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About This Guide

One of the principal goals of The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey’s education programs is to demystify the classics, take them “off the shelf,” and re-energize them for students and teachers alike. Toward these goals, this Classroom Activities Guide, used in conjunction with our Audience Guide, provide educators with tools to both allay their own concerns and to expand the theatre-going experience for their students beyond the field trip to The Shakespeare Theatre.

The information included in this guide will help you expand your students’ understanding of classic literature in performance, as well as help you meet many of the New Jersey Common Core Standards. We encourage you to impart as much of the information included in the Classroom Activities Guide and the Audience Guide to your students as possible. The following are some suggestions from teachers on how you can best utilize elements of these guides given limited classroom time.

- **JUST THE BASICS**: Many teachers have found that distributing or reading the Short Synopsis and Who’s Who pages from the Audience guide has greatly increased students’ understanding and enjoyment of the production. It provides the students with a general understanding of what they will be seeing and what they can expect. Some teachers simply take the last five minutes of a class period to do this with very positive results.

- **MINI TEAM-RESEARCH PROJECTS**: When more class time is available prior to your visit, we recommend incorporating the background information on the era in which the play is set as well the play itself. One teacher divided her class into groups and assigned each group research topics based on the divisions found in this guide as well as the Audience Guide. Using a copy of the corresponding Audience Guide page as a launch pad, the students had one week to research the topics. The students then presented their information to the class in three- to five-minute oral reports. Including the questions that evolved from the presentations, the entire project took only one class period.

- **POST-SHOW DISCUSSION**: Using the questions found in the “Topics for Discussion,” many teachers will opt to take a class period after their trip to The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey to discuss the play with their students. The questions help keep the comments focused on the production, while incorporating various thematic and social issues that are found in the play.

- **GET ON YOUR FEET**: One school spent two days working through performance-based activities (a few of which are suggested in the “Follow-Up Activities” section) with a particularly “difficult and rowdy” class. They were astounded with the results.

Again, we hope you will incorporate as many portions of this guide as you are able into your classroom experience. If you have any suggestions for activities or topics not already found in the Study Guide, please contact our Education Department. We are always interested in hearing new ways to excite young people (and teachers) about Shakespeare and live theatre.

Happy Teaching,

Brian B. Crowe,
Director of Education
William Shakespeare, widely recognized as the greatest English dramatist, was born on April 23, 1564. He was the third of eight children born to John Shakespeare and Mary Arden of Stratford-on-Avon in Warwickshire, England. Shakespeare’s father was a prominent local merchant, and Shakespeare’s childhood, though little is known about it for certain, appears to have been quite normal. In fact, it seems that the young Shakespeare was allowed considerable leisure time because his writing contains extensive knowledge of hunting and hawking. In 1582 he married Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a farmer. She was eight years his senior, and the match was considered unconventional.

It is believed that Shakespeare left Stratford-on-Avon and went to London around 1588. By 1592 he was a successful actor and playwright. He wrote approximately 38 plays, two epic poems, and over 150 sonnets. His work was immensely popular, appealing to members of all social spheres including Queen Elizabeth I and King James I. While Shakespeare’s plays were well-liked, his work was not considered exceptional by his educated contemporaries. By 1608, Shakespeare’s involvement with theatre began to dwindle, and he spent more time at his country home in Stratford. He died in 1616.

Most of Shakespeare’s plays found their first major publication in 1623, seven years after Shakespeare’s death, when two of his fellow actors put the plays together in the First Folio. Other early printings of Shakespeare’s plays were called quartos, a printer’s term referring to the format in which the publication was laid out. These quartos and the First Folio texts are the sources of all modern printings of Shakespeare’s plays.
London, in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, was a bustling urban center filled with a wide variety of people and cultures. Although most life centered around making a living or going to church, the main source of diversion for Londoners was the theatre. It was a form of entertainment accessible to people of all classes. The rich and the poor, the aristocrats and the beggars, all met at the theatre. Though often appeasing the church or the monarchy, theatre at this time did experience a freedom that was unknown in previous generations. Evidence of this can be found in the numerous bawdy and pagan references found in Shakespeare’s plays. This relative artistic license and freedom of expression made theatre extremely unpopular among certain members of society, and it was later banned entirely by the Puritans. Not until the reign of Charles II (1660-1685) was the theatre restored to the status it held in Shakespeare’s day.

