

Henry VI: Blood & Roses

Adapted from William Shakespeare by Brian B. Crowe

a study guide

compiled and arranged by
the Education Department of
The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey

The
SHAKESPEARE
Theatre of
New Jersey



HENRY VI: BLOOD AND ROSES

a support packet for studying the play and attending The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey's Main Stage production

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CLASSROOM

FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

What we hear most from educators is that there is a great deal of anxiety when it comes to Shakespeare; seeing it, reading it and especially teaching it. One of the principal goals of the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey’s Education Programs is to demystify Shakespeare, take him “off the shelf” and re-energize his work for students and teachers alike. Toward these goals, this Study 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 study guide will help you expand your students’ understanding of Shakespeare in performance, as well as help you meet many of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. We encourage you to impart as much of the information included in this study guide to your students as is possible. The following are some suggestions from teachers on how you can utilize elements of the study guide given limited classroom time.

Many teachers have found that distributing or reading the one-page “BRIEF SYNOPSIS” 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 have simply taken the last five minutes of a class period to do this with very positive results.

When more class time is available prior to your visit, we recommend incorporating the background information on William Shakespeare and the play itself. One teacher divided her class into groups and assigned each group research topics based on the divisions found in the study guide. Using a copy of the corresponding study 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. I am told that the reading of Old English and Middle English texts was “quite entertaining and very informative.”

Using the questions found in the “TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION,” many teachers will opt to take a class period after the 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.

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. Their students took the opportunity to “ham it up,” and discovered a great joy and understanding from performing Shakespeare.

To learn more about these and many other suggestions for engaging your students, I encourage you to join us this summer for our acclaimed summer professional development institute for teachers, *ShakeFest*. Again, we hope you will incorporate as many portions of this study 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.

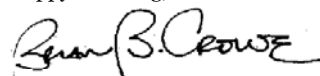
“What’s My Line?” Promoting Active Listening

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 Shakespeare meant by the line. 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?

Happy Teaching,



Brian B. Crowe, Director of Education



ACTIVITIES

Shakespeare: Helpful Tips For Exploring & Seeing His Works

“Just plunge right in

(to Shakespeare). See a play, read it aloud, rent a video, listen to a tape. It’s up to you. When you look at Shakespeare close up, he’s not as intimidating as when he’s seen from afar.”

Norrie Epstein
The Friendly Shakespeare

Tragedy can have humor, and
great comedy always has
elements of the tragic.

Eighteenth-century critics complained that Shakespeare’s tragedies weren’t consistently serious enough. According to the classic rules, tragedy should be uniformly somber. Shakespeare’s use of humor in his tragedies prevents us from becoming washed away in a dense fog of emotion. Rather, it forces us out of the “tragic” long enough to appreciate the level to which the play’s passions have taken us.

“Some of the plays have taken on mythic proportions. By myths, I mean we grow up knowing certain things about [Shakespeare’s] characters but we don’t know how we know them.

There are lots of
SHAKESPEAREAN MICROCHIPS
lodged in our brains.”

Charles Marowitz, director

“It was Olivier’s *Henry V*
that made me realize that

Shakespeare is
about real
people
and that his language
wasn’t simply beautiful
poetry.”

Robert Brustein, director



“My advice to anyone seeing Shakespeare:

Don’t worry so much!

Just make sure your ears are clean and your eyes are sharp. Listen and look and watch.

Look at the distance people stand from each other; look at the relationships being developed.

Stay with it.

Don’t negate the move that Shakespeare will make toward your gut, toward your soul--

because he will touch you there,
if you allow yourself to be touched.”

David Suchet, actor

“There are some parts of the plays you’ll never understand. But excuse me, I thought that’s what great art was supposed to be about.

DON’T FREAK OUT OVER IT!”

Peter Sellars,
Director

Don’t be afraid to
LISTEN, WATCH AND REACT;
laugh, cry, and be moved.

Shakespeare wrote for
a live and active audience.

Both audience and actor
must be involved to create
a truly winning performance.

The Life of William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare, 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 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 they were well-liked, Shakespeare's plays were 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.

Shakespeare's London

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 social popularity, actors maintained a relatively low 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, 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 were 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.



The Sonnets

You might have thought that Shakespeare wrote the sonnets earlier in his career, as a type of "stepping stone" to his plays. However, Shakespeare actually penned most of his sonnets during the various outbreaks of the plague in London, when the theatres were closed.

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

Oft Scyld Scefing sceaðena prëstum,
monegum mægðum meodo-setla oftëah,
egsode eorlas. Syððan ærert wearð
fëasceaft funden, hë þæs frofre gebåd,
wëox under wolcnum, weorð-myndum þäh,
oð-þæt him aeghwylc ymb-sittendra
ofer hron-råde hýran scolde,
gomban gyldan. þæt wæs god cyning!

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

But natheless / while I haue tyme and space
Er that I ferther / in this tale pace
Me thynketh it acordant to resoun
To telle yow / al the condiciun
Of eeche of hem / so as it seemed to me
And whiche they weere / and of what degree
And eek in what array / that they were inne
And at a knyght thanne wol I first bigynne.

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 being 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

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 talked on, yet they are past compare...

What did Shakespeare sound like?

While we may associate Shakespeare with the “refined” British accent of an Ian McKellen or Judi Dench, linguistic scholars say 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.

IN MODERN ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

*Oft Scyld the Scefing 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 throve,
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!*

IN 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.*

Henry VI: A Synopsis

The first part of Shakespeare's trilogy spans the greatest number of years of the three, ranging from Henry VI's coronation (historically, he was just 9 months old) to his marriage to Margaret of Anjou in 1445. This section of the play is a prelude to the Wars of the Roses themselves, with most of the action concerned with the English losses in the final phase of the Hundred Years' War in France and the disputes within the English court during Henry's minority.

The play opens in 1422 with the funeral of King Henry V. His young son Henry VI has just ascended the throne, and many noblemen and lords see the opportunity to advance their own standing, not least the child king's great-uncle, Thomas Beaufort, the Bishop of Winchester. As Winchester lays his plans, news is brought to the court that the English war effort in France is in dire peril. Several English possessions in France have been captured by the French, led by Joan of Arc, and the Dauphin has been crowned king.

As the heroic English general, Lord Talbot, attempts to regain the lost ground in France, his peers at the court are increasingly consumed with their own disputes. The King's uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, has a heated dispute with Winchester, but both men grudgingly agree to suppress their dislike of one another for the public good, at the Lord Mayor's entreaty. Even as this quarrel temporarily subsides, another erupts between two more royal relatives, the king's cousin Richard Plantagenet of York and Winchester's nephew the Duke of Somerset. Meeting in the Temple Garden, Plantagenet and Somerset pluck a white rose and a red rose, respectively, as the emblems of their causes, and spur their friends to do the same.

Parliament is called so that Gloucester and Winchester can formally and publicly ratify their truce, but their quarrel merely breaks out again during the session, resulting in a street riot between their respective followers. Appalled by the violence, the young king begs his uncles to reconcile, and they grudgingly go through the motions of doing so. In the spirit of peacemaking (but really at the urging of Gloucester, who wants an ally against the Beaufort faction), the king clears Richard Plantagenet of his father's treason and grants him the title of Duke of York.

In France, Talbot makes modest gains against Joan of Arc's forces, and Henry is sent to be crowned King of France in Paris in hopes of solidifying his wavering support in the English-occupied territories. The coronation is marred, however, by an ominous quarrel between Vernon and Basset, two minor noblemen, adherents of the two opposing "rose" factions. In an effort to reconcile to the two sides, King Henry impolitically puts on a red rose himself. "I see no reason, if I wear this rose, that anyone should therefore be suspicious I more incline to Somerset than York," the king naively offers. However, York is suspicious of exactly that, and the incident only intensifies the factionalism.

Still trying to forge an awkward peace between his feuding cousins, Henry assigns York and Somerset to lead armies in support of Talbot. When Talbot is outmaneuvered and trapped by French forces in the province of Bordeaux, messengers appeal to both Somerset and York to come to his rescue, but each commander stalls, blaming the other for his lack of preparation. Talbot is killed by the French, and England's hope of victory in France is all but extinguished.

With the aid of the Pope, Winchester (now Cardinal Beaufort)

negotiates a peace with France whereby Henry would marry the French king's cousin, the wealthy daughter of the Earl of Armagnac. While not all the court is pleased by the peace treaty, Henry agrees to the treaty and the marriage. Before either takes place, however, York and the Earl of Suffolk win a battle against Joan's forces in Angiers. Joan is captured by the English, along with the beautiful young Margaret of Anjou. York sentences Joan to be burned at the stake for witchcraft, while Margaret falls into the hands of Suffolk.

Suffolk sees an opportunity to both have Margaret as his lover and advance his own power in the court. He convinces the ever-wavering Henry to choose Margaret over Cardinal Beaufort's match, despite her relative poverty, intending to use her to control Henry and to effectively rule England himself.

Shakespeare's part two begins with the return of Suffolk from France, with both Margaret and a new peace treaty in hand. Gloucester begins to read the treaty but breaks off, choked with emotion. In exchange for Margaret, Suffolk has agreed to give up England's claim to both Maine and Anjou, two of its last remaining possessions in France. With Gloucester publicly humiliated, his old enemy Cardinal Beaufort moves against him again, securing the support of his brother Somerset and the Duke of Buckingham.

Meanwhile, York and Warwick privately discuss their fears of the growing influence of Suffolk and the Beauforts. York explains that it is not yet the right time or political climate for him to advance his own claim to the throne. Meanwhile, he and Warwick will oppose Suffolk and the Beauforts as they can.

