STUDENT ACTIVITIES GUIDE
The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey’s production of

Shakespeare in Love

Based on the screenplay by
Marc Norman & Tom Stoppard
Adapted for the stage by Lee Hall
Music by Paddy Cunneen

Originally produced on the West End by Disney Theatrical Productions and Sonia Friedman Productions, directed by Declan Donnellan, and designed by Nick Ormerod
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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, provides 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 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 Audience 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

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“What’s My Line?”
Promoting Active Listening

Teacher-tested, student-approved!
Try this exercise with your students:

Before attending the production, give each student one line from the play to listen for. Discuss the meaning of the line and encourage their input in deciphering what the intention of the line might be. How would the student perform the line? Why is the line important to the play? Does it advance the plot, or give the audience particular insight into a character or relationship?

Following the production, discuss the line again. Did the actor present the line in the way your student expected? If not, how was it different?
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-upon-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-upon-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 the plays were well-liked, Shakespeare’s work was not considered by his educated contemporaries to be exceptional. 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.
Finding the perfect words to convey the full depth and intent of one’s meaning can be a struggle for anyone. A skilled wordsmith can bring entire worlds to life or speak volumes about the human experience with the correct turn of phrase.

As Shakespeare in Love begins, we see Will struggling with writer’s block, working on a sonnet. A sonnet is a 14 line poem consisting of three quatrains followed by a rhyming couplet. Take a moment and fill in the blanks of one of Shakespeare’s most famous sonnets and see what happens. You’ll have a chance to edit your word choices in the end.

1. name of a season // a unit of time
2. two adjectives
3. a weather event (plural) // an adjective // the name of a month
4. name of a season (same as above) // an adjective describing a unit of measure
5. an adverb
6. an adjective
7. a noun (used twice)
8. an adjective
9. an adjective // name of a season (same as above) // action verb
10. noun
11. proper noun // action verb, present tense
12. proper noun
13. action verb // action verb
14. noun

Insert your word choices into the sonnet on the next page. After reading it through, take a moment to make any revisions that you think will make your sonnet flow better.

Compare your completed sonnet with William Shakespeare’s Sonnet 18 (“Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?”). How does Shakespeare’s choice of words help to conjure up images and support the theme of the poem? What images do your words conjure up? Is your theme different than Shakespeare’s? How? Be specific.
Mad-Lib Sonnet

1. Shall I compare thee to a __________________’s ____________________?
2. Thou art more ____________________ and more ____________________.
3. Rough ______________ do shake the ______________ buds
   of ________________.
4. And ______________’s lease hath all too ______________ a date.
5. Sometimes too ______________ the eye of heaven shines.
6. And often is his ________________ complexion dimmed;
7. And every ______________ from ______________ sometime declines,
8. By chance, or nature’s ______________ course, untrimmed;
9. But thy ________________ ______________ shall not ________________
10. Nor lose possession of that ______________ thou ow’st.
11. Nor shall ______________ brag thou ______________ in his shade,
12. When in eternal lines to ______________ thou grow’st.
13. So long as men can ________________ or eyes can ________________,
14. So long lives this, and this gives ________________ to thee.
Who Said That?

Match the spoken line to the character who speaks it. Some characters match more than one line, some match none.

A. “I am the money.”
   WILL SHAKESPEARE

B. “Where is my play, Shakespeare? I have posteried half of Shoreditch and I haven’t seen a single page.”
   KIT MARLOWE
   NED ALLEYN

C. “How dare you perform me here in front of the Queen without my say-so. I am still owed half of the commission.”
   RICHARD BURBAGE
   JOHN WEBSTER
   HENNSLOWE

D. “Let me explain about the theatre business. The natural condition is one of insurmountable obstacles on the road to imminent disaster...But it always works out in the end.”
   FENNYMAN
   VIOLA DE LESSEPS
   RICHARD DE LESSEPS

E. “Stage love will never be real love until we women can be onstage ourselves.”
   WESSEX
   QUEEN ELIZABETH I
   TILNEY

F. “There is no playhouse in London where my verse is spoke truly.”

G. “I need a dowry, your family seeks a title. It seems our fortunes are well met.”

H. “In the name of Her Majesty, I arrest you all!”

I. “I told you I would make you a partner, Shakespeare. For fifty pounds.”

J. “I do know something of a woman in a man’s profession. Yes, by God, I do know about that.”

K. “I liked the part where she killed herself.”

L. “Enough. She takes the bait, let’s go.”

Answers available on Pg. 10
Test Your Understanding

Circle the letter that BEST answers the question.