The Globe Theatre, the resident playhouse for Shakespeare’s company of actors, was easily accessible to Londoners and an active social center. Actors and performers were also regularly brought to court or to private homes to entertain. Despite their popularity, actors maintained a relatively low social status, sometimes no better than a common beggar or rogue. Most performers were forced to earn a living doing trade work. The aristocracy’s desire for entertainment, however, did spur the development of numerous new theatre pieces. Often a nobleman would become a patron to an artist or company of actors, providing for their financial needs and sheltering them to some degree from official sanctions. In return, the company would adopt the name of the patron. Shakespeare’s acting company was originally named “Lord Chamberlain’s Men” after their patron Henry Carey, the Lord Chamberlain. Later, under the patronage of King James I, they were known as “The King’s Men,” an unprecedented honor at the time.

Despite the flourishing of the arts at this time, London was sometimes a desolate place. Outbreaks of the Black Plague (the bubonic plague) frequently erupted, killing thousands of citizens. Theatres, shops, and the government all shut down during these times in hopes of preventing the spread of the disease. Elizabethans were unaware that the disease was being spread by the flea and rat populations, which well outnumbered the human population of London at that time.
Are You SURE This Is English?

Contrary to popular belief, Shakespeare and his contemporaries did not write in Old English, or even Middle English. PLAYWRIGHTS OF THE 16TH AND EARLY 17TH CENTURIES WROTE IN MODERN ENGLISH. Shakespeare spoke (and wrote in) the same language which we speak today. It is possible to be thrown a bit by grammatical “carry-overs” from earlier English (“thee” and “thou” instead of “you”) and the poetic liberties that Shakespeare took, but there is no doubt that the words and syntax used in his plays can be understood today without any “translation.” To help clarify this point, here are some examples of Old, Middle, and Modern English.

**Old English (500 - 1150 CE)**

When Julius Caesar invaded Britain in BCE 55-4, the Celtic (pronounced KEL-tic) tribes lived in the British Isles. Their languages survive today in the forms of Gaelic (Scotland and Ireland), Welsh (Wales), and Manx (Isle of Man). The Romans brought Latin to Britain. However, early English developed primarily from the language of tribes which invaded and settled England from what is now Germany. This language, known as Old English, was also influenced by the Latin spoken by Catholic missionaries from Rome as well as the Scandinavian dialects of Viking raiders and settlers.

**Selection from Beowulf**

*Author unknown, ca 800 CE*

**MODERN ENGLISH TRANSLATION:**

> Often Scyld the Sceafing from squadroned foes, from many a tribe, the mead-bench tore, awing the earls. Since first he lay friendless, a foundling, fate repaid him: for he waxed under welkin, in wealth he throwe, till before him the folk, both far and near, who lived by the whale-path, heard his mandate, gave him gift: a good king he!

**Middle English (1150 - 1450 CE)**

The conquest of England by the Norman army in 1066 brought great changes to English life and the English language. The Old French spoken by the Normans became for many years the language of the Royal Court and of English literature. Over time, the spoken English still used by the lower classes borrowed about 10,000 words from French, as well as certain grammatical structures. By the time English reappeared as a written, literary language in the 14th century, it only distantly resembled Old English. This German-French hybrid language is known as Middle English.

**Selection from The Canterbury Tales**

*By Geoffrey Chaucer, ca 1390 CE*

**MODERN ENGLISH TRANSLATION:**

> But nonetheless, while I have time and space Before I continue in this story I think it appropriate to speak of, To tell you, the condition Of each of them, as it seemed to me. And who was who, and of what degree, And in what fashion each was dressed. And with a knight then I will begin.

