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That Lady is Loca! or Speech as the Main Method of Characterization in Shakespeare's Plays

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Introduction

In my first year of teaching, I taught 9th grade Literature and Composition at a private school in Miami, on a campus that provided small classes and a modified curriculum for students with learning disabilities. The course required me to teach Macbeth. I was fresh out of graduate school and had a lot of ideas about how to make learning fun and accessible for my students. I ordered a modified version of the play with images and a combination of the original and modern text, and we acted out entire scenes with various props made out of whatever was in the room. On the day that we finished reading Act I, in which Lady Macbeth wants and plans the murder of Duncan, one of my students said, "Oye, Ms. S - that lady is loca!" ("Hey, Ms. S - that lady is crazy!") After I finished laughing, I asked the student to tell me why he thought that. He replied that she was messed up. I again asked him to explain why. He said that everything she said made her sound like that. I asked the class their opinions and we launched into a lively discussion about whether Lady Macbeth was good or bad as both a person and as a wife. Some of the comments students made included, "She said that she would think his love was weak if he was weak - if my girl said that, I'd be gone!"; "She's a good wife - she tells him there's no way they'll fail as long as he is courageous!" It's been six years since then, and I've taught several other Shakespearean plays; however, I can still remember that student's comment and the ensuing discussion, which is what helped me shape this curriculum unit.

Four years ago I moved back to Charlotte, North Carolina and took a job teaching at Providence High School in the Exceptional Children's Department. Providence High School is one of 172 schools in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District, which serves just over 134,000 students. Of those students, roughly 48% qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. The ethnic distribution falls mostly to African-American (41.8%) and Caucasian (33.7%), but there is also 15.5% Hispanic, 4.7% Asian, and 4.3% American Indian / multiracial¹. For the last two years I have taught a variety of classes, including resource and inclusion English 9. A resource classroom is one in which a special education teacher provides instruction in the subject area to a class made up of students with varying disabilities, all of whom have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). An inclusion classroom, on the other hand, is a class made up of students with IEPs as well as general education students, where instruction is provided by both a regular education content area teacher and a special education teacher. Students in a resource classroom typically need more individualized and direct instruction than those at the inclusion level of service.

There are several circumstances, such as my principal switching schools and teacher cuts in the district, that have left it uncertain what classes I am going to teach next year. It will be either English 9, in which *Romeo and Juliet* is part of the curriculum, or English 12, in which *Macbeth* and another play of my choosing are included in the curriculum. Due to the fact that last I heard, I was teaching the English 12 class, I am designing this unit using *Macbeth*. The unit can be easily altered to fit any of Shakespeare's plays, however. In each of the grade levels, the students are expected to understand the methods of direct (the author stating what a character is like) and indirect characterization (the author showing what a character is like using a variety of methods), albeit at different levels of understanding. Direct characterization is simple for students with learning disabilities, as most of them easily grasp the literal. It is what must be interpreted that creates problems for these students, who have not only reading disabilities, but also difficulties with processing and higher level thinking skills such as interpreting, inferring, drawing conclusions and making predictions. Indirect characterization presents problems at the higher level of thinking to my students because they must first be able to recognize that a character's traits are being shown to them by the author or playwright through a variety of methods before being able to analyze characters based on the characterization provided to them.

Objectives

In a play, there really is no direct characterization; in other words, the playwright does not tell the reader/observer, "Macbeth is an ambitious man," for example. In a play, all characterization, or analysis of characters, is dependent on the different types of indirect characterization. Indirect characterization is usually demonstrated through a character's speech, private thoughts, actions, looks, and/or the effect he or she has on other characters. In this unit, students will focus on speeches as the main method of characterization that Shakespeare uses to create his characters. The students will be able to identify the other methods of indirect characterization within the speeches and work to analyze characters based on bringing all those aspects together. Through their analyses, the students will also work through two very true but seemingly contradictory aspects of speech: in one respect, they must be aware that they reveal the type of people they are through the things they say and the manner in which those things are said; on the other hand, they must be careful to not always take what other people are saying at face value. The speeches we will focus on in this unit will demonstrate both of those concepts, and students will discuss how both can be true even though they appear to conflict. Additionally, the students will improve reading skills such as making inferences and predictions and drawing conclusions (see Appendix A for state objectives).

Instructional Information

The information contained in this section is here so that any teacher accessing the unit can find all relevant information for teaching the unit in one place. Since this unit is designed for students in a resource classroom, it is important to consider not only information about Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, and methods of characterization, but also to include information regarding the makeup of a resource classroom and the type of instruction required. More information specific to how to instruct those students will be in the strategy section of the unit. This section will discuss each of these facets of the unit.

Exceptional Children

As I stated before, in my resource English class, I will be the sole instructor for delivering the 12th grade English curriculum to 8 - 12 students with disabilities. The students will have varying disabilities, ranging from specific learning disabilities in reading, math, and/or written expression to autistic, emotional disturbances or traumatic brain injuries. Each student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) with goals and objectives specific to his or her disability. My instruction must address not only the North Carolina curriculum standards, but also the goals listed on each student's IEP. The unit plan will contain strategies and instruction specific to teaching students with disabilities; however, it can easily be used for a general education classroom, as every teacher should strive to address varying ability levels within his or her own classroom.

