

# **“STAND AND UNFOLD YOURSELF”**

**A Monograph on the  
Shakespeare & Company Research Study**

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*Harvard Project Zero  
from a report produced by the staff of  
the Shakespeare & Company Research Study<sup>1</sup>*

## INTRODUCTION

For twenty years, Shakespeare & Company, a classical professional theater company in Lenox, Massachusetts, has been committed to three simultaneous purposes: producing the plays of William Shakespeare as well as a repertory of other works, including new plays; professionally training actors; and teaching Shakespeare at elementary, secondary and undergraduate levels. The Company's ways of teaching Shakespeare evolved from their distinctive approach to rehearsal, performance, and their training of actors. This approach stands in stark contrast to traditional teaching in our public schools.

A team at Harvard Project Zero began research in 1995 in order to better understand learning and teaching in two of the Company's numerous education programs: *The Fall Festival of Shakespeare* and *The National Institute on Teaching Shakespeare*. Specifically, the team's purpose was to identify what the participants were learning and the principles, structures, and pedagogy at the foundation of those learning experiences.

The study began in July, 1995 and continued through two seasons of *The National Institute on Teaching Shakespeare* and *The Fall Festival of Shakespeare*. Project Zero staff visited these school programs, observed sessions, attended student performances, interviewed teacher and student participants, reviewed written materials, and talked with program faculty and administrators.

The central questions of this study were:

- Why do these programs work so well?
- What is it participants are actually learning?
- What is critical to the success of these programs?

The research team produced an extensive report of findings in 1998. This monograph is drawn from that report.

### "Stand and Unfold Yourself"

The tragedy of *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* begins with these lines.

Scene 1. Elsinore. A Platform before the Castle.

Francisco is at his post. Enter to him Bernardo.

Bernardo: Who's there?

Francisco: Nay, answer me; stand, and unfold yourself.

In a rehearsal of *Hamlet* conducted by one of the teaching artists from Shakespeare & Company, these lines, seemingly inconsequential, are examined as deeply and closely for possible meanings as any of the most famous lines from this play. Almost magically, as each line, phrase, and word is considered, meanings resonate both within the context of the play and in the context of the rehearsal.

"Stand and unfold yourself" has come to epitomize the work of Shakespeare & Company's education programs. First, that work is physical: it is about standing up. But it goes further. The work is also about "unfolding" and opening oneself—to the highest level

<sup>1</sup> The study has been conducted by a team of researchers from Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education: Barbara Andrews, Ellen Doris, Dawn Ellis, Jenna Moskowitz, Carol Philips, Shree Ram, Jennie Treeger. Steve Seidel is Principal Investigator. Sara Hendren and Denise Simon provided editorial assistance for the writing of this monograph.

Kevin Coleman is Director of Education at Shakespeare & Company.

Mary Hartman is Director of Education Programs at Shakespeare & Company. Tina Packer is Artistic Director of Shakespeare & Company. Dennis Krausnick is Director of Training at Shakespeare & Company. Christopher Sink is Managing Director of Shakespeare & Company.

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of literacy, to Shakespeare’s language, to the ideas and meanings contained in his words, to other people. At the same time, it is about standing and embodying the work. It is about revealing oneself—taking risks, and accepting and embracing the vulnerability inherent in those risks. It is about moving away from a sleepy, protective posture of being folded up, or folded into oneself, and moving toward a tall, open, awake, and graceful stance.

## OVERVIEW

Since 1978, Shakespeare & Company has maintained an education program dedicated to working with students and teachers in elementary, middle, high schools, and universities. This education program has developed simultaneously with the Company’s approaches to rehearsal, their performance aesthetic, and their distinctive actor training program.<sup>2</sup> Many of these foundational ideas are captured, albeit briefly, in the 1996 mission statement of the education programs. It begins with the charge “to bring the classical poetry and plays of Shakespeare alive and into the lives of as many students and teachers as possible.”<sup>3</sup>

The *Fall Festival of Shakespeare* has grown over the past 11 years into an annual project involving ten schools, approximately 40 artist-teachers and other Company members, and over 400 young people. The demand from students and schools wanting to participate continues to increase, and in 1999, the Company initiated a *Spring Festival of Shakespeare* in the eastern part of Massachusetts. The *National Institute on Teaching Shakespeare* was a month-long intensive institute for approximately twenty high school literature teachers, though teachers of other subject areas

also participated. A recent follow-up study of participants and the influence of their Institute experience on their teaching 2.2–3.5 years later reveals that benefits “continued or increased in the areas of teaching Shakespeare, teaching other texts, educational philosophy, and relationships with students (Philips, 1999).”<sup>4</sup>

