



MONTANA
Shakespeare
in the Parks

**MONTANA
SHAKES!**

**GOOD
IN EVERYTHING**

For More Information Visit ShakespeareInTheParks.org



WELCOME Hello Teachers!

Thank you for inviting *Montana Shakes!* into your schools and classrooms. We are so excited to visit your schools and to meet you.

**Super
Human
Artistic
Kids & Exceptional Humans
Society**

This toolkit is designed for you. The goal of this Teacher Toolkit is to extend the *Montana Shakes!* experience beyond the one day we are with you in your school. We hope it provides you with some information about the production, some background about the goals of the *Shakes!* program, and some inspiration for activities and discussions with your students both before and after the performance.
Enjoy!



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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Dear Friends,

My name is Matt, and I am a part of the Montana Shakespeare in the Parks family.

Wait? Family you might be asking? How can a bunch of people who dress up and play make believe for a job be like a family you say?

Well that's how theatre works...like families in a lot of ways.

That's one of the coolest things about Montana Shakes! and all of Montana Shakespeare in the Parks: a group of people with all kinds of skills and interests and gifts come together to collaborate on a story. Some people like to be on stage, some people like to work with their hands, or to help organize and make space for people's best ideas.

In case you didn't know it, you're a part of that process and project too. The audience is ultimately the last part of this family in any theatrical collaboration, coming together with us in your school or a park each summer to use imagination to piece together all the parts all our partners have been working on up to that moment.

You are incredibly important and we are so grateful for your help today. The thing we are about to make is going to be completely new – that's the cool thing about theatre. Sure, we bring the same four actors with the same costumes and set up all the scenery and props the same way each morning as we travel around the state. But because you are going to be there, listening and watching us as we listen and see you, it's going to be completely and forever unique – no play has been like it before, and no play will ever be like it again.

This year's play is based on Shakespeare's AS YOU LIKE IT and is going to rely on you, the AUDIENCE to help finish the play – just like ol' Bill would invent and find words to say what he was feeling or needing for his stories, you are going to help us do the same.

At the start of the play, we're going to ask you some questions and we want you to be brave and creative

and know how much we are rooting for you and all on the same team and shout out the amazing first things that come into your mind and we're going to use those to tell the story together.

And the story is full of people trying to make sense and communicate these HUGE feelings they are having while feeling like they aren't doing a very good job at it. Ultimately, each person finds a way, or a person, or a dog (or all three) to help them share those confusing parts that make them worried or feel strange or lost.

That's the cool thing about stories – they are often a kind of cure for feeling confused or strange or worried or lost because we encounter and empathize with people who are navigating things like we are. And when we see them struggle and thrive and persist and adapt it makes us feel all kinds of things that help us figure our own moments out – however and whenever we have them.

Shakespeare's plays are pretty great for those kinds of big feelings because each time somebody is about to explode with everything going on inside they step out and talk to us about it in a speech with incredible words that match up with these extraordinary feelings.

It's our belief and experience here at Montana Shakespeare in the Parks that, when given the chance, students are able to hear these old words in fresh and impactful ways, even in their first years of learning and we are so excited to share these words (and make up some new ones) with you today.

If this is your first time seeing a Montana Shakes! performance, WELCOME TO THE FAMILY. Maybe some summer we'll get to see you during one of our performances in your park, or you'll be a part of making one of our plays again. Either way, we are glad you are here, grateful to make this play with you, and can't wait to see what we come up with together!



MEET THE DIRECTOR and EDUCATION DIRECTOR



Matt Foss (Director and Playwright)

Matt received his M.F.A. in acting from Chicago's Roosevelt University and Ph.D. in theatre studies and directing from Wayne State University in Detroit. Recent professional credits include Red Tape Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Oracle Theatre, Montana Shakespeare in the Parks, American Blues Theatre, The Jewish Ensemble Theatre and Tipping Point Theatre.

