

# Shakespeare extension activities – kids

## Topic

Various Shakespeare plays

## Aims

To extend learners' work with the Shakespeare plays featured on LearnEnglish Kids (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Much Ado About Nothing*) and develop their reading, writing, speaking, listening and critical thinking skills.

## Age / Level

Older primary (9–11 years); the level of challenge of each activity is graded accordingly:

- easy (suitable for all)
- quite easy (some learners might find the activity challenging)
- medium (should present a level of challenge to all learners)
- hard (a challenging activity to be used with stronger, more mature groups of learners)

## Introduction

These activities are designed to be used with primary learners to extend their work on any of the Shakespeare plays featured on LearnEnglish Kids. You can find lesson plans for the plays here:

*A Midsummer Night's Dream*: <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/a-midsummer-nights-dream-kids>

*Romeo and Juliet*: <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/romeo-juliet-kids>

*Twelfth Night*: <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/twelfth-night-kids>

*Hamlet*: <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/hamlet-kids>

*Macbeth*: <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/macbeth-kids>

*Much Ado About Nothing*: <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/much-ado-about-nothing-kids>

Most of the activities are suitable for use with any of the plays. The activities are:

- *Characters review*
- *Sort the events*
- *Make puppets and act out the play*
- *Write a play script and act out the play*
- *Design a theatre poster*
- *Create a storyboard*
- *Write a different ending*
- *Write or record a diary entry*
- *Write to a problem page*
- *Focus on a minor character*
- *Character conversations*
- *Newspaper or TV news report*

## Characters review

<b>Challenge</b>	easy (suitable for all)
<b>Time</b>	15 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	paper, sticky tape
<b>Play(s)</b>	one or more
<b>1. Generate ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brainstorm some of the characters from the play(s) you have covered. Write their names on the board.</li> <li>Now brainstorm some words or phrases that could describe the characters. For example, Puck – naughty, Romeo – loves Juliet.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Pair work speaking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask each learner to choose a character (or assign characters, if you think lots of learners will choose the same one) and ask them to write their character's name on a piece of paper. Monitor and help learners if necessary.</li> <li>Collect in the pieces of paper. Randomly mix them up and then stick one piece of paper to the back of each learner.</li> <li>Ask learners to work in pairs to find out who they are. Depending on your learners, they can either describe their partner's character, for example 'You're very naughty and you can do magic!' or they can ask each other questions, for example 'Are you a man or a woman? Do you love anybody?' etc.</li> <li>As a follow-up, learners could write a short paragraph describing their character.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Mingle alternative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give each learner a piece of paper with a character's name. They should write two or three words or phrases about their character.</li> <li>Collect in the pieces of paper. Randomly mix them up and then give one character to each learner. Tell them they need to keep it secret!</li> <li>Learners should then mingle and find a partner. They then describe their character to their partner, using the words and phrases on the paper, and their partner needs to guess the character. When they have finished, they should swap papers, and find a new partner and repeat.</li> <li>At the end, ask learners how many characters they guessed right. Which ones were difficult?</li> </ul>

## Sort the events

<b>Challenge</b>	easy (suitable for all)
<b>Time</b>	30 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	paper, scissors
<b>Play(s)</b>	any three
<b>1. Group work writing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask learners to work in groups. You should have three or six groups depending on the number of learners you have. Choose three of the plays you have covered.</li> <li>Ask each group to write around 5–10 sentences describing the events of one of the plays on a piece of paper. All learners in the group should take turns to write, so there is a mixture of handwriting!</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They should now cut the paper into strips, so one strip of paper has one sentence.</li> <li>• Repeat with the other two plays.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Group reading race</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Now ask each group to mix up all the strips of paper from all three plays. Each group should pass their strips of paper to another group. Then each group races to read all the sentences and sort them into the three different plays, in order!</li> </ul>
<b>3. Pair work speaking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While the strips are still arranged according to play, ask learners to write the name (or initials) of the play on the back of each strip, then mix the strips up again.</li> <li>• Working in pairs, they take turns to choose a strip and read it to their partner, who tries to say which play it's from. Then they check by looking at the back of the strip.</li> </ul>