**Modern English (1450 - present day)**

With the invention of the printing press in the 15th century, the English language began to develop and mutate at an unprecedented rate. Books, previously a precious and expensive commodity, were now widely available to anyone with basic literacy. Works in Latin, Italian, Spanish, French, and Portuguese were translated by the hundreds, and the translators found it necessary to borrow and invent thousands of new words. English trade and exploration fueled even more cultural and linguistic exchange. The early Modern English of Shakespeare and his contemporaries has been referred to as “English in its adolescence”: daring, experimental, innovative, and irreverent.

**Selection from Romeo and Juliet**

*By William Shakespeare, ca 1595 CE*

**MODERN ENGLISH TRANSLATION:**

> While we may associate Shakespeare with the “refined” British accent of Sir Ian McKellen or Dame Judi Dench, linguistic scholars suggest that the closest approximation to the London accent of Shakespeare’s day is the accent heard nowadays in the Appalachian region of the United States.

To hear how Old and Modern English sound, visit the links on page 15.
Who Said That? Match the spoken line to the character who speaks it. Some characters match more than one line, some match none.

A. “There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and [my niece]. They never meet but there’s a skirmish of wit between them.”
   DON PEDRO

B. “That a woman conceived me, I thank her; that she brought me up, I like wise give her most humble thanks, but…I will live a bachelor.”
   COUNT CLAUDIO

C. “Your Grace is too costly to wear every day. But I beseech your Grace pardon me. I was born to speak all mirth and no matter.”
   BENEDICK

D. “If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it And I will break with her and with her father And thou shalt have her.”
   DON JOHN

E. “…though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man, it must not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villain.”
   BORACHIO

F. “She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the Prince’s jester, that I was duller than a great thaw, huddling jest upon jest with such impossible conveyance upon me that I stood like a man at a mark with a whole army shooting at me.”
   CONRADE

G. “There was a star danced, and under that was I born.”
   LEONATO

H. “There, Leonato, take her back again. Give not this rotten orange to your friend.”
   HERO

I. “Trust not my age, My reverence, calling, nor divinity, If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here Under some biting error.”
   MARGARET

J. “…I was not born under a rhyming planet…”
   DOGBERRY

Answers available on Pg. 9
Test Your Understanding

Circle the letter that BEST answers the question.

1. Which character(s) refuse to ever marry at the beginning of the play?

2. Claudio confesses to Benedick that he is in love with ____________.

3. ______________ plays match-maker and successfully woos ______________ for Claudio.

4. Don John proclaims himself to be ____________________.
   a. a flattering honest man  b. a plain-dealing villain  
   c. a rogue and peasant slave  d. the Prince’s jester

5. Don John and his men plan to undo Claudio's impending wedding by ____________.
   a. making Hero believe that Claudio has been unfaithful  
   b. making Leonato see what a treacherous man Claudio truly is  
   c. making Don Pedro fall hopelessly in love with Hero  
   d. making Claudio believe that Hero has been unfaithful

6. How do Don Pedro and Claudio make Benedick fall in love with Beatrice?
   a. They convince him of her virtues.  
   b. They have him overhear a conversation in which they assert that Beatrice is in love with Benedick.  
   c. They force him to spend one evening locked in a room alone with her.  
   d. They insult, humiliate, and belittle him until he agrees to love her.

7. Whose conversation does Beatrice overhear, that makes her fall in love with Benedick?
   a. Hero’s and Margaret’s  b. Hero’s and Don Pedro’s  c. Hero’s and Ursula’s  d. Don Pedro’s and Claudio’s

CONTINUED >>
Test Your Understanding

8. When Hero is wronged at her wedding, what does Beatrice ask Benedick to do?
   a. kill Don John  
   b. kill Claudio  
   c. save Hero  
   d. find Don John

9. Who overhears Conrade and Borachio bragging about Don John’s plot against Claudio and Hero?
   a. The Watch  
   b. Leonato  
   c. Don Pedro  
   d. Benedick

10. Who is said to be “an ass?”
    a. Dogberry  
    b. The Watch  
    c. Verges  
    d. Benedick

11. What is Friar Francis’ plan to punish Claudio and save Hero’s reputation?
    a. They will have Hero remain hidden and proclaim that she is dead until the truth is known.
    b. They will have Hero become a nun and force Claudio out of Messina.
    c. They will publicly shame Claudio and Don Pedro for the cruel murder of Hero.
    d. They will have Claudio placed in the stocks and have Hero marry Don Pedro.

