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PERFORMING SHAKESPEARE EXAMPLE SPEECHES

When deciding which monologue or duologue to perform for the ESU Performing Shakespeare Competition, we encourage students to explore the plays themselves and select a speech which calls out to them and seems to connect with their own experiences, or a speech from the play they are studying in class.

However, we realise that for some students this may be a daunting task! So here we have listed some examples of speeches which may be helpful starting points when selecting pieces. These are **not** compulsory and we welcome entries from any of Shakespeare's 37 plays – this list is in no means exhaustive. Speeches listed here may of course be shortened or lengthened with additional text from the play if desired.



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A Comedy of Errors

Act 2, Scene 1

Adriana and her sister Luciana, Adriana is anxiously awaiting the return of her husband and his slave Luciana insists that Luciana should be more patient.

Themes include: Marriage, family.

ADR. Neither my husband nor the slave return'd,
That in such haste I sent to seek his master?
Sure, Luciana, it is two a' clock.

LUC. Perhaps some merchant hath invited him,
And from the mart he's somewhere gone to dinner.
Good sister, let us dine, and never fret;
A man is master of his liberty:
Time is their master, and when they see time,
they'll go or come; if so, be patient, sister.

ADR. Why should their liberty than ours be more?

LUC. Because their business still lies out a' door.

ADR. Look when I serve him so, he takes it ill.

LUC. O, know he is the bridle of your will.

ADR. There's none but asses will be bridled so.

LUC. Why, headstrong liberty is lash'd with woe:
There's nothing situate under heaven's eye
But hath his bound in earth, in sea, in sky.
The beasts, the fishes, and the winged fowls
Are their males' subjects and at their controls:
Man, more divine, the master of all these,
Lord of the wide world and wild wat'ry seas,
Indu'd with intellectual sense and souls,
Of more pre-eminence than fish and fowls,



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Are masters to their females, and their lords:
Then let your will attend on their accords.

ADR. This servitude makes you to keep unwed.

LUC. Not this, but troubles of the marriage-bed.

ADR. But, were you wedded, you would bear some sway.

LUC. Ere I learn love, I'll practice to obey.

ADR. How if your husband start some other where?

LUC. Till he come home again, I would forbear.

ADR. Patience unmov'd! no marvel though she pause
They can be meek that have no other cause:
A wretched soul, bruis'd with adversity,
We bid be quiet when we hear it cry;
But were we burd'ned with like weight of pain,
As much, or more, we should ourselves complain:
So thou, that hast no unkind mate to grieve thee,
With urging helpless patience would relieve me;
But if thou live to see like right bereft,
This fool-begg'd patience in thee will be left.

LUC. Well, I will marry one day, but to try.
Here comes your man, now is your husband nigh



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Merchant of Venice

Act 1, Scene 2

In this scene, Portia complains to her lady-in-waiting, Nerissa, that she is tired of her situation because she is not allowed to decide for herself if she should marry. Nerissa lists her possible suitors.

Themes include: love and marriage, women's rights.

POR. By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is a-weary of this great world.

NER. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are; and yet for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much as they that starve with nothing. It is no mean happiness therefore to be seated in the mean: superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer.

POR. Good sentences, and well pronounc'd.

NER. They would be better if well follow'd.

POR. If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions; I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than to be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree—such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word choose! I may neither choose who I would, nor refuse who I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curb'd by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one, nor refuse none?

NER. Your father was ever virtuous, and holy men at their death have good inspirations; therefore the lott'ry that he hath devis'd in these three chests of gold, silver, and lead, whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you, will no doubt never be chosen by any rightly but one who you shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

POR. I pray thee over-name them, and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and according to my description level at my affection.



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NER. First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

POR. Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse, and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts that he can shoe him himself. I am much afeard my lady his mother play'd false with a smith.

NER. Then is there the County Palentine.

POR. He doth nothing but frown, as who should say, "And you will not have me, choose." He hears merry tales and smiles not. I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these two!

NER. How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

POR. God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker, but he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palentine; he is every man in no man. If a throstle sing, he falls straight a-cap'ring. He will fence with his own shadow. If I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him, for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

NER. What say you then to Falconbridge, the young baron of England?