Gloucester's wife, Eleanor, who has dreamt of being crowned Queen, begins to pressure her husband to advance his own claim to the throne. But Gloucester too has had a dream, which ominously predicts the shattering of his staff of office as Protector. He urges Eleanor to abandon her treasonous thoughts, but, dissatisfied, the Duchess decides to hire a witch and a conjurer to look into the future of King Henry's rule. Unfortunately, the agent she uses to hire them has been paid off by Beaufort and Suffolk to have her arrested for suborning witchcraft, thereby destroying her and her husband.

Meanwhile, Somerset is in competition to replace York as Regent of France. When a rumor surfaces that York has begun to advance his own claim to the throne, Gloucester unexpectedly throws his support behind Somerset. In retaliation, York joins Suffolk and Somerset in carrying out the arrest and exposure of Eleanor, who is banished. With his own reputation thus tarnished, Gloucester sadly resigns as Protector.

In Parliament, Somerset announces that England has been driven from all its territories in France. The rest of the king's council turns on Gloucester, accusing him of treason and arguing that he accepted bribes from the French. Gloucester protests his innocence, and Henry meekly wishes that he will be found so, but Gloucester is arrested and placed in Cardinal Beaufort's custody. As soon as Henry leaves the chamber, Margaret and the council agree to put Gloucester to death. York, meanwhile, is dispatched to Ireland with an army to quell rebellions there.

With an army at his command, York realizes that all the ingredients will be in place for an open challenge to Henry's rule

upon his return. In the meantime, he will test the waters of national sympathy for the Yorkist cause by hiring a commoner, Jack Cade, to pose as an imaginary Yorkist cousin, “John Mortimer,” and raise a rebellion against Henry.

Gloucester is murdered by agents of Suffolk, and the king is told that he died of a sudden illness. Almost immediately, however, Warwick arrives with a mob of angry commoners to accuse Suffolk of murder. Examination of the body supports Warwick’s claims of murder, and the people beg the king to banish Suffolk. Ignoring Margaret’s pleas, Henry pronounces the sentence. News quickly follows that Cardinal Beaufort has taken ill, and he dies in agony, haunted by visions of Gloucester’s ghost. Suffolk attempts to flee to France, but is captured by a group of soldiers and beheaded.

Jack Cade gathers some popular support as the royal pretender “John Mortimer,” although the rabble following him are motivated more by greed and bloodlust than they are by his presumed Yorkist descent. The rebellion reaches London, and forces the king to flee the city, before Cade’s followers finally turn against him when reminded of their loyalty to Henry V.

Even as Cade’s rebellion is put down, news comes that York has returned from Ireland with his army and is demanding that his old enemy Somerset be removed from office and imprisoned. Henry agrees to Somerset’s imprisonment, but Margaret sets him free again, and York, infuriated by the deception, denies his allegiance to Henry and names himself king. Somerset attempts to have York arrested, but Warwick and York’s sons say they will protect him. Open battle erupts between the Lancastrian and Yorkist factions for the first time, during which York and his son Richard kill the Lancastrian leaders Clifford and Somerset, causing the Lancastrian forces to panic and flee. Shakespeare’s second part concludes with the victorious entry of York and Warwick into London.

The third part of the Shakespearean trilogy opens immediately after the battle, as Henry and his allies enter London to find York already seated in the throne. They demand that York descend, but Henry is unable to verbally justify his own claim. A compromise is reached by which York swears allegiance to Henry for life while Henry makes York his heir (disinheriting his own son by Margaret, Edward).

The furious Margaret leads an army against York at Wakefield,

where his young son Edmund of Rutland is killed by Clifford (who is avenging the death of his own father) and York is taken prisoner. After taunting and tormenting York, Margaret has him killed and orders his head placed over the gates of his native city.

York’s three surviving sons— Edward, George and Richard— rally their troops and rejoin Warwick to again challenge the Lancastrians. Their next battle, at Towton, proves disastrous for the Lancastrian side, as Clifford is killed and Henry captured. The Yorkists return to London in triumph, and Edward is crowned King Edward IV.

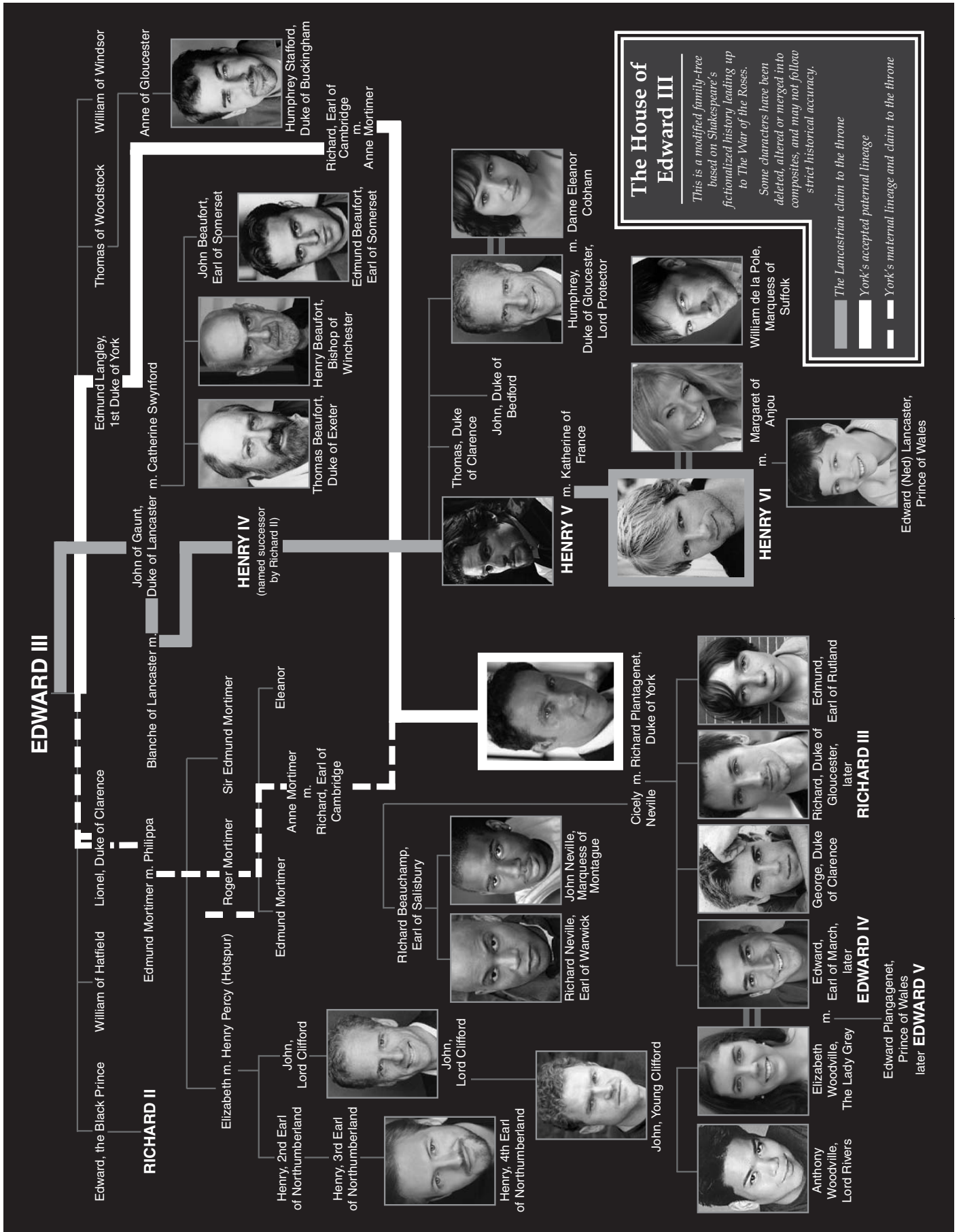


Lord Saye is brought before Jack Cade in this engraving by Charles Lucy, 1892.

Margaret goes to France to beg for support from her cousin the king, but Warwick outmaneuvers her, promising a new alliance between England and France if Edward marries the French king’s sister. Even as the Lancastrians’ hopes are slipping away, however, Edward is secretly negotiating his own marriage to Lady Grey, the widow of a minor nobleman. When this news arrives from England, Warwick is humiliated and enraged. He defects to the Lancastrian side and begins plotting with Margaret to overthrow Edward.

George of Clarence also defects, and Edward and Richard are driven from London. The two brothers rally their troops, however, and persuade George to return to the Yorkist cause. They meet Warwick in battle, defeating and killing him, then rout Margaret’s forces as well, capturing her and her son Prince Edward. In revenge for the deaths of their father and Rutland, they put Prince Edward to death before her eyes. As King Edward orders the executions of the few remaining Lancastrian leaders, Richard of Gloucester sneaks off to the Tower of London where Henry is a prisoner.

The deposed Henry VI and the future Richard III meet in the prison cell, where Henry prophesies that Richard will bring still further death and suffering to England. Richard murders the former king, and proclaims to the audience that he will eliminate everyone else who stands between him and the throne. As the rest of the court celebrates the birth of Edward IV’s first son, the stage is set for Richard’s famous “winter of our discontent.”



The House of Edward III

This is a modified family-tree based on Shakespeare's fictionalized history leading up to The War of the Roses. Some characters have been deleted, altered or merged in to composites, and may not follow strict historical accuracy.

- The Lancaster claim to the throne
- York's accepted paternal lineage
- York's maternal lineage and claim to the throne

Sources and History of the Play

The *Henry VI* trilogy marked Shakespeare's entry into a brand-new genre of English theatre, one which he would come to redefine and master, the historical epic. Prior to the 1580s, most English plays had dealt with classical or Biblical themes, but the publication of very popular chronicle histories of England (such as Shakespeare's main source, Holinshed) and a growing sense of nationalism fostered by the struggle against Spain undoubtedly encouraged the London theatre companies to tackle topics from English history.