Shakespeare

The following information ² can be used as background information for the students:

William Shakespeare was born to John and Mary Shakespeare in April of 1564 in a small town named Stratford-upon-Avon. His birth was during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. While Shakespeare did attend school as a youth, he did not go on to a university. This fact has actually caused some to question whether or not he actually wrote any plays - the argument is that he was not educated enough to use such rich and advanced language. There is no real evidence to support that argument, however. When Shakespeare was 18 years old, he married Anne Hathaway, who was 26 and pregnant. Their first daughter, Susanna, was born six months after they married. Two years later, in 1585, his wife gave birth to twins - Hamnet and Judith. Hamnet died when he was only 11 years old, though, and it deeply affected Shakespeare. Some cite Hamlet as proof of his sadness over the loss. There is very little information about Shakespeare during the years of 1585-1592. This period of time has been referred to as the "Lost Years." The next we hear of him was in 1592 in London, England, where he has become a well-known actor and playwright. In 1594, Shakespeare was a charter member of a theatrical company called the Lord Chamberlain's Men, which in 1603 became the royal company, the King's Men. From 1599, the company acted at the Globe Theater, of which Shakespeare owned one-tenth. It cost only one penny for admission at the theater, and this allowed audience members to stand at the sides and in front of the stage. These spectators were referred to as "groundlings." It was only one penny more for a more comfortable seat and a better location. In 1613, a cannon fired during a performance of Henry VIII ignited the thatched roof and burned the theater to the ground. The theater was quickly rebuilt with a tiled roof. The Globe was closed by the Cromwell government in 1642 and demolished in 1644 ³. In 1989, the foundations of the Globe were discovered, and, led by the late Sam Wanamaker, construction began in 1993 near the original site to build a new Globe Theater. The new Globe was completed in 1996 and Queen Elizabeth II opened the theater in June of 1997 with a production of Henry V ⁴. Shakespeare died in April of 1616 at the age of 52, which was almost 20 years longer than the average life expectancy of 35 years during that time. In his lifetime, Shakespeare published 38 plays, 154 sonnets, and 2 narrative poems on classical subjects. His plays fall into the following categories: comedies, tragedies, and histories; some consider there to be a fourth category, as well, that of the romantic tragicomedy. An interesting fact that could be introduced to students is that there is speculation that Shakespeare had a hand in writing the King James version of the Bible. Evidence that has been cited to prove that fact is that if one goes to Psalm 46, the word "shake" appears 46 words from the beginning and the word "spear" appears 46 words from the end. This is obviously just a theory, but students may find it interesting.

The Play: Macbeth

The following plot summary ⁵ can be used to introduce the play to the students, or an alternative version may be used for plot introduction (see Strategy section below).

Macbeth and Banquo, two of King Duncan's generals, meet three strange women on their way home from suppressing a rebellion. The women prophecy that Macbeth will be given the title of Thane of Cawdor and then become King of Scotland, and that Banquo's heirs shall be kings. As a way of thanking Macbeth for his success in recent battles, King Duncan does in fact name Macbeth the Thane of Cawdor upon his return. Macbeth writes a letter to his wife to fill her in on the prophecy and his new title. She vows to help him become king, no matter what it takes. After Macbeth gets home, Duncan comes to visit. Macbeth and his wife, Lady Macbeth, devise a plan to get the guards drunk and then kill King Duncan and blame it on the guards. Duncan's sons find his body and quietly leave, afraid that someone will come after them also. Macduff, a nobleman from Scotland, arrives at the same time. Macbeth does get elected as king following Duncan's murder, but he feels pretty bad about what he did. He arranges for Banquo and his son to be murdered (because of the women's prophecy that Banquo's heirs would be kings). Banquo is killed, but his son gets away. At a banquet later on, Macbeth sees Banquo's ghost and begins to act rather odd. Macbeth goes to find the women with the prophecies and find out what is in store for him. They tell him that he will be safe until Birnam Wood (the forest) comes to Dunsinane (his castle). They also tell him that he cannot be harmed by anyone born of a woman, and that the Scottish succession will come from Banquo's son. Macbeth goes a little crazy with power and kills a lot of people, including Macduff's family. Macduff and Malcolm, one of Duncan's sons, decide to lead an army against Macbeth. Macbeth thinks he is safe until someone tells him Birnam Wood is moving towards him. The soldiers in Malcolm's army are actually approaching the castle using tree branches as camouflage. Around this same time, Lady Macbeth has started to go crazy, walking and talking in her sleep, and she ends up killing herself. Macduff challenges Macbeth to fight, and Macbeth still thinks he is safe, until he learns that Macduff was "from his mother's womb, untimely ripped," or born of a Caesarian (so NOT of woman born). Macbeth realizes he is doomed and Macduff wins. Macduff brings Macbeth's head to Malcolm, who declares peace and is crowned king.

Characterization

One of the main goals of this unit is for students to be able to analyze characters by examining how Shakespeare used indirect characterization to show his characters to the reader/audience member/etc. There are two main modes of characterization that authors use: direct characterization, which is when the author states very clearly what a character is like; and indirect, which is when the author chooses to show the reader what a character is like. Indirect characterization employs several different ways of showing the reader what a character is like, including the use of a character's speech, his or her actions, the character's private thoughts, the effect he or she has on other characters in the play, story, novel, etc., and the character's physical appearance. In a play, there is little to no chance of any direct characterization, since the "author" never speaks.

I have always taught the different types of indirect characterization as being separate from the others. In the seminar Shakespeare and the Human Character, however, during a discussion about plot vs. character vs. thought vs. speech, Paul Fry stated that all Shakespearean speeches showed all four of those levels and could be tilted or viewed in whichever light was necessary. This theory rang true to me in terms of indirect characterization, as well. One might say that at any given moment, there may be several overlapping types of indirect characterization, one being more dominant than another. Another discussion in our seminar centered

on the fact that the speeches that Shakespeare's characters present actually demonstrate all the other types of indirect characterization within the speeches. This is the concept that will be focused on in the unit.

Shakespeare and Characterization

The following information is pulled from several sources as a fund of knowledge for someone teaching this unit. While it is important for students to learn about Shakespeare as a person and his methods of characterization separately, it is also important for there to be some discussion of the relation that Shakespeare has to the process of creating characters.

An important aspect of understanding and analyzing characters is to consider the importance of character development from a historical perspective and in relation to Shakespeare's plays. Greek philosopher Aristotle wrote about the different aspects of plays, including the importance (or lack thereof) of characters. His writings state that the plot is the driving force behind the play and the characters are ways to make the plot more interesting. He made several points about characters, the most significant being that characters should be a slightly better version of ourselves ⁶. We see this in Shakespeare with the characters making decisions that we ourselves might make, but the characters are kings or other noblemen upon whom the welfare of the state hinges. William Hazlitt, on the other hand, believed that characters are the most important part in a play and that all the other parts - politics, plot, religion, etc. - were barely even secondary to the characters ⁷. It seems that Shakespeare most likely agreed with Hazlitt. Harold Bloom, the Sterling Professor of Humanities at Yale University, states that Shakespeare "did not like to devise plots - he stole them wherever and whenever he could - with both hands. He was not interested in action. He was immensely interested in men and women ⁷."

