



# RICHARD III

SHAKESPEARE IN THE SCHOOLS TOUR 2025

[ShakespeareInTheParks.org](https://ShakespeareInTheParks.org)



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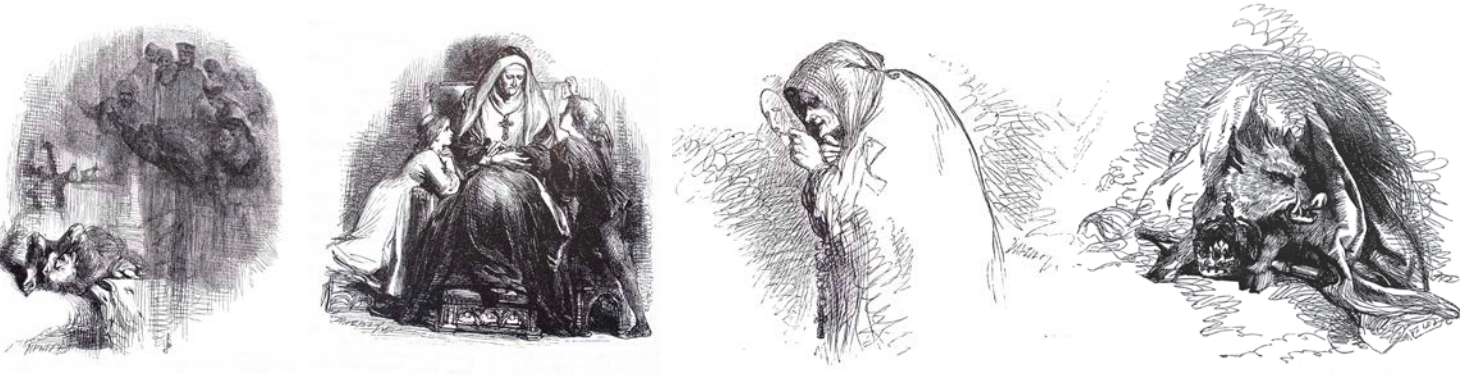
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# Welcome!

## FROM MSIP ARTISTIC DIRECTOR KEVIN ASSELIN

### Welcome to the 33rd season of Montana Shakespeare in the Schools!

Since 1992, this enriching program has reached hundreds of thousand students, and thousands of teachers with educational abridgments of Shakespeare’s work and hundreds of curated workshops that have brought the themes, symbols and humanity of the playwrights’ magnificence to life in classrooms, gymnasiums and auditoriums throughout Montana and beyond. This milestone for MSIP and our region would not have been possible if not for the enthusiasm and commitment of your remarkable schools and communities. As with all of our programs here at MSIP, Shakespeare in the Schools belongs to you, your students, and your families.

Why Shakespeare, and why now? For over 400 hundred years now his themes, characters, and language have resonated throughout all landscapes, populations, and nations. Throughout each century, Shakespeare’s stories have “held, as twere, a mirror up to nature.” We feel that it’s safe to say that art aims to reflect our human nature and the worlds in which we strive to live. Characters such as Romeo, Juliet, Lady



Macbeth and Macbeth seem to capture our individual sense of selves, and often radiate with familiarity when we reflect upon our own memories or perceptions of love, identity, and choice. Though we all benefit from this relevancy, it is imperative that we continue to introduce our young people to these plays with a goal of providing greater insight into our understanding of not only the structure of language, but almost more importantly, the study of the human condition, societal values, civics and history. This remains our goal at MSIP--to continue our own study of how to elevate these themes for your classroom!

Please know that it is our mission to continue to unlock new and relevant ways of supporting your educational goals. We welcome, at any point in the year, your feedback and ideas on how we can continue to meet the standards and values of your curriculum. The success of our last 33 years is purely a reflection of your passion and hard work to reach the needs of your students, and we are honored to partner with you as we all work to keep literature and the cultural arts alive and relevant for generations to come.

## EXECUTIVE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR KEVIN ASSELIN

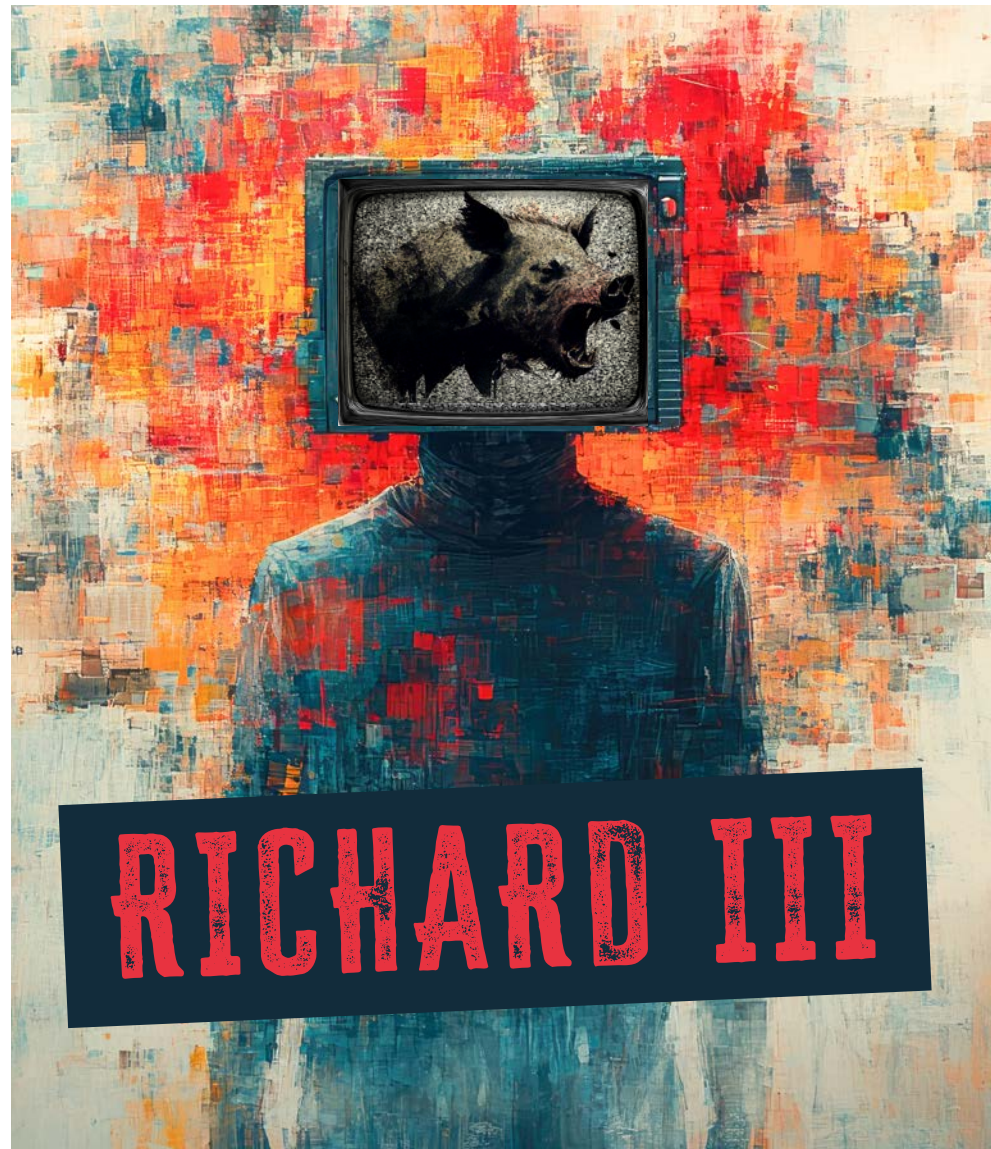
Kevin holds an MFA in Acting from the University of Illinois and a Bachelor of Science in Music-Theatre from Plymouth State University. Prior to assuming his current position, Kevin worked with MSIP for 13 seasons as an actor, fight director, and director. For MSIP he has directed productions of *The Three Musketeers*, *King Lear*, *Cymbeline*, *Henry IV, Part I*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *As You Like It*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Julius Caesar*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Noises Off*, *A Little Night Music*, *Man of La Mancha*, and *My Fair Lady*. A proud member of Actor’s Equity, his Chicago acting credits include several productions with Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Writers Theatre, Goodman Theater, Steppenwolf Theatre, Defiant Theatre, Famous Door, Shakespeare on the Green, Chicago Symphony, and others. Regional credits

include 10 seasons with Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival, Oklahoma Shakespeare in the Parks, Illinois Repertory Theater, Papermill Theater, Plymouth Repertory, Struthers Library, and others. A two-time Joseph Jefferson nominated fight director, he has been a Resident Fight Director with The American Players Theatre, The Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival, Theatre OCU at Oklahoma City University, and holds actor combatant certifications with the Fight Directors of Canada and the Society of American Fight Directors. Additionally, Kevin was an Associate Professor of Movement and Acting at Oklahoma City University and has worked as a Guest Artist at Plymouth State University, Ball State, Kenyon College, University of Notre Dame, University of Illinois, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, American Players Theatre, University of Idaho, and Interlochen Academy.