1. At the opening of *Shakespeare in Love*, Will is suffering from _________________.
   a) a severe cold       b) the plague       c) writer’s block       d) indigestion

2. Who assists Will to write his sonnet, “Shall I compare thee...”?
   a) Wessex       b) Burbage       c) Henslowe       d) Marlowe

3. As the play opens, Shakespeare is working on a new comedy entitled _________________.
   a) *Romeo and Juliet and a Dog*       b) *The Two Gentlemen of Pisa*
   c) *Romeo and Ethel the Pirate’s Daughter*       d) *Twelfth Night*

4. Henslowe needs Shakespeare’s play to be a success in order to pay back money he owes to ________.
   a) Fennyman       b) Wessex       c) the Queen       d) Tilney

5. Shakespeare is upset with Burbage, because Burbage added ________________ into his play, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.
   a) a song       b) a dog       c) a jig       d) a new character

6. During auditions for Shakespeare’s new play, all but one of the actors enter and perform a speech written by _________________.
   a) Ben Johnson       b) William Shakespeare
   c) Christopher Marlowe       d) John Fletcher

7. Young Thomas Kent auditions for Shakespeare’s new play and is cast as _________________.
   a) Juliet       b) Mercutio       c) Romeo       d) the Nurse

8. While seeking Thomas Kent to offer him a role in his new play, Shakespeare arrives at the de Lesseps estate where _________________.
   a) a solemn feast is taking place       b) a mysterious meeting is taking place
   c) a great party is taking place       d) everyone is fast asleep.

9. While at the de Lesseps estate, Shakespeare _________________.
   a) falls under the spell of an evil sorcerer       b) meets and falls in love with Viola
   c) steals gold to help Henslowe pay his debts       d) is robbed by Wessex

CONTINUED >>
Test Your Understanding CONTINUED

10. Viola is betrothed to ____________________________.
    a) Fennyman       b) Lord Tilney       c) Lord Wessex       d) Henslowe

11. Rehearsals for Shakespeare’s play are shut down by the Lord Chamberlain when it is discovered that ________________.
    a) the play speaks ill of the Queen and of England
    b) there is a woman performing in it — something illegal in England at that time
    c) the play was stolen from another theatre
    d) there is no dog in the play — something upsetting to the Queen

12. When the play can’t be performed at The Rose (Henslowe’s theatre), ________________ offers up a place for the company to perform in ________________.
    a) Burbage / his theatre, The Curtain
    b) Shakespeare / his theatre, The Globe
    c) Queen / her palace
    d) Tilney / his residence, The Blackfriars

13. Sam, the boy cast in the role of Juliet, can not go on for the performance because ________________.
    a) he has stage fright
    b) he refuses to play a girl
    c) he has caught the plague
    d) his voice has changed

14. The play is finally performed with ________________ and ________________ in the title roles.
    a) Will Shakespeare / Viola de Lesseps
    b) Richard Burbage / Ned Alleyn
    c) Fennyman / John Webster
    d) Henslowe / Sam

15. When Tilney attempts to close down the theatre and arrest all in attendance after the performance, who intercedes to stop him?
    a) Lord Wessex       b) Richard Burbage       c) Lord de Lesseps       d) Queen Elizabeth

16. What play does Will begin to write at the end of the story as a way to immortalize Viola?
    a) *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*
    b) *Troilus and Cressida*
    c) *The Merry Wives of Windsor*
    d) *Cymbeline*
Topics for Discussion

ABOUT THE PLAY:

1. *Shakespeare in Love* uses the fictionalized romance between Will and Viola as the inspiration for writing Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*. How does Will and Viola’s relationship parallel Romeo and Juliet’s? How is it different? How does Will alter events and feelings from his life to create a compelling theatrical work? What role does artistic license play in the creation of his work?

2. Discuss the class differences in Elizabethan England. How are they depicted in this play? Do you believe that the play accurately depicts the world? Be specific. How does Viola’s class standing influence her choices and experience? How would Will be different if he were of Viola’s class?

3. Discuss the role of women and marriage in Elizabethan England. There is a powerful queen of England, yet Viola is still not independent enough to marry for love. Why does Viola feel she has no choice but to marry Wessex? What would happen if she went against her father’s choice for a spouse?

4. What does Viola wish for most in the world? What obstacles prevent her from achieving her desires? What freedom does she gain once she has disguised herself as Thomas Kent?

5. Will writes *Romeo and Juliet* and later performs the role of Romeo. Viola (as Kent) rehearses the role of Romeo and later performs the role of Juliet. How are the characters (Will and Viola) altered by performing these roles? What do they learn about themselves, each other, and love through these roles? How does performing these roles prepare them for the events to come at the end of the play?

ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION:

1. How have the director and designers of this particular production created the various locations of the play? How does the play shift from public playhouses to taverns to elegant estates? Be specific. What role does lighting play in helping to establish these locations?

2. There is a great deal of music in this production. What role does music play in setting the tone and mood of the piece? How would the play be different if no music was used?