It has been argued that Shakespeare's characters are superior to those of any other writer in history. Dr. Samuel Johnson, in "Preface to Shakespeare," stated that Shakespeare "holds up to his readers a faithful mirror of manners and of life", and that he "has no heroes; his scenes are occupied only by men, who act and speak as the reader thinks that he should himself have spoken or acted on the same occasion" ⁸. Johnson says that we owe Shakespeare everything, which Bloom translates to mean that Shakespeare has taught us to understand human nature ⁹. It can be said that Shakespeare's characters are truly human in the sense that they are so complex - it is nearly impossible to 100% love them or 100% hate them, and this detail makes them more 'human' than some other fictional characters. Closely connected to this fact is that Shakespeare's characters are like those in life, to be shown to the reader rather than described to him or her ¹⁰. This detail can be explained to students as the process by which they get to know each other: we don't walk around carrying placards that state, "I am a nice person" or "I will talk about you behind your back." We must make our own observations about each other based on a variety of different things, similar to the methods of indirect characterization.

In an interview with Charlie Rose on November 2, 1998, Harold Bloom stated that he bases his thesis - that Shakespeare invented the human - on Samuel Johnson's idea that Shakespeare's extraordinary skill comes from the "Creation of Distincts - characters that differ absolutely from one another and from every other literary character or representation and who speak differently from every other character ⁷." Bloom said that he also gives credit to William Hazlitt, who in his book, *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays*, states that there never was such a comprehensive talent for the delineation of character. Among several other qualities Hazlitt lists as being admirable, he mentions the diversities of rank, sex, and age; as well as the fact that the king and the beggar, the hero and the pickpocket, and the sage and the idiot speak and act with "equal truth" ¹¹.

Shakespeare also presents the reader with individuals undergoing life events that the readers are likely to relate to: Macbeth's pursuit of power, Hamlet dealing with the death of a parent, Hal dealing with parental expectations in 1 Henry IV, and the giddiness of first love in Romeo and Juliet ¹² .

Strategies

This unit is designed to take just over two weeks, or about 13 school days. My students are high school seniors, aged 17 - 20. I teach in a resource classroom, which means that a special education teacher, myself, provides the instruction to students with disabilities. Due to the fact that I must design my instruction to meet curriculum standards as well as IEP goals, it is important to have strategies that address a variety of areas.

Unit Goal

As I said before, the overarching goal of this unit is for students to be able to recognize the various methods of indirect characterization (how a character speaks, thinks, acts, looks, and the effect he or she has on others) within the speeches in a Shakespearean play and analyze the character based on those observations. In order to introduce the actualization of this skill, I will begin the unit by choosing a character from one of the plays on which we focused in the Shakespeare and the Human Character seminar and pick speeches that demonstrate the various methods. For example, in 1 Henry IV, Act 1, Scene 2 ¹³ , Hal is alone when he delivers his, "I know you all, and will awhile uphold the unyoked humor of your idleness" speech, which shows us not only Hal's private thoughts but also his plan of action. It could also be argued that it demonstrates the effect he wants to have on others. I will explain in more detail how to lead students through that analysis further in this section, and it will also be referenced in the classroom activities. This instruction will be provided using the teaching and learning strategies presented below, specifically by using a spread out scaffolding technique. Scaffolding will be explained within this strategy section. With proper scaffolding, appropriate graphic organizers and group activities, my goal is that students will be able to independently identify signifiers of character and analyze the characters in a given play - Macbeth for my purposes.

Another aspect of my unit is getting students to think about how their words reveal certain things about their character and that they should therefore think about what they say and how they say it. However, I also want them to realize that when speaking to someone else, that person may also be being 'careful' about what they say and how they say it, so we should exercise caution in trusting or believing everything we hear. In order to teach these seemingly conflicting ideas, I will provide students with a variety of situations in which they must develop responses and then attempt to interpret the meaning behind what other students (and myself) say (see Classroom Activity 2). This will be more of a discussion and contemplative point than presented as something that will always be true; therefore I will design my instruction to emphasize discussion-based learning.

Scaffolding

The concept of scaffolding is based on Lev Vygotsky's Social Learning theory, which separates problem solving and other skills into three separate categories: those that a student can perform independently, those that cannot be performed even with help, and those that fall between those two extremes - tasks that can be performed with help from others. Vygotsky calls that last category the "Zone of Proximal Development," which

is defined as the distance between a child's "actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving" and the higher level of "potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers ¹⁴ ." In other words, learning occurs in this zone of proximal development (ZPD), the place where a student can perform a task under adult guidance or with peer collaboration that could not be achieved alone. There are several different elements to consider when using scaffolding as an instructional approach, including (among others) to tailor the scaffolding according to curricular and student needs, to provide constant feedback, and to help the student generalize the skill to other contexts ¹⁵ .

The following activity provides an example of how to scaffold for students. Given the assignment to complete "Character Trading Cards," the following steps may be used to scaffold the assignment.

1. Teacher: Create a transparency sheet with a blank or partially completed character trading card projected onto an overhead screen. Use a "think aloud" type process to fill out the character trading card in front of the class.
2. Class: Teacher and students work together to fill in the character trading card. As students make suggestions, the teacher writes on the overhead while students simultaneously fill in answers on their own worksheets.
3. Group: Students work either in partners or small groups (depending on the size of the class and/or teacher preference) to complete a character trading card.
4. Individual: Students work independently to demonstrate mastery of the skill (completing a character trading card in this assignment) and practice to make the skill automatic.