# Welcome to the Teacher Toolkit!

FROM EDUCATION DIRECTOR KATHERINE E. NORMAN, PHD



Hello, and welcome to the 2025 tour of Shakespeare in the Schools!

Thank you for inviting us into your schools and classrooms, whether for the first time or for the thirty-third! We are so excited to be visiting schools across the Intermountain West with this performance of Shakespeare's *Richard III*.

This Teacher Toolkit aims to give you concrete materials and lesson plans with which to dive into the play with your students; not only into Shakespeare's text, but also into the play's history, design, themes, and ways it might connect to our lives today. This Toolkit includes contextual information about the play, discussion prompts, lesson plans, and more! With it, we hope to support you in structuring your students' experience both before and after the performance, and to provide some inspiration for creative ways that you can draw upon the Shakespeare in the Schools experience for extended learning beyond our one day in your school.

Cheers,

- Katherine

## EDUCATION DIRECTOR KATHERINE E. NORMAN



**Katherine E. Norman** is a researcher, educator, and theatre-maker; this is her tenth tour design with Montana Shakespeare. She is a researcher with the DICE (Design, Informal, and Creative Education) Lab at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where her work focuses on playful learning in arts education and children's museums. Her theatre work includes credits as an actor, educator, playwright, director, and more with companies including Interlochen Center for the Arts, the Utah Shakespeare Festival, Door Shakespeare, Forward Theatre, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Pendragon Theatre, the Upper Jay Arts Center, Four Seasons Theatre, Milwaukee Shakespeare in the Parks, the Children's Theatre of Madison, Adishakti Theatre, the Kattaikkuttu Gurukulam, Double Edge Theatre, and more. She holds a PhD in Educational Psychology, an MS in Educational Psychology, and an MA in Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies from the UW-Madison, and a BFA in Acting from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

# Director's Note

FROM RICHARD III DIRECTOR RILEY O'TOOLE

When Shakespeare wrote *Richard III* more than four hundred years ago, he could never have imagined TikTok, Instagram, or the rise of artificial intelligence. But the questions his play raises about power, truth, and manipulation feel eerily like they were written for our world today.

Richard begins the play by telling us exactly what he intends to do: lie, cheat, and kill his way to the throne. What's most disturbing is not only that he succeeds for so long—it's that almost everyone around him goes along with it. Why? Because he knows how to shape perception. Richard doesn't only fight battles with his sword; he fights them with words. He spins rumors, stages fake "proof," and manipulates the crowd into believing him. He creates the image of who he wants to be, and people follow it. Sound familiar?

We live in a time where the line between truth and fiction is blurring every day. Social media allows us to construct carefully curated identities—filters, captions, and staged photos that don't always reflect reality. Misinformation spreads faster than facts, often because it's more entertaining. Now, with artificial intelligence capable of creating realistic fake videos, images, and voices, it's harder than ever to tell what's authentic. Richard would have thrived in this world. He was the original "influencer villain," mastering the art of persuasion long before hashtags and algorithms existed.

For high school students, this play speaks directly to the environment you navigate daily. How often do we believe something because it has been shared enough times, not because it's true? How do we decide what voices to trust when we are surrounded by competing narratives? And what happens when people use these tools—whether memes, fake accounts, or AI-generated content—to harm others or build power for themselves? The unsettling truth is that Richard succeeds not only because he is cunning, but because others allow him to succeed. He thrives in a world where silence, apathy, and the hunger for spectacle drown out the truth. What does it cost to speak up when everyone else remains silent?

Richard's physical identity, which he describes as "deformed" and "unfinished" also raises powerful questions about how society treats difference, and disability - both visible and invisible. Shakespeare gives us a character who has been defined by his body since birth, and whose bitterness as a result drives much of his ambition. How much of who we become is shaped by the way others see us, and treat us? And what happens when people

are constantly forced into categories—by appearance, by status, or today, by the carefully managed images we post of ourselves?

**At its heart, this play isn't just about one man's ambition. It's about a society that allows itself to be deceived because truth is uncomfortable and lies are easier.**

At its heart, this play isn't just about one man's ambition. It's about a society that allows itself to be deceived because truth is uncomfortable and lies are easier. We live in a world where we must constantly evaluate: What's real? What's manipulated? How do we know who someone truly is behind the persona they present online?

Richard loses everything by the end—not because he is outsmarted by others, but because the illusions

he created collapse under their own weight, and the reality of his actions comes back to haunt him:

*"There is no creature loves me, and if I die, no soul shall pity me. Nay, wherefore should they, since that I myself find in myself no pity to myself?"*

Truth still matters, but only if we care enough to fight for it. In a time when reality can be rewritten with the swipe of an app or the prompt of a machine, Shakespeare's warning feels urgent: if we stop questioning, if we stop seeking truth, then anyone—even a Richard—can rule the feed.

## The Director

RILEY O'TOOLE



Since 2016, Riley has been involved in 11 tours, 22 productions, and over 700 performances with MSIP across its various programs. He has worked for MSIP as an actor, teaching artist, assistant director, fight director and tour manager, and became the Associate Artistic Director in 2024. No-

table MSIP credits include Hamlet in Hamlet, Edgar in King Lear, and Puck in A Midsummer Night's Dream. Riley holds a BFA in Acting from the University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theater Actor Training Program. He is also an alumnus of the Milwaukee Repertory Theater's Emerging Professional Residency Program. Riley's regional acting credits include the Guthrie Theater, Jungle Theater, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Arizona Theater Company, and Salt Lake Acting Company.



# Dramaturgical Note

FROM MSIP DRAMATURG GRETCHEN MINTON, PHD

## Richard III: A Study in Tyranny

*Richard's villainy is readily apparent to almost everyone. There is no deep secret about his cynicism, cruelty, and treacherousness, no glimpse of anything redeemable in him, and no reason to believe that he could ever govern the country effectively. The question the play explores, then, is how such a person actually attained the English throne.*

—Stephen Greenblatt, *Tyrant: Shakespeare and Politics*

Richard III was King of England from 1483-85, but despite this short reign he looms large in the popular imagination. This image of a deformed, bloodthirsty king did not originate with Shakespeare, but he is certainly responsible for immortalizing it. *Richard III* is far more than the portrait of a villain, however—it is a terrifying look at the rise of a tyrant.

At the end of *Henry VI, Part 3*, Richard (who is then Duke of Gloucester) trains his sights on those who are between him and the throne: his brothers, Edward IV and Clarence, and his two nephews who are heirs to the throne. Richard considers his body with disgust, vowing that “since the heavens have shaped my body so, / Let hell make crooked my mind to answer it.” Richard unapologetically embraces evil, cutting himself off from family loyalty and proudly declaring, “I am myself alone.” This is the Richard who famously takes the stage at the opening of *Richard III* with his “Now is the winter of our discontent...” soliloquy. When he says that he is “determined to prove a villain,” it is ambiguous whether he means that this is his fate, or that he is intent on this course of action. In the Elizabethan period, physical disabilities were often viewed as a sign of moral degeneracy, but Shakespeare also drops hints in his play that the disability may have caused psychological damage due to the way he was treated since birth. Regardless, he enacts villainy with unbridled enthusiasm.

Shakespeare does not typically begin a play with the protagonist, but in this case Richard establishes not only how central he is to the drama, but how his words are the controlling force of the entire play. Although he had always been a powerful soldier throughout the War of

the Roses, in *Richard III* it is not until the final battle that he takes arms again. Instead, his success throughout this play is dependent upon his ability to lie, cheat, and hire others to commit murders for him. Each crime he perpetrates is more outlandish than the last, but as he embodies vice itself, he delights in how easy it is for him to fool the gullible folks around him. He manipulates the responses of his family members and of the crowds, engineering his own rise to power with cold-blooded efficiency.

In portraying Richard III as a villain, Shakespeare was not original, but his portrait of this tyrant as a consummate actor who seduces everyone around him, including the audience, is both original and brilliantly theatrical. Richard, despite his evil and his disability, or perhaps *because of* these things, is impossible to stop looking at. After saying he cannot prove a lover, he seduces Anne; after swearing allegiance to his brother Clarence, he has him brutally killed; after pretending to be at prayer and unconcerned with worldly gain, he ruthlessly seizes the throne. Step by step, we watch and follow him as he commits these atrocities, fascinated by how he is able to overcome every obstacle. His bald-faced lies and his ability to play factions against one another become works of art.

When Shakespeare wrote history plays, he was invariably concerned with politics. *Richard III* in particular focuses on how those who gain political control must also control the telling of history itself. It is not enough to sit on the throne: in order to secure his power, Richard attempts to wipe out all of his opponents, killing not just physical people, but circulating stories about bastardy and treason in order to manipulate public perception. Why does no one stop this reign of terror? As Greenblatt notes in his masterful book *Tyrant*, the citizens are lulled into inaction, “whether from indifference or from fear or from the catastrophically mistaken belief that there is no real difference between Richard and the alternatives.”