During the twenty years since their establishment, there has been steady growth in the Company’s educational programs, as measured in both the range of programs offered and the demand for them. These programs are a major commitment for the Company, and command a budget roughly equal to that of their entire performance season. Today, Shakespeare & Company’s education programs have a budget of approximately \$700,000. Schools and school districts return year after year to request the Company’s programs. Students in the high schools that are part of *The Fall Festival of Shakespeare* usually choose to participate for three or four years. Many of the artists working as staff/faculty in the education programs stay on for many years despite the uncertain and sporadic nature of work in arts education.

Few arts education partnerships between arts organizations and schools have the benefit of two decades of continuous work and evolution. This study was an opportunity to explore the workings of a mature, developed, and highly successful arts education partnership.

## Why Worry About Studying Shakespeare?

Several factors in American public education suggest the special relevance of Shakespeare & Company’s educational programs. First, the plays of William Shakespeare are at the core of our high school literature curriculum, perhaps the only literature to occupy a place in the curriculum of virtually every high school in the country. At some point, nearly every graduate of an American high school will have been expected to read at least one of Shakespeare’s plays.

<sup>2</sup> All of the aspects of the Company’s work have evolved with and through the work of the Company’s founders: Kristin Linklater, Dennis Krausnick, and Tina Packer. Linklater’s approach to voice training for actors, which has an international reputation, and Packer’s ideas about the function of theater were the original impetus for the creation of the Company.

<sup>3</sup> Coleman, K., Hartman, M., and Lee, L. (1996). *The Mission Statement of the Shakespeare & Company Education Programs*. Internal Document. Lenox, MA; Shakespeare & Company.

<sup>4</sup> Philips, C. (1999). *Teachers’ Voices: A Case Study of Professional Development Associated with the National Institute on Teaching Shakespeare*. Unpublished document.

It would be hard to make this claim of any other author or specific body of work.

The team found no significant research investigating the success of most high schools in introducing students to these plays in ways that promote deep understanding and a long-term relationship between the students and Shakespeare's work. It certainly appears that the overwhelming majority of high school students have little deep engagement with the plays while in high school: indeed, most students find Shakespeare's work irrelevant and inaccessible. They leave high school with little understanding of Shakespeare's accomplishments or their own capacities to enter into those plays, as readers or audience, and to draw meaning and pleasure from them. This is not true, however, of the nearly 800 hundred students who participated in this study. On the contrary, they reported with virtual unanimity that they developed a strong sense of their own capacities to understand and engage deeply with Shakespeare's plays.

### **Bringing Students to the Highest Levels of Literacy**

Considerable documentation, not least the notoriously poor results of far too many public school students on standardized tests of reading skills, indicates that there is reason to worry that our high school students are not graduating as confident readers. There is little reason for optimism that many students are accomplished in understanding difficult texts, whether they be from the world's literature or from a physics text. Presently, our schools struggle to make sure all students master the levels of literacy involved in only basic decoding of texts. By contrast, reading, enjoying, and understanding any of Shakespeare's plays is a task that could easily be considered a hallmark of the highest levels of literacy.

How, then, is it that Shakespeare & Company's programs work so well to help various levels of readers enter the difficult and even cryptic language of Shakespeare?

One high school student who participated in the *Fall Festival of Shakespeare* provided a useful perspective

on the use of rehearsal techniques in studying Shakespeare. "In school we're just reading over the book: reading it to get to the next chapter, never with feeling in it or gratification. When I walked out of classes reading Shakespeare, I used to be confused as to what it was about. After you walk away from these rehearsals, you can really understand the scenes because of the many techniques used to go over the various interpretations of the text." Another student from a different high school remarked, "When Shakespeare & Company makes us go through things word by word if we don't understand them, it is weird how much you learn, and what doesn't leave your head."

Many participants also noted that their experience as active readers of complex texts in these programs was relevant well beyond the specific work they did with Shakespeare's plays—in entering math and physics texts as well as approaching other literature. One student described the text of these plays as a puzzle to "fragment, take apart, and fit together again." The serious attention Shakespeare & Company gives to the imaginative, emotional, and intellectual responses of students to these complex texts is the foundation of a pedagogy that embraces the most difficult texts as challenges well within the capacity of typical adolescents.