POR. You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him. He hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture, but alas, who can converse with a dumb show? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behavior every where.

NER. What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbor?

POR. That he hath a neighborly charity in him, for he borrow'd a box of the ear of the Englishman, and swore he would pay him again when he was able. I think the Frenchman became his surety and seal'd under for another.



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Romeo and Juliet

Act 2, Scene 5

Juliet anxiously waits for news from her Nurse regarding Romeo's plans.

Themes include: Love, friendship, family.

JUL. The clock struck nine when I did send the nurse;
In half an hour she promised to return.
Perchance she cannot meet him—that's not so.
O, she is lame! Love's heralds should be thoughts,
Which ten times faster glides than the sun's beams,
Driving back shadows over low'ring hills;
Therefore do nimble-pinion'd doves draw
Love, And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.
Now is the sun upon the highmost hill
Of this day's journey, and from nine till twelve
Is three long hours, yet she is not come.
Had she affections and warm youthful blood,
She would be as swift in motion as a ball;
My words would bandy her to my sweet love,
And his to me.
But old folks—many feign as they were dead,
Unwieldy, slow, heavy, and pale as lead.

Enter Nurse.

O God, she comes! O honey nurse, what news?
Hast thou met with him? Send thy man away.

NURSE. Peter, stay at the gate.

JUL. Now, good sweet nurse—O Lord, why lookest thou sad?
Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily;
If good, thou shamest the music of sweet news
By playing it to me with so sour a face.



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NURSE. I am a-weary, give me leave a while.
Fie, how my bones ache! What a jaunce have I!

JUL. I would thou hadst my bones, and I thy news.
Nay, come, I pray thee speak, good, good nurse, speak.

NURSE. Jesu, what haste! Can you not stay a while?
Do you not see that I am out of breath?

JUL. How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath
To say to me that thou art out of breath?
The excuse that thou dost make in this delay
Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.
Is thy news good or bad? Answer to that.
Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance.
Let me be satisfied, is't good or bad?

NURSE. Well, you have made a simple choice, you know not how to choose a man. Romeo!
no, not he. Though his face be better than any man's, yet his leg excels all men's, and for a
hand and a foot and a body, though they be not to be talk'd on, yet they are past compare.
He is not the flower of courtesy, but I'll warrant him, as gentle as a lamb. Go thy ways,
wench, serve God. What, have you din'd at home?

JUL. No, no! But all this did I know before.
What says he of our marriage? what of that?

NURSE. Lord, how my head aches! What a head have I!
It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.
My back a' t' other side—ah, my back, my back!
Beshrew your heart for sending me about
To catch my death with jauncing up and down!

JUL. I' faith, I am sorry that thou art not well.
Sweet, sweet, sweet nurse, tell me, what says my love?



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NURSE. Your love says, like an honest gentleman,
An' a courteous, and a kind, and a handsome,
And, I warrant, a virtuous—Where is your mother?

JUL. Where is my mother! why, she is within,
Where should she be? How oddly thou repliest!
“Your love says, like an honest gentleman,
‘Where is your mother?’”

NURSE. O God’s lady dear!
Are you so hot? Marry, come up, I trow;
Is this the poultice for my aching bones?
Henceforward do your messages yourself.

JUL. Here’s such a coil! Come, what says Romeo?

NURSE. Have you got leave to go to shrift today?

JUL. I have.

NURSE. Then hie you hence to Friar Lawrence’ cell,
There stays a husband to make you a wife.
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks,
They’ll be in scarlet straight at any news.
Hie you to church, I must another way,
To fetch a ladder, by the which your love
Must climb a bird’s nest soon when it is dark.
I am the drudge, and toil in your delight;
But you shall bear the burden soon at night.
Go, I’ll to dinner, hie you to the cell.

JUL. Hie to high fortune! Honest nurse, farewell



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Twelfth Night

Act 1, Scene 5

Olivia, a beautiful lady with many admirers and Viola, here dressed as a man, meet for the first time in this comic scene.

Themes include: disguise and deception, love.

VIO. The honorable lady of the house, which is she?

OLI. Speak to me, I shall answer for her. Your will?