But while Richard's tactics allow him temporary power, he runs up against the problem that controlling history is ultimately impossible. He is able to engineer the deaths of his nephews in the Tower of London, but he cannot

suppress their memory. These princes live on in people's imaginations, thereby growing increasingly powerful. By the end of the play, Richard cannot even control his own individual memories. He is at last haunted by the ghosts of those he has killed, powerless to keep conscience at bay: “My conscience hath a thousand several tongues, / And every tongue brings in a several tale, / And every tale condemns me for a villain.” His psychological breakdown gives us another opportunity to look inside Richard, and even to gloat at his weakness. No longer the remorseless schemer, he is now the pathetic outcast who realizes that no one loves him. Even at this point, though, we cannot stop looking at him—the temptation to watch his demise

and cheer at his downfall is simply too great.

Shakespeare's larger-than-life villain is responsible for our enduring fascination with the historical figure as well. By giving us unprecedented access to the psychology of a villain, Shakespeare created an insatiable appetite for dissecting this English king. When his body was discovered under a parking lot in Leicester in 2012, the world turned to gaze once again at the crooked spine of Richard Plantagenet. Yet we must dig much deeper than this grave to address the questions that Shakespeare raised in this history play: why are tyrants so seductively effective, and why do we find ourselves powerless in their grasp?

## Why Shakespeare

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE LIVED IN ENGLAND FROM 1563-1616.

During this lifetime, huge changes were happening in English-language culture. Science, technology, and medicine were rapidly advancing. People debated big ideas like politics, religion, women's rights, colonialism, language, science, and art. Their ideas and actions continue to shape the way we still think about and debate these topics today. Events from Shakespeare's time continue to shape the way we think about and engage with politics, art, and ideas.

His plays give us thrilling stories, poetic language, and expansive worlds that can help us think about our own lives in new and meaningful ways. By engaging in performances and workshops with Montana Shakespeare in the Schools, you and your students enter into that centuries-long conversation.

People all over the world have been adapting, performing, studying, challenging, embracing, reclaiming, rejecting, celebrating, and debating Shakespeare for four centuries. We are excited to participate in that legacy with you!





# Shakespeare In The Schools



A Midsummer Night's Dream, at Willow Creek, 2024.



Montana Shakespeare in the Parks has been touring since 1973 with a mission to interact directly with the people of Montana and the surrounding states. 32 years ago, we launched Shakespeare in the Schools. The program has grown to include over 50 schools and serves over 12,000 students. Our tour takes us through much of Montana and Wyoming, and in the past we've performed as far away as Chicago, Kentucky, and Philadelphia.

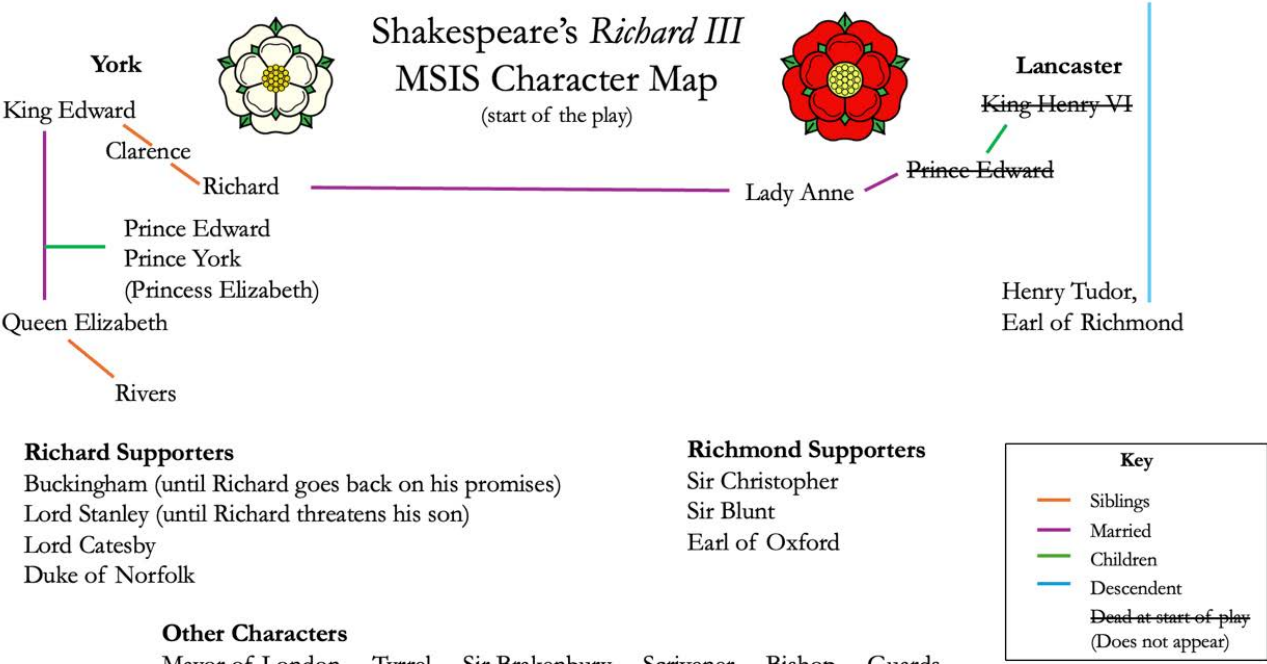
Shakespeare in the Schools travels throughout Montana and northern Wyoming, making a point to perform in smaller communities. This map shows the distance some schools are from our Bozeman base.



## 2025 Shakespeare in the Schools Tour Schedule

OCTOBER			
3	Willow Creek & Harrison Schools	21	Red Lodge High School
6	Billings West High School	22	Powell High School
7	Dodson High School	23	Ryegate High School
8	Scobey High School	24	Columbus High School
9	Bainville High School	27	Ennis High School
10	Pine Hills Youth Correctional Facility	28	Lone Peak High School
13	Tongue River High School	29	Belgrade High School
14	Sheridan High School	30	Gallatin High School
15	Buffalo High School	31	Headwaters Academy
16	Cody High School	NOVEMBER	
17	Meeteetse School	3	St. Patrick's Academy East
18	Community Performance at Tippet Rise Art Center	4	Belt High School
		5	Highwood High School
		6	Simms High School
		7	Conrad High School
DECEMBER			
10	Kalispell Middle School	20	Lincoln High School
11	Community Performance at Wachholz College Center	21	Loyola Sacred Heart High School
12	Browning High School	24	Petra Academy
13	Polson High School	25	Three Forks High School
14	Plains High School	26	Shields Valley High School
17	Ronan High School		
18	Corvallis High School		
19	Florence-Carlton High School		
20	Lincoln High School		
21	Loyola Sacred Heart High School		
24	Petra Academy		
25	Three Forks High School		
26	Shields Valley High School		

# Before you see the Show



## The Characters

**Richard**, Duke of Gloucester, later King Richard III

**Lady Anne**, widow of Edward, son to the late King Henry VI; later wife to Richard

**King Edward IV**, brother to Richard

**Queen Elizabeth**, Edward's wife

**Prince Edward**

**Prince Richard**, Duke of York

**Princess Elizabeth** (does not appear onstage)

**George**, Duke of Clarence, brother to Edward and Richard Rivers, sister to Queen Elizabeth

**Duke of Buckingham**

**Sir William Catesby**

**Duke of Norfolk**

**Lord Stanley**, Earl of Derby

**Earl of Richmond**, Henry Tudor, later King Henry VII

**Earl of Oxford**

**Sir James Blunt**

**Christopher**

**Sir Robert Brakenbury**; Lieutenant of the Tower in London; Tyrrel, executioner; Lord Mayor of London; Scrivener; Bishop; Citizens; Ghosts



# The Story

Our play begins at the end of decades of civil war in England. The bloody Wars of the Roses between the rival Houses of Lancaster and York seem to have reached an end, and the victorious Yorkists look forward to a period of peace under the newly-crowned King Edward IV.

But Edward's younger brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, wants the crown for himself. Thus begins Richard's violent march towards the throne.

Richard manipulates King Edward into imprisoning their brother George, Duke of Clarence, in the Tower of London for treachery. Richard then arranges his murder in such a way that makes Edward think it is his own fault. Edward blames himself for Clarence's death and dies shortly after.

Meanwhile, Richard convinces the noblewoman Lady Anne to marry him, even though she knows that he murdered both her first husband and her father-in-law.

King Edward IV leaves behind him his wife – the now-widowed Queen Elizabeth – two young sons, and a daughter. His eldest son is still a child and not old enough to rule. Richard is, therefore, appointed Lord Protector of England, putting him in charge until the Prince grows up. Richard orders the execution of several powerful nobles to protect his power, including Queen Elizabeth's sister Rivers.

Richard tells the young Princes that they should stay in the Tower of London for their own safety. While the Princes are imprisoned in the Tower, Lord Buckingham – a nobleman who supports

Richard – follows Richard's orders to spread rumors that the princes are not true heirs because they are illegitimate. Richard and Buckingham then stage events that manipulate the Mayor of London and the citizens to install Richard as King of England.

Following his coronation, Richard sends the executioner Tyrrel to murder the Princes. As the bodies start to pile up, the people of England become increasingly fearful of Richard.

