

SHAKESPEARE LIVES **IN** SCHOOLS

20 ACTIVITIES FOR
SHAKESPEARE LIVES
IN SCHOOLS DAY

www.shakespearelives.org



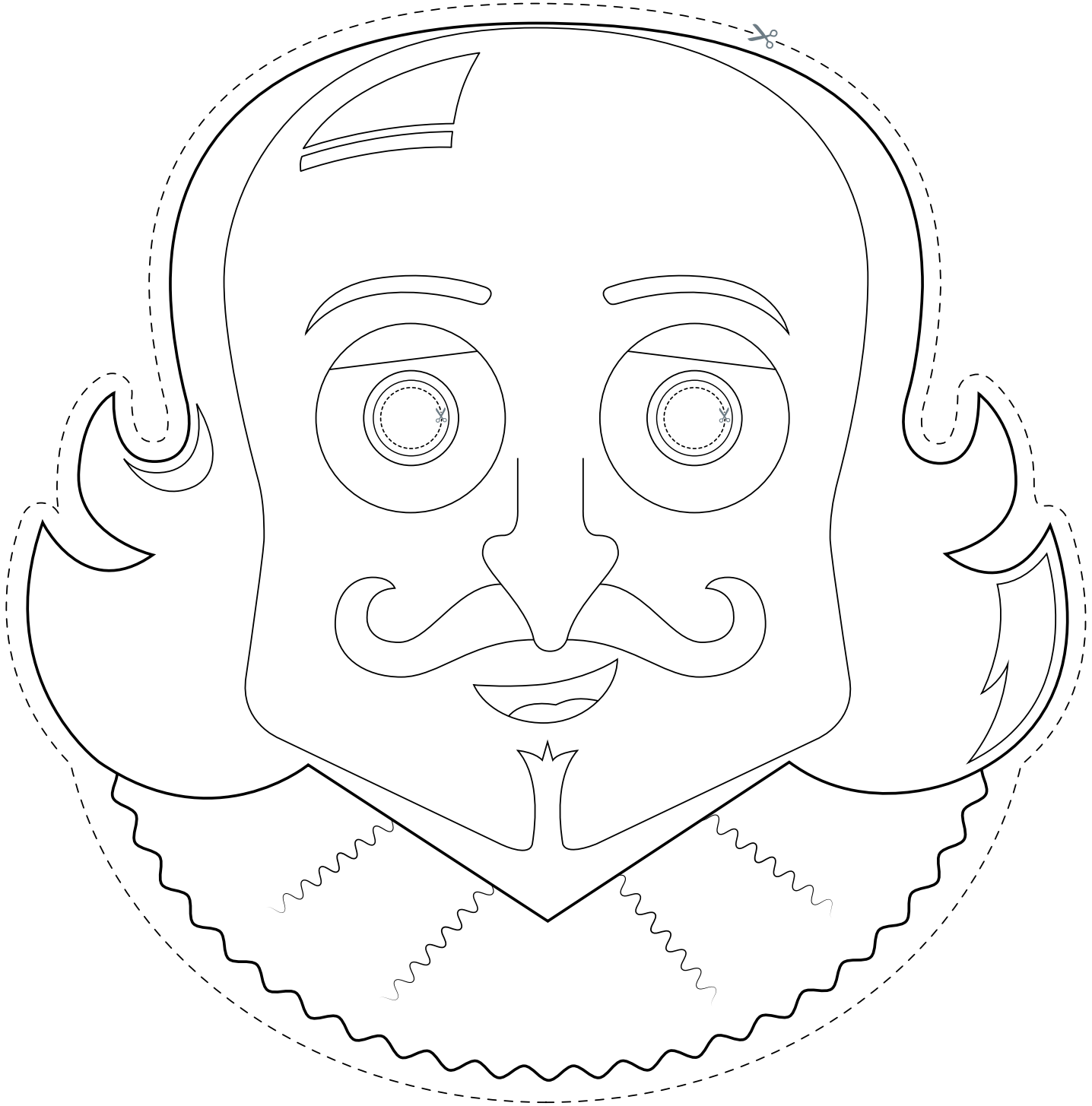
INTRODUCTION

Whichever activities you choose on Shakespeare Lives in Schools Day, tell us how you are marking the day in your school by sending us a photo, an email or film clip about what you are doing to celebrate this unique event. Reach us on social media @Schools_On_Line using #ShakespeareLives or by email shakespearelives@britishcouncil.org



1. Invite staff and pupils to come to school dressed as a character from a Shakespeare play. They could be a fairy or Bottom transformed with a donkey's head from **A Midsummer Night's Dream**, a witch or Banquo's ghost from **Macbeth**, Julius Caesar or Cleopatra, or come as Shakespeare himself.
2. Use the Shakespeare mask template in this pack to complete your costumes. Print out, cut and colour in the mask and pose for the ultimate Shakespeare selfie and show the world on social media #ShakespeareLives.
3. Use our Shakespeare assembly to set the scene for the day.
4. Incorporate the following exercise from the Shakespeare Lives in Schools Pack into your lesson.