### Make puppets and act out the play

<b>Challenge</b>	quite easy (some learners might find the activity challenging)
<b>Time</b>	30 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	video transcript from LearnEnglish Kids, card, scissors, sticky tape, straws (optional)
<b>Play(s)</b>	any
<b>1. Make the puppets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask learners to tell you who the characters are in the play you have chosen. Write the characters on the board. Add 'narrator' to the list and explain what this is.</li> <li>• Learners work in groups according to how many characters there are. If there is lots of narration in the video you have chosen, have two or three narrators. If you have an uneven number of learners, pair a weaker with a stronger learner to work together, or ask one learner to take two characters.</li> <li>• Either let learners choose a character or assign one, for example if you would like a weaker learner to have an easier part or a stronger learner a more challenging part. If you want learners to choose a character randomly, you could write each character on a small piece of paper, fold in half and learners take one piece of paper each.</li> <li>• Now give each learner a small piece of card. They should draw their character, making sure the character's feet are touching the bottom edge of the card. 'Narrators' can help or can draw a background scene instead!</li> <li>• Show the learners how to draw a horizontal strip across the bottom edge of the card, connecting their character's feet to the left and right side of the card. They should cut out their character making sure they don't cut off the strip, then bend the strip around and stick the ends of the strip together to make a finger puppet!</li> <li>• Alternatively, after they have cut out their character, give each learner a straw and stick the character to the straw to make a stick puppet.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Practise the play</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a whole class, brainstorm the main events in the play.</li> <li>• Give learners a copy of the video transcript from LearnEnglish Kids. Where there are spoken lines, ask learners to write the name of the character who's speaking.</li> <li>• Now learners highlight the parts where their character speaks, or their narration parts if they are a narrator. Then they should change groups according to character, so that, for example, all the 'Juliets' are together, all the 'Romeos' are together, all the narrators are together, etc.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a whole class, read the play script through together, with all the 'Juliets' speaking together, all the 'Romeos' speaking together, all the narrators speaking together, etc. Model any tricky lines, and discuss with the learners what might be appropriate intonation or emotion for each line.</li> <li>• In their groups, learners practise saying their lines. Monitor and help as needed.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Perform the play</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When they are confident with their lines, learners go back to their original groups and practise the play together. Monitor and help as needed.</li> <li>• Finally, each group performs the play for the class.</li> <li>• Depending on your learners, you might like to give them time to draw background scenes, or create props, to make it more like a real play. You could even record the plays for the learners to watch afterwards!</li> </ul>

### Write a play script and act out the play

<b>Challenge</b>	medium (should present a level of challenge to all learners)
<b>Time</b>	45 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	props and costumes (optional)
<b>Play(s)</b>	any
<b>1. Write the play</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask learners to tell you who the characters are in the play you have chosen. Write the characters on the board.</li> <li>• Next, brainstorm the main events in the play and write or display them on the board.</li> <li>• As a whole class, decide on the first few lines of the play. You can also include stage directions!</li> <li>• For example, for <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> you could write:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ [Demetrius and Hermia are standing together, talking.]</li> <li>○ Demetrius: 'Please marry me, Hermia. I love you!'</li> <li>○ Hermia: 'I'm sorry, Demetrius. I can't marry you because I love Lysander!'</li> <li>○ [Hermia walks away and stands next to Lysander.]</li> <li>○ Lysander: 'Love is never easy! Let's run away together!'</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Put learners in groups, according to how many characters there are. If you have an uneven number of learners, pair a weaker with a stronger learner to work together or ask one learner to take two characters, although it doesn't matter at this stage which learner is which character.</li> <li>• Learners then continue writing the play script in their group. Let them keep it as simple, or make it as creative, as their level. Encourage each learner to take a turn at writing. Monitor and help as needed.</li> <li>• If you have strong learners, you could alternatively ask them to write a play script with either modern or locally relevant details. For example, instead of Demetrius asking Hermia to marry him, he could ask her to go to a party with him. Hermia and Lysander could run away to a local town or place in your learners' country instead of the forest, and so on. You could even change the characters' names to be typical names of young people in your learners' country.</li> </ul>