Buckingham asks Richard to make good on the titles and lands that he had promised to Buckingham in return for his support. Richard brushes him off. Buckingham turns against Richard, and he too is executed.

Meanwhile, the Lancastrian Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond (called "Richmond" in the play) is raising forces in France to return to England and challenge Richard.

To strengthen his claim to the throne, Richard arranges to have his wife Anne murdered so he can marry King Edward's daughter, Princess Elizabeth.

Richard's plans begin to unravel. After Queen Elizabeth seems to agree to engage the Princess to Richard, she secretly plans to marry her daughter to Richmond, who has recently arrived in England to challenge Richard in battle on Bosworth Field.

The night before the battle, the ghosts of the people Richard has had murdered appear to him in a dream, cursing him and praying for Richmond's success.

Led by Lord Stanley, many of Richard's troops abandon him on the field and join Richmond's side. After fighting bravely, Richard is killed in battle by Richmond, who becomes King Henry VII. Henry's marriage to Princess Elizabeth promises a new era of peace for England, uniting the Houses of York and Lancaster and starting the Tudor era.

**Richard's plans begin to unravel. After Queen Elizabeth seems to agree to engage the Princess to Richard, she secretly plans to marry her daughter to Richmond, who has recently arrived in England to challenge Richard in battle on Bosworth Field.**



Richard III



King Edward and Queen Elizabeth

Stanley

Lady Anne



Tyrrel



Prince Edward and Prince York



Buckingham



Clarence



Richmond



Rivers

Costume renderings by Angela Cateora



# Character Spotlight: Richard

Richard is one of the greatest characters in Shakespeare's cannon of plays. Complex, brilliant, and villainous, he has challenged some of the greatest actors on the English-language stage.

Please enjoy this Character Spotlight on Richard across all three Shakespeare plays in which he appears (*Henry VI Parts II and III* and *Richard III*) from wonderful Shakespeare scholar and artist, Maya Gosling from her fantastic website [GoodTickleBrain.com](http://GoodTickleBrain.com)

## CHARACTER SPOTLIGHT ON RICHARD III

from *Henry VI*, parts 2 and 3, and *Richard III*

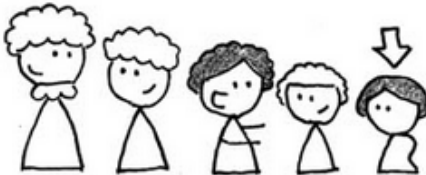


Out of all the wonderfully evil villains in Shakespeare's plays, Richard III is definitely one of the more wonderful ones. Appearing in three plays, he develops from an eager young soldier into a master manipulator and ruthless murderer. He's a lot of fun.

Of course, as Richard III is a historical figure, there is a lot of rather heated debate about the way that Shakespeare portrays him. The Ricardians insist that his villainous nature was entirely invented by Shakespeare as part of Tudor propaganda efforts, and that he was actually a great guy. The truth is, as it so often is, most probably somewhere in between those two extremes.

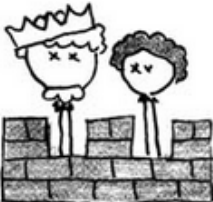
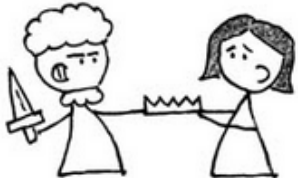


The character spotlight only covers the *fictional* Richard III, so, if you're a Ricardian, please do not sent me angry messages.



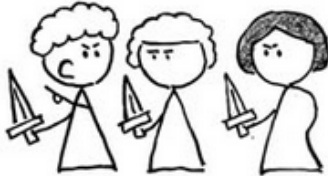
Fictional Richard (like historical Richard) is the fourth surviving son of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York. He notoriously is a deformed hunchback. His older brothers are Edward, Edmund, and George.

Richard's father, Richard (there are only about three male names in the Plantagenet royal family, so get used to seeing them over and over again) is a cousin of King Henry VI. One day he decides that he should be the king instead of Henry, and rises up in rebellion.



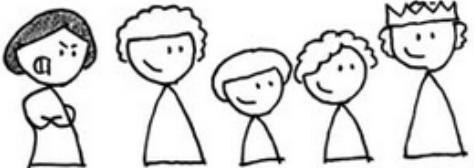
This turns out to be a terrible idea. Richard the elder, along with his son, Edmund, is killed. His decapitated head is placed over the gates of York and crowned with a paper crown, which is really just adding insult to injury.

Unsurprisingly, this makes Richard the elder's surviving sons really mad. His eldest son, Edward, continues his father's rebellion against Henry VI, supported by his two younger brothers. The young Richard emerges as a fierce and ruthless warrior, despite his deformity.



After Edward and his brothers successfully defeat Henry VI's armies and seize the throne, Richard runs off to where Henry is being held prisoner and murders him in cold blood. Because that's the kind of thing he likes to do.

Edward becomes king and it looks like everything is going to end happily every after... until Richard realizes that he is now fourth in line to the throne, behind Edward's two young sons and his elder brother George. This does not go down well.



Richard starts to act fast. First of all he frames his brother George for treason, and arranges for him to be murdered in the Tower of London. Famously, George is killed by being drowned in a barrel of Malmsey, a sweet dessert wine, which is not a bad way to go.

Conveniently for Richard, the news of George's death shocks Edward, and he drops dead not long afterwards, leaving his young son, also named Edward, the new king of England.



Richard, however, has Edward and his younger brother, also named Richard (remember what I said about there only being three names?) declared bastards, and thus ineligible to be king.

As the only remaining male heir to the throne, Richard is crowned king. One of his first acts is to arrange for his nephews, who are imprisoned in the Tower of London, to be murdered.



There is only so much wanton murder that the people are willing to tolerate, however. Henry Tudor, a distant cousin whose claim to the throne is more tenuous than a hippopotamus on a tightrope, invades England, kills Richard (who famously doesn't have a horse) and then becomes King Henry VII. So much for Richard...

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# The Characters

**HALEY BASIL** – Clarence, Richmond, Mayor, Christopher  
**JOSHUA HENRY BRELSFORD** – Stanley, Brakenbury, Bishop  
**ESTHER FISHBEIN** – Rivers, Prince York, Norfolk, Bishop  
**ISA GROFSOREAN** – Queen Elizabeth, Scrivener, Citizen, Blunt  
**EVAN JOSLYN** – King Edward, Catesby, Guard  
**GIUSEPPE MICHAEL PIPICELLA** – Buckingham, Guard, Oxford  
**DUSTIN VALENTA** – Richard  
**AHLORA VICTORIA** – Lady Anne, Tyrrel, Prince Edward, Citizen

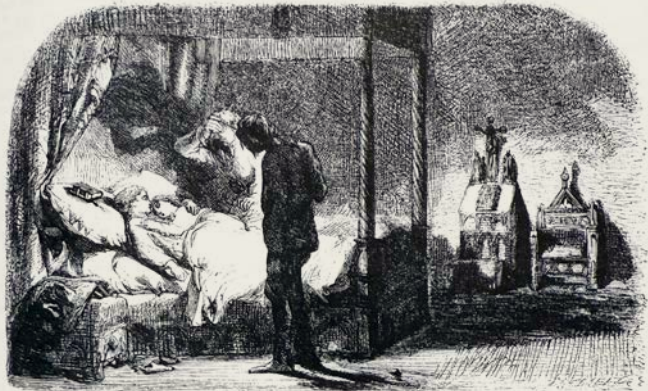


Illustration by John Gilbert, The Complete Illustrated Shakespeare

## Shakespeare in the Schools 2025 Administrative Staff

**Kevin Asselin** ..... Executive Artistic Director  
**Riley O’Toole** ..... Associate Artistic Director  
**Adam Fedock** ..... Production Manager  
**Carrie Wintersteen** ..... Managing Director  
**Liz Johnson** ..... Director of Access & Engagement  
**Vicki Stenberg** ..... Executive Associate

## Shakespeare in the Schools 2025 Production Team

**Riley O’Toole** ..... Director  
**Mara Flynn** ..... Stage Manager  
**Tom Watson** ..... Scenic Designer  
**Angela Cateora** ..... Costume Designer  
**Stacy Hostetter** ..... Properties Designer  
**Nok Kanchanabanca** ..... Sound Designer  
**Kevin Asselin** ..... Fight Director  
**Katherine E. Norman** ..... Education Director  
**Peter Fedock** ..... Lighting Designer/Electrician  
**Dylan McPhail** ..... Audio Engineer  
**Lydia Gray** ..... Text and Verse Coach  
**Gretchen Minton** ..... Dramaturg  
**Juliette Walsh** ..... Costume Assistant  
**Nora Tjernagel** ..... Stitcher  
**Ashley Milleson** ..... Carpenter  
**Arnold Bueso** ..... Multimedia Designer

# The Actors



## HALEY BASIL

Haley is an actor and writer based in Chicago. Originally from Indianapolis, Haley studied acting and playwrighting in New York City at Marymount

Manhattan College. She has performed in regional theatres across the East Coast and Midwest. When she’s not doing theatre, Haley spends her time watching movies or reading.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR 16-YEAR-OLD SELF?