Matt has worked with MSIP for almost 25 years now and wrote and directed Montana Shakes shows *FAITHFUL FRIENDS*, *BOTTOM'S DREAM*, *HAMLET SANDWICH* and *GOOFS & GAFFS*.

Before working in the theatre he was a wildlife biologist with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

In 2016, his touring production of *The Glass Menagerie* performed at Russia's Moscow Art Theatre. He adapted and directed Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* for Oracle Productions in Chicago in 2014. The production received Chicago Jeff Award Nominations for Outstanding Production, Director, Ensemble, and won for best new adaptation. In 2012 his production of *Six Characters* at Iowa State University received the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival's National Award for Outstanding Production of a Play and Outstanding Director of a Play. He directed and co-wrote (with UTOLEDO students Carlos Washington and Alexandria Rayford-West) 2020's *20K Leagues Under the Sea*, which received a Kennedy Center Citizen Artist Award.

In 2019, his adaptation of *All Quiet on the Western Front* received the Kennedy Center's David Mark Cohen Playwriting Award. The play had its professional premiere in Chicago in 2019, winning 6 Jeff Awards- including Best Production, Best Ensemble and Best New Work. Foss was the co-writer and a producer of the award-winning short film, *SONS OF TOLEDO* (2021) and was named one of the Austin Film Festival and Movie Maker Magazine's Top 25 Screenwriters to Watch for 2023 and his first feature film premiered in 2024.

Foss was the recipient of the ATHE/KCACTF Prize for Innovative Teaching in 2013 and the 2020 University of Toledo Edith Rathburn Outreach and Engagement Excellence Award.

He is a member of the WGA-East, repped by Tom Carter at Artillery Creative and a proud graduate of SPACE CAMP at the U.S. Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama. He was twelve and it was amazing.



Riley O'Toole (Education Director)

Riley is the Associate Artistic Director of Montana Shakespeare in the Parks. Since 2016, Riley has been involved in 11 tours, 23 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. Notable 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. Riley would like to thank his dog Tenny for being pretty much the best dog ever!



MEET THE TEAM!

These bios are written to share with your students to get to know the company! Please feel free to share them with your classroom.



Emily plays Rosalind

Hey there, I'm Emily! I'm so happy to be back performing with Montana Shakes. You may remember me from last year's show where my main love language was dancing with ribbons. I love to play board games and go rock climbing! If you see me in the halls or at lunch, stop me and let me know where's the best place in your town to find pizza or tacos!



Sam plays Uncle Duke

Hi! My name is Sam. You may remember me from last year when I sang about love, or the year before when I sang about a door. I'm so excited to be at your school and play some more. In my free time, I love to watch football and build legos. Looking for a new set! Let me know what I should build next. Can't wait to hang out soon! If you see me at lunch, tell me about your pets! If you see me at recess, I call playing quarterback.



Evan plays Duke Senior

Howdy! I'm Evan, and I am thrilled to be meeting you all for the first time! When we're not hanging out and getting to be silly, I love listening to music, reading books, watching movies, and playing in the great outdoors. I've been working on my basketball skills with the high schoolers this year, so let me know if you want to hoop after lunch. I could really use the practice!



Esther plays Celia

Hiya, I'm Esther! I am over the moon that I get to meet and play with you this year! In my spare time, I love playing and singing with my guitar, reading books or playing with my favorite and cutest kitty ever, Rhiannon. Stop me in the halls or at lunch, if you see me, and let's make up a handshake!



WHAT IS OUR PLAY ABOUT?

Good in Everything is an adaptation of Shakespeare's *AS YOU LIKE IT*.

This means we started with the play you may have seen before when Montana Shakespeare in the Parks comes through your community each summer and took the ideas and words and pieces to tell a story especially for you that is *like AS YOU LIKE IT* but also *like* something completely new we are making together.

ROSALIND and CELIA are best friends and just so happen to be cousins because their dads are brothers. And those DADs are straight up feuding, but nobody really knows what their beef is all about.