Divide pupils into small groups to create still images of key characters or lines from a play. They could be statues showing 'a King and his subjects,' 'three witches meeting'; or portraying famous lines from the plays such as, 'a pair of star – crossed lovers' or 'Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears.' Photograph and share the results.



Cut the Shakespeare mask out, colour it in and put it on a stick to complete your costume



5. Try directing a scene from **A Midsummer Night's Dream** using the Mix the Play interactive digital platform. Your pupils can experiment with different actors, acting styles, settings, costumes and music. Try out a few different versions until they are happy with their selection. When your students have settled on their final choices, they could share their scene with a partner and explain the decisions they made to them and/or share their results on social media.
6. Many words and phrases found in Shakespeare's plays are still in common usage today. Copy and cut up the examples of some well-known Shakespearean idioms which you can find on the resource sheet, in the Identity and Equality section of the Shakespeare Lives in Schools Pack. Put them in envelopes and hold a competition to see which group can match the beginning and the end of these famous quotations in the quickest time. You could do this with staff and pupils.
7. Wherever you are in the world, watch **A Midsummer Night's Dream** from Shakespeare's Globe on the BBC. This is the first ever production to be live streamed around the world from The Globe.
8. We are retelling three of the Bard's most iconic plays through the lens of Instagram! Set throughout Europe, these modern adaptations will inspire and intrigue. You can follow the stories so far on Instagram. Follow @britishcouncileurope to watch them unfold in real time. Why not try storyboarding your own play on Instagram?



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9. Incorporate the following exercise from the [Shakespeare Lives in Schools Pack](#) into your lesson.

Discuss the character traits and motivations of a character from a Shakespeare play that you have studied. Draw round members of the class and create large collage versions of these characters with key lines from the play written around them. You could also create a Twitter bio for them that captures the essence of their personality and actions in the play in only 140 characters or less.

10. Watch the performances of children singing 'Full Fathom Five' or 'Hey Ho' on the [World Voice website](#). These songs from [The Tempest](#) and [As You Like It](#) have been put to music by composer Paul Burrell. Try singing along and then performing one of the songs.

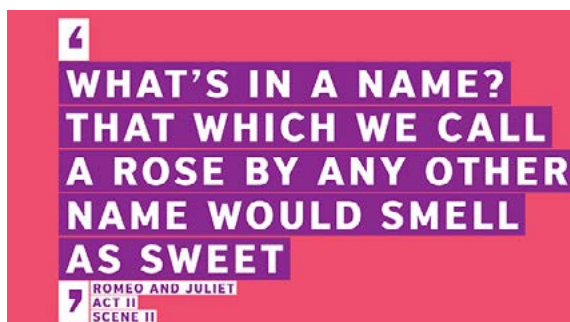
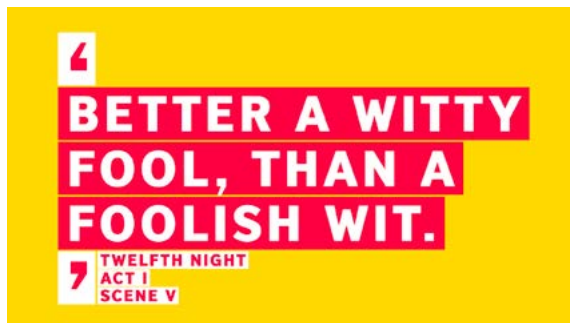
11. Experiment with the sounds and rhythms of Shakespeare's language. Practice some simple call and response clapping and stamping rhythms and then clap and stamp their feet to the rhythm of blank verse - Di Dum Di Dum Di Dum Di Dum Di Dum (ten beats) Keep the rhythm going as you read together short examples from well-known Shakespearean speeches such as: Portia's famous speech about 'the quality of mercy' from Act 4 Scene 1 of [The Merchant of Venice](#) or The Prologue from [Romeo and Juliet](#).

12. Watch SBTV's re-imagination of [Twelfth Night](#) then have a class discussion about who is the 'Shakespeare' of our time.