What you’re hoping for now will eventually come — just give it time.



## JOSHUA HENRY BRELSFORD

Joshua (he/him) is an actor, playwright, and teacher in New York City. He achieved his BFA in Acting from the University

of Minnesota and Guthrie Theater. Past projects include playing “Romeo” (*Romeo & Juliet*, Stage Door Theater), Benjamin the Donkey (*Animal Farm*, Prime Stage Theater) and bringing his original play, *KILN*, to premiere at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Outside of performing, Joshua enjoys learning tunes on his hammered dulcimer and exploring small towns on his bike.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR 16-YEAR-OLD SELF?

Love your instincts, and cherish your friends. It is only embarrassing if you allow it to be.



## ESTHER FISHBEIN

Esther (she/her) is a Chicago actor and educator. She has been gracing Chicago stages since she graduated in 2018 with her BFA in acting from the

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Some favorite credits include: Henry V (First Folio Theatre), Midsummer Night’s Dream (London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts) Goodbye Marianne (Goodman Theatre) , The Diary of Anne Frank (Young People’s Theatre of Chicago), originating her role in the world premier of In Every Generation (Victory Gardens Theatre) and starring in her first commercial this past year! Outside of acting Esther can be found cooking up a storm, reading, teaching music to her 3rd and 4th grade students or spending time with her kitty, Rhiannon.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR 16-YEAR-OLD SELF?

Don’t worry about being bad at math. Just focus on being even if it looks totally different than everyone else.



## ISA GROFSOREAN

Isa Grofsorean (she/her) is an actor/educator from Ann Arbor Michigan. She graduated from the University of Minnesota Guthrie Actor Training Program with a BFA in Acting.

While at school, she especially enjoyed playing Thersites in Troilus and Cressida. And most recently she appeared as Catherine in Proof! Outside of acting, Isa enjoys horseback riding, cooking meals with her family, or enthusiastically struggling through dance classes. Isa is very excited to be joining Montana Shakespeare in the Schools!

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR 16-YEAR-OLD SELF?

Everything will work itself out, keep going.



## EVAN JOSLYN

Evan Joslyn is an actor, teaching artist, and playwright originally from Madison, WI. He is stoked to be making his MSIS debut! He was most recently seen as Malvolio in “Twelfth

Night” (Cleveland Shakespeare Festival), and Steven in the premiere of “The Right Room” (Borderlight Theatre Festival). He spent the past year as an Actor-Teacher with Great Lakes Theater. As a writer, Evan’s second fully immersive work, “In the Land of Oz,” will be produced this fall (Columbus Children’s Theatre). He holds a degree in Theatre from Denison University and furthered his training at the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey and Gaiety School of Acting in Ireland. Shoutout to his sister, BK, for starting her grad program at MSU. Smiles to Jess and the fam!

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR 16-YEAR-OLD SELF?

Go easy on yourself! Stay hydrated. Wear sunscreen. Forget about a backup plan – live the dream!



## GIUSEPPE MICHAEL PIPICELLA

Giuseppe Michael Pipicella (He/Him/His) (Buckingham) is an international actor, active in the United

States and his home country Italy. He graduated from the University of Central Florida with a Master of Fine Arts in Acting by writing a thesis on the marriage between sports and acting. Favorite credits include Charles the Dauphin (Henry VI Part I, Orlando Shakespeare Theater), Mercutio (Romeo and Juliet, Wisconsin Shakespeare Festival), Dromeo of Ephesus (The Comedy of Errors, Hoosier Shakespeare Festival) and Professor Otto Lidenbrock (Journey to the Center of the Earth, REV Theatre Co). His three main passions in life outside of Theatre are soccer, clubbing, and hiking. You can follow him on Instagram @gmpipicella

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR 16-YEAR-OLD SELF?

Question, discover, explore... Always!



## DUSTIN VALENTA

Dustin Valenta (he/him) is a Chicago-based actor. He graduated from The Theatre School at DePaul University with both his BFA and MFA in Acting. This is his first tour with MSIP, and he’s very

excited to be part of the team. Recent Chicago credits include INANIMATE at Theatre Wit, THE CABINET at Victory Gardens’ Biograph, and the world premiere of BRIEFLY BREATHLESS (Steppenwolf Lookout). You can also see him in the upcoming film PONDEROSA with Bill Camp and Alexis Bledel. Outside of acting, Dustin loves being outside riding his bike, hiking, playing any number of sports, or just generally running around with his partner, Jocelyn. He’s also an avid yoga practitioner and credits the practice with saving his life after a serious bike accident.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR 16-YEAR-OLD SELF?

I think I would tell my 16 year old self to spend more time with his parents and sisters, start keeping a gratitude journal, and make friends with the uncertainty of life.



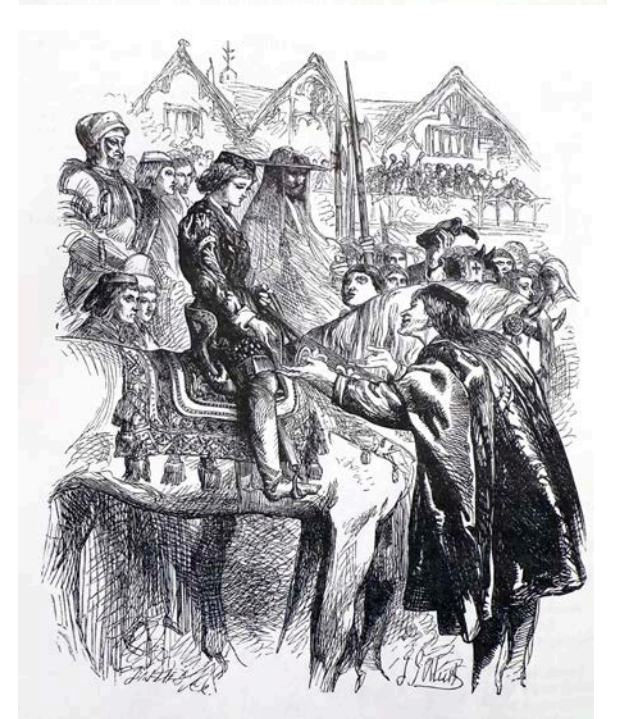
## AHLORA VICTORIA

Ahlora Victoria (she/her/hers) is incredibly stoked to make her Montana debut! She graduated from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 2024 and relocated to Chicago soon after. Past Shakespearean

appearances include Love’s Labour’s Lost (Midsommer Flight), The Death of Kings (Verona Shakespeare Fringe Festival), Titus Andronicus (Prague Shakespeare Company), Romeo & Juliet (UC Santa Barbara), and more! In her free time, Ahlora can be found on aerial silks or crocheting while gabbing with her friends. She wants to thank you for your attention, enthusiasm, and support.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR 16-YEAR-OLD SELF?

You are not too much, and you never will be.



Illustrations by John Gilbert, The Complete Illustrated Shakespeare



# Classroom Activity

## HISTORY AND THE HISTORY PLAYS

**Lesson Length:** 45 minutes

**Materials:** open space, four chairs

**Learning Goals:**

Students will be able to...

Situate the story of Richard III within both history and Shakespeare's canon

Visualize the relationships and characters in the two main families of the story

Connect the Tudor villainization of Richard to contemporary examples

**Lesson Plan:**

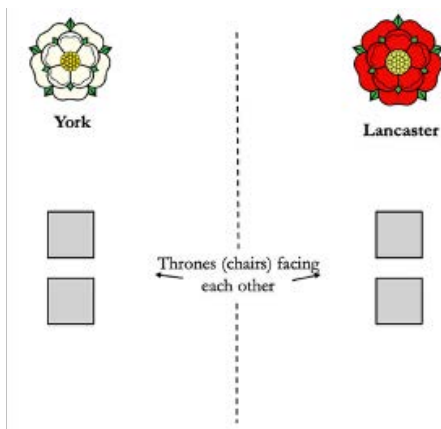
### I. Introduction

Shakespeare wrote a series of plays dramatizing events in English history. *Richard III* is the last installment in a series of eight plays that scholars organize into two tetralogies (sets of four).

Just like with contemporary books and movies in a larger series, you can absolutely jump at any point and enjoy the story of a single history play. But, much like when watching modern epics like the Marvel Universe or Star Wars, having a sense of what came before can enrich your experience of the new story.

### II. Activity – Visualizing the Families

- Divide your space into two. One half represents the House of Lancaster; the other the House of York. Put two sets of chairs in the center of each half.
- Explain to students that you're going to build up the family trees of the two warring families. Ask for 12 volunteers to represent historical characters of importance to the play.