Things going really bad and Rosalind's dad takes off for the forest and when Celia's dad blows his top, the two girls decide to head that direction too.

Worried that it might not be safe, they adopt disguises which allows both of them to talk openly about things they might not normally say if they weren't pretending to be somebody else.

And that's kind of what theatre is – we watch imaginary people do things and feel things that we may not normally feel like we can in order to figure out how we *might*.

Oh – and there's going to be a huge wrestling match because Shakespeare is crazy fun, y'all so buckle up and hang on for Rosalind and Celia's big adventure in GOOD IN EVERYTHING.

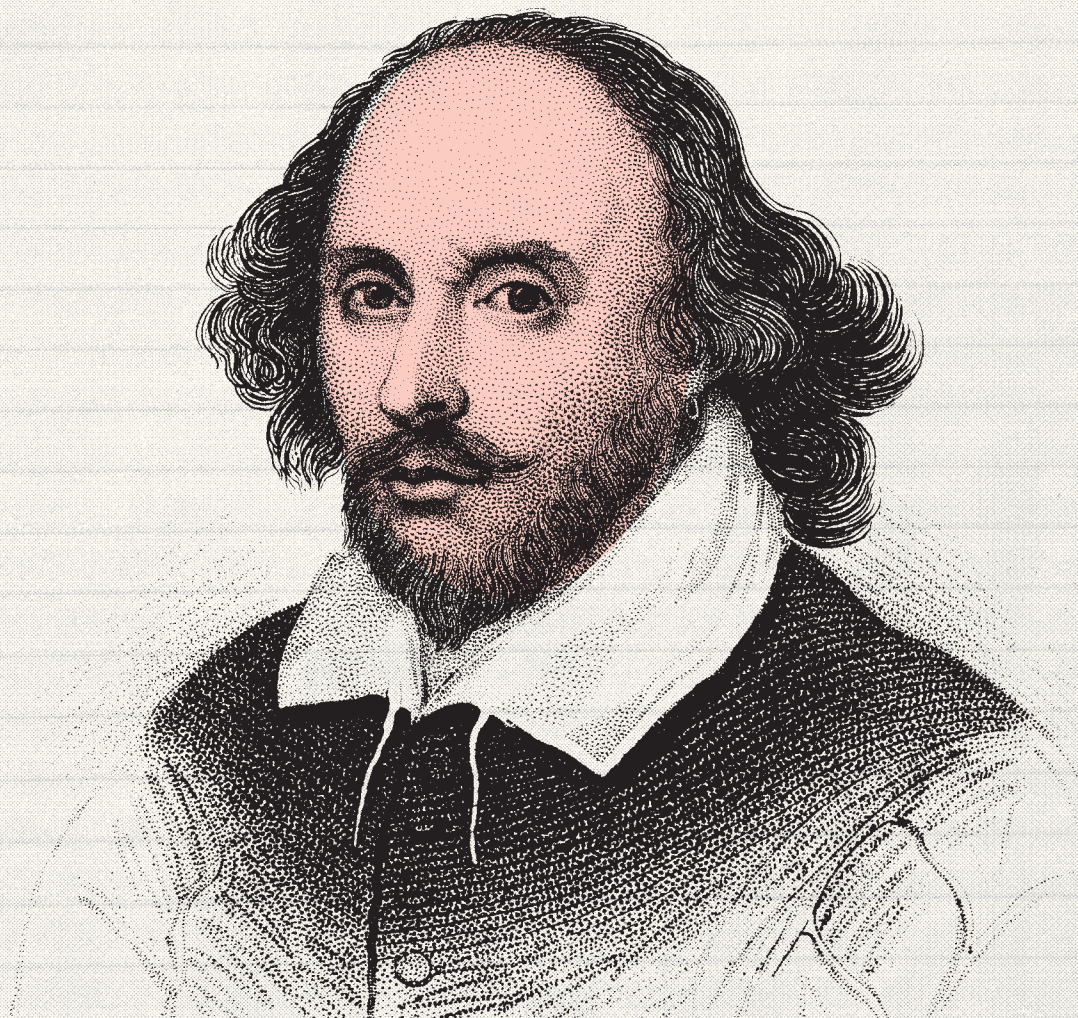
WHY SHAKESPEARE?