VIO. Most radiant, exquisite, and unmatchable beauty—I pray you tell me if this be the lady of the house, for I never saw her. I would be loath to cast away my speech; for besides that it is excellently well penn'd, I have taken great pains to con it. Good beauties, let me sustain no scorn; I am very comptible, even to the least sinister usage.

OLI. Whence came you, sir?

VIO. I can say little more than I have studied, and that question's out of my part. Good gentle one, give me modest assurance if you be the lady of the house, that I may proceed in my speech.

OLI. Are you a comedian?

VIO. No, my profound heart; and yet (by the very fangs of malice I swear) I am not that I play. Are you the lady of the house?

OLI. If I do not usurp myself, I am.

VIO. Most certain, if you are she, you do usurp yourself; for what is yours to bestow is not yours to reserve. But this is from my commission; I will on with my speech in your praise, and then show you the heart of my message.

OLI. Come to what is important in't. I forgive you the praise.

VIO. Alas, I took great pains to study it, and 'tis poetical.



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OLI. It is the more like to be feign'd, I pray you keep it in. I heard you were saucy at my gates, and allow'd your approach rather to wonder at you than to hear you. If you be not mad, be gone. If you have reason, be brief. 'Tis not that time of moon with me to make one in so skipping a dialogue.

VIO. I bring no overture of war, no taxation of homage; I hold the olive in my hand; my words are as full of peace as matter.

OLI. Yet you began rudely. What are you? What would you?

VIO. The rudeness that hath appear'd in me have I learn'd from my entertainment. What I am, and what I would, are as secret as maidenhead: to your ears, divinity; to any other's, profanation.

OLI. Now, sir, what is your text?

VIO. Most sweet lady—

OLI. A comfortable doctrine, and much may be said of it. Where lies your text?

VIO. In Orsino's bosom.

OLI. In his bosom? In what chapter of his bosom?

VIO. To answer by the method, in the first of his heart.

OLI. O, I have read it; it is heresy. Have you no more to say?

VIO. Good madam, let me see your face.

OLI. Have you any commission from your lord to negotiate with my face? You are now out of your text; but we will draw the curtain, and show you the picture. Look you, sir, such a one I was this present.

Uncovers her face



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Is't not well done?

VIO. Excellently done, if God did all.

OLI. 'Tis in grain, sir, 'twill endure wind and weather.

VIO. 'Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white
Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on.
Lady, you are the cruell'st she alive
If you will lead these graces to the grave,
And leave the world no copy.

OLI. O, sir, I will not be so hard-hearted; I will give out divers schedules of my beauty.
It shall be inventoried, and every particle and utensil labell'd to my will: as, item, two lips,
indifferent red; item, two grey eyes, with lids to them; item, one neck, one chin, and so forth.
Were you sent hither to praise me?

VIO. I see you what you are, you are too proud;
But if you were the devil, you are fair.
My lord and master loves you. O, such love
Could be but recompens'd, though you were crown'd
The nonpareil of beauty.

OLI. How does he love me?

VIO. With adorations, fertile tears,
With groans that thunder love, with sighs of fire.

OLI. Your lord does know my mind, I cannot love him,
Yet I suppose him virtuous, know him noble,
Of great estate, of fresh and stainless youth;
In voices well divulg'd, free, learn'd, and valiant,
And in dimension, and the shape of nature,
A gracious person. But yet I cannot love him.
He might have took his answer long ago.



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VIO. If I did love you in my master's flame,
With such a suff'ring, such a deadly life,
In your denial I would find no sense,
I would not understand it.

OLI. Why, what would you?

VIO. Make me a willow cabin at your gate,
And call upon my soul within the house;
Write loyal cantons of contemned love,
And sing them loud even in the dead of night;
Hallow your name to the reverberate hills,
And make the babbling gossip of the air
Cry out "Olivia!" O, you should not rest
Between the elements of air and earth
But you should pity me!

OLI. You might do much.
What is your parentage?

VIO. Above my fortunes, yet my state is well:
I am a gentleman.

OLI. Get you to your lord.
I cannot love him; let him send no more—
Unless (perchance) you come to me again
To tell me how he takes it. Fare you well.
I thank you for your pains. Spend this for me.

VIO. I am no fee'd post, lady; keep your purse;
My master, not myself, lacks recompense.
Love make his heart of flint that you shall love,
And let your fervor like my master's be
Plac'd in contempt! Farewell, fair cruelty. (exit)



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OLI. "What is your parentage?"