In this unit, I am using scaffolding in several different ways. In the same vein of which I just spoke, I will scaffold for the students how to identify the various methods of characterization within Shakespearean speeches. So for example, I will have a copy of one of his character's speeches on a transparency and talk through it with the students to identify the type(s) of characterization taking place. I will use a different speech to complete the assignment with the class, another to complete as a group, and the individual practice will take place during the actual reading of the play. The difference is that this scaffolding process will have to be much more drawn out than the simpler task of creating a character playing card. There may be three or four days spent at each level of the scaffolding before moving on to the next level.

Character Analysis using Scaffolding

I previously mentioned Hal's speech in 1 Henry IV, Act 1, Scene 2. My overhead projection will have side-by-side versions of the speech in its original language and the speech in modern language (as presented in the No Fear Shakespeare text). Below the speech will be questions regarding each of the five main types of indirect characterization. There will also be two questions leading the students to making an analysis of the character. Students will be provided with copies of the same organizer that is being projected (see Appendix B). A large part of analyzing the characters will be discussion-based. By listing out the various things students observe via the methods of indirect characterization and then putting those things together, students are being led through the process as a group. In terms of the aforementioned speech, the following sample answers could be given to the worksheet questions:

What is he saying? Try to explain in your own words what is being said in this speech. Hal is saying that he is going to keep acting like a bad kid so that when he finally decides to act like a king, everybody will think he's great because they are comparing how he used to be to how he is.

Do we hear any private thoughts in this speech? Ms. S said that Hal is alone when he gives this speech, so it expresses his private thoughts. I think this shows that it expresses his true thoughts.

What is the effect of this character on others? Can we tell from this speech? He wants his effect on others to be to eventually think he's great, but I don't know if that's how people really think.

Are any actions discussed in this speech? What are they? Yes - he talks about continuing to be bad, to exhibit "loose behavior" until he "throws it off."

Can we tell what the character looks like from this speech? No.

Given all the above details, what can we infer about this character? I think he is just making excuses so that he can keep being bad.

Do you know anyone like this and/or can you identify with this character? Well, my brother makes excuses for when he does bad things.

This activity can be scaffolded with the different speeches by the teacher first answering the questions on the worksheet for or with the class, and eventually leading up to the class answering the questions on their own. Once students have filled in the entire sheet, the class can then have a discussion including each of the student's responses and opinions.

Scaffolding with the Text

The other way I will use scaffolding is through the type of reading material that I will provide to the students. In order to provide the students with information about the plot, I will introduce Macbeth using an over-sized comic strip format that simply provides a framework with which to understand the plot. As we actually begin to read the play, we will begin with the graphic novel version, which uses the original language, but is still accompanied by pictures and short synopses of the acts and scenes. As we get into the play, we will use the No Fear Shakespeare, which presents side-by-side versions of the text, with the original on the left pages and modern translations on the right pages. This will allow us to work back and forth between the two versions and monitor understanding as we read.

Routine

Structure and routine are extremely important for all students, but especially for students with disabilities. A resource classroom is just as likely to contain a student who falls within the autistic spectrum and has no adaptability for change as it is likely to contain a student with learning disabilities who is simply well below grade level in reading. The nature of special education is that we are serving a variety of students with a variety of disabilities and our deliverance of instruction must be highly individualized while also addressing the entire class. Routine is one way to establish consistency and address classroom management as a whole while also addressing the behavioral shortcomings of some students.

One way I will provide routine within this unit is to develop warm up activities related to Macbeth and character. I begin each class period throughout the year with a warm up activity, so these will keep with a pre-established routine. These warm up activities will be a mix of reminding the students what we worked on / read the previous day, as well as prompts to help them think about / analyze various topics, or prepare them for that day's material. An example of a warm up activity may be: "Macbeth received a prophecy from the three witches that he would one day be king. If you were told that you would be king (or queen), how would

you react? Would you tell people?" This type of warm up makes a reference to prior knowledge and requires students to put themselves into the literature and draw on their experiences and knowledge of themselves and their character to predict a response.

Strategy Instruction

There is a plethora of information available on how specific strategy instruction is beneficial for all students, but especially for students with disabilities. Cognitive strategy instruction focuses on metacognition, which is the understanding a person has about how he or she learns - thinking about thinking, if you will. There are many different types of cognitive strategies, and often, more than one strategy is used; in fact, research indicates that successful learners use numerous strategies ¹⁷ . Examples of cognitive strategies include visualization, making associations, chunking, questioning, underlining, and using mnemonics. As part of my role as the special educator, I often provide my students with instruction in how to use strategies. Even if I am simply providing an example of one of the strategies (as I will do with giving a mnemonic for the methods of characterization), I make sure students understand why I am using a mnemonic and how that device can aid them in retaining and recalling information. Research has shown that when struggling students are taught strategies and are given plenty of encouragement and feedback, along with opportunities to use those strategies, the students improve in their ability to process information, which, in turn, leads to improved learning ¹⁷ . The way to provide strategy instruction in the classroom is to introduce or describe the strategy, model its use, provide enough practice time, promote self-monitoring and/or evaluation of the strategy, and encourage continued use of the strategy.

One type of strategy that I employ often in my teaching is the use of mnemonic devices. A mnemonic device is a strategy used to remember and recall information. Research has shown that interventions using mnemonic instruction have produced some of the largest instructional gains recorded in special education literature ¹⁷ . There are several different types of mnemonic devices, including acronyms, acrostics, grouping, method of loci and illustration or symbolic devices. It is important to choose the right type of mnemonic for the activity, as the student must be able to clearly see the connection between the mnemonic device and the information to which it is being connected. Any student who has had me before has received my "Mnemonics are awesome" instruction, but I give the same lesson to each of my classes every semester, every year. In some cases, I provide the mnemonic; in others I work with the students to develop appropriate mnemonics; in still others, I allow the students to create their own mnemonic devices.

In this unit, I will use the acronym STEAL in order to review the methods of indirect characterization: S - speech; T - thoughts; E - effect on others; A - actions; L - looks. The students should have learned the ways that characters are developed in their prior English classes, so this is really just a review to activate prior knowledge. However, the instruction will be linked with the introduction of a mnemonic as well as a lesson on how to use mnemonics to aid in retaining and recalling information. Other strategy instruction I will embed in my teaching will be focused on reading comprehension. Students with disabilities typically have very poor reading comprehension skills. I will introduce and use a variety of reading comprehension strategies in order to aid in comprehension of Macbeth.