William Shakespeare lived in England from 1563-1616.

During this time, 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. These are topics we still debate, and events from Shakespeare's time continue to shape the way we think about and engage with politics, art, and ideas.

Shakespeare wrote his plays in conversation with his own time, and that conversation continues today. His plays give us thrilling stories, poetic language, and new words and worlds that can help us think about our own lives in new and meaningful ways. By engaging in performances and workshops with Montana Shakes!, 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 join with you in that legacy!



For More Information Visit ShakespeareInTheParks.org

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES 1

Good in Everything

We adapted our play, *Good In Everything*, from Shakespeare's play *As You Like It*. And Shakespeare created *As You Like It* from an even older play called *Rosalynde: Euphues' Golden Legacy* by Thomas Lodge.

Adapting stories is a great way to create art! We get to engage with stories we love while changing them for new contexts or audiences, or putting them into our own words.

Adaptation Activity

In this classroom activity, students will be able to practice adapting stories in preparation for seeing the Montana Shakes! adaptation of Shakespeare's play.

1. Identify some stories for adaptation. Fairytales and nursery rhymes (like Cinderella or Humpty Dumpty) work great for this activity, but your students could use any stories they like.
2. Identify the characters, setting, and main themes of the original story
3. Either individually or in small groups, encourage students to act out or rewrite the stories. Prompt: What are the themes of the story that they like best, how can they focus on those pieces? What happens if we change the characters, or change who is the main character? What happens if you change the setting? How can the students integrate their own ideas and perspectives into the story? What might happen after or outside of the story we hear about in the original?
4. Invite students to share their adaptations!

Adaptation requires thoughtful engagement with the source material, and then innovation, creativity, and courage in making it your own!

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES 2

Good in Everything

In the play, the actors needed your help to create the story! Just like we included students' words in the performance of *Good In Everything* at your school, the following printable handout can allow more students to have a turn adding their words to the story in your classrooms.

For younger grades this can be a full-class activity in which students suggest words, the teacher writes them down, and then the class listens to the new story that they created all together.

For older grades this can be a small group activity, in which each group creates their own version of the story and then shares out.

For any age, an optional expansion of this activity is creating space for students to act out and perform their new Shakespeare Stories.

Good in Everything, **written by us!**

Once upon a time in the kingdom of _____, there were two cousins and best

Place 1

friends named Rosalind and Celia. They both loved eating _____ and they

Food 1

didn't enjoy _____. Celia and Rosalind's dads, Uncle Duke and Duke

Chore/Activity

Senior, were brothers, but they weren't getting along and so Duke Senior traveled away to the

forest of _____. One day, Uncle Duke was acting scary, like a really

Place 2

mean _____. So, Rosalind and Celia decided to also escape to the

Scary Animal

forest of _____, famous for its _____(s). To keep

Place 2

Scary Thing

themselves safe in the scary forest, they disguised themselves as a _____

Job 1

and a _____. While in disguise in the forest, they met up with Duke Senior,

Job 2

who was feeling sad about leaving his daughter and fighting with his brother. Eventually, Uncle

Duke also joined them in the forest. Together, they used their imaginations to talk about difficult

feelings like _____ and _____. Re-united, they

Feeling 1

Feeling 2

celebrated their love as a family and lived happily ever after.

The End



Fill out this page, then turn it over and plug in your words to complete the story!