<b>2. Practise the play</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When they have finished writing their play, learners need to choose a character, or you could assign one, for example if you would like a weaker learner to have an easier part or a stronger learner a more challenging part. If you want learners to choose a character randomly, you could write each character on a small piece of paper, fold in half and learners take one piece of paper each.</li> <li>• In their groups, learners practise reading the play. Monitor and help with pronunciation and intonation.</li> <li>• When the learners are comfortable with their lines, they can stand up and physically rehearse the play in a corner of the room.</li> <li>• You might like to do this activity over two lessons, if you think learners would prefer to practise their lines some more at home first, or even prepare costumes and props to bring in for the next lesson!</li> </ul>
<b>3. Perform the play</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finally, each group performs their play for the class.</li> <li>• Depending on your learners, you might like to record the plays for the learners to watch afterwards!</li> </ul>

### Design a theatre poster

<b>Challenge</b>	easy (suitable for all)
<b>Time</b>	20 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	card and drawing supplies
<b>Play(s)</b>	any
<b>1. Look at the genre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write the play(s) you have covered on the board. As a class, brainstorm some of the themes from each play.</li> <li>• Show learners some examples of theatre posters for the plays on the board. What features do the posters have? For example, the name of the play, the actors and actresses playing the main roles, the theatre, the days and times of the show, the cost of tickets, the name of the theatre group and the use of the word 'presents' (e.g. The TeachingEnglish Acting Company presents William Shakespeare's <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>), etc. List these features on the board.</li> <li>• Ask learners which posters they like best. Do the images on the posters illustrate or suggest the themes of the play?</li> </ul>
<b>2. Plan and produce the poster</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depending on your learners, they can work in pairs or individually. Give them some scrap paper and ask them to choose a play and plan a rough draft of their poster, making sure to include the list of features on the board.</li> <li>• If you have done an activity previously where learners have acted out a play, they could imagine the poster is for their own performance of the play!</li> <li>• Encourage learners to be creative, for example using famous actors' or actresses' names for the main roles, choosing an imaginative name for the theatre or theatre group and thinking of images that would illustrate the themes of the play.</li> <li>• Monitor as learners are planning their poster, helping where needed and checking they have included all the features.</li> <li>• When they are ready, give them a piece of card and drawing supplies and they can make the poster.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you have learners who don't like drawing, they could find images to cut out from old magazines instead.</li> <li>• Producing the poster could also be set for homework.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Display the posters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display the finished posters around the room. Ask learners to look around the room. Which posters do they like best?</li> <li>• Alternatively, you could collect the posters in before displaying them, and carefully cover up the name of the play with a blank piece of paper and some white-tack. Show each poster one by one to the class. Can learners guess the name of each play from the rest of the poster?</li> </ul>

### Create a storyboard

<b>Challenge</b>	medium (should present a level of challenge to all learners)
<b>Time</b>	20 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	storyboard template
<b>Play(s)</b>	any
<b>1. Brainstorm the main events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show the learners a storyboard template. This is usually six boxes – each box has a main space for a picture and speech bubbles, and a strip at the bottom for a sentence describing the events in the picture.</li> <li>• Explain to the learners they are going to make a storyboard of the play. They need to decide on the key event each box needs to feature, what characters need to appear in each box, what dialogue they might be saying and what sentence to write at the bottom.</li> <li>• Now brainstorm as a class the main events of the play you have chosen. If there are lots of ideas, write them all on the board and then decide as a class the six key events.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Plan and produce the storyboard</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put learners into pairs. In their notebooks, they should work together to try to decide what the picture, dialogue and sentence should be for each of the six main events as listed on the board. Monitor and help as necessary.</li> <li>• When each pair is ready, give them a storyboard template and they can create the storyboard.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Display the storyboards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display the finished storyboards around the room. Ask learners to look around the room. Which one do they like best?</li> <li>• For stronger learners, you could allow them to choose which play they would like to storyboard. Put the learners into groups according to which play they have chosen and the groups can brainstorm the list of six main events. Then they can work in pairs to plan and create the storyboard as above.</li> <li>• Learners might like to create a storyboard of another play as homework!</li> </ul>

### Write a different ending

<b>Challenge</b>	medium (should present a level of challenge to all learners)
<b>Time</b>	30 minutes