Reading Comprehension Strategies

1. Metacognition / Comprehension Monitoring - Metacognition, as I said before, is thinking about thinking. Metacognitive strategies will include those that students must activate on their own - monitoring comprehension, being aware of what they do and do not understand, identifying where and what the

difficulty is (ex: Act III, scene ii, line 14: I don't understand what John is saying); restating in their own words; and looking both backward and forward in the text. One of the ways I will help with metacognition and comprehension monitoring within this unit will be to provide post-it pads on which the students will write questions about the text, the plot, and/or the vocabulary.

2. Graphic Organizers - can be used to help illustrate concepts or relationships, as well as keep track of important information. I will provide graphic organizers for the speeches presented in the beginning of the unit, during each act in the play in order to maintain continued understanding of the plot and who's who, and for various other reasons throughout the unit.
3. Reciprocal Reading - requires that teachers provide explicit instruction in how to understand a text. There are four parts to the strategy: Questioning, Summarizing, Clarifying, and Predicting. First, a student assumes the role of "teacher." In the Questioning part of the activity, the "teacher" student reads aloud part of the text as group members follow along. The group then develops questions that focus on main ideas. In Summarizing, the "teacher" answers and summarizes the text. In Clarifying, the group discusses and clarifies remaining difficulties in understanding. In Predicting, the group then makes a prediction about future developments. The role of teacher is then passed on to another student. This activity can be done in groups, or as whole class, where the actual teacher leads. An additional component can be to have a worksheet on which each section is labeled with space to fill in questions, information, etc.

Classroom Activities

Activity One: How to analyze characters by finding examples of indirect characterization within speeches - within the first three days of the unit

After students have reviewed background information about William Shakespeare and the methods of indirect characterization (on the first day), I will provide students with the plot of a Shakespearean play. Any play can be used, as long as the teacher can find three or four speeches from that play that can be used to show students how to identify the different types of characterization and use those observations to make a character analysis. I will provide plots derived from Marcia Williams' *Tales from Shakespeare* and *More Tales from Shakespeare*. The purpose of providing the students with the plot is so they can more accurately assess the character.

This activity will begin with me asking students how they think the methods of characterization would be seen differently in a play as opposed to a narrated story. Based on student responses, I will either confirm or guide them toward answering that plays do not contain all the narrative information that we are given in novels, and that therefore almost all character analysis must be interpreted based on characters' words. I will then provide students with a character - Suzie - and some very simplistic examples of the different methods of indirect characterization WITHIN speech that allow the reader to make an interpretation about the character (See Appendix C).

Once I'm sure that students understand the point I am trying to make about a character's speech clueing the reader into the other types of characterization and how we can interpret those characters (and this will be assessed based on the verbal and written responses students give to the question about the differences between a book and a play as well as their responses to the Suzie scenario), I will provide the students with a

play's plot for background information. Any play can be used for this activity. Some teachers may choose to present a play with which the students are already familiar (Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, etc.); others may choose to present a new play so as to broaden the students' experiences with Shakespeare. Based on the latter idea, I will present the students with Antony and Cleopatra.

After providing students with the plot, I will use three pre-selected speeches from the play (two by Cleopatra and one by Enobarbas about Cleopatra) to present to the students. These speeches will be presented as I stated before, with the left side showing the original language, and the right side showing the modern translation.

The first 'speech' will contain a few samples of Cleopatra's words throughout Act I (See Appendix D). For this, I will guide the students through the reading of the speech by reading both sides (original text and modern text), and then model (with student input allowed but not required) how to identify which types of characterization are evident in the speech and what those things reveal to the reader. My modeling will "create" the questions which will be included on the second speech provided to the students.

The second speech, taken from Enobarbus' descriptions of her in Act II, will be presented much like the Hal speech referenced earlier in this unit. The left hand side of the sheet will have the speech in the original text; the right hand side will have it in modern text; and the bottom of the sheet will have questions based on those we developed during the first speech (See Appendix E). For the reading of the second speech, I will read the side with the original language, then allow or choose a student to read the side with modern language. In order to answer the questions, students in the class will have to answer as a group, but without my help.

The third and final speech, several of Cleopatra's words once she decides to kill herself, will again be presented in the same style; however, after the speeches are read (I will again read the original while another student reads the modern), students will have to work independently to answer the questions. After all students have finished making their observations, we will discuss their answers as a class (Appendix F).

I will then review all three speeches and observations with the students and ask them, in about one paragraph, to make their own analyses of Cleopatra using the three speeches as evidence. I will encourage them to use strong adjectives by offering bonus points to students who come up with adjectives that are both accurate and original (no one else used the same word). Student responses must include at least three examples from the speeches that provide evidence for their analysis of Cleopatra's character.

I anticipate not being able to complete all three of these speeches in one class period, as grammar, vocabulary, and work on the North Carolina Graduation Project is necessary each day, as well. For whichever point there is a break, the next class period will begin with a warm up where the class is split into four groups - A will list characters; B will briefly explain the beginning of the play; C will briefly explain the middle of the play; and D will briefly explain the ending of the play. It is possible to assign this at the end of the prior day's class period so that each student has time to prepare. Once each group has presented, we will pick up where we left off the day before, after a quick review of the speech or speeches studied on that previous day.

Activity Two: Exercise Caution in your Interpretations - can be done at various points and in many different ways throughout the unit; this example should be done after Act I has been read.

Since this is a resource classroom, my class size will be no more than 8 - 12 students, which affects how I plan group work; I am limited by the number of students in a group, as well as the number of groups overall. This activity will be presented as I would divide my class, but obviously other teachers can modify their

assignments based on class size. After splitting my students into three groups of four (or however many I need to divide as closely to evenly as possible), I will give each group a sheet of paper with a reason why they don't want to attend a family party. Group A will not want to go because last time there was a family party, their parents got into a huge fight and they had to leave early. Group B will not want to go because they feel like they have better things to do with their friends. Group C will not want to go because they feel uncomfortable being around large groups of people, even if it is family.