Books (especially massive ones like Holinshed's *Chronicles*) were still costly items throughout Shakespeare's lifetime, so the fact that his history plays are peppered with paraphrases and reworkings of entire passages from the 1587 second edition of Holinshed suggests that Shakespeare had invested in his own copy of the book, and that it was perhaps one of the centerpieces of his personal library.

The *Henry VI* trilogy is also heavily indebted to an earlier chronicle history, Edward Hall's 1540 *Union of the Noble and Illustrious Families of Lancaster and York*. The "union" of Hall's title is, of course, the victory of Henry VII over Richard III, and the founding of the Tudor dynasty with Henry's marriage to Princess Elizabeth Plantagenet. Both Hall and Holinshed, writing under the scrutiny of Tudor kings and queens, are emphatic propagandists for the Tudor regime. The Tudors are presented as the legitimate heirs to the House of Lancaster, and the Yorkist dynasty that they succeeded is represented as thoroughly brutal, corrupt, and power-hungry. Modern historians have since questioned the accuracy of many of Hall and Holinshed's accounts, but in Shakespeare's time, such questions were scarcely permitted.

Because the *Henry VI* plays were among Shakespeare's earliest works, there has also been a good deal of controversy over the precise dating and manner of their composition. It is fairly clear that, by 1592, all three parts of the trilogy were complete, being performed in repertory, and doing great business at the box office. Embittered rival playwright Robert Greene paraphrased one of the lines from Part Three in that year as he railed against Shakespeare as an "upstart crow" in his *Groatsworth of Wit*, while the poet Thomas Nashe wrote about "ten thousand spectators at least" thronging to a play about Lord Talbot (apparently Part One) in the same year. The playwright, not yet 30, had apparently vaulted into the forefront of London's theatre scene.

Scholarly controversy is more heated about the order in which the plays were written, and Shakespeare's role in their writing. Parts Two and Three share a tighter construction and focus, whereas Part One has long been recognized to be a more muddled kind of play. Parts Two and Three were first published almost simultaneously in 1594-95, while Part One did not appear in quarto form until 1598. Parts Two and Three seem almost certainly to have been principally written by a single author, while Part One shows some evidence of having been a collaborative work. And, oddly, Part One was registered for publication in the First Folio as "the third part" of *Henry VI*.

Several possible explanations have been proposed. If the trilogy was indeed written and performed in historically chronological order, it may be that the twentysomething journeyman playwright Shakespeare was indeed assigned to write Part One as part of a writing team. Elizabethan playwrights worked under intense dead-

lines, and collaborating was a common practice, much in the way contemporary television writers work. If Part One was the massive hit suggested in Nashe's account, the company may well have recognized the promise in Shakespeare's sections and given him "creative direction" of the second and third installments.

It is also possible that Shakespeare was first employed as a kind of "script doctor," to rework a rough version of Part One by another playwright or playwrights, and that each part of the trilogy represents his growing confidence and command of his genre.

Marjorie Garber, among others, proposes that Shakespeare began his career with a two-part historical epic about the Wars of the Roses (*Henry VI, Parts Two and Three*), which was such a surprise hit that the company put together a "prequel." Garber notes that Part One has the characteristics of a flashback, as well as the "trailer" that precedes the release of movies. Two-part sequences like *Tamburlaine* were accepted forms, while no other stage trilogy seems to have existed. If Garber's argument is correct, a whole team of playwrights, including Shakespeare, may well have scrambled to throw together this prequel before another company "scooped" them.

However the trilogy came to be, it suffered greatly in popularity after Shakespeare's death, and was rarely produced. The consensus of the 18th and 19th centuries was that the plays were too long, too confusing, and too poorly-written. After World War II, however, theatres began to show an increased interest in these accounts of a world torn apart by brutal, power-mad military leaders. More recently, several directors have created "condensed" versions of the trilogy, including the current adaptation at The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey.



Historical depiction of King Henry VI from the Borough of Richmond upon Thames website, www.richmond.gov.uk.

Adapting *Henry VI*: A History of Other Abridgments

From shortly after Shakespeare's death until the mid-20th century, the three parts of *Henry VI* were among the most rarely-produced of his plays. No theatre had attempted the massive task of producing all three plays as a chronological sequence in repertory.

The trilogy emerged from centuries of theatrical neglect in 1963, when the Royal Shakespeare Company produced all three *Henry VI* plays, as well as *Richard III*, in a new adaptation by Peter Hall and John Barton entitled *The Wars of the Roses*. Hall believed that the trilogy had not originally been planned as a sequence at all, but was a response to the success of Part One, and thus suffered from "inconsistencies and confusions," in addition to being far too long for modern audiences. In response, Hall and Barton condensed the three parts of *Henry VI* into two plays, *Henry VI* and *Edward IV*, which, along with significant cuts to *Richard III*, reduced the total amount of text by about half. To clarify the plot and bridge gaps created by cutting, Barton wrote more than 1,400 new lines of "Shakespearean" verse based on the same chronicle histories that the Bard consulted.

The undertaking put enormous strain on the RSC's artistic staff and acting company— Peter Hall collapsed from stress shortly before rehearsals began, and directed from a couch when he was able to return. With Barton taking over numerous rehearsals, completing the massive script took far longer than expected. The acting company began rehearsing 10-hour days without a day off, but the final dress rehearsal was still a shambles.

Their work paid off, however, when the first two parts of the adapted trilogy opened on July 17, 1963 to cheering crowds and glowing reviews. According to Sally Beaumann in her history of the RSC, "almost everyone connected with the RSC at that time... considered *The Wars of the Roses* the pinnacle of the company's achievements." The production was especially notable for the tour-de-force performance by Dame Peggy Ashcroft as Margaret of Anjou, who appeared in all three parts. Then 55, the actress transformed (sometimes in the course of a single marathon day) from a 20-something princess to a septuagenarian crone.

The RSC would revisit this success in 1988 with *The Plantagenets*, a new adaptation by director Adrian Noble which also condensed the trilogy plus *Richard III* into a three-play sequence. While more traditionally staged than many of Noble's productions, *The Plantagenets* still featured his signature use of striking, abstract visual elements, such as a vast white floorcloth which, smeared with blood, rose to become the backdrop for *Richard III*.

In 1987, the now-defunct English Shakespeare Company, under the direction of Michael Bogdanov, undertook to stage the entire cycle of Shakespeare's histories, including the *Henry VI* trilogy, which was condensed into two parts, retitled *The House of Lancaster* and *The House of York*. Bogdanov's approach was Brechtian and politically-charged, frequently referencing Margaret Thatcher and the Falklands War. The complete cycle, entitled *The Wars of the Roses*, toured internationally from 1987-1989, and stirred up enormous controversy for the liberties Bogdanov took with Shakespeare's text as well as its wildly eclectic design.

A former RSC director, Barry Kyle, tried his hand at adapting the trilogy in 1995 for New York's Theatre for a New Audience. Kyle's version was a two-part condensation of the three *Henry VI* plays,

entitled *Henry VI Part One: The Contention* and *Henry VI Part Two: The Civil War*. Like the current Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey production, Kyle's adaptation began with an excerpt from *Henry V* and ended with an excerpt from *Richard III*. While the reviews were not unanimously positive, the production was nominated for a Drama Desk award.

In 1996, the Public Theater made its own foray into the trilogy, with a two-part adaptation by director Karin Coonrod, entitled *Henry VI: The Edged Sword* and *Henry VI: The Black Storm*. Unlike Barton and Hall, Coonrod did not add new material, but did cut the plays down to about six hours (cutting the text by about 1/3). A 10-member ensemble performed all the roles in both parts, although the two halves were visually and stylistically distinct, with *Black Storm* calling upon sounds and imagery from rock music. Puppetry and other devices were also used to help tell such a sprawling story with only ten actors.

The next great step forward for abridgments of the Henry VI trilogy came in 2002, with *Rose Rage*, an adaptation by Edward Hall (son of Sir Peter) and his all-male Propeller Company. While *Rose Rage* technically had two parts, it was often presented as a single performance, 5 1/2 hours with two intermissions and a dinner break. This marked the first time that a theatre company had approached the entire trilogy as a "single theatrical event." The striking design concept included a Victorian slaughterhouse setting with an ensemble chorus of "masked butcher boys" wielding mallets and cleavers. The violence of the plays was graphically depicted by this chorus assaulting red cabbages and chunks of raw meat in what was surely one of the messiest and most visceral (literally) devices ever used in a Shakespearean production.



Painting of the Battle of Châtillon and the death of John Talbot by Charles-Phillipe Larivière (1798-1876).

Commentary and Criticism

We seem justified, therefore, in claiming that the *Henry VI* trilogy, far from being hackwork as was once thought, contains the most powerful and richly-textured writing in Shakespeare's earliest work.

Paul Dean

"Shakespeare's *Henry VI* Trilogy and Elizabethan 'Romance'"

[*Henry VI, Part One*] is broken and choppy to an intolerable degree. The only part of it to be put down to Shakspeare [sic] is the Temple Garden scene of the red and white roses and that has nothing specially characteristic in it, though the proportion of extra-syllabled lines in it forbids us supposing it is very early work. There must be at least three hands in the play, one of whom must have written -- probably, only -- the rhyme scenes of Talbot and his son.

Frederick James Furnivall

The Leopold Shakspeare (1877)

The three parts of *Henry VI...* are inferior to the other historical plays. They have brilliant passages, but the general ground-work is comparatively poor and meager, the style "flat and unraised."