### **Refusing to Simplify**

Tina Packer, the Artistic Director of Shakespeare & Company, once reminded a group she was addressing that "words are older than we are." The respect for words—the worlds of meaning they contain—and a desire not to diminish or simplify those words drives the Company's approach to exploring complex texts. This respect for complexity is, perhaps, the deceptively simple core of a pedagogy. The texts they work with are so complex that most teachers feel compelled to simplify them in order for them to be understood or appreciated.

In every aspect of their pedagogy, the Shakespeare & Company artist-teachers guide their students away from the idea that there is one "right" interpretation of Shakespeare's meaning or one "right" way to play a

character or scene. Through the many exercises they’ve designed and their carefully considered patterns of questioning, they turn their students back toward themselves as the source of their own understandings. They want their students to locate their understandings in what sense and meaning the text has for them “in this moment” and not in some notion of what they think the text “should” mean.

Throughout the interviews conducted for this study, students articulated their own perceptions of the complexity of Shakespeare’s language and plays. One high school student, discussing how Shakespeare developed multiple facets to his characters, stated that these characters “all seem real in terms of what they are doing, and they have their own issues. Because everything [about the characters] is complex and real, totally filled to the brim with emotion.” Another student noted, “If you really read through all of the [plays], you come across all of life’s major issues and problems.” And another student suggested, “If you really look at what it says, it tells you everything. If you just take it for what you are saying, and not explore its whole worth, then that’s not true to Shakespeare.” Mary Hartman, Director of Education Programs, agrees: “It is through the language that all these categories of experience (physical, imaginative, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, aesthetic) are integrated. We respect the complexity, but it is the specific attention to the words that focuses thoughts and gives thinking its energy.”

Neither the words nor our relationship to them—our sense of their meanings—is straightforward or simple. Hartman suggests that the richness of Shakespeare’s language is, quite possibly, a reflection of the role of language in Elizabethan culture. “Shakespeare was writing in a time that may have been more linguistically rich than ours and, in turn, may have inspired a richer experience of language.” She notes that Shakespeare used no stage directions in his plays and that his theaters had virtually no scenery. “Everything had to be communicated through the language—setting, character, action, emotions, the story.”

“What keeps it complex, moment by moment, is that it is poetry.” Kevin Coleman, Director of Education insists. “The individual words keep it complex. The complexity is inherent in the text moment by moment, word by word.”

Coleman notes that language functions quite differently in our contemporary American culture. “The language we are most familiar with tries to pin things down. This is why we feel it is so important to work with poetic language: poetic language versus scientific language, or even hopeless language or slang. Poetic language is expansive and opens up. Scientific language reduces. In our over-emphasis on science and math in schools, in our love affair with technology, we have left our imaginations impoverished.”

Coleman’s deep concern resonates, especially in the context of the approach to reading Shakespeare taken in many American classrooms, where reading the play may be an assignment, but there is little hope that students, in fact, will do it. Instead, teachers bring videos to class, and the video format becomes the method of sharing the play—an uneasy truce between our desire for students to experience the plays and our confusion over how to help them actually enter the text directly.

As Lisa Schneier, a high school Language Arts teacher, suggests, “[W]e organize subject matter into a neat series of steps which assumes a profound uniformity among students. We sand away at the interesting edges of subject matter until it is so free from its natural complexities, so neat, that there is not a crevice left as an opening. All that is left is to hand it to them, scrubbed and smooth, so that they can view it as outsiders (Schneier, quoted in Duckworth, 1990).<sup>5</sup>

### Teaching and Learning for Understanding

The Company’s approach to teaching Shakespeare is also an elegant exemplar of teaching for deep understanding. As such, it deserves consideration from any teacher seriously committed to exploring pedagogy built on the ideas put forth by Perkins, Gardner,

<sup>5</sup> Duckworth, E. (1991). Twenty-four, Forty-two, I Love You: Keeping it Complex. *Harvard Education Review*. 61:1, 1-24.