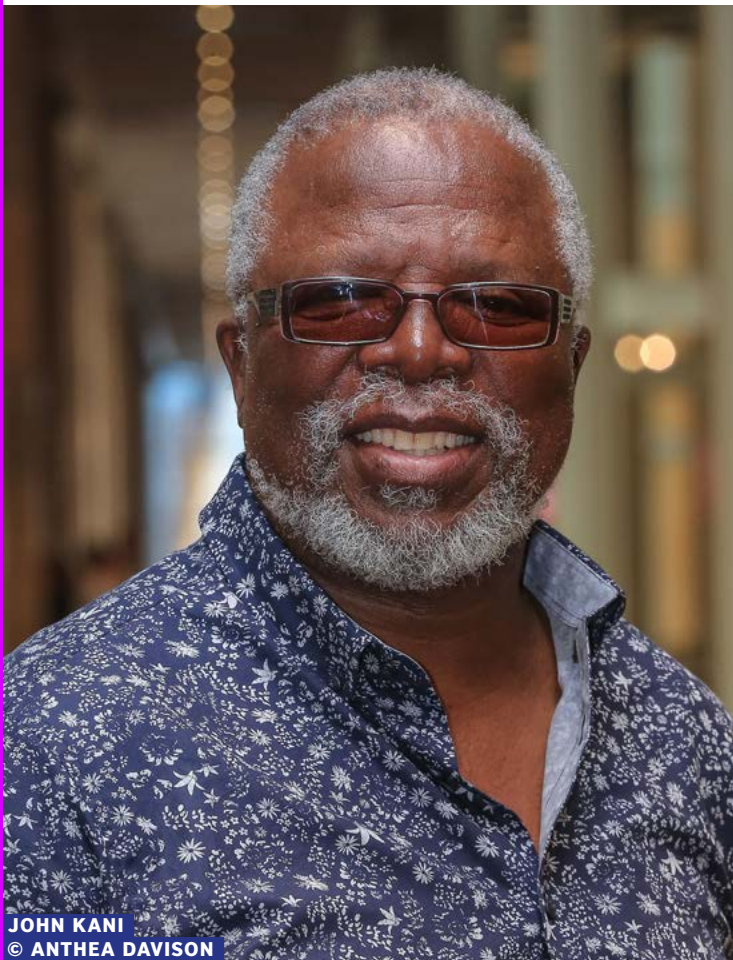


13. Make a scene in a box inspired by a piece of Shakespearean text. Provide some examples of evocative Shakespearean text, small boxes, collage materials, card and images from magazines. Ask pupils to choose images and textures that they feel are linked to a piece of text and cover the back of the box with one to create a backdrop.
14. Share the following quotation cards with your pupils. Try saying them in different ways. You could whisper them, gossip them or shout them out loud. Collect other favourite Shakespearean quotes from teachers, their families and partner schools. You could record these digitally or write and illustrate them to make a book of Shakespeare quotations for the school library.
15. Give out copies of national or local newspapers. Ask your pupils to try and find contemporary news stories that are concerned with issues such as leadership and power, family and relationships, justice and rules that Shakespeare also explored in his writing four hundred years ago.
16. Shakespeare often used the soliloquy to allow characters to express all sorts of emotion and intentions and give the audience insight into a character's deepest private thoughts. Perhaps the best-known opening line to a Shakespeare soliloquy is 'To be or not to be' from **Hamlet**. Challenge groups to work together to create a soliloquy in modern language where a character from a Shakespearean play they know well displays their thoughts and feelings about their situation and reveals what they would like to say and do.





17. Watch the film by South African actor John Kani who recounts his experiences playing **Othello** in Apartheid South Africa or Dame Evelyn Glennie demonstrating how deafness is no impediment to hearing **The Tempest**. Download and read eight corresponding essays on Shakespeare here from leading cultural and political figures from around the world.
18. When Shakespeare was writing, fairies and spirits were considered dangerous and magic represented unseen forces in the world. Design and create your own Shakespearean magical creatures. Give the character a name, a particular power and a secret! You could use play dough, clay, recycled materials or construction kit pieces. Take photographs of your creatures and use computer software if available to create an exciting backdrop from the play your creature might appear in. You could also use stop frame techniques to recreate a scene as an animation with sound effects and extracts from the play.
19. Create soundscapes using body percussion and musical instruments to accompany a dramatic scene from a Shakespeare play such as the witches on the heath in **Macbeth** or the storm in **The Tempest**.
20. Remember, Shakespeare was a playwright and not an author – he wrote his plays to be performed and shared with an audience. Perform a scene, a speech or Shakespeare-inspired performance for your school and community. There are lots of examples of speeches you could use in the Shakespeare Lives in Schools Pack.



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EVELYN GLENNIE
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