William Hazlitt

The Characters of Shakespeare's Plays (1817)

There is little of Shakespeare's great poetry in the plays. There is immense vitality, comedy and the sort of theatrical poetry of action that is rare outside Shakespeare. It is not hard to discover the reason for the plays' compelling theatricality, and it has much to do with the battle reports of the first critics, including Irving Warde for *The Times*. Like the warfare that washes restlessly across the stage between and during speeches, everything that happens is a matter of life and death.

Ned Chaillet

The Times of London, 4/17/78

The logic of the plays might best be described in terms of repetition rather than linear progress: heroic flourishes, treacherous acts, the crowning, capturing, and and killing of kings recur as patterns that all but eclipse the individuals concerned.

Kathryn Schwarz

"Fearful Simile: Stealing the Breech in Shakespeare's Chronicle Plays"

If [Shakespeare] did not originate the form of the History Play when he wrote the *Henry VI* plays, he created its vogue and shaped its tradition. So preeminent was his contribution that, if we omit his History Plays, the tradition very nearly ceases to be artistically significant."

Robert Ornstein

A Kingdom for a Stage: The Achievement of Shakespeare's History Plays

From Part One...

"[*Henry VI, Part One*] is a lively, smart, sophisticated, and well-designed play, full of strong characters and fast-paced action. It plays exceedingly well onstage and it does not deserve the literary condescension that has sometimes come its way."

Marjorie Garber

Shakespeare After All



Painting of medieval longbowmen in battle, from the British National Army Museum exhibit *A British Archer, 1415*.

...to Part Three

"The quality of the poetry, and especially of the imagery, is vivid throughout, and the portraits of lasciviousness, malevolence, and ambition in high places are as compelling and recognizable today as they would presumably have been in the early modern period."

Marjorie Garber

Shakespeare After All

Shakespeare's Common Tongue

alack- expression of dismay or shock

anon- soon, right away

ere- before

hath- has

hence- away (from here)

henceforth- from now on

hither- here

lest- or else

naught- nothing

oft- often

perchance- by chance, perhaps, maybe

sirrah- "hey, you" as said to a servant or someone of lower status

thee- you

thence-away, over there

thine- yours

thither- there

thou- you

thy- your

whence- where

wherefore- why

whither- where

... and the "thys" have it

Often Shakespeare will alternate his usage of "thou" for "you", or "thy" for "your", or "thine" for "yours". Though the words are synonymous, there is a great deal of information that can be obtained by looking closely at these choices.

The different use of these pronouns have to do with status, relationship, degrees of intimacy and shifting attitudes. "You" is used in formal situations and conveys respect from the speaker. It is used when addressing royalty and parents. "Thou," used in more informal settings, also can suggest contempt or aggression from the speaker. The use of "thou" places the speaker above the status of the person to whom s/he is speaking. Children are addressed using "thou," "thee" or "thy." In a conversation between two people of equal status, the use of "you" suggests that everything is going along smoothly, whereas "thou" would suggest that there is some kind of upset or unrest in the relationship.

Terms and Phrases Found In *Henry VI*

SHAKESPEARE'S PART ONE

warrantise – guarantee

proditor – traitor

bearded – confronted to one's face

contumeliously – argumentatively

quilllets – fine points

purblind – partly blind, dull

crestless yeomen – untitled commoners, men of low birth

extemporal – unrehearsed

prelate – a bishop or archbishop

disanimates – disheartens

environ – surround

at my beads – at prayer (a reference to the Catholic rosary)

alder-liefest – most beloved

SHAKESPEARE'S PART TWO

imprimis – first (as used in legal Latin)

hoise – hoist, lift

"I am but grace" – dukes and duchesses are referred to as "your grace" (being addressed as "your majesty" being a privilege of kings and queens)

attainture – condemnation (specifically for treason)

supplications – requests

cullions – wretches

Albion – an archaic name for England

Ave-Maries – prayers (the Catholic rosary)

holy saws – holy sayings, precepts

sacred writ – scripture, the Bible

tilt-yard – the field of jousting

triple crown – the Papal crown

callet – scold, gossip, loose woman

limed a bush – set a trap (as for a bird)

ill demean'd himself – dishonored himself

dandle – to bounce on the knee (as a baby)

mechanical – workman

adsum – Latin for "I am here"

guerdon'd – rewarded

so shrewd a maim – so painful a wound

raught – broken

scathe – harm

subornation – incitement, encouragement (to commit a crime)

fond affiance – foolish loyalty

come amain – come in haste

(INTERMISSION)

Iris – Greek goddess of the rainbow and messenger of the gods

calculate my birth – read my horoscope

jaded groom – corrupt lackey

handicrafts-men – workmen

cade – a barrel (of fish, for example)

cast accompt – add and subtract

ink-horn – inkwell (for writing with a quill pen)

gelded – castrated

the Pissing Conduit – any small water conduit in the city (not, as the name implies, an open sewer)

the Savoy – the great London palace of the Dukes of Lancaster (actually destroyed in 1381)

the Inns of Court – the building complexes housing London's lawyers at the time

besom – broom

in capite – Latin: "in chief" (ironic in light of Cade's condemnation of grammar schools only moments before)

stigmatic – a deformed person (literally "marked," as by God)

SHAKESPEARE'S PART THREE

poltroons – cowardly wretches

factious – characterized by conflict and dissension

shambles – a slaughterhouse

sith – since

cavilling – quibbling, discussing pointlessly

silly – foolish

timorous – fearful

demean'd themselves – conducted themselves

orisons – prayers

trull – prostitute

Hyrkania – a region in the north of modern-day Iran, once renowned for its wild tigers

lenity – forgiveness, leniency

bootless – useless

ruthful – filled with anger

thick-grown brake – dense shrubbery, thicket

laund – glade, meadow

quondam – Latin: “former”

Nestor – one of the Greek leaders in the Trojan War

Ulysses – the Greek hero Odysseus, renowned for his cleverness

Sinon – the clever Greek soldier who betrayed the city of Troy by convincing the citizens to open their gates to the Trojan Horse

succor – help

dare – stare down, overawe

jointure – a groom’s payment to the family of his prospective bride

forward – disobedient

meed – merit

to lime the stones together – to join (as with mortar)

coop’d – prepared, equipped

charm your tongue – silence you

malapert – insolent, smart-mouthed

railer – a scold or complainer

twitting – teasing, taunting

Roscious – a famous actor in ancient Rome whose name became a popular epithet for any great actor

A Man of Many Words

Shakespeare used over 20,000 different words in his plays and poems. Of these, 8.5% (1700 words) had never been seen in print before Shakespeare used them. To give you a sense of just how extraordinary this is, consider that the King James Bible uses only 8,000 different words. Homer is credited with using approximately 9,000 different words in his works. Milton is estimated at using 10,000 different words in his works.

Henry VI: Food For Thought

Witches: Good for the Box Office

Shakespeare’s audience must have had a bottomless appetite for “witchy” scenes such as those featuring Margery Jourdain and Joan La Pucelle in the Henry VI plays (not to mention Macbeth). The Bard wasn’t the only one writing about witches: Marlowe’s Doctor Faustus, Ford and Rowley’s The Witch of Edmonton, and Middleton’s The Witch were all stage hits that featured “weird women” and their illicit magic.

This is not surprising when you consider that many (if not most) of Shakespeare’s contemporaries believed that witchcraft was real (and quite frightening). Like modern-day screenwriters, Elizabethan and Jacobean playwrights wrote about the “hot topics” of the day to boost their ticket sales.

In the history plays, Shakespeare also makes frequent use of prophecies from the spirit world, which give the audience the thrill of understanding (with the benefit of historical hindsight) words which baffle the characters on stage.

The Margery Jourdain scene is a great example of this: what starts as a simple “sting operation” on an unsuspecting Eleanor of Gloucester turns into a real conjuration that reveals the fate of the sting’s organizers (and of the kingdom itself), although few on stage recognize it at the time.

What’s in a name? (Or, who ARE these guys?)

One of the confusing aspects of trying to follow Shakespeare’s history plays, in particular the Henry VI/Richard III tetralogy, is the fact that the same characters seem to be known by several different names in the course of each play.

Even in medieval England, everyone of noble blood had a first name and surname, just as we do today, although their surnames aren’t mentioned as often in the plays. York and his four sons (Edward, George, Richard and Edmund) are all Plantagenets. Lady Grey was born Elizabeth Woodville, and her brother (Lord Rivers) was born plain Anthony Woodville.

More important than surnames amongst a feudal nobility (where everyone seems to be everyone else’s cousin anyhow) are the characters’ titles. Several dozen highly-placed families controlled almost all the land in England as dukes, earls, and marquesses, including the innumerable royal cousins who claimed descent from King Edward III.

The unlucky young Edmund Plantagenet is often referred to in the play as “Rutland,” because his childhood inheritance included the Earldom of Rutland. Similarly his older brothers George and Richard become known as Clarence and Gloucester after those dukedoms are awarded to them by the victorious Edward of York. Referring to a nobleman by his title was a way of showing respect for the subtle gradations of status that different titles held in the medieval era. Dukes outranked marquesses who outranked earls who outranked viscounts and barons— towards the end of the play, there is a barbed exchange on this topic between Warwick and Gloucester:

Warwick	Is not a dukedom, sir, a goodly gift?
Gloucester	Ay, by my faith, for a poor earl to give.

Like the varying usage of “thou” and “you,” the act of referring to someone by his name versus his title can be used to convey subtle shadings of familiarity, mockery or contempt on the part of Shakespeare’s characters.

“Let’s kill all the lawyers!”

One of the most famous (or infamous) quotes in the Henry VI plays is spoken by a minor character, Jack Cade’s memorably-named sidekick “Dick the Butcher.” The Jack Cade scenes inject an element of comedy (albeit dark comedy) into a rather grim plot, and also allow Shakespeare to show the increasingly lawless actions of the nobility being brutally mirrored by the commons.