Each student will be distributed copies of the same speech telling his or her parents that he or she does not want to go to the family party. Since each student receives the same speech, it will not include any of the "reasons" for not wanting to go. It is up to the students to perform that speech without giving away too much information. Students will listen to the speech from two others and will have to make guesses as to why the student does not want to attend the party. After all students have rotated and some of the guess reasons have been shared, I will put the three actual scenarios up on the board and have students make guesses as to which reason goes with which speaker. Students will have to provide reasons (or cite evidence based on words in the speech) for their choices. Student understanding will be assessed based on how strong their argument / evidence is.

The following "speech" can be used and/or adjusted: I don't want to go to the family party. I know you want me to go, but I really don't want to. I've done things for you in the past, because you're my parents and I love you, but I don't want to do this. If you really loved me, you wouldn't make me go. I wish you would just understand why I don't want to go. Sorry - I'm not changing my mind. I'm old enough to stay by myself and I'm not going.

Once that activity is completed, the discussion can then turn to how this information is applicable when attempting to interpret the characters in Macbeth. Students will be asked to brainstorm some ideas for how the characters of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth could be described, based on Act I. I will explain to the students that they do not have to agree with all the ideas they list; the goal is to get out many possibilities. Examples: [They could be] evil, greedy, misguided, insecure, only doing what he/she thinks the other wants, doing what is best for the family, ambitious, selfish, innocent, naïve, manipulative, power hungry, blinded by power, gullible, etc. Once students have listed all they can, we will create a class list of characteristics. I will split students into pairs and either let them choose or assign (based on willingness to choose) characteristics for Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Once pairs have been assigned a set of characteristics, they will be responsible for going through the text of Act I to find evidence to support that understanding of the character. Evidence should include either brief quotes or summaries of characters' speech and/or actions. Students should be able to explain, either verbally or in written form, how the evidence supports their interpretation.

Students will then receive a handout (or use their books) with the text from Act I, scene vii, where Macbeth and Lady Macbeth discuss whether or not to go through with killing Duncan. The student pairs will use the following key points to help them develop a plan for how to perform the scene to convey the characterizations they were assigned before:

- Does Macbeth want to be convinced to kill Duncan or not? (This could be conveyed by how easily he gives in to Lacy Macbeth.)
- How far is Lady Macbeth willing to go to convince her husband to kill Duncan? What does she think will persuade her husband? (Is she sweet, seductive, angry, violent, etc?)
- How quickly does Macbeth agree to go with Lady Macbeth's plan, and how firm is he in his resolve?
- What words and/or phrases does either of the characters emphasize in order to make his or her points?

(Underline those words to make sure they are emphasized in your performance)

Student pairs will then perform brief sections of the scene for the rest of the class. During the performances, students should fill out on a sheet of paper (teachers can provide handouts or have students construct their own) sections for each pair in which the characteristics assigned to that pair are listed. While each pair is performing, the students watching will have to list evidence from the performance (words, actions, etc.) that demonstrated the given characteristics. Student understanding will be assessed not only on how the performance is given and received by other students (if students were able to clearly see examples of the characteristics assigned for demonstration), but also on the responses they give to other performances. The activity will conclude with a discussion of how the same words can be presented or interpreted differently based on what the speaker and listener each bring to the words.

Activity Three: Demonstrate understanding of Shakespearean character from Macbeth - to be completed at end of unit

As part of my English 12 curriculum, I will incorporate instruction on how to use Windows Movie Maker by collaborating with the media specialists and technology teachers. Windows Movie Maker is a video editing program that allows the user to make home videos, presentations, and projects by incorporating still pictures, video clips, sounds, music, and/or narration. This serves a dual purpose for my students. During the semester in which students take English 12, they must do a presentation for the North Carolina Graduation Project, and a video is an accepted format for presentation. The Movie Maker instruction will provide knowledge for the Graduation Project as well as lead into the Macbeth culminating activity.

For this final project, students will be assigned a character from the play. Using the analyses that we have done over the course of the unit as well as individual interpretations, students will create a Windows Movie presentation about that character. There will be several options for how students can present their character (see Appendix G for assignment sheet and rubric). This final project will serve as an assessment of the students' understanding of who the various characters in the play are, as well as a demonstration of their ability to look at several pieces of information about a character and bring it all together in order to have a more holistic understanding of that character.

Annotated Bibliography

Aristotle, and Stephen Halliwell. Aristotle's Poetics. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1998.

Good for research purposes on the various parts of a play, including the importance of characters.

Beckman, Pat. "Strategy Instruction. ERIC Digest." ERICDigests.Org - Providing full-text access to ERIC Digests. <http://www.ericdigests.org/2003-5/strategy.htm> (accessed July 12, 2009).

Useful article about strategy instruction for students with disabilities.

Bloom, Harold. Shakespeare the Invention of the Human. New York: Riverhead Books, 1998.

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"Fast Facts." Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Home. <http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/MEDIAROOM/ABOUTUS/Pages/FastFacts.aspx> (accessed July 9, 2009).

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Hoskyn, Maureen, Carole Lee, and H. Lee Swanson. Interventions for Students with Learning Disabilities: A Meta-Analysis of Treatment Outcomes. New York: The Guilford Press, 1999.

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Johnson, Samuel. "Johnson, "Preface to Shakespeare" (Abridged)." Rutgers-Newark: The State University of New Jersey. <http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Texts/prefabr.html> (accessed July 10, 2009).

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James Wertsch and Peeter Tulyiste's chapter on Lev Vygotsky and the Social Learning Theory provides a basic understanding for why teachers should scaffold instruction.

"Shakespeare Resource Center - Shakespeare's Globe." Shakespeare Resource Center. <http://www.bardweb.net/globe.html> (accessed July 9, 2009).

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Provides current and historical information about the Globe Theater in London, England.

Shakespeare, William (Author) ; Sparknotes Editors. Antony & Cleopatra (No Fear Shakespeare). New York: Sparknotes, 2006.