3. How does this production of *Shakespeare in Love* compare to what you expected? Be specific.

TEST YOUR UNDERSTANDING Answer Key

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WHO SAID THAT? Answer Key

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<tr>
<td>Fennyman</td>
<td>Burbage</td>
<td>Queen Elizabeth</td>
<td>Will</td>
<td>Viola</td>
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Follow Up Activities

CRITIC’S CORNER — Write a review of this production of *Shakespeare in Love*. Be sure to include specific information and your own reactions to the acting, the design elements (lights, set, costumes and sound), and the play itself. Explain what you liked about the production, and what you disliked, and support your opinions. Submit your review to The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey’s Education Department, or see if it can be published in your school newspaper.

“ALERT THE MEDIA!” — Select a series of events from the play, and “cover” them in the style of a newspaper reporter or television journalist or an internet blogger: news of Will’s bet with Wessex, an exposé on the life of a playwright in Elizabethan England, an article covering the rivalry between the London theatres, a social column announcing the engagement of Viola and Wessex and their upcoming move to Virginia, or a review of Shakespeare’s new play *Romeo and Juliet*. Extra credit if you can squeeze in some quotes from 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, one could write a letter from Viola to a dear friend about her upcoming nuptials, or from Fennyman to a school friend about his unexpected appearance in a play by William Shakespeare, or a letter from Tilney to the Queen discussing the scandalous events at the theatre.

WRITE “_______ IN LOVE” — The play theorizes that Shakespeare’s writer’s block is only cured by a muse who, through real-life encounters, inspires him to write one of his greatest works. Consider other famous writers for whom you could write your own play, like “Lucas in Love” about the muse that helped George Lucas to write the first *Star Wars* film (Episode IV), or “Tolkien in Love” about the muse that helped J.R.R. Tolkien to write *The Hobbit*, or “Rowling in Love” about the muse that helped J.K. Rowling to write the *Harry Potter* books. Pick your own favorite writer, playwright, or filmmaker. Imagine specific iconic scenes from the stories as if they had been inspired by real events. What would those events be? Have fun. Be specific.

MODERN PARALLELS — Consider any one aspect of the play and find the parallels to our modern world. It could focus on the class differences between Will and Viola, or Will’s difficulty in writing a new play, or Tilney’s censorship of the theatre, or Wessex’s marriage of convenience. How are these elements of the play the same as now, how are they different? Support your ideas with specific passages from the play and from contemporary news sources and culture.

CALLING ALL TEACHERS!

Do you have activities or exercises to suggest for this play? We are always looking for new ideas to inspire students (and teachers). Send your suggestions to Education@ShakespeareNJ.org and we will share them with other teachers, and maybe even include them in future study guides.
Meeting the Common Core Standards

In 1996, the New Jersey State Board of Education adopted the 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 their schooling. The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is committed to supporting teachers by ensuring that our educational programs are relevant to the evolving standards of modern education.

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 underlying assumptions of the Language Arts Literacy CCSS: 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”; 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.

NJSLSA.R1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences and relevant connections 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.

NJSLSA.R9. Analyze and reflect on how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
- Compare this production to another Shakespeare play or to a piece you are reading in class.

NJSLSA.R10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently with scaffolding as needed.
- Analyze a portion of the text, isolate specific imagery, meanings, references, and then compare those instances to other passages in the play.

W.3.6. With guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others.
- Compare and Contrast the printed text with the staged version viewed online.
- Maintain a journal or blog that classmates can comment on using specific prompts about the play.

SL.3.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- Participate in a post-show Discussion.

L.6.3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
- Write a new ending for the play in modern prose.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS STANDARDS

Both the CCSS and the Every Student Succeeds Act promote the inclusion of “programs and activities that use music and the arts as tools to support student success through the promotion of constructive student engagement, problem solving, and conflict resolution” (ESSA 2015). Performances, workshops, and study guide exercises developed by The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey strive to address the Visual and Performing Arts Standards.

Below, you will find a few possibilities for aligning your study of our production to each standard.

Standard 1.1 The Creative Process: All students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles that govern the creation of works of art in dance, music, theatre, and visual art.
- Write a review of the production using domain-appropriate terminology; develop a class rubric for effect theatrical presentations

Standard 1.2 History of the Arts and Culture: All students will understand the role, development, and influence of the arts throughout history and across cultures.
- Discuss the representation of social issues (class, politics, etc.) in the play; research how the historical period affected the writer’s work; compare the play to work from other historical periods.

Standard 1.3 Performing: All students will synthesize skills, media, methods, and technologies that are appropriate to creating, performing, and/or presenting works of art in 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 1.4 Aesthetic Responses & Critique Methodologies: All students will demonstrate and apply an understanding of arts philosophies, judgment, and analysis to works of art in 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.
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 celebrates its 55th anniversary in 2017.

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 2017 Main Stage Season features five productions presented in the F.M. Kirby Shakespeare Theatre from May 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 Northeast 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 F.M. Kirby Shakespeare Theatre
Photo © Andrew Murad, 2008
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.

**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 ages 10 to 18, admission to this program is through an audition and/or an interview.

www.ShakespeareNJ.org/Education