The Cade scenes (and his lawyer-killing manifesto in particular) are not particularly historically accurate. Shakespeare deliberately conflated two rebellions, Cade’s 1450 rebellion and the Wat Tyler Peasants’ Revolt of 1381. The earlier rebellion may have targeted the literate (including lawyers) at least in theory, but Cade’s movement was actually a far more middle-class affair. At least one knight, two members of Parliament, and a handful of priests were among Cade’s army as it marched into London. Lord Saye was indeed executed by the rebels— in contrast to his moving death scene in Shakespeare however, the historical Lord Saye, who was Treasurer of England at the time, was the most widely-loathed of Henry’s officials, apparently both incompetent and massively corrupt.

England vs. France: The Hundred Years' War

The Hundred Years' War was a conflict between England and France that arose when English kings began making claims to the French throne based on their descent from the French royal family. Edward III was the first to do so, in 1337, precipitating a conflict that lasted, on and off, for 116 years. The war is usually divided into four phases, separated by periods of peace: the Edwardian War (1337-1360), the Caroline War (1369-1389), and the Lancastrian War (1415-1429) followed by the slow expulsion of the English from France, which was complete by 1453.

The Capetian dynasty in France was disrupted in 1314 when Philip IV died. Although he left three male heirs, all died within a decade leaving behind no sons. Philip IV had also had a daughter, Isabella, who was married to Edward II of England. They had one son, who ascended the throne of England as Edward III in 1327 after his father's assassination. Edward III proclaimed that, as grandson to Philip IV, the last monarch of the Capetian dynasty, he was the legitimate heir to the throne of France.

The French, however, were resistant to the idea of a foreign-born king. They cited a law dating back to the Dark Ages, the Salic Law, which stated that inheritance of property could not pass through female heirs. Because Edward's claim was based on descent in the female line (through his mother), it was rejected and in 1328, another of Philip IV's relatives, Philip of Valois, ascended the French throne as Philip VI. Edward was not satisfied, so in 1329 the French returned the province of Gascony to the English in return for Edward's agreement to drop his claim to the throne.

Tensions continued to smolder, erupting into open war when Philip VI retook Gascony by force and had his fleet sack towns along the English coastline. Philip believed that Edward would be distracted by war in the north with Scotland, a French ally, but Edward's troops defeated the Scots and captured their king in 1346. With the northern border secure, Edward invaded France at Normandy, capturing Caen, Crécy, and Calais within a year.

Ten years later, Edward's son, Edward the Black Prince, led a second invasion from the west, defeating the French at Poitiers and capturing their new king, John II. The Second Treaty of London was signed, by which John was returned to his people and England acquired the duchy of Aquitaine, adding to its French possessions.

A short period of peace and equilibrium lasted until 1369 when Charles V took the throne of France and began to push back the English. By this time, the Black Prince had fallen ill and Edward himself was too old to fight. They died in 1376 and 1377, respectively, and England found itself in the hands of a boy king, Edward's grandson Richard II. Political instability in England meant that attempts to retake the nation's territories in France had to be put on hold.

After Richard was deposed and killed in 1399, King Henry IV planned several times to attack France, but was unable to do so as he fell sick and died in 1413. His son, Henry V, succeeded him, and united the English behind his plans to relaunch the stalled military campaigns in France. In a series of successful invasions, Henry V won decisive victories at Harfleur, Agincourt, Rouen and Baugé in short order before taking ill and dying during the long Siege of Meaux. According to the terms of the Treaty of Troyes, Henry was given Charles VI of France's daughter Katherine in marriage,

with an understanding that their son would succeed to the throne of both countries, finally accomplishing Edward III's goal of a century before.

However, when Henry V died young, leaving the throne to his infant son Henry VI, the French saw a chance to thwart the treaty and retain control of their native land. A peasant girl, known as Joan of Arc, famously convinced Charles's lawful heir, the Dauphin, living in exile in the countryside, that God had commanded her to lead the French in battle. In 1429, Joan's army broke the English siege of Orléans, clearing the path for the Dauphin to move to Rheims and be crowned Charles VII of France, in contravention of the Treaty of Troyes.

Although Joan of Arc was captured and executed by the English in 1430, the French victories continued under Charles, slowly but surely forcing the English from France. John Talbot's English troops were more experienced and better trained than their adversaries, but with political infighting and financial instability in the English government, they were not numerous or well-supplied enough to effectively oppose the French. The final battle of the Hundred Years' War took place at Castillon in 1453, and its result was the complete expulsion of the English from France.



Edward III's army lays siege to Rheims in this illustration from Jean Froissart's *Chronicles*, 1377.

The Wars of The Roses: A Princely Feud

Shakespeare wrote four history plays (the three parts of *Henry VI*, and *Richard III*) dealing with the turbulent period of dynastic conflict and intermittent civil war in England between 1455 and 1485 which later came to be known as the Wars of the Roses. Although the true effects of these wars are still debated by today's historians, there is at least general agreement that they contributed greatly to the decline of the feudal nobility in England, to the rise of a mercantile class, and to the consolidation of power in the hands of the central government. Rightly or wrongly, it was also certainly the perception in Shakespeare's time that the wars had been a deeply traumatic and disruptive period for the nation as a whole.

The set of circumstances which would lead to civil war began more than two generations earlier. King Edward III's numerous children founded several branches of the ruling Plantagenet family, both legitimate and illegitimate. The 1399 coup which deposed Edward's unpopular grandson, Richard II, was led by Henry Bolingbroke, the Duke of Lancaster and one of the many royal cousins. According to the rules of primogeniture (an exclusive right of inheritance belonging to the eldest son), the throne should have passed not to Bolingbroke (descended from Edward's fourth son), but to one of the other cousins. Bolingbroke seized the moment of his initial popularity and military advantage to claim the throne for himself, however, and was named King Henry IV.

Henry IV held his throne with difficulty, never able to fully escape the shadow of the means by which he had obtained it. However, matters changed when he died, leaving the throne to his young son, Henry V. After years of military failure in France, the new king united the country behind a gloriously successful invasion which not only regained England's long-lost French possessions but toppled the French monarchy as well. With England anticipating its imperial status under Henry's infant son, old grudges against the house of Lancaster were temporarily forgotten.

Henry V never lived to enjoy his success, however, leaving his own son Henry to inherit the throne as an infant. A Protectorate was established to govern the country while Henry VI was still a child, made up primarily of assorted royal uncles and cousins, and the buried discontents began to resurface. In part due to these divisions within the royal court, Henry V's military gains in France were whittled away even as royal spending mounted. The trouble only increased as Henry VI grew into a weak and indecisive man who depended entirely on the advice of a trusted few, in particular his French-born queen, Margaret of Anjou. As English armies continued to retreat from France, and taxes and corruption thrived, resentment began to build among the general public, and even more so among those members of the old noble families excluded from the Lancastrian inner circle.

Chief among these was the king's cousin Richard Plantagenet, the Duke of York (father of the eventual Richard III). Richard of York was descended from two of Edward III's sons, and married into the line of descent of another, giving his sons a far stronger claim to the throne than Henry VI's own son. He was widely respected, especially in the north of England, and was personally more popular than the king. His wife, Cecily Neville, was a daughter of the richest aristocratic family in England, and had helped enable Richard himself to become quite wealthy. As the richest of the royal cousins, Richard was expected to command (and personally finance) the ongoing military campaign in France, even as the king's circle pointedly excluded him from decision-making.

Richard's growing resentment of this situation came to a head when the king recalled him from France, replacing him with their cousin Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, a detested royal favorite. Richard was dispatched to Ireland, even as he was expected to continue forwarding his personal funds to Beaufort in France. His lack of faith in Somerset's abilities as a general was well-founded. Almost immediately, Somerset bungled the campaign in Normandy, and was forced to surrender the entire province to the French, perhaps the most symbolically crushing defeat thus far in the eyes of the English public. Nevertheless, the king let Somerset retain his command, even as English losses accelerated.

In 1453, on the heels of England's almost complete expulsion from France, Henry VI suffered the first of several nervous breakdowns that were to haunt the last decades of his life. With the king incapacitated, it was necessary to appoint a Council of Regency, and the country was now vehemently opposed to politics as usual. Richard of York was appointed to head the council as Lord Protector, and he moved quickly to curtail the power of the royal favorites. Somerset was accused of treason and placed under arrest. With the balance of power suddenly tipped, fighting between noble families broke out all over the country as adherents of Richard's faction sought to settle old scores and advance their own positions at the expense of those who had been in favor under the king.

When the king recovered early in 1455 and was able to resume government, battle lines were already effectively drawn between the noble houses who adhered to him (the Lancastrians) and those who adhered to Richard (the Yorkists). According to legend (partly created by Shakespeare) each faction took as its insignia a rose: red for the Lancastrians; white for the Yorkists.

Almost immediately, the king freed Somerset and removed Richard from office. Unwilling to see the corrupt inner circle returned to power, Richard gathered a small army and marched south to demand that Somerset and the other "bad councillors" be stripped of office. At the town of St. Albans, just north of London, Richard's force was met by an armed force headed by Henry and Margaret in person. While both sides may have meant only to put on a show of strength, violence broke out and the first real battle of the Wars of the Roses ensued. It was a humiliating one for the Lancastrians—Somerset was killed and the king forced to retreat to London—but the fact that Richard had dared to openly attack the king lost him many supporters, at least for a time.