- Ask for your first two volunteers, King Edward IV and King Henry VI, to sit on the 'thrones': Edward on the York side; Henry on the Lancaster side.
- Then ask for the next two volunteers to be the queens: Queen Elizabeth (wife of Edward); Queen Margaret (wife of Henry). Ask them to take a chair beside the kings.
- The next two characters are Edward's brothers: Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and George, Duke of Clarence. Ask them to stand on either side of Edward.
- The next four characters are the children of each king:
  - Princes Edward and York and Princess Elizabeth sit in front of King Edward
  - Edward, Prince of Wales is to sit in front of Henry.
- Ask Lady Anne to sit next to Edward, Prince of Wales, as his wife.
- Finally, ask Henry, Earl of Richmond, to stand far behind the Lancastrians – representing his more distant relationship.
- You now have an image of two main families referred to in the play!
- Explain that you will now briefly look at what happened before this play starts. Note that there are two sets of monarchs. This conflict is at the heart of the War of the Roses and is dramatized by Shakespeare in his plays *Henry VI, Parts I, II, and III*.
- Ask Richard Duke of Gloucester, Henry VI, and Edward Prince of Wales to stand and meet in the middle. Explain that, according to Shakespeare, Richard kills both Henry and Edward. Ask Henry and Edward to lie on the floor 'dead', while Richard returns to his position.
- Ask Queen Margaret to stand and depart. Remove her chair and the dead Henry VI's chair from the House of Lancaster. Power now belongs to the House of York.
- You are now ready for the play to begin...
- Option: After the performance, you could choose to re-create this image showing the end of the play, and who is still alive and who Richard murdered.

### III. Context Video

- Did anything stand out to you as surprising, interesting, or potentially important in staging these two families?
- What other media (tv shows, movies, books, etc.) do you enjoy that has a similarly complex lore? How does knowing or not knowing the background context impact engagement with that piece of media?

## After you see the play

### Classroom Activity: Roses, Crests, and Symbols of Power

**Lesson Length:** 45 minutes

**Materials:** Handouts (included on proceeding pages), pencils, optional colored pencils/markers

**Learning Goals:**

Students will be able to...

- Connect personal symbols to characters in the play
- Discuss how personal symbols function today
- Create their own crests

**Lesson Plan:**

### I. Introduction

The play we saw was set in an imaginary world. The scenic design was punctuated by symbols of the past and future.

The costume designer for MSIS's Richard III, Angela Cateora, described creating a world in which – in the aftermath of a cataclysmic war – the leaders of the moment reach for symbols of the past to bolster their power.

You can see this imagery in some of the accessories that characters wear. There are the White and Red Roses, symbolizing the houses of York (White) and Lancaster (Red). Richard's personal crest is a white boar. Richmond wears his family's Coat of Arms on his jacket. Some characters wear symbols of leadership like chains or crowns.

### II. Discuss

Invite a discussion:

- Are there contemporary examples you can think of where we use crests, symbols, or imagery in

similar ways to express who we are and with whom we align ourselves?

- (Ex: school mascots, government seals, sports branding, company logos, etc.)
- Are there contemporary examples of leaders reaching into the past for symbols that bolster their current power, like the costumer described in the world of Richard?
  - (Ex: Greek architecture in US government buildings, mortarboard caps at graduation, Latin motos at universities, etc.)
- Does/in what ways does this type of imagery serve the characters in the play? Does/in what ways does this type of imagery serve us now - either positively or negatively?

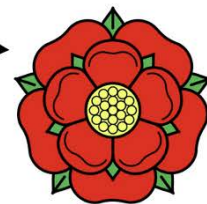
### III. Create!

- Using the handout, encourage students to create their own personal imagery
- Guiding prompts:
  - What sort of information about you do you want your crest to communicate?
  - Are you pulling from pre-existing imagery, or creating something new? Why?
  - Are the colors important? What does color convey?
  - Are you using metaphorical symbols, or literal depictions of things that are important to you?
- Create an optional opportunity for students to share their creations with the class and discuss their choices.





Angela Cateora's rendering (a detailed in-color drawing of a costume used to guide construction) of Richmond



The Red Rose of the House of Lancaster. When Richmond married Princess Elizabeth York, he combined the Red and White Roses representing their two families, creating the Tudor Rose:



A close up of Richmond's Coat of Arms. These images were unique to individuals and symbolized their history and allegiances. The different sections within the shield reflect the combination of families through marriage. The animals represent qualities of the person: the dragon and the lion both symbolize bravery.

### Discussion Questions

- In the very opening of the play, Richard tells us that he is "determined to prove a villain." Dr. Gretchen Minton, in the Dramaturgy note on page X, points out that the word "determined" can have multiple meanings: it can mean either a choice one makes, or it can mean something that is predestined and outside one's control. Based on what you saw in the play, in what sense do you think Richard meant the word? Did he choose his actions, or were they predetermined?
- Lord Stanley first serves King Richard but, at a pivotal moment in the final battle, sends his troops to support Richmond instead. Richard senses this possibility earlier in the play, leading to this exchange:

**KING RICHARD III**

Thou wilt revolt, and fly to him, I fear.

**STANLEY**

Most mighty sovereign, You have no cause to hold my friendship doubtful:

I never was nor never will be false.

Stanley has sworn an oath of loyalty to his sovereign, but when he sees how violent and cruel Richard is, he breaks this oath and supports Richmond. Do you think it is more honorable to

maintain an oath and loyally support the king's power, no matter their actions, or to break an oath of loyalty if you disagree with the king's actions?

- Lady Anne agrees to marry Richard, even though he killed her husband and father-in-law. Soon after Anne's death, Queen Elizabeth (seemingly) agrees to marry her daughter to Richard, despite knowing Richard's cruelty and the fact that he killed much of her family. Why do you think these two women agree to give in to Richard's requests? What additional context might help make sense of their choices?
- Dramatic Irony is a literary device in which the audience knows more than the characters. While watching *Richard III*, we – the audience – often know more than the characters because Richard tells us his motivations while lying to those around him.
- Can you identify specific examples of dramatic irony in the play, in which you knew more than the characters onstage? What was the impact on you of knowing more than the characters? How did it shape your experience of the story?
- Who were you rooting for in this play? Who did you want to succeed? Why? Did it change throughout the course of the play? In your opinion, does this play have a "happy" ending? Justify your opinion with specific examples from the performance.

## Create Your Own Coat of Arms!

A Crest is a single symbol – like the Rose; a Coat of Arms is the complete design that reflects both the person and thier heritage – like what Richmond wore on his jacket. In this activity, we'll use both. The four quadrants are roughly based on heraldic imagery from the time of the play. Your images can be as literal or as metaphorical as you like.

In this quadrant below, draw a symbol of your past – it could be your hometown, something from your chidhood, an image of your family or heritage, ect.

In this quadrant below, draw an animal that symbolizes who you are now


In this quadrant above, draw an image of something that is important to you right now

In this quardrant above, draw an image that symbolizes your goals for the future



# Contextual Materials:

## Interpreting Richard in Performance

### Telling Richard's Story

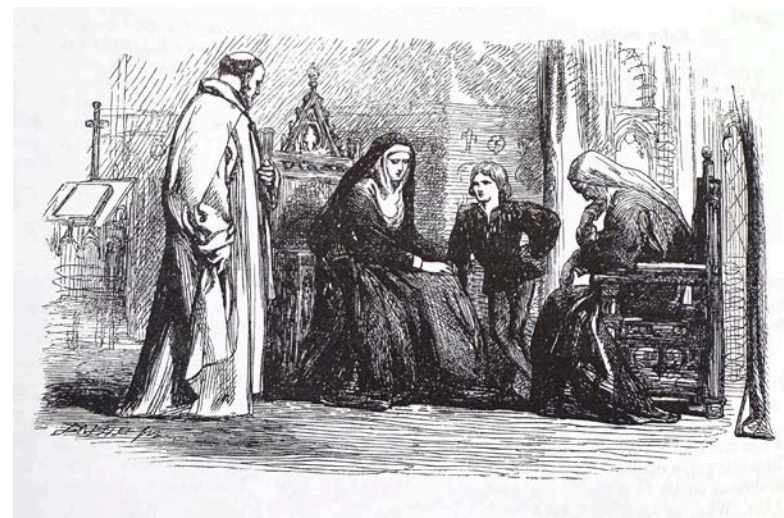
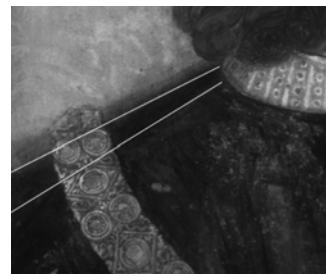
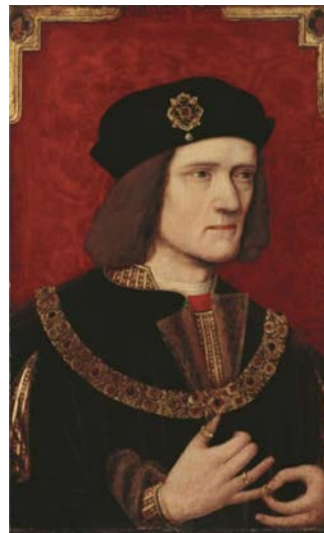
Richard is considered by many to be Shakespeare's most wicked villain. He is also one of the largest, most complex, ambiguous, exciting, and sought-after roles in all of Shakespeare's plays.

