_\_
- Cordelia – \_\_\_\_\_
- Gloucester's Sons:*
- Edgar – \_\_\_\_\_
- Edmund – \_\_\_\_\_
- King of France – \_\_\_\_\_
- Soldiers (2) – \_\_\_\_\_
- Regan's husband, Cornwall – \_\_\_\_\_
- Goneril's husband, Albany – \_\_\_\_\_
- The King's Fool – \_\_\_\_\_
- Captain – \_\_\_\_\_
- Narrator – \_\_\_\_\_

Long ago, in England, lived an old king named King Lear. He had three daughters, named Regan, Goneril, and Cordelia. One day, he made up his mind to divide his kingdom into three equal parts, but what he didn't know was that two of his daughters, Regan and Goneril, were greedy and cruel, and could easily pretend that they loved him just to get the land.

**King Lear:** We have divided in three our kingdom. Which of you three daughters shall say you doth love us most. Goneril, our eldest-born, speak first.

**Goneril:** Sir, I love you more than words can say, no less than life.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## A Midsummer Night's Dream – A Comprehension Check

1. What does the law in Athens say about whom a girl must marry?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Explain why Oberon decides to play a trick on his wife.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Who is in the woods, preparing a play for the duke's wedding? What are they like? Tell about them using proof from the story.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Describe Puck. How does he help Oberon play his trick on Titania?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. When Nick Bottom wakes up with a donkey's head, how do the other actors react? Explain why they do this.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. How do you think an audience would react to seeing Nick Bottom with a donkey's head? Tell why.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Think about how the play ends. In your opinion, tell why the sentence, "And they all lived happily ever after!" would be a good way to end the play.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_