The Lancastrians now knew that Richard was willing to go to almost any length to drive them from power. With Richard temporarily back in Ireland, they called a special session of Parliament that introduced the process of attainder into English law. Through attainder, anyone could be effectively convicted of treason by a mere majority vote of Parliament, making their lives and property forfeit to the crown. In attempting to crush the Yorkists in this way, however, Margaret's faction may have unintentionally driven more supporters into his arms. The aristocracy was understandably unnerved by the sweeping and arbitrary power of attainder. At the same time, the merchants of London and the southern coast, who favored Richard and his nephew-in-law, Warwick, were growing increasingly dissatisfied with the Lancastrian government's indifference to growing piracy and lawlessness that disrupted trade. By 1456, Margaret refused to let Henry return to the capital, keeping the king in the Midlands, where his support was strongest. By 1459, the Yorkists had regrouped and were able

to capitalize on the renewed public disapproval of Henry's reign. Warwick, who had refused to give up command of the English naval stronghold at Calais, launched raids on the southern coast of England, culminating in a 1460 invasion of his native country. The Yorkist army moved easily through the south of England, gathering support along the way. A papal emissary blessed their mission, and they were welcomed by the people of London. Quickly, Henry gathered what support he could and marched south to meet them. At the Battle of Northampton, the Lancastrian army was routed and the king was taken prisoner by Warwick.

Quickly, Richard returned from Ireland as Warwick brought the king back to London and summoned Parliament to consider the question of who should succeed Henry. Richard appeared in person before the assembly to present his claim to the throne. Weary of the ongoing conflict, and longing for a stable and effective national government, Parliament resolved to settle the matter with the October 1460 Act of Accord, which stated that although Richard's claim to the throne was stronger, Henry would remain king for his natural life. Henry and Margaret's 6-year-old son, Edward of Lancaster, would be disinherited, however, in favor of Richard, who would also regain the title of Lord Protector. Margaret and her son were ordered to leave both London and the king.

Enraged, Margaret headed back north into the Midlands, gathering Lancastrian supporters to her cause. As winter approached, Richard learned with alarm that she had massed a large army near the city of York, his ancestral seat. Richard and his brother-in-law, Salisbury, headed north to confront the Lancastrians. On December 30, 1460 the forces met at the Battle of Wakefield. Severely outnumbered, the Yorkists were driven from the field. Richard was killed in battle, and Margaret's troops captured both Salisbury and Richard's teenage son, Edmund of Rutland, whom the queen ordered beheaded. All three heads were placed over the gates of York to rot, as a mocking reminder of the Lancastrian victory, and a deadly insult to Richard's family and supporters.

Wakefield began a second, much bloodier and uglier phase of the wars. With Richard's death, leadership of the Yorkist cause passed to his oldest son, 18-year-old Edward, Earl of March. Tall, blond and handsome, Edward was naturally charismatic and, as it turned out, a born military leader. He and Warwick were now determined not only to achieve the Yorkists' political goals, but to exact bloody revenge for the deaths of their fathers. However, it took time for Edward and Warwick to raise armies to meet Margaret, and to join their forces, and the queen moved quickly to press her advantage.

Negotiating a marriage for her young son to the princess of Scotland, and promising the Scottish soldiers free reign to loot in southern England, Margaret was able to secure still more troops. However, because Margaret's cash-poor army depended on looting for its survival, it became increasingly feared and hated by the local populations as it passed south towards London. Although Warwick was unable to stop the Lancastrian advance in the field at a second Battle of St. Albans (having to retreat so quickly that their prize hostage, King Henry, was forgotten under a tree, and collected by his wife), he successfully spread propaganda that Margaret's army of "savage northerners" meant to pillage London. At the gates of the capital, Margaret and Henry's triumphant return was checked by the people of London, who barred the gates and refused to supply the Lancastrian army with food. Stalled at the threshold of their goal, the Lancastrians were reduced to looting the surrounding farms and estates for food. Meanwhile, Edward and his younger brothers, George and Richard, were mov-

ing east from Wales at the head of another Yorkist army, which the Lancastrians had been unable to stop. Joining forces with Warwick, the brothers moved swiftly towards London and Margaret's encampment. With the local countryside turning increasingly hostile, Margaret withdrew north to friendlier territory, and Edward was welcomed into London with celebrations and shouts of "King Edward!" Parliament met and hastily agreed that Edward should be crowned, although the young king stated that he would have no formal coronation ceremony until both Henry and Margaret were either executed or exiled.

A peaceful resolution was no longer possible, and both sides gathered all their remaining allies for a final showdown. Leaders on both sides agreed that the battle would be fought to the death. On March 29, 1461, the armies met on the moors of Towton, near York, in the midst of a late spring blizzard. By most estimates, the Lancastrians fielded at least 40,000 men, and the Yorkists more than 35,000. Well over half the hereditary nobility of England were armed and in the field. The ensuing battle was one of the bloodiest of the entire medieval era, and the largest single day's loss of life on English soil in recorded history. In the battle's opening minutes, volleys of over 120,000 arrows per minute rained down on each side, with the high winds and poor visibility wreaking havoc on those attempting to return fire from downwind. As the foot soldiers engaged one another, there were so many casualties that the two sides had to frequently halt to clear the bodies out of their way.

The balance of the battle shifted to and fro until late afternoon, when John Howard was able to arrive with several thousand fresh Yorkist troops. The Lancastrian lines collapsed, then panicked. Throwing their armor and weapons aside as they fled, they were easy targets for the Yorkists. Bridges collapsed under the weight of the fleeing men, who plunged into the flooded streams and rivers and drowned. Eventually, rivers were so choked with corpses that soldiers were climbing over bodies to cross. Edward and his brothers entered the city of York for the first time in years and replaced their father's rotting head with the freshly decapitated heads of numerous Lancastrian nobles. Historians estimate that 20,000 men lost their lives in the battle and the ensuing flight. Perhaps more than anything else, it is the horror of Towton that lived on in English cultural memory and that colors Shakespeare's descriptions of civil war.

Margaret, with her husband and son, narrowly escaped to Scotland, but the Lancastrian forces were shattered. A kind of guerilla warfare continued along the Scottish border and in Wales, but its principal result was the recapture of the deposed king in 1465, and his return to the Tower of London.

The third and final phase of the Wars began with the deterioration in the friendship between King Edward and his mentor Warwick. As much as Edward was admired as a soldier, he was notorious as a womanizer. One of these liaisons resulted in the king's secret marriage to a commoner, Elizabeth Woodville, in 1464. Warwick, who had been tirelessly negotiating Edward's marriage to a member of the French royal family, was humiliated and furious. By marrying Edward into the French court, he had hoped to trump Margaret's influence in France and crush any hope of a Lancastrian restoration once and for all. Now his plans were in ruins and the French more implacably opposed to the Yorkist regime than ever. To add insult to injury, Edward began granting offices and income to the new queen's large and ambitious family, as longtime Yorkist supporters went unnoticed. Finally, popular discontent was brewing,

as taxes and lawlessness were on the rise again.

Warwick decided that, as he had made Edward king, he could just as easily unmake him. Traveling to France, he was able to persuade his oldest enemy, Queen Margaret, to make peace with him and plot a return to power. As a sign of good faith, he betrothed his younger daughter, Anne, to Prince Edward of Lancaster. His older daughter, Isabel, was already married to King Edward's brother George of Clarence, and Warwick was able to persuade a disgruntled George to join the new alliance. Only King Edward's youngest brother, Richard of Gloucester (the future Richard III), refused to take part in Warwick's plot.

In 1470, the new Lancastrian army swept into England under Warwick's command. Joined by nobles dissatisfied with Edward and the Woodvilles, they were too numerous and swift for the king to counter. Edward and Richard fled to Holland, then to Burgundy, and Henry VI was released from the Tower and restored to his throne for the last time. Edward and Richard, in turn, were able to gain the support of the Duke of Burgundy, and their own armies invaded England in 1471. Two decisive victories destroyed the Lancastrians—Barnet, in which Warwick fell, and Tewkesbury, where Prince Edward of Lancaster was killed. A broken Queen Margaret fled again to France, never to return, Edward IV resumed the throne, and on May 14, 1471, Henry VI was put to death in the Tower to prevent any further Lancastrian uprisings.

Until 1483, Edward ruled in comparative peace. Under the surface, however, a fierce rivalry was brewing between his favored in-laws and a faction led by his brother Richard. In 1478, the king had his unreliable brother George executed for treason, and (in spite of Shakespeare) all historical evidence suggests that it was at the behest of the Woodvilles, and that Richard argued bitterly and faithfully for their feckless brother's life.

When Edward died, leaving his 12-year-old son Edward as the presumptive heir, Richard was not the only one alarmed at the degree of influence that the Woodvilles would hold over the boy king, and may have justifiably feared for his own life, given the fate of Clarence. In his will, King Edward had named his brother sole Protector until the prince came of age, but the Woodvilles moved immediately to have the will nullified. Richard was faster, and he capitalized on the nobility's growing detestation of the Woodville circle. Acting in Council and Parliament, he had Edward's marriage to Elizabeth Woodville declared invalid, and the young princes excluded from succession. Richard was crowned king, the leading members of the Woodvilles arrested and executed for treason, and the princes placed in royal custody in the Tower. The subsequent disappearance of the two boys remains one of the greatest historical unsolved mysteries.

Many, but by no means all, of the English nobility who had survived the Wars thus far threw their support behind Richard, who was respected both as a general and administrator. Again, much of the scanty evidence that survives from Richard's short reign points to an able, reform-minded king rather than the psychopathic monster that Shakespeare portrayed. If anything, it was Richard's attempts at administrative reform and his leniency toward former opponents that contributed to his downfall. In 1485, Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, an illegitimate descendant of the House of Lancaster, led yet another army out of France to challenge the reigning king.

At the Battle of Bosworth Field, Richmond won the day by ensuring the desertion of forces on Richard's side. Richard was killed, and Henry Tudor was crowned King Henry VII, securing his claim to the throne by marrying Edward IV's daughter Elizabeth, thus symbolically merging the red rose of Lancaster and the white rose of York.