<b>Materials</b>	none
<b>Play(s)</b>	any of the tragedies ( <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> , <i>Hamlet</i> or <i>Macbeth</i> )
<b>1. Brainstorm ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about the ending of your chosen play with your learners. Was it a happy or sad ending? Why was it sad? What did the characters do or not do to lead to such a sad ending? For example, with <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> you could talk about why Romeo and Juliet got married in secret and why they killed themselves in the end.</li> <li>• What might the learners do instead in that situation? For example, if they had a good friend and their parents tried to stop them from seeing each other?</li> <li>• Brainstorm ideas of things that the characters in the play could have done differently. For example, Romeo and Juliet could have talked to their parents, asked Friar Lawrence to mediate, Romeo could have stopped Mercutio from fighting Tybalt or Juliet could have waited to be sure Romeo had received the message describing the plan!</li> </ul>
<b>2. Write the ending</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask learners to think about how doing these things differently might have led to a happy ending, or at least a different outcome. They should choose one or some of the ideas and write a new ending for the play. It should be clear at what part of the play they are starting from.</li> <li>• Monitor and help as learners write their new ending in their notebooks. When they are finished, they can write out a neat copy and draw a picture to illustrate their new ending.</li> <li>• If you wish, you can ask learners to imagine this is happening in modern times. They can imagine how this would affect (or not affect) the character's actions and the outcomes of their actions. For example, Juliet could have phoned Romeo and explained the plan to him. But would it have worked? For example, even if Romeo had known the plan, would a modern doctor have been able to tell Juliet wasn't really dead? Or perhaps Juliet sent Romeo a text message, but he didn't receive it because he'd run out of battery.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Read each other's endings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask learners to swap endings with the other learners on their table and read each one. Which ending do they think is the best, the most realistic or the most unlikely?</li> </ul>

### Write or record a diary entry

<b>Challenge</b>	hard (a challenging activity to be used with stronger, more mature groups of learners)
<b>Time</b>	30 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	cameras e.g. on their phones or tablets (optional)
<b>Play(s)</b>	any
<b>1. Generate ideas and introduce the genre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask learners to tell you the characters in your chosen play and write their names on the board.</li> <li>• Which character do they think has the most interesting storyline? Why? What's the most dramatic thing that happens to them?</li> <li>• Tell learners they are going to imagine they are that character, and they are going to write or record a diary entry for that character at the end of the day when the dramatic event has happened.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brainstorm with learners some ideas of some of the things the character might say or write. Encourage them to imagine they are the character, and think about how they would react and feel.</li> <li>• Show learners a simple example diary entry. Highlight that they should use the first person and past tenses. The diary entry should say:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ what happened</li> <li>○ how they felt</li> <li>○ how they feel now.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Explain that diary entries often start with 'Dear Diary, '!</li> </ul>
<b>2. Prepare and write or record the diary entry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask learners to work in pairs. They should plan the diary entry in their notebooks, using the class brainstorm to decide what they will write for the three areas (what happened, how they felt, how they feel now). Monitor and help as necessary.</li> <li>• If they are going to write their diary entry, ask both learners in the pair to write their own version.</li> <li>• Monitor and help as necessary. When they are ready, ask them to swap and read each other's work. They should say two things they like about their partner's work, and make one suggestion. Then they can write up the final version.</li> <li>• If they are going to record their diary entry, they should make notes, based on the plan in their notebook, about what they are going to say. They shouldn't write out the full script so that the diary entry will be more natural when recorded. They can take turns to rehearse to each other. When listening to their partner, encourage them to make suggestions about how they could try to sound when expressing different emotions or talking about the dramatic events.</li> <li>• Monitor and help as necessary. When they feel ready, they can record their diary entries and then watch them back!</li> </ul>
<b>3. Extension</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You might like to create more diary entries with your learners, for example they could produce more for the same character to span the length of the play, or they could produce some for the same day but different characters to get different perspectives on the same events.</li> </ul>

### Write to a problem page

<b>Challenge</b>	hard (a challenging activity to be used with stronger, more mature groups of learners)
<b>Time</b>	30 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	example problem page from a magazine or website
<b>Play(s)</b>	any
<b>1. Introduce the genre and generate ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find an example of a problem page from a magazine or website aimed at the age of your learners. Ask learners what kinds of problems people might write about.</li> <li>• Brainstorm some of the main characters from the plays you have covered. What problems did they have? For example, Juliet not being able to marry Romeo, Claudio thinking Hero is with another man, Helena loving Demetrius while he loves Hermia, Hamlet finding out that Claudius killed his father, Macbeth being worried that Banquo knows his secret, or Viola not being able to reveal her true identity.</li> <li>• Now brainstorm some advice you might give these characters in their situation.</li> </ul>