12. When the truth of Don John’s plot is known, what does Leonato require from Claudio as repentance for the death of Hero? (pick all that apply)
    a. Claudio must publicly proclaim that Hero was chaste. 
    b. Claudio must promise never to marry. 
    c. Claudio must promise to wed Leonato’s niece. 
    d. Claudio must duel with Benedick, Leonato, and Leonato’s brother.

13. Who calls Benedick the “Prince’s fool”?
    a. Don Pedro  
    b. Claudio  
    c. Beatrice  
    d. Dogberry

14. Who is unwittingly mistaken for Hero at her window late one night?
    a. Margaret  
    b. Ursula  
    c. Beatrice  
    d. Dogberry

15. The true feelings of Beatrice and Benedick are confirmed at the end of the play when ____________________
    a. the vicious letters they have written against each other are revealed.
    b. they are caught kissing after the wedding of Claudio and Hero.
    c. the love sonnets that they have each written to the other are revealed.
    d. it is revealed that they were secretly married before the war.

Answers available on Pg. 9
Topics for Discussion

ABOUT THE PLAY:

1. Discuss the themes of love, marriage, and family as they are addressed in Much Ado About Nothing. How are the relationships depicted in this play? What couples do you feel will have a happy and healthy relationship after the play has concluded? What do you believe constitutes a happy and healthy relationship for these characters? Use evidence from the play to support your answer.

2. Compare and contrast the Claudio-Hero story and the Benedick-Beatrice story. What challenges do each of the couples face? Are the challenges internal to the relationship or driven by outside forces? How do they overcome these challenges? Cite specific examples from the play.

3. Discuss the numerous overheard conversations and rumors that abound in this play. What influence do they have on the story? Do the listeners always interpret what they hear correctly? If no, how does this misinformation affect the action of the play? Who intentionally uses false information in the play to serve his/her own ends? Why?

ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION:

1. The director and designers have decided to set this play during the final days of World War II. Why do you think this decision was made? Consider the evolving roles of women and men in society during this period of history. How does the feel of this period influence the world of the play? Support your answer.

2. For this production, the director has included a framing device for the play. Why do you think he has included this framing device, which incorporates action prior to the beginning of Shakespeare's play and following the scripted action of the play? Does it illuminate any particular theme in the play? How does it serve to set the tone of the production? Support your answers.

3. Discuss the use of sound and music in this production of Much Ado About Nothing. How have these elements been used to help evoke the world of the play? Support your answer.

4. Consider the costume design for the play. How have the director and the designer chosen to utilize colors and textures to clarify the characters? How do the costumes help to identify the characters and their status in the play? Be specific.

5. Was this production different than what you expected to see when you came to the theatre? How so? Include specifics about the look and sound of the play. Did this production make you think differently about any of the characters? Why? Support your answer.

WHO SAID THAT? Answer Key

| A. LEONATO | B. BENEDICK | C. BEATRICE | D. DON PEDRO | E. DON JOHN | F. BENEDICK | G. BEATRICE | H. CLAUDIO | I. FRIAR FRANCIS | J. BENEDICK |

TEST YOUR UNDERSTANDING Answer Key

Follow Up Activities

CRITIC’S CORNER
Write a review of this production of *Much Ado About Nothing*. Be sure to include specific information and your own reactions to both the acting and the design elements (set, costumes, lighting, and sound). Explain what you liked about the production and what you disliked. Support your opinions. Then submit your review to The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey’s Education Department (education@shakespearenj.org), or see if it can be published in your school newspaper.