The Wars of the Roses were finally at an end, although even Henry would face more than one uprising led by a Yorkist pretender during his reign. The true impact of the Wars is still debated by historians. On the one hand, the disruption to the lives and livelihoods of most ordinary English people was relatively minimal. It was, to a great extent, a war fought by the highest echelon of the nobility and their households. Although the material consequences were not great, the psychological impact of the ongoing government instability, the regular presence of foreign fighters on English soil, and the extreme and gruesome brother-against-brother violence of battles such as Towton continued to be felt in Shakespeare's own day. Additionally, because the loss of life and money among the nobility was so great, the Wars practically ended the enormous power that the great noble families had held since 1066. With more than half their number dead, the nobility were unable to resist both Henry Tudor's ruthless efforts to centralize power in the monarchy and the growing insistence of the mercantile classes that they be heard in Parliament. The feudal era in England had drawn to a grim and bloody close.



York and Somerset face off in the Temple Garden in this illustration from Charles Knight's *Imperial* edition of Shakespeare's *Complete Works*, 1873.

Additional Topics for Discussion

About the Play

1. Shakespeare, of course, did not entitle his three plays *Blood and Roses*— however, he also didn't entitle any of them simply *Henry VI*. When Parts Two and Three first appeared in print, they were entitled, respectively, *The First Part of the Contention bewtixt the two famous houses of York and Lancaster* and *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York and the death of good king Henry the Sixth*. What insights do these expanded titles give you into the themes of the plays? Why does King Henry seem to not be at the center of the story until he dies? What would *you* entitle this story? **LAL:** 3.1.G-H, 3.3.A-B, 3.5.A **VPA:** 1.4, 1.5

2. While Shakespeare clearly adheres to the official Tudor view of recent English history (that the Yorkist dynasty was personally and politically unfit to rule), his portrayal of the “wicked” characters, even the monstrous Richard of Gloucester, is multi-layered and psychologically complex. Can characters such as York and Margaret be considered “villains?” Are they sometimes sympathetic? How and why does Shakespeare balance his depiction of these characters? **LAL:** 3.1.G-H, 3.3.A-B **VPA:** 1.5

3. Fathers and sons appear again and again in the trilogy, beginning with the relationship between the child Henry VI and the phantom presence of his heroic father. Not only are there numerous real father-son pairs, but also relationships in which a mentor functions as a kind of surrogate father (consider the relationship between Warwick and Edward Plantagenet). These relationships run the gamut from love to hatred. Why is Shakespeare so interested in fathers and sons in this story? What is he trying to say about father-son relationships? **LAL:** 3.1.G-H, 3.3.A-B, 3.5.A, 3.5.C **VPA:** 1.5

4. While contemporary historians question whether the Wars of the Roses had a significant impact on the lives of ordinary people in England, Shakespeare's narrative explicitly traces connections between the actions of the ruling classes and the actions of the common people. What kind of political beliefs does Shakespeare express? What functions do the scenes dealing with the common people serve? **LAL:** 3.1.G-H, 3.3.A-B, 3.5.A, 3.5.C **VPA:** 1.4, 1.5

5. Much of Shakespeare's Part Three, in particular, seems to be setting up the characters and plot elements of *Richard III*. Is the malevolent Richard the real “engine” of this story once he appears on the scene, or is he in some way simply a product of his times? How is Richard's rise to power “enabled” by the actions of those around him? Do any of the characters in the earlier parts of the story reflect or foreshadow Richard's character? **LAL:** 3.1.G-H, 3.3.A-B, 3.5.A, 3.5.C **VPA:** 1.4, 1.5

About this Production

1. This adaptation begins and ends with references to other kings from Shakespeare's histories: we hear the voice of Henry V, whose funeral opens the play, and see the face of Richard III, whose words end the play. Why do you think Brian Crowe, the adaptor and director, chose to frame his version of the *Henry VI* trilogy in this way? **LAL:** 3.3.A-B, 3.5.A, 3.5.C **VPA:** 1.4, 1.5

The standards codes following each exercise are intended to suggest just some of the ways these exercises might be aligned to NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards. Activities can be extended or expanded upon to connect to many other standards.

Follow-up Activities

1. Write a review of this production of *Henry VI: Blood and Roses*. Be sure to include specific information and your own reactions to both the acting and the design elements (lights, set, costumes and sound). Explain what you liked and disliked, and support your opinions. Then submit your review to The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey's Education Department, or see if it can be published in your school newspaper. **LAL:** 3.2.A-B, 3.2.D, 3.4.A-B, 3.5.A-C **VPA:** 1.1, 1.3-1.5

2. **Character Web.** The complex familial and political relationships of the many characters in the Henry VI trilogy are one of its challenges for readers and audience members. Using the family tree on p. 9 as a starting point, create a character web that shows how all the characters are connected to one another. Discuss the complexity and variation in these relationships and how they affect the events of the play. **LAL:** 3.1.E, 3.1.G-H, 3.3.A, 3.5.A **VPA:** 1.1, 1.3-1.5

3. **“Alert the media!”** Public perception of the characters in the play strongly influences their rise and fall as political leaders. Select a series of events from the play, and “cover” them in the style of a newspaper or television journalist: obituaries for any one of the numerous deaths, courtroom coverage of one of the trials, a battlefield report from Orléans or Towton, etc. Your coverage may be truly objective, or it may be pure propaganda for the English, French, Lancastrians, Yorkists, etc. How is your depiction like or unlike Shakespeare's? **LAL:** 3.1.G-H, 3.2.A-B, 3.2.D, 3.3.D, 3.5.A-C, **VPA:** 1.2, 1.5

4. The attempts of children to live up to the expectations (and reputations) of their parents are an important thematic element in the *Henry VI* trilogy. In pairs or groups, act out any of the following scenarios (using either a scripted or improvised text): a child defends his/her parent's reputation in front of a peer or teacher, a parent expresses anger at a teenage child's choices, a child decides to express political beliefs different than his/her parent's, a parent teaches a child to emulate his/her prejudices or grudges. Discuss the issues that were raised and the acting choices made. How did these scenes mirror moments in *Henry VI*? **LAL:** 3.1.D-E, 3.1.G-H, 3.2.A-B, 3.2.D, 3.3.D, 3.5.A-C, **VPA:** 1.1-1.5

5. **“I learn by this letter...”** Shakespeare frequently uses letters as a plot device to reveal a character's secret thoughts or other surprising news. 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 King Henry to his son Prince Edward, explaining his decision to go along with the act of Parliament disinheriting him. Try to accurately reflect the plot of the play and the character's motivations. **LAL:** 3.1.G-H, 3.2.A-B, 3.2.D, 3.5.A-C, **VPA:** 1.5

6. **Wars of the Roses Memorial.** Research some of the world's famous war memorials. What characteristics do they share? What makes an effective memorial? Pick one of the battles in *Henry VI*, and decide how to memorialize it. Does your memorial reflect a Lancastrian or Yorkist perspective, or is it neutral? You can design your memorial on paper (along with a written description/proposal) or have your classmates create it with their bodies as a living tableau. **LAL:** 3.1.H, 3.2.A-B, 3.2.D, 3.3.A-B, 3.3.D, 3.5.A-C, **VPA:** 1.1-1.5

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 info@ShakespeareNJ.org and we will share them with other teachers, and maybe even include them in future study guides.

Test Your Understanding

1. Shakespeare's plays are most often written in:
 - a) rhyming couplets
 - b) Old English
 - c) blank verse
 - d) prose
2. Shakespeare wrote in what language?
 - a) Old English
 - b) early modern English
 - c) Middle English
 - d) Latin
3. How old was Henry VI when he became the King of England?
 - a) 9 years old
 - b) 21 years old
 - c) 9 months old
 - d) 12 years old
4. In the Temple Garden scene, what symbol do the factions choose to represent their argument?
 - a) shields
 - b) roses
 - c) swords
 - d) hats
5. Who is Jack Cade, according to Shakespeare?
 - a) a commoner
 - b) a rebel leader
 - c) an agent of York
 - d) all of the aforementioned
6. What territories do the English return to the French in exchange for Henry's marriage to Margaret of Anjou?
 - a) Paris and Corsica
 - b) Nice and Orleans
 - c) Anjou and Maine
 - d) Calais and Beaufour
7. Queen Margaret has an affair with which of the following courtiers?
 - a) Suffolk
 - b) Clifford
 - c) Talbot
 - d) Warwick
8. What does King Henry VI have with him when he is apprehended by the two keepers?
 - a) an apple
 - b) a candle
 - c) a sceptre
 - d) a prayer book
9. Complete this line: "The first thing we do, _____."
 - a) "let's kill those Frenchmen."
 - b) "let's kill the King."
 - c) "let's kill all the lawyers."
 - d) "let's kill all the Lancastrians."
10. King Henry travels to France just once in the play, in order to:
 - a) judge the trial of Joan la Pucelle
 - b) be crowned King of France
 - c) marry Margaret of Anjou
 - d) award a medal to John Talbot
11. Who kills York's son Rutland?
 - a) Warwick
 - b) Prince Edward of Lancaster
 - c) Rutland's brother Richard
 - d) Young Clifford
12. Which of the following women leads an army into battle?
 - a) Joan la Pucelle
 - b) Lady Bona
 - c) Queen Margaret
 - d) A and C
13. The *Henry VI* trilogy is classified as a:
 - a) comedy
 - b) tragedy
 - c) history
 - d) romance
14. Which character in this play becomes the title character in a later Shakespeare play?
 - a) Queen Margaret
 - b) George, York's son (later Duke of Clarence)
 - c) Joan la Pucelle
 - d) Richard, York's son (later Duke of Gloucester)
15. How long did the Wars of the Roses last?
 - a) 1380-1456
 - b) 1455-1485
 - c) 1485-present
 - d) 1493-1512

What Did He Say?