Perrone and their colleagues in the Teaching for Understanding Project (Wiske, 1998).<sup>6</sup> According to these authors, understanding can only truly be assessed, and, for that matter, even achieved, through performance. Perkins (1998, p. 41) argues, “First, to gauge a person’s understanding at a given time, ask the person to do something that puts the understanding to work—explaining, solving a problem, building an argument, constructing a product. Second, what learners do in response not only shows their level of current understanding but very likely advances it. By working through their understanding in response to a particular challenge, they come to understand better.”<sup>7</sup>

In the pedagogy of the *Fall Festival of Shakespeare*, the performance of understanding is literal and, in a sense, high stakes—there will be several hundred people out in the auditorium watching. Of course, the purpose of the Festival performances is not critical judgment, but the sharing of the experience of Shakespeare’s great works. However, these performances are not simply school-room exercises: they are authentic acts of communication, culture and community. When they are successful, they are demonstrations of deep understanding that make the complex and difficult world of Shakespeare’s texts lucid, vibrant, relevant and moving to everyone in the auditorium.

### Moving toward Authentic Projects in the Literature Curriculum

One of our concerns in this study was to examine just how the Company’s education programs represent alternatives to contemporary schooling and in what ways they reflect elements of the last decades of education reform in America. As one of the oldest and most fully developed of the educational theater programs in the country, Shakespeare & Company offers lessons for other reformers and alternatives to

traditional schooling. One perspective on the Company’s work in schools relates to project-based learning, in this case in the literature curriculum.

Project-based learning has roots in the philosophy of John Dewey and the educational experiments pioneered by William Kirkpatrick, Dewey’s contemporary and colleague from Teachers College in New York City. Dewey, Kirkpatrick, and countless others since, including many at Project Zero, have found in project-based learning an alternative to the desk-bound, transmission-based approach of most traditional classrooms. With projects, students get to work on solving authentic problems, working in groups, using the materials and methods of the professions, and creating products or performances.

In a framework for considering the “rigor and relevance” of project-based learning, Steinberg (1998)<sup>8</sup> identifies six elements—authenticity, academic rigor, applied learning, active exploration, adult relationships, assessment practices—that she argues are critical to the design of powerful projects. In brief, this study revealed significant evidence that Shakespeare & Company’s work points to an affirmative answer to each of the questions stated below, suggesting that their work stands as an important model of rigorous project-based learning.

#### Authenticity

- Is it a problem or question that might actually be tackled by an adult at work or in the community?

#### Academic rigor

- Does it challenge students to use methods of inquiry central to one or more disciplines? (e.g., to think like a scientist)

#### Applied learning

- Does the project lead students to acquire and use competencies expected in high performance work organizations (e.g. teamwork, appropriate use of technology, problem-solving, communications)?

<sup>6</sup> Wiske, M.S. (1998). *Teaching for Understanding: Linking Research with Practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

<sup>7</sup> Perkins, D. (1998). *The Intelligent Eye: Learning to Think by Looking at Art*. Santa Monica, CA: Getty Center for Education in the Arts.

<sup>8</sup> Steinberg, A. (1998). *Real Learning, Real Work: School-To-Work as High School Reform*. New York: Routledge.

**Active exploration**

- Are students expected to communicate what they are learning through presentations and performances?

**Adult relationships**

- Do students have an opportunity to work closely with at least one adult with relevant expertise and experience?

**Assessment practices**

- Do students reflect regularly on their learning, using clear project criteria that they have helped to set and do adults from outside the classroom help students develop a sense of the real world standards for this type of work (1998)?