Shakespeare wrote this character into being within a specific web of context and culture – he was writing under the rule of a Queen who was the direct descendent of the man who killed Richard. During the Tudor era there was a concerted propaganda effort to justify their rule by vilifying Richard III. In contrast with the violent image of Richard that the Tudor's spread, primary sources from Richard's reign indicate a far more complex monarch, and one potentially not any more violent than other kings and queens of the era.

Richard's body was found in 2012 (see the Further Learning section for more information on this archeological discovery). His skeleton indicates that the real Richard had scoliosis – a bend or curve in the spine that affects many people today. This kernel of truth may have influenced Sir Thomas More's *History of King Richard III* - a work of Tudor propaganda and the first source to villainize Richard. More described Ricahrd as having "one shoulder higher than the other." Shakespeare drew heavily from More's book in creating his play. Shakespeare's version of Richard is, famously, defined by his body – both by Ricahrd himself and the people around him. He is described in the play as "Deformed, unfinish'd," "whithered," and "a bunch-backed toad." Shakespeare's play was made at a time when it was believed that outward appearance was a reflection of the state of your soul – a beautiful face meant a beautiful soul, and likewise, someone 'deformed' was sinful. This extended to ideas about government: the "body politic" referred not only to the abstract concept of governance but also to the monarch's literal body.

### (Re)Shaping Richard's Image

The Tudor creation of Richard as a villain extended to visual images. The earliest portrait of Richard III, currently held by the Royal Collection Trust in the UK, was commissioned under the rule of Henry VIII. This famous portrait shows a character with exaggerated features that lend Richard a sharp and mean look. In 2016, however, infrared reflectography revealed the initial charcoal sketch made by the painter was quite different from the final painting: Richard's mouth and eyes were made thinner, his face shortened, and one shoulder raised.



Illustrations by John Gilbert, The Complete Illustrated Shakespeare

### Performing Richard's Character

Performing such a physically specific character – a real historical figure interpreted by politics and art – offers challenges and opportunities to contemporary theatre companies and actors. Is Richard inescapably a villain, or is it possible to find empathetic readings of his motivations? When he says his villainy is "determined" does he mean that it is his choice or that it is predestined and out of his control? Is he a villain, hero, or anti-hero? In Early Modern England, a person's outward image was perceived as reflective of their inward character; how can contemporary productions challenge this idea? Now that theatre companies no longer need to appease Tudor monarchs, the play is open to many interpretations and presentations.

Theatre is an embodied art form. The story told through the performance of Richard is highly bound up in the body of the actor playing Richard.

Much like our culture's fairly recent reckoning with race in performance and the rejection of practices such as white actors performing in Black Face, Yellow Face, etc., English-language theatre has, in recent decades, started a much-needed examination of how physical and mental-diversity and disability appear onstage. There has been a strong wave of advocacy for disabled actors to play disabled characters rather than able-bodied actors "cripping up" – the term for pretending to have a disability onstage. We highly recommend the article quoted and linked below for a history of disabled actors playing Richard. For example, an actor named Daniel Monks in a production of Mike Lew's play *Teenage Dick* – which relocates *Richard III* to an American high school – describes the necessity of having theatre-makers with lived experience of disability in the play to avoid falling into damaging stereotypes: "As a disabled person, I experience ableism daily. It's a worthy, important topic to explore on our stages – but when it is done without us, it feels like our oppression is being framed as merely entertainment."

In addition to the artistic, aesthetic, and storytelling reasons to center disabled actors in the role of Richard, there are also political reasons shaping how we think about Richard in performance:

The motive behind the crippling of Richard III in recent years, however, is not simply that a disabled actor can connect with and portray Shakespeare's disabled king better than an able-bodied actor. If we see this attitude as the *aesthetic* motivation behind the crippling of Richard, the *political* motivation has exerted more force: A disabled actor playing Richard III exemplifies the recent push for fair hiring practices in the English-speaking world.

Every time an able-bodied actor plays Richard, that's one less role available for a disabled actor. Since disabled actors are less likely to be cast in

roles for able-bodied characters, employment opportunities are limited. This dynamic has the look and feel of structural discrimination on the basis of disability, which laws and standards since the 1990s have sought to curb. In the main, having disabled actors play Richard III isn't about offering a radically new interpretation of the play or even a better, more realistic performance; it's about enhancing the visibility and status of disabled actors in the hopes that they will secure more roles, including roles for characters that don't have disability as a centerpiece. The political goal of disabled actors is to bring the way the world looks and feels onstage closer into line with reality. This means having disabled actors portraying characters in stories about disability, as well as disabled actors playing characters in stories having nothing to do with disability (Wilson, 2023).



Illustrations by John Gilbert, The Complete Illustrated Shakespeare



Below are three excerpts from experts on the topic of Richard in performance: a playwright, a scholar, and an actor, all of whom identify as disabled. We encourage further exploration of their work!

**From playwright Kaite O'Reilley's introduction to the one-person play *Richard Redux***

It was only after historical research on the 'real' Richard III that I realised just how revised Shakespeare's hatchet job is. Just as black figures have been white-washed or erased from history, disabled figures have been either normalised or transformed into the hideous, fearful Other – and in Richard, we have character-assassination of the highest order. It's a double-whammy. Not only did Shakespeare exaggerate Richard's atypical embodiment and contort it to represent evil, he also re-wrote history, transmuting a reforming, popular King who led thousands into battle despite his scoliosis, into an evil, murdering coward, ready to give up his kingdom for a horse (contemporary sources state he was offered a horse to flee the battlefield, but he responded his fate would be decided there – either to die at Bosworth, or live as King). It comes perhaps as no surprise that many consider *Richard III* as a piece of Tudor propaganda, written to please powerful patrons and reiterate their (tenuous) claim to the throne – the descendants of whom still live in the big palaces now.

**From scholar Jeffery R. Wilson's *Richard III's Bodies: From Medieval England to Modernity – Shakespeare and Disability History***

Shakespeare's Richard III creates an interpretive space around disability, defining the contours of the questions to be asked, but not answering them apart from suggesting that responses are always conditioned by the context in which we come to Richard's body. ... his disability is a way into intellectual history, allowing us to watch ourselves forming ideas, to see where they come from and how they work. Richard's body reveals histories of moral judgment on individual and cultural levels. ...

Interpreting disability in Shakespeare's first tetralogy is a lot like interpreting disability in life, not because the plays are an exact copy of nature, for they are the opposite—filled with artifice. In Shakespeare's plays, as in life, so many conflicting interpretations lie between us and disability, layers upon layers, each asking us to accept its claims, that we have no pure, unfiltered experience with the thing we seek to understand. Richard's disability—a physical thing visible in the character's body and the recipient of competing interpretations from other characters—reflects the status of Richard III himself as both a historical person (open to interpretation) and a literary character (already interpreted by Shakespeare). When making sense of Richard's disability, we are interpreting not only his physical body but also the meanings made of it dramatically and historically. That quality of being always already interpreted is what drives thought from interpretation to reflection upon the stakes and implications of interpretation, upon meaning and significance.

**From an interview with actor Katy Sullivan about her performance of Richard III at the Chicago Shakespeare Theatre in 2024; article by Jerald Raymond Pierce**

"Growing up, I never saw anybody that looked like me doing anything like I'm doing," said Tony-nominated actor and Paralympic sprinter Katy Sullivan. "I had absolutely nothing to point to to say that a career in theatre and acting and television and any of that stuff was even remotely possible."

Now Sullivan is taking the Chicago Shakespeare Theater stage as Shakespeare's most well-known disabled character in a brutal new production of *Richard III* directed by Chicago Shakes's new artistic director, Edward Hall. ...

"There were so many accounts that I read and books and things of actors who had played this role, and so much of their thought process was the disability and was the physicality," Sullivan said. "They became obsessed with that being the thing. I think what this has afforded us is an opportunity to look at this from the lens of somebody who already has all that life experience behind them. I don't have to go searching for it. I walk into the room with all of that life experience."

Sullivan also noted that there were moments during the rehearsal process where they'd discuss how specific language aimed at Richard would affect her differently. Hall's direction certainly doesn't shy away from how vile characters in the play can be toward Richard: At one point King Edward IV spins Richard in his wheelchair without his consent. At another, King Edward's sons, played here by actors using puppets, viciously mock Richard by flopping to the floor to pull themselves around on their arms. Despite being a steely warrior, Hall said, these are slights that Richard could never quite shake off. ...

"One of the things we talked about really early on is that I want him to feel dangerous and strong," Sullivan said. "I think able-bodied people playing this role can fall into this trap of making him so disabled that it's this huge thing to overcome. And I'm like: No, he killed a king. He is a warrior and he's strong and he's powerful, and we should be scared of him. It's the people that underestimate him that ultimately end up paying the price."

It was interesting, Sullivan explained, to think about what disability meant back when *Richard III* was written compared to today—the idea being that people would look at a disabled person and assign moral fault or blame to that person or their family, imagining it must be some kind of punishment. From a contemporary standpoint, Sullivan said, Richard's disability is simply the hand he was dealt, and if people want to think him a worse person because of it, he's going to play with those expectations. For this production—a telling of *Richard III* that manages to use Sullivan's unique abilities while never losing sight of a story about deadly ambition—Sullivan said she has just one hope.