<b>2. Prepare and write the letter</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain to the learners that they should choose a character and that they are going to write a letter or an email to a problem page about their problem. They should keep in mind the point in the play at which the character has the problem and think about how they might feel at that point.</li> <li>• Brainstorm some language on the board that might help them, for example:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 'I'm desperate.'</li> <li>○ 'I don't know what to do.'</li> <li>○ 'The problem is ...'</li> <li>○ 'Can you help me?'</li> <li>○ 'Should I ...?'</li> </ul> </li> <li>• You can also suggest some stages for the letter, for example:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ describing the problem</li> <li>○ saying how you feel</li> <li>○ explaining what you're thinking of doing, and why you're not sure it's the right thing to do</li> <li>○ asking for advice</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Learners start writing their letter. Monitor and help as necessary.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Write a reply</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When learners have finished their letters, explain that they are now going to swap with someone and write a reply!</li> <li>• First, brainstorm some language on the board that might help them, for example language for advice (should, shouldn't, I think ...) or suggestions (You can try ... / You could ... / Why don't you ...?).</li> <li>• Now learners should swap letters. They could swap with their neighbour but ideally it should be someone who has written a letter as a different character.</li> <li>• Learners should read the letters and write a reply! If learners are struggling to think of advice, you could pair learners who have a letter about the same character together. Monitor and help as necessary.</li> <li>• Give the replies back to the learner who wrote each letter. Have they received any good advice?</li> </ul>

### Focus on a minor character

<b>Challenge</b>	hard (a challenging activity to be used with stronger, more mature groups of learners)
<b>Time</b>	30 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	none
<b>Play(s)</b>	any
<b>1. Generate ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brainstorm some of the less featured characters from the play(s) you have covered. For example, Horatio from <i>Hamlet</i>, Friar Lawrence from <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, Sebastian from <i>Twelfth Night</i>, Don John from <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>, Banquo from <i>Macbeth</i> or Bottom from <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>.</li> <li>• Choose one or two of the characters. Ask learners what the minor character might think about the other characters' actions, or what they might have been doing before or after their part in the play. For example, what had Sebastian been doing between being shipwrecked and turning up to find Viola? What did Banquo think of his friend Macbeth's actions? What did Bottom do after that night in the forest?</li> </ul>

<b>2. Write a diary entry or conversation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask learners to choose one of the characters. Depending on your learners, they could either write a diary entry for the character or imagine a conversation between their character and another. For example, they could write a diary entry (or several!) to show what Sebastian had been doing after being shipwrecked, or imagine a conversation between him and Viola where he tells her what he had been doing.</li> <li>• As learners are writing, monitor and help as necessary. Encourage them to be creative and share ideas with the other learners on their table.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Swap diary entry or act out conversation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If learners have written a diary entry for a character, ask them to swap with another learner who chose the same character. How similar or different are they?</li> <li>• If learners have imagined a conversation, they could act it out with their partner!</li> </ul>

### Character conversations

<b>Challenge</b>	medium (should present a level of challenge to all learners)
<b>Time</b>	20–30 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	none
<b>Play(s)</b>	any
<b>1. Generate ideas and do an example</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose a play to focus on. Ask learners to tell you some of the points in the story when two characters have a conversation (even if the conversation wasn't explicitly in the video), for example:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Horatio telling Hamlet about the ghost in the castle in <i>Hamlet</i></li> <li>○ Friar Lawrence telling the Capulets and Montagues what happened in <i>Romeo and Juliet</i></li> <li>○ Viola asking Duke Orsino for a job in <i>Twelfth Night</i></li> <li>○ Leonato telling Claudio that he must marry his niece in <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i></li> <li>○ Lady Macbeth telling Macbeth to kill King Duncan in <i>Macbeth</i></li> <li>○ Hermia telling Helena that she is going to run away with Demetrius in <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Choose one conversation. Brainstorm ideas of what the characters might say to each other and generate a dialogue on the board. Encourage learners to think about how the characters are feeling and how they might react to what the other says.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Write and act out the conversation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask learners to work in pairs and choose another conversation. In their notebooks they should write a conversation between the characters. Encourage them to be creative! Monitor and help where necessary.</li> <li>• When they have finished, learners can act out their conversations.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Improvisation (hard – try with stronger, more mature groups of learners)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If learners enjoyed this activity, you could also ask them to improvise some conversations. Give them some situations that are not necessarily in the play, for example, Lady Macbeth goes to see the witches, or Titania sees Helena in the forest, or Lady Olivia meets Viola in the shops. Get learners to suggest some more ideas.</li> </ul>