Shakespeare, William(Author) ; Sparknotes Editors. Macbeth (No Fear Shakespeare) [MACBETH SG/E]. New York: Sparknotes, 2003.

Shakespeare, William(Author) ; Sparknotes Editors. Henry IV , Parts One and Two (No Fear Shakespeare). New York: Sparknotes, 2005.

The No Fear Shakespeare books provide the complete text of the original plays plus a line-by-line translation that puts Shakespeare's words into everyday language. The books also include a complete list of characters with descriptions, as well as commentary to help with the reading.

Smith, Emma. The Cambridge Introduction to Shakespeare (Cambridge Introductions to Literature). New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Provides insightful look into Shakespeare's plays and characters.

Henry IV, Part One (Signet Classics). New York: Signet Classics, 1998.

The Shakespeare overview in the front of any of the Signet editions is extremely helpful for providing students with relevant background information.

More Tales from Shakespeare. Cambridge: Candlewick, 2005.

Williams takes seven of Shakespeare's most well-known plays and presents them in a large comic strip style that makes the plays vividly entertaining and visually interesting.

Scaffolding Student Learning: Instructional Approaches and Issues (Advances in Learning & Teaching). Cambridge, Massachusetts: Brookline Books, 1997.

Great resource for how and why to scaffold instruction.

Tales from Shakespeare. Cambridge: Candlewick, 2004.

See annotation on More Tales from Shakespeare.

Resources

Teacher - Student - Classroom Resources

The following resources can be used for gathering additional information on the subjects of Shakespeare, characterization, and teaching strategies for students with disabilities. The actual texts by Shakespeare and Williams can be used during instruction.

Bloom, Harold. Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human. New York: Riverhead Books, 1998.

Hall, Tracey and Nicole Strangman. "CAST Universal Design for Learning: Graphic Organizers." (2002), http://www.cast.org/publications/ncac/ncac_go.html Accessed July 20, 2009

ReadWriteThink. "Defining Characterization" (2004). http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson800/Characterization.pdf

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Shakespeare, William. "No Fear Shakespeare: 1 Henry IV." New York: Spark Publishing, 2006.

Shakespeare, William. "No Fear Shakespeare: Antony and Cleopatra." New York: Spark Publishing, 2006.

Shakespeare, William. "No Fear Shakespeare: Macbeth." New York: Spark Publishing, 2006.

Williams, Marcia. Tales from Shakespeare. Cambridge: Candlewick Press, 1998.

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APPENDIX A - Implementing District Standards

On the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, the emphasis in English IV is on argumentation by developing a position of advocacy through reading, writing, speaking, listening, and using media.

Competency Goal One states that the learner will express reactions and reflections to print and non-print text as well as to personal experience. This goal is primarily the main goal addressed within this unit - students are required to express their reactions and reflections related to characterization with Macbeth in terms of their own and peer responses. Competency Goal Two states that the learner will inform an audience by exploring general principles at work in life and literature. This includes similar objectives as above, but related to informing an audience, which comes into play through the performances and final project. Competency Goal Four states that the learner will analyze and critique texts from various perspectives and approaches. This is evidenced through Activity Two, in which students must interpret speeches based on a variety of given and assumed perspectives. Competency Goal Five states that the learner will deepen understanding of British literature through exploration and extended engagement. This is shown clearly through the study of a Shakespearean play.

APPENDIX B - Sample of Hal's speech / worksheet as referenced in Scaffolding

<p>I know you all, and will awhile uphold The unyoked humor of your idleness. Yet herein will I imitate the sun, Who doth permit the base contagious clouds To smother up his beauty from the world.....</p> <p>(Continue worksheet with the remainder of this speech)</p>	<p>I understand all of you. For now, I'll put on the rowdy behavior of your good-for- nothing ways. But in this way, I'll be like the sun, who allows the vulgar, corrupting clouds to hide his beauty from the world.</p> <p>(Continue worksheet with the remainder of this speech from the No Fear text)</p>
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(Make a worksheet using the above speech and the following questions)

What is he saying? Try to explain in your own words what is being said in this speech.

Try to use examples from the speech to answer the following questions.

Do we hear any private thoughts in this speech?

What is the effect of this character on others? Can we tell from this speech?

Are any actions discussed in this speech? What are they?

Can we tell what the character looks like from this speech?

Given all the above details, what can we infer about this character?

APPENDIX C - Character Analysis with Suzie as referenced in Activity One

Suzie's Speech: Did you hear about Amanda's fight with her boyfriend? It was really loud and messy.

Suzie's Thoughts: I wonder if I can get Amanda to tell me about that fight. It would be nice if I knew all the details.

The Effect Suzie has on other characters / also includes information about Suzie's Looks:

Here comes Suzie - I bet she knows everything about Amanda and John's fight. I bet it wasn't even that big of a deal, but she's probably turned it into a big deal... Look at her smirking, she's walking over here with that 'I know something you don't know' kind of look — oh hey, Suzie! How's it going?

Suzie's Actions: So I just walked right up to Amanda and asked her what had happened and if she needed someone to talk to. I put my arm around her and told her that if she needed to confide in anyone, that I was there and that I would keep everything in confidence.

What can you tell about Suzie? Provide examples to support your argument.