"I hope that people leave the theatre with a little bit of a different idea," she said, "about what it means to live your life from this perspective."

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Illustration by John Gilbert, The Complete Illustrated Shakespeare



# Suggestions for Further Learning

## Watch

To learn more about the 2012 discovery of King Richard III's body in a UK parking lot, watch:

- *The King in the Car Park* - Documentary  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=jWerD-siYt4>

## Read

To learn more about Shakespeare's *Richard III*, read:

- "A Modern Perspective: Richard III" by Phyllis Rackin - essay  
<https://www.folger.edu/explore/shakespeares-works/richard-iii/richard-iii-a-modern-perspective/>
- "Performance, Power, Politics: The Body as Stage in *Richard III*" by Sidia Fiorato - chapter  
<https://upopen.com/reader/chapters/pdf/10.1515/9783110591514-005>
- "Crippling Richard III: What Disabled Actors Bring to the Role" by Jeffrey R. Wilson - article  
[www.americantheatre.org/2023/01/03/the-case-for-cripping-but-not-cripping-up-richard-iii](http://www.americantheatre.org/2023/01/03/the-case-for-cripping-but-not-cripping-up-richard-iii)
- *Shakespeare in Performance: King Richard III* by Hugh M. Richmond - book  
<https://archive.org/details/kingrichardiii0000rich>
- *Richard IIIs Bodies: From Medieval England to Modernity – Shakespeare and Disability History* by Jeffery R. Wilson - book  
<https://www.folger.edu/blogs/shakespeare-and-beyond/excerpt-richard-iiis-bodies-from-medieval-england-to-modernity-by-jeffrey-r-wilson/>

## Theatre Adaptations

To learn about how other theatre artists have adapted or taken inspiration from *Richard III*, read:

- *The African Company Presents Richard III* by Carlyle Brown
  - It's 1821 in New York, and two productions of Shakespeare's *Richard III* are vying for audiences. One is presented by the African Company of New York, a downtown theater known for its growing popularity with both Black and white audiences. A white theater owner is threatened by the success of his competition and will stop at nothing to shut them down. Learn what happens in this true story straight from American theater history.

## Teenage Dick by Mike Lew

- In this retelling of Shakespeare's *Richard III*, one of the most famous disabled characters in history is reimagined as a 16-year-old outsider taking on the political turmoil of high school. Bullied for his cerebral palsy (and his sometimes disturbing tendency to speak with a Shakespearean affect), Richard plots his revenge...as well as his glorious path to the senior class presidency.



## Richard Redux by Kaite O'Reilley and Phillip Zarelli

- The play, reflecting on Shakespeare's representation of disability in his acclaimed historical tragedy, stars Sara Beer as the iconic machiavel. According to Kaite, 'our piece interrogates, satirises and subverts Shakespeare's attitude towards physical difference through a parallel contemporary story: a bogus autobiography of performer Sara Beer, who had the same form of scoliosis. Through irreverent references, we break down the construction of the "twisted body, twisted mind" stereotype of Richard III as evil incarnate – and we do it with laughter and moments of playfulness and absurdity.'

## Visit

To learn more about a local organization whose mission is "Protecting the civil & human rights of people with disabilities," visit:

- Disability Rights Montana  
<https://disabilityrightsmt.org/>

# Shakespeare in the Schools Social Narrative



- 1 We will all walk to the place where we will watch the play.
- 2 We will sit together in the audience to watch the story. If you want to sit on the edge so you can step out if you need to, let your teacher know!
- 3 The actors will come out to perform the play!
- 4 If there is something funny during the play, we can laugh! If there is something sad, we can cry. It's great to react to the play; the actors like hearing responses from the audience!
- 5 At the end of the play, the actors will bow and we will applaud to say "thank you for the story!"
- 6 The actors will come out and we can ask questions if we want to.
- 7 Last, we will walk back to our classroom.

## PLEASE

feel free to share this social story with individual students, or your whole classroom!

## Accessibility and Shakespeare in the Schools

We strive for Universal Design in the Shakespeare in the Schools tour; this means doing our best to create as many access points for students as we can with the tools we have available to us on the road. If there are specific accommodations that would better enable students at your school to engage with the play, please connect with the Tour Manager or the Home Office - 406.994.3310 - and we will be excited to work with you!



# Our Learning Goals

## ARTS LEARNING

### Montana Shakespeare and the National Theatre Arts Standards

**Theatre Creating, Anchor Standard 1:** Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work

**Theatre Performing/Presenting, Anchor Standard 5:** Develop and refine artistic work for presentation

**Theatre Connecting, Anchor Standard 10:** Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art

In addition to state and national learning standards, Montana Shakes! programming aims to provide students the opportunity to practice the ‘6 Cs’ of 21st Century Skills:

1. **Collaboration:** teamwork and community building
2. **Communication:** speaking, writing, and listening
3. **Content:** both academic subjects, and “learning to learn” skills like paying attention
4. **Critical thinking:** how to navigate the masses of available information
5. **Creative innovation:** knowing something well enough to make something new
6. **Confidence:** the ability to take safe risks, and persist through failure

To achieve these learning goals, Montana Shakes! programming is all about theatre and art as a *method* of learning! We aim to bring you content anchored in the principles of playful learning.

Our programming strives to be:

**Active      Engaging      Joyful      Interactive**  
**Socially interactive      Meaningful**

## MONTANA CONTENT STANDARDS

**Our production and workshops are designed to align with Common Core Standards in English Language Arts and Literacy:**

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

#### Key Ideas and Details

RL.7.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.7.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.7.3 Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

#### Craft and Structure

RL.7.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

RL.7.5 Analyze how a drama’s or poem’s form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

RL.7.6 Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RL.7.7 Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).

RL.7.9 Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history and include texts that contain portrayals and/or accounts by and about American Indians.

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

#### Key Ideas and Details

RL.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.8.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.8.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

#### Craft and Structure

RL.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

RL.8.5 Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

RL.8.6 Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RL.8.7 Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.

RL.8.9 Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new and include texts by and about American Indians.

## 9th- 10th Grades

### Key Ideas and Details

RL.9-10.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including works by and about American Indians.

RL.9-10.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text, including those by and about American Indians, and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, including those of American Indians, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

### Craft and Structure

RL.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

RL.9-10.5 Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

RL.9-10.6 Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RL.9-10.7 Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden’s “Musée des Beaux Arts” and Breughel’s Landscape with the Fall of Icarus. Painting: American Progress, by John Gast(circa 1872) with “Birthright,” a poem, by M. L. Smoker in Another Attempt at Rescue).RL.9-10.8(Not applicable to literature)

RL.9-10.9 Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare or how American Indian stories and oral histories appear in contemporary works, such as James Welch’s Fools Crow, the author retells the Pikuni traditional story, “Star Boy”).



# MONTANA CONTENT STANDARDS

## 11th- 12th Grade

### Key Ideas and Details

RL.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

RL.11-12.2 Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text, including those by and about American Indians, and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.11-12.3 Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama, or oral or written history (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

### Craft and Structure

RL.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare, works by American Indian authors, as well as other authors.)

RL.11-12.5. Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

RL.11-12.6 Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement), include works by and about American Indians.

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RL.11-12.7 Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), or traditional American Indian oral histories, evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)

RL.11-12.9 Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including American Indian works, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.

We also focus on alignment with Social Studies standards:

## 6th-8th Grade

SS.CG.6-8.1 Explain a variety of forms of government from the past or present

SS.CG.6-8.7 Employ strategies for civic involvement that address a state or local, or national issues

SS.H.6-8.2 Analyze how the historical events relate to one another and are shaped by historical context, including societies in the Americas

SS.H.6-8.6 Understand that there are multiple perspectives and interpretations of historical events

SS.H.6-8.7 Analyze how people's perspectives shaped the historical narratives they created

SS.H.6-8.8 identify limitations and biases in primary and secondary sources, specifically regarding misinformation and stereotypes

SS.H.6-8.9 understand that the questions people ask shape the conclusions they reach

## 9th-12th Grade

SS.CG.9-12.4 Apply civic virtues and democratic principles when working with others

SS.CG.9-12.6 Evaluate the American governmental system compared to international governmental systems

SS.CG.9-12.11 Analyze the impact and roles of personal interests and perspectives, market, media, and group influences on the application of civic virtues, democratic principles, constitutional rights, and human rights

SS.H.9-12.1 Analyze how unique circumstances of time, place, and historical contexts shape individuals' lives

SS.H.9-12.3 Identify ways in which people and groups exercise agency in difficult historical, contemporary, and tribal contexts

SS.H.9-12.5 Explain events in relation to both their intended and unintended consequences

SS.H.9-12.8 Analyze the ways in which the perspectives of those writing history shaped the history they produced

SS.H.9-12.11 Evaluate the limitations, biases, and credibility of various sources, especially regarding misinformation and stereotypes

SS.H.9-12.14 Construct arguments which reflect understanding and analysis of multiple historical sources, perspectives, and contexts