“ALERT THE MEDIA!”
*Much Ado* features events that would certainly be considered newsworthy. Write a newspaper article (or series of articles) detailing and describing these events (i.e. the arrival of Don Pedro and his troops in Messina, the engagement of Claudio and Hero, the events of the wedding, the announcement of Hero’s death), or create a gossip column based on the events in the play.

“I LEARN BY THIS LETTER...”
Write a letter from the point of view of one of the characters discussing an event or situation in the play; for example, a letter from Margaret to Hero explaining her unwitting involvement in Don John’s scheme, a love letter from Claudio to Hero, or write a sonnet or love poem from Benedick to Beatrice or Beatrice to Benedick.

CASTING CALL
Imagine that you are a movie director about to shoot a new film version of *Much Ado*. Choose the eight main characters (in your opinion) and list five words that describe each character. Using these descriptions, decide what famous actor you would cast in each role. Defend your decision by explaining why that particular actor seems right for the character Shakespeare depicts.

THE FIFTEEN-MINUTE *MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING*
Divide into five groups, and have each group take one act of the play. Your task is to create a three-minute version of your act, using only Shakespeare’s words. Choose carefully the lines from your act that carry the most important information and advance the story. When each group is done, you will have a 15-minute version of *Much Ado* which you can perform for the class. Afterwards, discuss both the process of adaptation and how your “abridgement” compared to the full-length production.
Meeting the Common Core Standards

In 1996, the New Jersey State Board of Education adopted Core Curriculum Content Standards that set out to clearly define what every New Jersey student should know and be able to do at the end of his/her schooling. The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is committed to supporting teachers by ensuring that our educational programs are relevant to standards-based teaching and learning.

Viewing a performance at The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey and participating in the post-performance discussion can serve as a powerful springboard for discussion, writing, and other outlets for higher-order thinking. On this page you will find suggestions for ways to align your study of our production to each standard.

**LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY STANDARDS**

As a theatre dedicated to the classics, we are continually engaged in exploring some of the world's greatest literature, and the relationship between the written text and performance. Our philosophy and practice follow the four underlying assumptions of the Language Arts Literacy CCCS: that “language is an active process for constructing meaning,” that “language develops in a social context,” that language ability increases as learners “engage in texts that are rich in ideas and increasingly complex in language,” and that learners achieve mastery not by practicing isolated skills but by “using and exploring language in its many dimensions.” In the practice of theatre, we merge all areas of the language arts, as the standards suggest, “in an integrated act of rehearsal, reflection, and learning.” Below, you will find just a few of the possibilities for aligning your study of our productions to each of these standards.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1** Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

*Read a scene from the play as a class and use context clues to interpret new words and expand vocabulary.*

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5** Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

*Analyze a portion of the text, isolating specific imagery, meanings, references, and then compare those instances to other passages in the play.*

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.6** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

*Compare and contrast the printed text with the staged version you have just seen, as well as any number of staged versions available on-line.*

*Maintain a reading journal/active blog, that classmates can comment on using specific prompts about the play.*

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1** Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

*Participate in a post-show discussion.*

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.2** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

*Write a new ending for the play in modern prose.*

**VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS STANDARDS**

According to both No Child Left Behind and the New Jersey CCCS, the arts (including theatre) are a core subject and “experience with and knowledge of the arts is a vital part of a complete education.” In the area of performing arts, performances, workshops and study guide exercises developed by The Shakespeare Theatre address all five state standards.

Below, you will find just a few of the possibilities for aligning your study of our productions to each of these standards.

**STANDARD 1.1:** All students will develop, apply and reflect upon knowledge of the arts in their many dimensions.

*Discuss the use of metaphor in both the text and the design of the production; discuss how the play expresses cultural values of its period and/or of today.*

**STANDARD 1.2:** All students will utilize those skills, media, methods, and technologies appropriate to each art form in the creation, performance, and presentation of dance, music, theatre and visual art.

*Perform a monologue or scene from the play; participate in a classroom workshop that develops the physical and technical skills required to create and present theatre.*

**STANDARD 1.3:** All students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles of dance, music, theatre and visual art.