"Above my fortunes, yet my state is well:
I am a gentleman." I'll be sworn thou art;
Thy tongue, thy face, thy limbs, actions, and spirit
Do give thee fivefold blazon. Not too fast! soft, soft!
Unless the master were the man. How now?
Even so quickly may one catch the plague?
Methinks I feel this youth's perfections
With an invisible and subtle stealth
To creep in at mine eyes. Well, let it be.



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Macbeth

Act 1, Scene 7

In this scene, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth meet before Duncan's murder and Lady Macbeth reminds her husband of the reasons he should be courageous and kill the king.

Themes include: betrayal, courage, loyalty, love.

MACBETH If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly: if the assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With his surcease success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgment here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice
Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips. He's here in double trust:
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off;
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's Cherubins, horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on the other.

Enter LADY MACBETH



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How now! what news?

LADY MACBETH He has almost supp'd. Why have you left the chamber?

MACBETH Hath he ask'd for me?

LADY MACBETH Know you not, he has?

MACBETH We will proceed no further in this business:
He hath honour'd me of late; and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.

LADY MACBETH Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dress'd yourself? Hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afraid
To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would,'
Like the poor cat i' the adage?

MACBETH Pr'ythee, peace.
I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none.

LADY MACBETH What beast was't then,
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time, nor place,



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Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.

MACBETH If we should fail?

LADY MACBETH We fail?
But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep
(Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him) his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassail so convince
That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
A limbeck only: when in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie, as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell?

MACBETH Bring forth men-children only!
For thy undaunted mettle should compose
Nothing but males. Will it not be received,
When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber and used their very daggers,
That they have done't?

LADY MACBETH Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar
Upon his death?



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MACBETH I am settled, and bend up
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.
Away, and mock the time with fairest show:
False face must hide what the false heart doth know.



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A Midsummer Night's Dream

Act 2, Scene 1

Demetrius is followed by Helena through the woods, as he seeks out Hermia.

Themes include: Friendship, love, betrayal.

DEM. I love thee not; therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia?
The one I'll slay; the other slayeth me.
Thou toldst me they were stol'n unto this wood;
And here am I, and wode within this wood,
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

HEL. You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant;
But yet you draw not iron, for my heart
Is true as steel. Leave you your power to draw,
And I shall have no power to follow you.

DEM. Do I entice you? Do I speak you fair?
Or rather do I not in plainest truth
Tell you I do not nor I cannot love you?

HEL. And even for that do I love you the more;
I am your spaniel; and, Demetrius,
The more you beat me, I will fawn on you.
Use me but as your spaniel; spurn me, strike me,
Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.
What worser place can I beg in your love
(And yet a place of high respect with me)
Than to be used as you use your dog?

DEM. Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit,
For I am sick when I do look on thee.



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HEL. And I am sick when I look not on you.

DEM. You do impeach your modesty too much,
To leave the city and commit yourself
Into the hands of one that loves you not;
To trust the opportunity of night,
And the ill counsel of a desert place,
With the rich worth of your virginity.

HEL. Your virtue is my privilege. For that
It is not night when I do see your face,
Therefore I think I am not in the night,
Nor doth this wood lack worlds of company,
For you in my respect are all the world.
Then how can it be said I am alone,
When all the world is here to look on me?

DEM. I'll run from thee, and hide me in the brakes,
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

HEL. The wildest hath not such a heart as you.
Run when you will; the story shall be chang'd:
Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase;
The dove pursues the griffin; the mild hind
Makes speed to catch the tiger—bootless speed,
When cowardice pursues and valor flies.

DEM. I will not stay thy questions. Let me go;
Or if thou follow me, do not believe
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

HEL. Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius!
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex.
We cannot fight for love, as men may do.
We should be woo'd, and were not made to woo.



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The Taming of the Shrew

Act 2, Scene 1

Petruchio tries to charm Katherina in their first meeting and what follows is a battle of wits.

Theme: Love, marriage, gender roles.

