

NURSE THE VERSE: INTRODUCING SHAKESPEARE'S BLANK VERSE WITH SONNET STUDY, FOLIO CLUES, AND ACTIVE DRAMA APPROACHES

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2021

KEVIN LONG AND MARY T. CHRISTEL

Co-Authors of *Bring on the Bard: Active Drama Approaches
for Shakespeare's Diverse Student Readers*.

Kevin Long
Associate Professor of Theatre
Harper College
klong@harpercollege.edu

Mary T. Christel
Curriculum Developer
Timeline Theatre
christel.mary@gmail.com

Date and Time: Saturday 3:15-4:15

Room Assigned: Prairie Stone V

Readers of Shakespeare can feel intimidated by the exoticness of the plays' language, not to mention their verse form. Attention to clues Shakespeare embedded in his plays for his actors and retained in the First Folio help to demystify the verse conventions. This session focuses on strategies which combine First Folio excerpts with classroom play editions and selected sonnets to acquaint students with the Bard's clues and transform them into verse nurses and text detectives using close reading, focused text analysis, and active drama approaches suited to an ELA classroom, drawn from Long and Christel's *Bring on the Bard: Active Approaches for Shakespeare's Diverse Student Readers* (NCTE 2019).



KEVIN LONG Nominated for the 2015 Tony Award® for Excellence in Theatre Education is an Associate Professor of Theatre at Harper College, the recipient of the 2018 Motorola Solutions Foundation Endowed Award for Teaching Excellence, recipient of the 2012 Illinois Theatre Association Award for Excellence in College Theatre Teaching, and an Associate Member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society. Kevin is a nationally recognized expert in teaching Folio Technique and frequently presents his workshop "Shakespeare Whispers into Your Ear," which explores the language and theatre of Shakespeare using the 1623 First Folio. Kevin teaches Folio Technique for Chicago Shakespeare Theater's Education Department, Actors Training Center, and at various institutions and theatres across the country.

See also www.kevinlongdirector.com.



MARY T. CHRISTEL currently is the curriculum developer for TimeLine Theatre's Living History Program, which offers residencies and hosts performances for Chicago Public School Students. She has served as dramaturg for Harper's productions of *Too Heavy for your Pocket*, *Shakespeare in Love*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Mary writes about Shakespeare in contemporary film and popular culture.

Long, Kevin, and Mary T. Christel. *Bring on the Bard: Active Drama Approaches for Shakespeare's Diverse Student Readers*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 2019.



SONNET 116

Let me not to the marriage of true minds	1
Admit impediments. Love is not love	2
Which alters when it alteration finds	3
Or bends with the remover to remove.	4
O, no, it is an ever-fixèd mark	5
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;	6
It is the star to every wand'ring bark,	7
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.	8
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks	9
Within his bending sickle's compass come;	10
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,	11
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.	12
If this be error, and upon me proved,	13
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.	14

FOLIO TECHNIQUE TEXT CLUES



ECPHONESIS O

When Bill writes O in the text, this represents a cry of passion, emotion, etc.

REPEATED WORDS AND PHRASES

Repeated words or phrases may appear in the same or adjacent lines; however, repeated words and phrases may also appear between two characters. We need to build vocally on the repeated words and phrases as the character is choosing to repeat words to effect change. They *need* the repeated words.

“BIG BUT” WORDS

Transitional words help the audience follow the thoughts of the character. Through transitional words, Shakespeare is indicating a change of thought. It is then appropriate to give words (such as: *but, yet, therefore, wherefore, however, if, or, for, so, thus, etc.*) a little extra emphasis. **ALWAYS** stress all, now and long.

LISTS

Shakespeare loves lists. They are everywhere in his play. Lists = Build.

ANTITHESIS

Antithesis is the setting up of opposites in the text to help convey meaning to the audience. These are wonderful to act. It is important to use the language to paint specific pictures for the audience.

MONOSYLLABIC LINES

Using monosyllabic phrases, and lines, Shakespeare is telling you to slow down. The character is speaking something that is vitally important or difficult to say or understand.

COMMAS

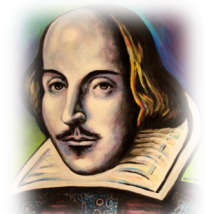
“I’ll have the French fries, with gravy.”

OTHER SUGGESTED SONNETS TO USE:

Sonnet 18 Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

Sonnet 29: When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes

Embedded Sonnet in *Romeo and Juliet*, Act 1, scene 5 (If I profane with my unworhiest Hand)



THANK YOU,
BILL!