APPENDIX D - Cleopatra's speech → First speech referenced in Activity One

<p>See where he is, who's with him, what he does. I did not send you. If you find him sad, Say I am dancing. If in mirth, report That I am sudden sick. Quick, and return.</p> <p>(Each ... means that Antony is trying to speak)</p> <p>Oh never was there queen So mightily betrayed! Yet at the first I saw the treasons planted... Why should I think you can be mine, and true--Though you in swearing shake the throned gods--Who have been false to Fulvia? Riotous madness, To be entangled with those mouth-made vows Which break themselves in swearing!... Nay, pray you, seek no color for your going But bid farewell and go. When you sued staying Then was the time for words. No going then!</p>	<p>Find out where he is, who he's with, and what he's doing. Don't tell him I sent you. If he's sad, tell him I'm dancing. If he's happy, say that I've suddenly taken sick. Hurry, and come back.</p> <p>Oh never has a queen been so betrayed as I have been. I knew from the first it would be this way...How could I have ever thought that you would be faithful and true, even though your vows of love shook the heavens themselves--you, who were unfaithful to Fulvia? It was wild insanity to believe promises made by the mouth and not the heart. Such false vows are broken as soon as they are spoken...No, please don't try to excuse your departure. Just say good-bye and go. When you begged to stay, that was the time for words. You didn't want to go then!</p>
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(Lead students through developing the same questions used in Appendix B for Hal's speech)

APPENDIX E - Enobarbus's speech → Second speech referenced in Activity One

<p>The city cast Her people out upon her, and Antony, Enthroned i' th' marketplace, did sit alone, Whistling to th' air, which, but for vacancy, Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too And made a gap in nature.</p> <p>Never. He will not. Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale Her infinite variety. Other women cloy The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry Where most she satisfies, for vilest things Become themselves in her, that the holy priests Bless her when she is riggish.</p>	<p>All the people came out to see her, and Antony, waiting for her in the marketplace, was left alone. Even the air itself would have gone to look at Cleopatra, if that wouldn't have caused an unnatural vacuum in the atmosphere.</p> <p>He'll never leave her. Age won't wither her, and her charms are so varied that she never grows boring. With other women, the more familiar you grow with them the less appealing they become. Cleopatra, on the other hand, makes you desire her the more you see her. Even her worst faults are charming, and holy priests bless her even when she acts the slut. (Teachers may insert another word in lieu of "slut"!)</p>
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This worksheet should also have the questions listed in Appendix B.

APPENDIX F - Cleopatra's speech → Third speech referenced in Activity One

<p>[Antony, dying, asks C to come to him] I dare not, dear, Dear my lord, pardon, I dare not, Lest I be taken. Not th' imperious show Of the full-fortuned Caesar ever shall Be brooched with me.... But come, come, Antony!</p> <p>[As he dies] Noblest of men, woo't die? Hast thou no care of me?</p> <p>[As she prepares for her own suicide] Show me, my women, like a queen. Go fetch My best attires. I am again for Cydnus, To meet Mark Antony.</p> <p>[After her servant dies first] This proves me base. If she first meet the curled Antony, He'll make demand of her and spend that kiss Which is my heaven to have.</p>	<p>[Antony, dying, asks C to come to him] I don't dare come down--forgive me, my lord--I don't dare, for fear of capture. I will never be exhibited as lucky Caesar's prize....Come up here, Antony!</p> <p>[As he dies] Most noble man, will you die? Don't you care about me?</p> <p>[As she prepares for her own suicide] Women, dress me like a queen. Go get my best clothes. I will once again be as fine as when I went to Cydnus to meet Mark Antony.</p> <p>[After her servant dies before her] This proves that I'm petty: if Iras meets Antony before me, he'll want her first and give her the kiss that is my bliss to have.</p>
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This worksheet should also have the questions listed in Appendix B.

APPENDIX G - Movie Maker Assignment and Rubric

As a final project, you are to create a Windows Movie that presents your assigned character to the class in a way representative of the characterization we discussed during this unit. You have several options for how you can present this character. If you come up with an idea not on this list, you must submit it for approval at least three days (and preferably more) before the presentation.

- 1) Write a poem, song or rap about the character or performed by the character and present it as a music video.
Create a 10 - song soundtrack for Macbeth, which includes at least TWO songs that you identified as being specifically related to scenes with your character. Present the soundtrack as a "NOW That's What I Call Music"-type commercial.
- 2) Stage a scene where your character is talking to a friend, psychiatrist, parent, etc. about something that happened in the play and his or her reaction to it.

- 4) Interview your character for the 6:00 News to get his or her reaction to Duncan's murder, or to Macbeth's death, or to the entire event.
- 5) Re-create one of the scenes from the play IN YOUR OWN WORDS (you cannot use the modern text from the No Fear version - it must be your own. Slang - as long as it is school-appropriate - is allowed).

09.01.01.05

Endnotes

- ¹ "Fast Facts." Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Website <http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/MEDIAROOM/ABOUTUS/Pages/FastFacts.aspx> (accessed July 9, 2009).
- ² Sylvan Barnet, "Shakespeare: An Overview" in Henry IV, Part One, vii - lxi.
- ³ "Background: The First Globe." Shakespeare's Globe. <http://www.shakespeares-globe.org/abouttheglobe/background/thefirstglobe/> (accessed on July 9, 2009).
- ⁴ "Shakespeare's Globe." Shakespeare Resource Center. <http://www.bardweb.net/globe.html> (accessed on July 9, 2009).
- ⁵ "Macbeth Plot Summary." No Sweat Shakespeare. <http://www.nosweatshakespeare.com/> (accessed July 9, 2009).
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- ⁸ Samuel Johnson, "Preface to Shakespeare." Available at <http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Texts/prefabr.html> (accessed July 10, 2009).
- ⁹ Harold Bloom, Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human, 2.
- ¹⁰ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, in Coleridge's Writings on Shakespeare, 101.
- ¹¹ William Hazlitt, in Characters of Shakespear's Plays. Available at http://www.library.utoronto.ca/utel/criticism/hazlittw_charsp/charsp_titlepage.html (accessed July 11, 2009).
- ¹² Emma Smith, in The Cambridge Introduction to Shakespeare, 3.
- ¹³ William Shakespeare, Henry IV, Part One, I ii 199 - 221.
- ¹⁴ James Wertsch and Peeter Tulyiste, "Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky and Contemporary Developmental Psychology," in A Century of Developmental Psychology, 333-355.
- ¹⁵ Kathleen Hogan and Michael Pressley, Scaffolding Student Learning: Instructional Approaches and Issues, 185.
- ¹⁶ Pat Beckman, "Strategy Instruction" in ERIC Digest. Available online at <http://www.ericdigests.org/2003-5/strategy.htm> (accessed on July 12, 2009)
- ¹⁷ H. Lee Swanson, Interventions for Students with Learning Disabilities: A Meta-Analysis of Treatment Outcomes.

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