PET. I'll attend her here,
And woo her with some spirit when she comes.
Say that she rail, why then I'll tell her plain
She sings as sweetly as a nightingale;
Say that she frown, I'll say she looks as clear
As morning roses newly wash'd with dew;
Say she be mute, and will not speak a word,
Then I'll commend her volubility,
And say she uttereth piercing eloquence;
If she do bid me pack, I'll give her thanks,
As though she bid me stay by her a week;
If she deny to wed, I'll crave the day
When I shall ask the banes, and when be married.
But here she comes, and now, Petruchio, speak.

Enter Katherina.

Good morrow, Kate, for that's your name, I hear.

KATH. Well have you heard, but something hard of hearing:
They call me Katherine that do talk of me.

PET. You lie, in faith, for you are call'd plain Kate,
And bonny Kate, and sometimes Kate the curst;
But Kate, the prettiest Kate in Christendom,
Kate of Kate-Hall, my super-dainty Kate,
For dainties are all Kates, and therefore, Kate,
Take this of me, Kate of my consolation—
Hearing thy mildness prais'd in every town,
Thy virtues spoke of, and thy beauty sounded,



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Yet not so deeply as to thee belongs,
Myself am mov'd to woo thee for my wife.

KATH. Mov'd! in good time! Let him that mov'd you hither
Remove you hence. I knew you at the first
You were a moveable.

PET. Why, what's a moveable?

KATH. A join'd-stool.

PET. Thou hast hit it; come sit on me.

KATH. Asses are made to bear, and so are you.

PET. Women are made to bear, and so are you.

KATH. No such jade as you, if me you mean.

PET. Alas, good Kate, I will not burden thee,
For knowing thee to be but young and light.

KATH. Too light for such a swain as you to catch,
And yet as heavy as my weight should be.

PET. Should be! should—buzz!

KATH. Well ta'en, and like a buzzard.

PET. O slow-wing'd turtle, shall a buzzard take thee?

KATH. Ay, for a turtle, as he takes a buzzard.

PET. Come, come, you wasp, i' faith you are too angry.



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PET. Why, here's no crab, and therefore look not sour.

KATH. There is, there is.

PET. Then show it me.

KATH. Had I a glass, I would.

PET. What, you mean my face?

KATH. Well aim'd of such a young one.

PET. Now, by Saint George, I am too young for you.

KATH. Yet you are wither'd.

PET. 'Tis with cares.

KATH. I care not.

PET. Nay, hear you, Kate. In sooth you scape not so.

KATH. I chafe you if I tarry. Let me go.

PET. No, not a whit, I find you passing gentle:
'Twas told me you were rough and coy and sullen,
And now I find report a very liar;
For thou art pleasant, gamesome, passing courteous,
But slow in speech, yet sweet as spring-time flowers.
Thou canst not frown, thou canst not look askance,
Nor bite the lip, as angry wenches will,
Nor hast thou pleasure to be cross in talk;
But thou with mildness entertain'st thy wooers,
With gentle conference, soft, and affable.
Why does the world report that Kate doth limp?
O sland'rous world! Kate like the hazel-twig



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Is straight and slender, and as brown in hue
As hazel-nuts, and sweeter than the kernels.
O, let me see thee walk. Thou dost not halt.

KATH. Go, fool, and whom thou keep'st command.

PET. Did ever Dian so become a grove
As Kate this chamber with her princely gait?
O, be thou Dian, and let her be Kate,
And then let Kate be chaste, and Dian sportful!

KATH. Where did you study all this goodly speech?

PET. It is extempore, from my mother-wit.

KATH. A witty mother! witless else her son.

PET. Am I not wise?

KATH. Yes, keep you warm.

PET. Marry, so I mean, sweet Katherine, in thy bed;
And therefore setting all this chat aside,
Thus in plain terms: your father hath consented
That you shall be my wife; your dowry 'greed on;
And will you, nill you, I will marry you.
Now, Kate, I am a husband for your turn,
For by this light whereby I see thy beauty,
Thy beauty that doth make me like thee well,
Thou must be married to no man but me;
For I am he am born to tame you, Kate,
And bring you from a wild Kate to a Kate
Conformable as other household Kates.
Here comes your father. Never make denial;
I must and will have Katherine to my wife



ESU TEACHING RESOURCE



(Among which number, Cassius, be you one),
Nor construe any further my neglect,
Than that poor Brutus, with himself at war,
Forgets the shows of love to other men.