Favorite Place to Go (Place 1) _____

Favorite Food (Food 1) _____

Least favorite chore or activity _____

Scary Place (Place 2) _____

Scary Animal _____

Scary Thing _____

Favorite (Job 1) _____

Favorite (Job 2) _____

Difficult (Feeling 1) _____

Difficult (Feeling 2) _____

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before the show

- What is your favorite way to hear stories? Do you like books, movies, tv shows, theatre, video games, etc?
 - How do stories change when they are told in different ways? (Ex: how is a story in a book different from in a video game?)
 - Montana Shakes! is bringing a play to your school! What kinds of stories do you think a play lets us tell that might be different from tv or books or movies?
- The name of the play that we will create together is called *Good In Everything* – what do you think the play will be about?
- This story starts with Rosalind and Celia leaving their home to travel to the Forest of Arden. Their decision to leave their home takes a lot of bravery. Have you ever had to leave your home to go to a new place? Why? How did you feel about it?
 - What is something else that you've done that has taken a lot of bravery? What did you do to summon your courage, and how did you feel afterwards?
- The actors in our play use a variety of puppets to help tell the story. Have you ever made a puppet before? What kind of stories can you tell with a puppet that might be difficult to tell with people?

After the show

- The characters in this play feel some very big feelings. They practice expressing their feelings by pretending to be other people.
 - What do you do when you have really big feelings? When you're really really happy or excited, or sad, or angry?
 - Why do you think it was helpful for the characters in the play to practice saying how they felt?
- In the story, Uncle Duke says some really mean things and doesn't treat his brother, daughter and niece very well. He apologizes at the end of the play, but do you think this makes everything better?
 - What do you think are meaningful ways to apologize to our friends or family when we make mistakes? What would you want to hear from someone if they hurt your feelings?
- The title of this play is *Good In Everything*. While the character Duke Senior is enjoying being surrounded by nature in the Forest of Arden, he reflects on finding "tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything."
 - What do you think he means by saying this about nature?
 - Do you enjoy experiencing nature, and what is your favorite part?
 - The characters in the play use similes ("like" or "as") to describe how they feel. Fill in the blanks here: "Exploring nature makes me feel _____ like a _____." OR "Being outside makes me feel as _____ as a _____."



AWESOME AUDIENCES

What does it mean to be an awesome audience member?

At Montana Shakes, it means being part of the storytelling team!

We encourage students to engage with the play in whatever ways work best for them. Stillness and silence are great when we're caught up in a story – and laughter and dancing are great when there's music that makes us want to move! We love to hear the laughter, clapping, gasps, and more. We welcome students' need to wiggle their bodies, stand in the back or to the side, or step out occasionally – there's no wrong way to be part of theatre.

One of our main jobs in theatre is to take care of each other: actors and audience and all. That takes teamwork! Before you come to the play, invite a conversation with your class:

- **What does it mean to be a part of a team?**
- **How can we make sure that everybody – the actors and the audience – all have a great time at the performance?**
- **Why do you think the audience is such an important part of performing a play?**





SOCIAL STORY

This description of events can help students know what to expect on the performance day. Feel free to share this social story with individual students or your whole classroom!

- 1 We will all walk to the place where we will watch the play.
- 2 We will sit in the audience. An audience is a big group of people who have all come to watch the story together.
- 3 The actors will be there as we arrive. We can talk to the actors, or just watch.
- 4 The actors will perform a play! We will sit and listen. The play is about 40 minutes long.
- 5 When there is something funny, 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!
- 6 At the end of the play, we will clap our hands to say "thank you for the story!"
- 7 The actors will come out and we can ask questions if we want to.
- 8 Last, we will walk back to our classroom. Your teacher will let you know if an actor is visiting your classroom later in the day.

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

OUR LEARNING GOALS

Montana Shakes! is dedicated to engaging students in relevant and meaningful learning through the arts.

Montana Shakes! and Montana Content Standards

Speaking and Listening

ELA-Literacy.SL.3: Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Reading

CCRA.R.2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCRA.R.6: Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Language

L.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

L.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships and nuances in word meanings.



Montana Shakes! 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

The '6 Cs' of 21st Century Skills

In addition to state and national learning standards, Montana Shakes! programming aims to provide students the opportunity to practice :

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

Meaningful

Socially interactive

Iterative

Joyful!