This is an opportunity to test your comprehension of Shakespeare’s language. Below you will find a passage from *Henry VI*. Answer the questions as specifically as possible.

RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER

Why, I can smile, and murder whiles I smile,
 And cry ‘content’ to that which grieves my heart,
 And wet my cheeks with artificial tears,
 And frame my face to all occasions.
 I’ll drown more sailors than the mermaid shall;
 I’ll slay more gazers than the basilisk;
 I’ll play the orator as well as Nestor,
 Deceive more slyly than Ulysses could,
 And, like a Sinon, take another Troy.
 Can I do this and cannot get a crown?
 Tut! Were it further off, I’ll pluck it down.

1. To what is Richard comparing himself in lines 3-4?
2. What is the meaning of comparing himself to a “mermaid” and a “basilisk?”
3. What is the significance of the allusions to Homer’s *Iliad*?
4. In the first nine lines, are there more hard consonant sounds or soft consonant sounds? Why? Does this change in the last two lines? Why?
5. Would you describe the rhythm of this passage as choppy or flowing? Why do you think there are only two end-stops (periods) in the first nine lines?
6. Why does the passage end with a rhymed couplet?

Who Said That?

Match the spoken line to the character who speaks it. Four characters have two quotes each. Three characters have none of the quotes listed below.

- | | | |
|----|--|---|
| A. | “If he suppose that I have pleaded truth,
From this brier pluck a white rose with me.” | JOAN LA PUCELLE |
| B. | “O, how this discord doth afflict my soul.” | WARWICK |
| C. | “The regent conquers, and the Frenchmen fly.
My ancient incantations are too weak.” | YORK |
| D. | “Margaret shall now be queen and rule the king;
But I will rule both her, the king and realm.” | KING HENRY VI |
| E. | “Enforced thee? Art thou king, and wilt be forced?
I shame to hear thee speak. Ah, timorous wretch!” | WINCHESTER (CARDINAL BEAUFORT) |
| F. | “When I am king... there shall be no money; all shall eat and
drink on my score...” | SUFFOLK |
| G. | “And this is the regal seat: possess it, York,
For this is thine and not King Henry’s heirs’.” | QUEEN MARGARET |
| H. | “O tiger’s heart wrapt in a woman’s hide...” | RICHARD PLANTAGENET (RICHARD OF GLOUCESTER) |
| I. | “Tears then for babes, blows and revenge for me!” | YOUNG CLIFFORD |
| J. | “Teeth hadst thou in thy head when thou wast born
To signify thou camest to bite the world” | EDWARD PLANTAGENET (KING EDWARD IV) |
| K. | “Thus have we swept suspicion from our seat
And made our footstool of security.” | JACK CADE |
| L. | “King Lewis, I here protest in sight of heaven
That I am clear from this misdeed of Edward’s,
No more my king, for he dishonors me.” | ELIZABETH WOODVILLE (LADY GREY) |
| M. | “Why, I can smile, and murder whiles I smile” | PRINCE EDWARD OF LANCASTER |
| N. | “I know I am too mean to be your queen,
And yet too good to be your concubine.” | GEORGE PLANTAGENET (GEORGE OF CLARENCE) |
| O. | “I am your better, traitors as ye are,
And thou usurp’st my father’s right and mine.” | |



**Sources for this study guide
(and other resources):**

THE ANNOTATED SHAKESPEARE, Introductions, Notes, and Bibliography by A.L Rowe
ASIMOV'S GUIDE TO SHAKESPEARE by Isaac Asimov
THE COMPLETE IDIOT'S GUIDE TO SHAKESPEARE, by Laurie Rozakis
FREEING SHAKESPEARE'S VOICE by Kristin Linklater
THE FRIENDLY SHAKESPEARE by Norrie Epstein
THE MIRACLE OF LANGUAGE by Richard Lederer
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, and Dench
SHAKESPEARE IN PERFORMANCE, Consultant Editors Keith Parsons and Pamela Mason
SHAKESPEARE'S KINGS, by John Julius Norwich
SHAKESPEARE OUR CONTEMPORARY by Jan Kott
SHAKESPEARE: THE INVENTION OF THE HUMAN by Harold Bloom
THEATRE: A WAY OF SEEING, Third Edition by Milly S. Barranger
THE ESSENTIAL SHAKESPEARE HANDBOOK, by Leslie Dunton-Downer and Alan Riding
Wikipedia, the free online encyclopedia (www.wikipedia.com)
Shakespeare's complete works online (shakespeare.mit.edu)
Mr. William Shakespeare and the Internet (shakespeare.palomar.edu)
The Shakespeare Resource Center (www.bardweb.net)

Test Your Understanding Answer Key

1. c 2. b 3. c 4. b 5. d 6. c
7. a 8. d 9. c 10. b 11. d 12. d
13. c 14. d 15. b

Who Said That? Answer Key

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. York | I. Richard Plantagenet |
| B. King Henry VI | J. King Henry VI |
| C. Joan La Pucelle | K. Edward Plantagenet |
| D. Suffolk | L. Warwick |
| E. Queen Margaret | M. Richard Plantagenet |
| F. Jack Cade | N. Elizabeth Woodville |
| G. Warwick | O. Prince Edward of Lancaster |
| H. York | |

Joan of Arc (Joan La Pucelle) as depicted by the artist Andrew C.P. Haggard (1912) from the collection of the Portrait Gallery of the Library of the University of Texas at Austin.

Meeting Core Curriculum 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, and on the discussion and activities page (p.19) 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." Using the visual and performing arts to motivate and enhance language arts learning is explicitly recommended by the CCCS, citing extensive research.

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

STANDARD 3.1: All students will apply the knowledge of sounds, letters and words in written English to become independent and fluent readers, and will read a variety of materials and texts with fluency and comprehension.
Read a scene from the play as a class and use context clues to interpret new words and expand vocabulary (3.1.C/F); demonstrate understanding by performing a scene from the play (3.1.G); compare and contrast literary elements in the play with another text being studied (3.1.H)

STANDARD 3.2: All students will write in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.
Write a new ending for the play in blank verse or in modern prose (3.2.D), write a critique of the play which will be workshopped and published in a classroom setting (3.2.A/B/D)

STANDARD 3.3: All students will speak in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.
Participate in a post-show discussion (3.3.A/B), memorize and perform a monologue or scene from the play (3.3.D)

STANDARD 3.4: All students will listen actively to information from a variety of sources in a variety of situations.

Select one speech or line from the play and compare how it was performed in the stage and film version (3.4.A/B)

STANDARD 3.5: All students will access, view, evaluate and respond to print, nonprint, and electronic texts and resources.

Discuss how the play expresses cultural values of the playwright's time (3.5.A); compare and contrast the printed text with its staged version (3.5.B)

VISUAL AND 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 use aesthetic knowledge in the creation of and in response to dance, music, theatre and visual art.
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 playtext 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

About The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey

The acclaimed Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey (formerly called “New Jersey Shakespeare Festival”) is one of the leading Shakespeare theatres in the nation. Serving nearly 100,000 adults and children annually, it is New Jersey’s only professional theatre company dedicated to Shakespeare’s canon and other classic masterworks. Through 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, The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey marks its 45th season in 2007.

In addition to producing and presenting classic theatre, the Theatre’s mission places an equal focus on education— both for young artists and audiences of all ages. The Theatre nurtures emerging new talent for the American stage and cultivates future audiences by providing extensive student outreach opportunities. Through our work, we endeavor to promote literacy, civilization, community, cultural awareness, the theatrical tradition, and a more enlightened view of the world in which we live and the people with whom we share it.

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is one of 20 professional theatres in the state of New Jersey. The company’s dedication to the classics and commitment to excellence sets critical standards for the field. Nationwide, the Theatre has emerged as one of the most exciting “new” theatres under the leadership of Artistic Director, Bonnie J. Monte 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 Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is a member of ArtPride, The Shakespeare Theatre Association of America, Theatre Communications Group, and is a founding member of the New Jersey Theatre Alliance.

Other Opportunities for Students... and Teachers

SHAKESPEARE LIVE! EDUCATIONAL TOURING COMPANY

Shakespeare LIVE! is the educational touring company of The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey. This dynamic troupe of actors brings exceptional, visually-imaginative abridged productions of Shakespeare’s masterworks and other literary classics directly into schools. Workshops are also available in Stage Combat and Shakespeare in Performance.

JUNIOR AND SENIOR CORPS

The Theatre’s summer acting program for kids ages 11-17, the Junior and Senior Corps combines professional acting instruction, classic literature, and a commitment to developing the individual student’s self-confidence and creativity, all in the setting of an acclaimed theatre company. Each session culminates in an ensemble performance of Shakespeare or another classic play. Admission to this program is through audition and/or interview.

SUMMER PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

For graduating high school seniors and for university students, the intensive Summer Professional Training Program offers acting apprenticeships and professional internships, providing academic training and hands-on experience in acting, technical, artistic and arts management areas. For a full brochure of the opportunities available, please contact the Education Department.

SHAKEFEST: SUMMER SHAKESPEARE INSTITUTE FOR TEACHERS

Designed for elementary and secondary teachers of Shakespeare, *ShakeFest* is a weeklong professional development program filled with myriad practical ways to conquer “ShakesFear” and excite students about the Bard. In hands-on sessions, experienced teaching artists model active and exciting performance-oriented techniques to get students on their feet and “speaking the speech.”

SHAKESPERIENCE:NJ STUDENT SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

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

For more information about these and other educational programs
at The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey,
log onto our website,
www.ShakespeareNJ.org
or call **(973) 408-3278**