CAS.

Then, Brutus, I have much mistook your passion,
By means whereof this breast of mine hath buried
Thoughts of great value, worthy cogitations.
Tell me, good Brutus, can you see your face?

BRU.

No, Cassius; for the eye sees not itself
But by reflection, by some other things.

CAS.

'Tis just,
And it is very much lamented, Brutus,
That you have no such mirrors as will turn
Your hidden worthiness into your eye,
That you might see your shadow. I have heard
Where many of the best respect in Rome
(Except immortal Caesar), speaking of Brutus
And groaning underneath this age's yoke,
Have wish'd that noble Brutus had his eyes.

BRU.

Into what dangers would you lead me, Cassius,
That you would have me seek into myself
For that which is not in me?

CAS.

Therefore, good Brutus, be prepar'd to hear;
And since you know you cannot see yourself
So well as by reflection, I, your glass,
Will modestly discover to yourself



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That of yourself which you yet know not of.
And be not jealous on me, gentle Brutus:
Were I a common laughter, or did use
To stale with ordinary oaths my love
To every new protester; if you know
That I do fawn on men and hug them hard,
And after scandal them; or if you know
That I profess myself in banqueting
To all the rout, then hold me dangerous. Flourish and shout.

BRU.
What means this shouting? I do fear the people
Choose Caesar for their king.

CAS.
Ay, do you fear it?
Then must I think you would not have it so.

BRU.
I would not, Cassius, yet I love him well.
But wherefore do you hold me here so long?
What is it that you would impart to me?
If it be aught toward the general good,
Set honor in one eye and death i' th' other,
And I will look on both indifferently;
For let the gods so speed me as I love
The name of honor more than I fear death.

CAS.
I know that virtue to be in you, Brutus,
As well as I do know your outward favor.
Well, honor is the subject of my story:
I cannot tell what you and other men
Think of this life; but, for my single self,
I had as lief not be as live to be



ESU TEACHING RESOURCE



In awe of such a thing as I myself.
I was born free as Caesar, so were you;
We both have fed as well, and we can both
Endure the winter's cold as well as he;
For once, upon a raw and gusty day,
The troubled Tiber chafing with her shores,
Caesar said to me, "Dar'st thou, Cassius, now
Leap in with me into this angry flood,
And swim to yonder point?" Upon the word,
Accoutred as I was, I plunged in,
And bade him follow; so indeed he did.
The torrent roar'd, and we did buffet it
With lusty sinews, throwing it aside
And stemming it with hearts of controversy;
But ere we could arrive the point propos'd,
Caesar cried, "Help me, Cassius, or I sink!"
I, as Aeneas, our great ancestor,
Did from the flames of Troy upon his shoulder
The old Anchises bear, so from the waves of Tiber
Did I the tired Caesar. And this man
Is now become a god, and Cassius is
A wretched creature, and must bend his body
If Caesar carelessly but nod on him.
He had a fever when he was in Spain,
And when the fit was on him, I did mark
How he did shake—'tis true, this god did shake;
His coward lips did from their color fly,
And that same eye whose bend doth awe the world
Did lose his lustre, I did hear him groan;
Ay, and that tongue of his that bade the Romans
Mark him, and write his speeches in their books,
Alas, it cried, "Give me some drink, Titinius,"
As a sick girl. Ye gods, it doth amaze me
A man of such a feeble temper should
So get the start of the majestic world
And bear the palm alone.



ESU TEACHING RESOURCE



Shout. Flourish from offstage

BRU.

Another general shout!

I do believe that these applauses are

For some new honors that are heap'd on Caesar.

CAS.

Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world

Like a Colossus, and we petty men

Walk under his huge legs, and peep about

To find ourselves dishonorable graves.

Men at some time are masters of their fates;

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,

But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

Brutus and Caesar: what should be in that "Caesar"?

Why should that name be sounded more than yours?

Write them together, yours is as fair a name;

Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well;

Weigh them, it is as heavy; conjure with 'em,

"Brutus" will start a spirit as soon as "Caesar."

Now in the names of all the gods at once,

Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed

That he is grown so great? Age, thou art sham'd!

Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!

When went there by an age since the great flood

But it was fam'd with more than with one man?

