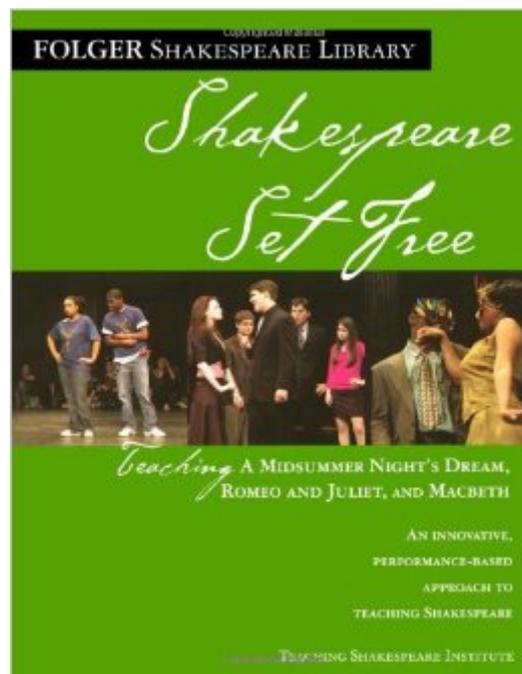


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# Shakespeare Set Free: Teaching Romeo & Juliet, Macbeth & Midsummer Night (Folger Shakespeare Library)



## Synopsis

The Folger Shakespeare Library is one of the world's leading centers for scholarship, learning, and culture. The Folger is dedicated to advancing knowledge and increasing understanding of Shakespeare and the early modern period; it is home to the world's largest Shakespeare collection and one of the leading collections of books and materials of the entire early modern period (1500–1750). Combining a world-class research library and scholarly programs; leadership in curriculum, training, and publishing for K–12 education; and award-winning performing arts, exhibitions, and lectures, the Folger is Shakespeare's home in America. This volume of the Shakespeare Set Free series is written by institute faculty and participants, and includes the latest developments in recent scholarship. It bristles with the energy created by teaching and learning Shakespeare from the text and through active performance, and reflects the experience, wisdom, and wit of real classroom teachers in schools and colleges throughout the United States. In this book, you'll find the following:

- Clearly written essays by leading scholars to refresh teachers and challenge older students
- Michael Tolaydo's brilliant and accessible technique for classroom teaching through performance
- Day-by-day teaching strategies that successfully and energetically immerse students of every grade and skill level in the language and in the plays themselves – created, taught, and written by real teachers

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Do you have HS students who just don't get Shakespeare? Don't even bother because of the language? Here's the book to break the Shakespeare language barrier. I bought this book for a "secondary English class" at college, since then I have bought one for a friend who teaches drama and I have suggested it to all the 9th and 10th grade English teachers at my high school. The three Shakespeare plays this lesson book covers: *Midsummer's Night Dream*, *MacBeth*, and *Romeo and Juliette*. The authors set it up nicely with a calendar for each selection and approximately 22 lessons in each selection. They provided the objective, the materials list, the lesson, any handouts, homework ideas and questions for reflection. All lessons are formatted to include some form of kinesiology, i.e. the students will have to get out of their seats and move around. Some of my favorites...tossing lines, yelling insults, building a shoebox set and stressing the subtext. There are also many essays in the beginning to help the teacher discover more about the connection to main themes and ideas within the Shakespeare experience. And the best thing was...I am now using some of the ideas for other text which are difficult for the HS student!

I have used this book to teach *Macbeth* to 7th graders, and I know several high school teachers who swear by it for grades 9 - 12. It contains helpful critical articles to keep teachers up to date on the latest research in the field, as well as day by day lesson plans. Each unit plan is for about 30 days and contains a variety of performance, film analysis, and close reading lessons as well as quizzes, project topics, and final assignments. Lessons can be easily adapted to fit any grade level, required lesson plan structure, or set of state standards. This is the only book you need to buy.

If you struggle with the challenge of motivating a bunch of squirrely ninth graders to read *Romeo and Juliet* in the spring, struggle no longer (well, at least, don't struggle as much). I have used this book for almost 20 years now and have had nothing but success using the day-by-day plans for *Romeo and Juliet*. This is the one resource you need. I supplement with a few more activities on figurative language, but you'll be amazed by what your students can do and read after using this resource. I've used sections of the *Macbeth* unit with middling luck. It's far too easy for seniors, but some lessons add a bit of fun for AP students. I used the day-by-day plans on *Macbeth* with a group of 8th graders once, and that was quite successful. It's too simple for AP kids, though. The *MND* unit wasn't as successful for me. I used parts of it once, but the unit wasn't as thorough as the *Romeo and Juliet* unit. The price of this book is definitely worth the *RJ* unit. My only complaint is that this book isn't bound more heartily: I've had to buy 2 more copies over the years because they wear out from so much use.

I am sure this is a fantastic resource for a classroom setting, but I somehow failed to realize that I would need a classroom full of students to utilize the lessons. I only have 1 child at the appropriate age, so I will be sending this back. It does look very good for the right setting, but it isn't going to work for me.

This book, along with Nancie Atwell's books and Harvey Daniels' *Literature Circles*, has become one of the few commercial sources from which I have directly lifted lessons. The "From Page to Performance" activity alone was worth the purchase of the book. I adapted the Midsummer unit to suit my 8th graders and the time I had left in the school year--and it was terrific. I just graded the essays on their final exams and it's clear that they understood and appreciated the play. It was even more clear from their scene performances. And their scene performances showed that they also *enjoyed* it. I highly recommend this resource for teachers who would prefer that their students enjoy and look forward to studying Shakespeare. If you are hoping to suck every possible drop of enjoyment out of the study, then do continue with the boring question packets and miserable round-robin reading.

I teach freshmen English - this is a guide for teaching that would work in a theater class, but not so much in a regular English classroom. Most of this is structured in a very time consuming, group discussion, everyone participates kind of way - which is GREAT! But in reality, I don't have time to actually do. We spend six weeks on R&J as it is, and this would make it take even longer since we actually have to teach the state standards and not just the "feel" of the play.

This book saved my life! I am currently student teaching a 12th grade English class. I had not read "Macbeth" as a student and I was terrified to teach it as an educator. After doing loads of research, this book was the cherry on top of the cake. The Unit Plan it provides is incredibly well put together. Though I did not follow it exactly I used a wealth of information and activities from it. The plan focuses largely on the performance of the play. Students are introduced to such concepts as stress, inflection, subtext, etc. I am very grateful I had this as a resource!

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