



SHAKESPEARE: PERFORMING YOUR SPEECH (PRIMARY)

Choosing a scene or speech

If your child or pupil has already been studying Shakespeare in school, they may already have a favourite speech or scene. If not, you may want to explore the language and themes of a particular play to see what appeals to them. They might enjoy the comedic antics of ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’, the grim and bloodthirsty violence of ‘Macbeth’ or the betrayal and (literal) backstabbing of ‘Julius Caesar’. Try out some different scenes and speeches with them to find out what suits their personality and which they enjoy performing. Some children might love getting their teeth into some tricky language whilst others may respond better to a more physical performance.

The performance

The performance should begin with an introduction saying briefly what the play is about, the name of the character(s) they are playing and why they chose this scene or speech. The introduction should be no longer than one minute and the acting no longer than three minutes, so the whole piece is, ideally, no longer than 4 minutes in total.

There is no need to worry about costumes or props as it is better to concentrate on the acting.

Key points to think about:

- Rehearse your performance a few times beforehand with an audience (family, teacher or friends);
- Think about what happens in the scene and its overall meaning - what do you want the audience to know about what has happened;
- What are the characters feeling in the scene and how could you show this? If their emotions change during the scene, how could you change your voice or body language?;
- Shakespeare’s language can be tricky for audiences - use your voice, your facial expressions and your actions to help them understand what is happening in the scene or speech.

Plan. Practise. Perform. Post!