When could they say, till now, that talk'd of Rome,

That her wide walks encompass'd but one man?

Now is it Rome indeed and room enough,

When there is in it but one only man.

O! you and I have heard our fathers say

There was a Brutus once that would have brook'd

Th' eternal devil to keep his state in Rome

As easily as a king.



ESU TEACHING RESOURCE



Macbeth

Act 4, Scene 3

To find out whether Macduff is still trustworthy, Malcom shares confessions about his own doubts about his ability to be king.

Themes include: Trust, loyalty, friendship.

MAL.

Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there
Weep our sad bosoms empty.

MACD.

Let us rather
Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men
Bestride our downfall birthdom. Each new morn
New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland, and yell'd out
Like syllable of dolor.

MAL.

What I believe, I'll wail,
What know, believe; and what I can redress,
As I shall find the time to friend, I will.
What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.
This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest; you have lov'd him well;
He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young, but something
You may discern of him through me, and wisdom
To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb
T' appease an angry god.

MACD.

I am not treacherous.

MAL.

But Macbeth is.
A good and virtuous nature may recoil



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In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon;
That which you are, my thoughts cannot transpose:
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell.
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,
Yet grace must still look so.

MACD.

I have lost my hopes.

MAL.

Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.
Why in that rawness left you wife and child,
Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,
Without leave-taking? I pray you,
Let not my jealousies be your dishonors,
But mine own safeties. You may be rightly just,
What ever I shall think.

MACD.

Bleed, bleed, poor country!
Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure,
For goodness dare not check thee; wear thou thy wrongs,
The title is affeer'd! Fare thee well, lord,
I would not be the villain that thou think'st
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,
And the rich East to boot.

MAL.

Be not offended; I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke:
It weeps, it bleeds, and each new day a gash
Is added to her wounds. I think withal
There would be hands uplifted in my right;
And here from gracious England have I offer
Of goodly thousands. But, for all this,
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,



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Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
Shall have more vices than it had before,
More suffer, and more sundry ways than ever,
By him that shall succeed.

MACD.

What should he be?

MAL.

It is myself I mean; in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted
That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state
Esteem him as a lamb, being compar'd
With my confineless harms.

MACD.

Not in the legions
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd
In evils to top Macbeth.

MAL.

I grant him bloody,
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin
That has a name; but there's no bottom, none,
In my voluptuousness. Your wives, your daughters,
Your matrons, and your maids could not fill up
The cestern of my lust, and my desire
All continent impediments would o'erbear
That did oppose my will. Better Macbeth
Than such an one to reign.

MACD.

Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny; it hath been



ESU TEACHING RESOURCE



Acting it many ways. Nay, had I pow'r, I should
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
Uproar the universal peace, confound
All unity on earth.

MACD.
O Scotland, Scotland!

MAL.
If such a one be fit to govern, speak.
I am as I have spoken.

MACD.
Fit to govern?
No, not to live. O nation miserable!
With an untitled tyrant bloody-sceptred,
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
Since that the truest issue of thy throne
By his own interdiction stands accus'd,
And does blaspheme his breed? Thy royal father
Was a most sainted king; the queen that bore thee,
Oft'ner upon her knees than on her feet,
Died every day she liv'd. Fare thee well, These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
Hath banish'd me from Scotland. O my breast,
Thy hope ends here!

MAL.
Macduff, this noble passion,
Child of integrity, hath from my soul
Wip'd the black scruples, reconcil'd my thoughts
To thy good truth and honor. Devilish Macbeth
By many of these trains hath sought to win me
Into his power, and modest wisdom plucks me
From over-credulous haste. But God above
Deal between thee and me! for even now
I put myself to thy direction, and



ESU TEACHING RESOURCE



Unspeake mine own detractiion; here abjure
The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
For strangers to my nature. I am yet
Unknown to woman, never was forsworn,
Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,
At no time broke my faith, would not betray
The devil to his fellow, and delight
No less in truth than life. My first false speaking
Was this upon myself. What I am truly
Is thine and my poor country's to command:
Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,
Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men
Already at a point, was setting forth.
Now we'll together, and the chance of goodness
Be like our warranted quarrel! Why are you silent?

MACD.

Such welcome and unwelcome things at once
'Tis hard to reconcile.