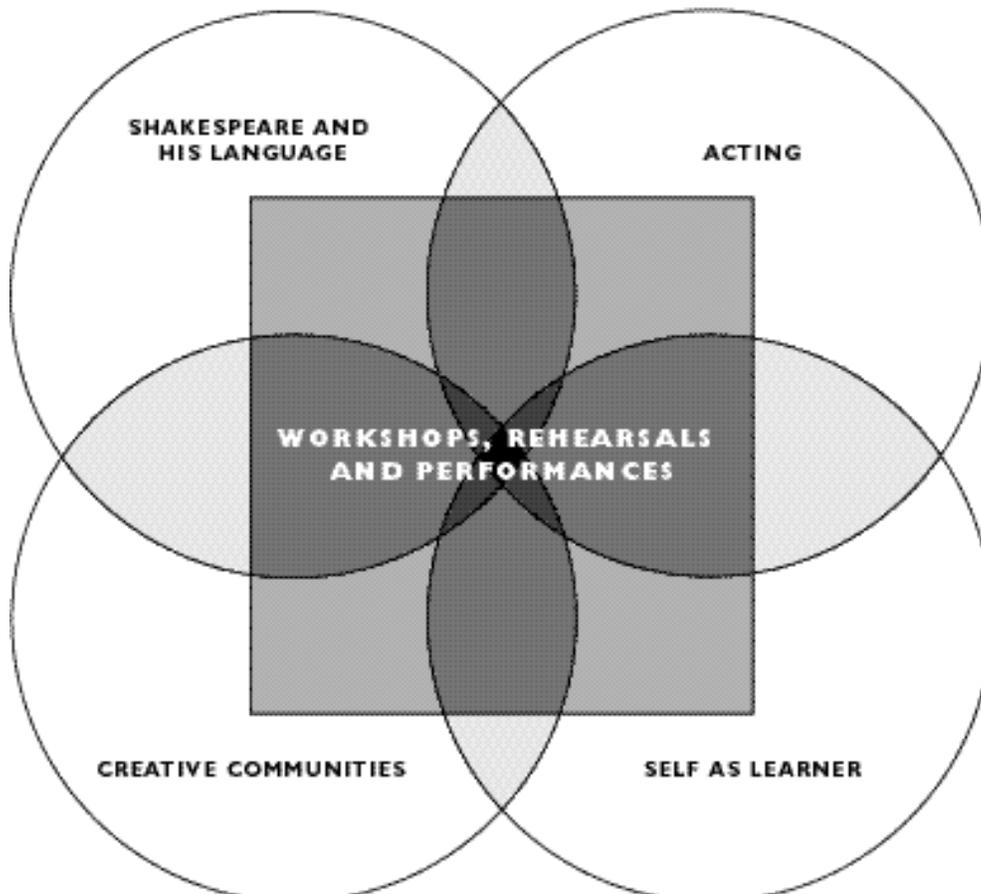
**Learning in Four Realms at Once**

Participants in the *Fall Festival of Shakespeare* and the *National Institute on Teaching Shakespeare* identified four major realms of learning they experienced in these programs:

- learning about Shakespeare and his language, and ways of reading the text of his plays
- learning about acting
- learning about working in creative communities
- learning about oneself: linking self-knowledge to social and intellectual development.

The diagram below suggests the way in which these realms of learning emanate from the many experiences participants had with each other and the artist-teachers in workshops, rehearsals and performances. Not

**LEARNING IN FOUR REALMS AT ONCE**



surprisingly, the research revealed that the realms overlap and interconnect.

Specific aspects of these realms are delineated in greater detail in the following four sections.

### Learning About Shakespeare and His Language

*“...and there was this unfolding, this flowering...”*

A 1995 *National Institute* participant describing her experience exploring a passage from *Much Ado About Nothing*

- Shakespeare’s plays are engaging, powerful, funny, moving, provocative, and full of personal relevance. His work, upon careful and active reading and exploration, is “universal and timeless;” Shakespeare is not, as many previously thought, a “dusty, old dead guy.”
- Reading Shakespeare’s plays is an active process of interpretation, and the plays themselves are open to divergent interpretations. Indeed, it is in exploring divergent interpretations that the complexity and richness of the plays becomes most apparent.
- Shakespeare’s language is full of ambiguity and multiple meanings—a reflection of human experience.
- When reading Shakespeare, one can build the confidence as well as strategies for reading many other kinds of complex texts (mathematical theorems, for example), but most especially poetry and drama.

### Learning About Acting

*“Shakespeare wrote plays; actors were called players; they played in a playhouse. Play is meeting him on his terms. He wrote this stuff to be played.”*

Kevin Coleman

- Acting, or embodying the language, is a very effective way to understand what is happening in a dramatic text.
- Interpretations and understandings of a text are not static and, in fact, can evolve and change

frequently. Further, one can adopt a disposition to seek out deeper understandings through active engagement with the interpretations of others and a resistance to settling on a single interpretation.

- Acting requires making sense of language on multiple levels (narrative, psychological, emotional).
- That acting requires embodying a text and, therefore, involves the body, voice, feelings, text, action, movement, self-awareness, and awareness of others.
- That one’s imagination is an essential tool in visualizing and, in turn, understanding a dramatic text.