*Participate in a post-show discussion of elements such as physicality and creating motivated action; discuss the relationship between play text and production design.*

**STANDARD 1.4:** All students will develop, apply and reflect upon knowledge of the process of critique.

*Write a review of the production using domain-appropriate terminology; develop a class rubric for effective theatrical presentations; compare and contrast the play with work by other artists.*

**STANDARD 1.5:** All students will understand and analyze the role, development, and continuing influence of the arts in relation to world cultures, history, and society.

*Discuss the representation of social issues (class, political leadership, etc.) in the play; research how the historical period affected the writer’s work; compare the play to work from other historical periods.*
Sources and Further Reading

On Shakespeare and Much Ado:

THE ANNOTATED SHAKESPEARE, Introductions, Notes, and Bibliography by A.L. Rowe
THE ARDEN SHAKESPEARE: MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING, edited by A.R. Humphreys
ASIMOV’S GUIDE TO SHAKESPEARE by Isaac Asimov
THE COMPLETE IDIOT’S GUIDE TO SHAKESPEARE, by Laurie Rozakis
THE FOLGER SHAKESPEARE: MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING, edited by Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine
FREEING SHAKESPEARE’S VOICE by Kristin Linklater
THE FRIENDLY SHAKESPEARE by Norrie Epstein
SHAKESPEARE A TO Z by Charles Boyce
SHAKESPEARE AFTER ALL by Marjorie Garber
SHAKESPEARE FOR BEGINNERS by Brandon Toropov
SHAKESPEARE FOR DUMMIES by Doyle, Lischner, & Dench
SHAKESPEARE’S IMAGERY by Caroline Spurgeon
SHAKESPEARE IN PERFORMANCE, Consultant Editors Keith Parsons and Pamela Mason
SHAKESPEARE: THE INVENTION OF THE HUMAN by Harold Bloom
SHAKESPEARE OUR CONTEMPORARY by Jan Kott
THE ESSENTIAL SHAKESPEARE HANDBOOK, by Leslie Dunton-Downer and Alan Riding
SHAKESPEARE SET FREE, edited by Peggy O’Brien
SHAKING HANDS WITH SHAKESPEARE, by Alison Wedell Schumacher

Plays by William Shakespeare:

The History Plays
- Henry VI, Part I
- Henry VI, Part II
- Henry VI, Part III
- Richard III
- King John
- Richard II
- Henry IV, Part I
- Henry IV, Part II
- Henry V
- Henry VIII

The Tragedies
- Titus Andronicus
- Romeo and Juliet
- Julius Caesar
- Hamlet
- Othello
- King Lear
- Macbeth
- Anthony and Cleopatra
- Coriolanus
- Timon of Athens

The Comedies
- The Comedy of Errors
- The Taming of the Shrew
- The Two Gentlemen of Verona
- Love’s Labours Lost
- A Midsummer Night’s Dream
- The Merchant of Venice
- The Merry Wives of Windsor
- Much Ado About Nothing
- As You Like It
- Twelfth Night, or What You Will
- Troilus and Cressida
- All’s Well That Ends Well
- Measure for Measure

The Romances
- Pericles
- Cymbeline
- The Winter’s Tale
- The Tempest
- The Two Noble Kinsmen

The Poems
- Venus and Adonis
- The Rape of Lucrece
- The Phoenix & the Turtle
- A Lover’s Complaint
- The Sonnets

*The Two Noble Kinsmen is sometimes classified by some scholars as a Romance, and by some as a Comedy.*
About The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey

The acclaimed Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is one of the leading Shakespeare theatres in the nation. Serving approximately 100,000 adults and young people annually, it is New Jersey’s largest professional theatre company dedicated to Shakespeare’s canon and other classic masterworks. With its distinguished productions and education programs, the company strives to illuminate the universal and lasting relevance of the classics for contemporary audiences. The longest-running Shakespeare theatre on the East Coast and the seventh largest in the nation, The Shakespeare Theatre celebrated its fifty-second anniversary in 2014.