- In pairs, learners decide who they are, then try to have a conversation. It doesn't have to be about something in the play, but encourage learners to think about what their character likes and dislikes, what they might say and how they might act.
- For support, give learners some language for starting and maintaining a conversation, for example:
  - Nice to meet you. I'm ...
  - How's it going?
  - Great. / Terrible.
  - Oh really? / Oh dear!
  - What do you think about ...?
  - Did you see ...?
  - What are you doing later?
- This activity could also be done as a mingle. For example, you could assign a different character from the play to each learner (if there are more learners than characters, two learners can be the same character or you could break the class into groups) and then ask them to imagine they are all at a party! What would the characters say to each other? Learners should mingle and make sure they speak to all the other characters.
- If your learners are familiar with several plays, try having a mixed-up party! For example, what would Olivia and Juliet talk about if they met at a party? What would Demetrius say to Claudio? At the end, learners can say what the most interesting conversation was that they had at the party!

### Newspaper or TV news report

<b>Challenge</b>	hard (a challenging activity to be used with stronger, more mature groups of learners)
<b>Time</b>	30–45 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	props and costumes for the TV news report (optional)
<b>Play(s)</b>	any
<b>1. Generate ideas for the news event</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose a play to focus on. Ask learners to brainstorm some of the dramatic parts. For example, <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> when Mercutio and Tybalt are killed, <i>Hamlet</i> when they fight, <i>Macbeth</i> when the army comes to the castle, or <i>Twelfth Night</i> when Sebastian arrives.</li> <li>• Ask learners to imagine that these events took place in modern times. Would they hear about it on TV, the internet or newspapers? Tell learners they are going to either write a newspaper report or make a TV/internet news report.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Write a newspaper report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If learners are going to write a newspaper report, talk about some of the features of a newspaper report that you'd like them to include. For example:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ an interesting headline</li> <li>○ a short summary of what happened</li> <li>○ more information about who, what, where, when, why and how</li> <li>○ the current situation</li> <li>○ quotes from the witnesses and people involved</li> <li>○ a picture.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Learners can work individually or in pairs to produce their newspaper report. Monitor and help as necessary.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you have covered several plays and learners are writing reports on various events in different plays, the reports could then be put together to make a whole newspaper!</li> </ul>
<b>3. Make a TV news report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If learners are going to make a TV/internet news report, talk about some of the roles involved, such as news anchor, reporters, witnesses, etc. Make a list, for example for <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> when Mercutio and Tybalt are killed, the roles needed might be:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ news anchor</li> <li>○ reporter</li> <li>○ Romeo</li> <li>○ police officer</li> <li>○ one of Tybalt's friends/family members</li> <li>○ one of Mercutio's friends/family members.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• More roles or scenes could be added, for example a reporter on the street where it happened interviewing a witness, a reporter at the court reporting on the trial, etc.</li> <li>• Learners work in groups. Depending on your learners, they can either choose roles or you can assign them. In their group, they should plan the news script. First, they should plan the order of who speaks. For example:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ news anchor in the studio</li> <li>○ reporter on the street where it happened, explaining the event and interviewing a witness</li> <li>○ back to news anchor in the studio</li> <li>○ reporter at the police station interviewing the police officer who arrested Romeo</li> <li>○ back to news anchor in the studio</li> <li>○ reporter outside the courtroom explaining what happened at the trial and interviewing Romeo as he comes out of court on his way to being banished</li> <li>○ back to news anchor in the studio.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Next the learners should write what they will say for their own part. Monitor and help as necessary.</li> <li>• Now learners should practise their lines. Monitor and help with pronunciation and intonation. When they are ready, they can stand up and physically rehearse in a corner of the room. You might like to do this activity over two lessons, if you think learners would prefer to practise their lines some more at home first, or even prepare costumes and props to bring in for the next lesson!</li> <li>• Finally, each group performs their news report while the teacher films!</li> </ul>

**Contributed by**

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