### Learning About Working in Creative Communities

*“Everyone counts.”*

Kevin Coleman

- A strong sense of community can be developed with people who share a common interest in Shakespeare by struggling together to make sense of his plays, especially through the challenging approach of acting the texts.
- Each individual has an important contribution to make to the work of the group.
- Rules, high expectations, and discipline are an important element of the life of a creative community.
- Inclusion is a powerful and positive principle, especially as it validates one’s own presence in a group.
- In a challenging collective project, each individual may well be pushed beyond his or her sense of personal limits. In this collective effort, each person deserves support and attention from the group, and the ultimate success of the group’s effort is dependent on providing that support and attention.
- By suspending judgment and fostering open communication, especially about feelings and conflicting ideas, it can be easier to keep an open mind to other viewpoints and new perspectives.

### Learning About Oneself as a Learner

*“I have opened myself up to risks, rejections, and criticisms; life is sweeter.”*

1995 *National Institute* participant

- Knowing and trusting one’s ideas and feelings and keeping one’s mind open to diverse and contradictory ideas is integrally linked to personal growth and intellectual development.
- Learning about other people’s ideas, feelings, and experiences (including characters in plays) provides perspectives that support coming to deeper self-knowledge and awareness.
- Treating oneself well, and being treated well by others—with kindness and generosity—increases the likelihood of and willingness to take risks.
- One can take approaches to problem-solving that were used effectively in rehearsal and adapt and use them in other areas of life.
- Producing and performing plays, just as most vocations, require managing limited time, multiple responsibilities, and competing demands.

### How Can Artmaking Inform Teaching?

Through extensive interviews and conversations with the faculty and directors of the Company’s education programs, it became clear that the principles underlying their program design and pedagogy came significantly from their own work, as individuals and as a company, in making theater. This is not surprising. Their work as artist-teachers in schools is constantly juxtaposed with the demands of preparing and mounting a season of performances. They move seamlessly, if not effortlessly, from acting to directing to training professional actors to teaching adolescents or adults to managing and administrating—sometimes all in a single week or even a single day.

Listed below are the principles that drive the practices of Shakespeare & Company’s education programs. These principles are extracted from inter-

views with Company administrators and the artist-teachers, and discerned from extensive observations of rehearsals, classes, workshops, and performances.

- Shakespeare’s plays articulate virtually every significant aspect of human nature, human relations and emotional experience.
- Studying Shakespeare can and should be, simultaneously, an investigation into the complexity of human relations, the capacity of language (written and performed) to express a very broad range of human experience, and the glory and pleasure of classic narratives and dramas.
- Studying Shakespeare’s plays is an enterprise of extraordinary complexity and, fundamentally, an interpretive process—a process in which each reader/actor must make personal sense of the texts.
- Acting the plays is a way of arriving at insights, making connections, and developing appreciation and understandings of Shakespeare that are not readily available through lecture, formal discourse, or silent reading.
- Acting is a process that, though extremely demanding, can be learned by anyone.
- The deepest understanding is dependent on the learner subjectively valuing the experience (of reading, acting, engaging with the text) as it is happening within and for oneself. Such understanding should not be seen in relation to an external reward (a grade, a teacher’s approval) or to the idea of finding an objective “right answer.”
- Participants must choose to participate as a pre-condition to learning. The most valuable learning happens when the learner chooses and desires to learn.

These pedagogical principles have evolved over twenty years. In this process, particular qualities of the Company’s approach to making theater have had major influence on their approach to professional actor training and the teaching of Shakespeare in schools.

Some of the most important of those artistic perspectives and practices include:

1. **Valuing “truthfulness.”** Guiding one’s actions in rehearsal and performance by a rigorous awareness of what feels “true” or “honest” or “genuine” at that moment.
2. **“Encouraging openness to new possibilities.”** Constant effort to resist the temptation to find and settle on one way of playing a scene, line, or moment.
3. **“Presence.”** Constant effort to be fully present with each person on the stage and in the room.
4. **“Playing” Shakespeare.** Actors in Elizabethan England were called “players.” The aim here is to approach acting Shakespeare’s plays in a spirit of play. Fun is a crucial element, as are the rules that guide this play and the discipline required of serious players in any setting.
5. **“Permission to Fail.”** Everyone shares responsibility to take risks and support others in taking risks. This means, first and foremost, that failure is not only quite acceptable, but necessary and expected.
6. **Generosity.** Everyone shares responsibility to approach the work and their colleagues with a spirit of generosity, of offering to help, give, and share whatever they have or perceive may be needed by others.
7. **Visceral language.** A commitment to work physically with the text in order to explore its visceral qualities and the meanings that may only be discovered through “embodying” it. Further, a celebration of the integration of intellectual, physical, emotional, imaginative, and spiritual responses to each word of the text.
8. **“Freeing the natural voice.”** A commitment to employing training techniques with the objective of a voice in direct contact with emotional impulse, shaped by intellect but not inhibited by it.