The Company’s dedication to the classics and commitment to artistic excellence helps set high standards for the field. Nationwide, the Theatre has emerged as one of America’s most exciting companies under the leadership of Artistic Director Bonnie J. Monte, who has been with the company since 1990. It is one of only a handful of Shakespeare Theatres on the East Coast, and in recent years has drawn larger and larger audiences and unprecedented critical acclaim. The opening of the intimate 308-seat F.M. Kirby Shakespeare Theatre in 1998, provided the Theatre with a state-of-the-art venue with excellent sightlines, and increased access for patrons and artists with disabilities.

The company’s 2014 Main Stage Season features six productions presented in the Kirby Shakespeare Theatre from June through December. Each summer, an Outdoor Stage production is also presented at an open-air amphitheatre nestled in a hillside on the campus of the College of Saint Elizabeth in nearby Florham Park. The Theatre is proud to have launched into its second half-century with a brand new support facility housing all its administrative and technical shops, as well as a new rehearsal hall, classroom spaces, and extensive costume, property and scenic inventory in the nearby town of Florham Park.

In addition to being a celebrated producer of classic plays and operating Shakespeare LIVE! (one of the largest educational Shakespeare touring programs in the North East region), The Shakespeare Theatre is also deeply committed to nurturing new talent for the American stage. By providing an outstanding training ground for students of the theatre, and cultivating audiences for the future by providing extensive outreach opportunities for students across New Jersey and beyond, The Shakespeare Theatre is a leader in arts education and professional training. For additional information, visit our web site at www.ShakespeareNJ.org.

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is a member of ArtPride, The Shakespeare Theatre Association, Madison Cultural & Arts Alliance, and is a founding member of the New Jersey Theatre Alliance.

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey's programs are made possible, in part, by funding from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as funds from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional major support is received from The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the F.M. Kirby Foundation, The Edward T. Cone Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, The CTW Foundation, as well as contributions from numerous corporations, foundations, government agencies and individuals. The Shakespeare Theatre is an independent, professional theatre company located on the Drew University campus.
Additional Opportunities for Students and Teachers

THE SHAKESPEARE THEATRE ACADEMY
The Shakespeare Theatre now offers youth and adult classes in a wide range of disciplines connected with the classics and the art of theatre. Each series of classes meets once a week in one of the Theatre's beautiful facilities, and gives participants the opportunity to work under the instruction of The Shakespeare Theatre's artistic and educational staff as well as guest teaching artists. Spring and Fall Classes Available.

SHAKESPEARE LIVE! TOURS AND WORKSHOPS
This acclaimed touring program brings dynamic and visually engaging one-hour productions of Shakespeare’s classics directly into the schools. Each performance includes a comprehensive study guide and a post-performance discussion with the actors. Fun and interactive workshops give students a chance to explore the actor’s approach to bringing Shakespeare’s language to life. In 2015 we will be offering brand new productions of Macbeth and A Midsummer Night’s Dream!

PAGES TO PLAYERS: IN-SCHOOL RESIDENCIES
Residencies provide an opportunity for classroom English teachers in grades 5–8 to partner with the Theatre’s skilled teaching artists to explore Shakespeare’s text in-depth, in an exciting, performance-based technique that promotes collaboration, self-confidence, and creativity, while always strengthening Language Arts skills.

SHAKESPERIENCE: NJ STUDENT SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL
This annual spring festival, developed in partnership with the Folger Shakespeare Library and Rider University, gives middle and high school students the opportunity to spend a day at the Theatre experiencing Shakespeare as both actors and audience members. The Shakesperience:NJ Festival celebrates the power of performance as a teaching tool on a statewide scale.

THE JUNIOR AND SENIOR SHAKESPEARE CORPS
Young actors are given the opportunity to participate in the excitement of the Theatre’s summer season through this program, which offers classes, a final presentation, as well as behind-the-scenes and front-of-house experience. Geared for students in grades 6 through 12, admission to this program is through an audition and/or an interview.

www.ShakespeareNJ.org/Education