The study also identified the following conditions as essential to acting as practiced by the Company and as a mode of learning:

- a safe environment (physical and emotional),
- an environment in which all ideas are considered and valued—where hard work is mixed with humor and playfulness,
- a discipline and work ethic that fosters a sense of personal responsibility to the work and the group,
- supportive and respectful relationships among everyone in the group,
- opportunities for learners to find personal points of engagement and to make choices about significant aspects of their work and learning,
- frequent and ample opportunities for learners to be actively engaged in the various aspects of the work of acting (including watching, listening, and responding to others’ work),
- support and respect for the subjective knowledge of the learner and the individual connection that the learner makes to the text, the play studied, and the work process,
- appreciation for the contributions scholarship makes to understanding Shakespeare, and opportunities to integrate insights from scholarship with insights from acting the text,
- opportunities to perform for witnesses (artist-teachers, fellow cast members, classmates, audiences),
- opportunities to reflect on one’s work, both individually and collectively.

## What are the Qualities of the Artist-Teachers of Shakespeare & Company?

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1. They are all artists.
2. They share a common aesthetic—a common body of knowledge about Shakespeare and the related disciplines necessary to perform his works.
3. They have a good working knowledge and abiding curiosity about the plays.
4. They have a proven progression within the rehearsal process that they follow or around which they improvise; in turn, this progression gives form and depth to their activities.
5. They have co-workers, co-directors, more experienced practitioners, and master teachers to learn from and consult with regularly.
6. They are not intimidated by strong emotion and high energy.
7. They are infinitely interested in the students, and in creating a meaningful educational experience, and are committed to the goals of the program.
8. They challenge themselves as they challenge their students; and specifically for the artist-teachers in schools, their students see them performing or directing during the summer season at Shakespeare & Company. They succeed and fail in public.
9. They develop strong relationships with the school administrators, teachers, and parents.
10. They have access to “experts”—fight directors, technical directors, sound, light, and costume designers, and dance instructors.
11. They remember what it was like to be in high school.
12. They are in the schools for a limited period of time for a special project.

Developed by Kevin Coleman, Shakespeare & Company

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## How Can More Adolescents Have This Experience?

This study found that a pedagogical approach built on the artistic practices of theatrical rehearsal and performance was highly successful in engaging adolescents and adults in the study of Shakespeare’s plays. Since these plays represent a core element of the high school literature curriculum and, in a sense, are among the ultimate challenges to both high school students and teachers, the success of Shakespeare & Company’s programs raise important and difficult questions about how more adolescents can have similar experiences.

The following questions, though somewhat specific to this situation, are the kinds of questions that come up in consideration of virtually any replication/adaptation effort.

- What training, support, and experience are needed to create new programs that are faithful to the philosophy and design of these models?
- Shakespeare & Company’s education programs are embedded in a rich community of artists engaged in professional productions. Can people working in settings with far more limited professional and artistic resources still create and sustain effective programs?
- Starting new arts education programs is expensive. Can financial assistance be secured to induce the kind of training and support needed to create programs modeled on this work?
- What is a reasonable expectation for the number of years it might take for a new program to fulfill its potential?
- How can a group insure that the creation of programs modeled on the Company’s educational pedagogies and approaches is a creative learning process and not simply an imitative one?

The study further identified conditions that are important to (though no guarantee of) the success of efforts to support replication/adaptation. Those conditions are:

- supportive local organizations (theaters, arts agencies, and schools, for example) to insure that the individuals who commit to this work are given institutional support,
- a community of artists and educators with an inclination toward this kind of work,
- a community with an interest in the arts and arts education, one which will value and support innovative arts programs,
- financial support, both for the new program and for a continued relationship with Shakespeare & Company staff.

## **CONCLUSION**

The realms of learning described by the participants in these programs offer another view of what the arts can create, contribute, and teach when carried out in favorable circumstances by well trained artist-teachers. The programs created by Shakespeare & Company provide examples of excellence in professional development, teaching, and learning to be studied and adapted by other artist-teachers, classroom teachers, and teacher-trainers.

Further, they provide powerful evidence that on the highest levels of literacy, in the realms of social and personal growth and development, and in the development of high-order thinking skills, the arts provide an ideal setting for multi-faceted and profound learning experiences.