



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2015 Volume II: Explaining Character in Shakespeare

Shaping a Multi-Dimensional Villain: Richard III

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Overview

Introduction

Teaching Shakespeare's plays may seem a monumental task. Indeed, it is a challenge for me, as a high school teacher, to select the most essential concepts and content from these plays that are bursting with opportunities for instruction. As a teacher of gifted students with a range of personalities and knowledge bases, I see countless occasions to enrich what are already very rich texts. However, time constraints and the varying needs of students demand that I be purposeful in creating a unit from which students can gain the most knowledge, skill, and enrichment from a given play. Admittedly, I tend to find several rabbit holes down which to plunge while exploring Shakespeare's plays with my students. While these make for lively class discussion, they often permeate the unit and leave the students with few, if any, meaningful take-aways. The end result is a mile-wide, inch-deep examination of language, poetry, plot structure, characterization, theme, politics, and historical context. Simply put, we try to examine everything, and end up gaining very little.

The purpose of this unit is to focus the study of *Richard III* on the craft of characterization. Instead of attempting to address all of the many areas of inquiry that the play offers, we will endeavor to answer the question, *Who is the literary Richard III?* While acknowledging that he is an historical figure, we will approach the analysis with the understanding that the character in the play is a creation of a playwright. While there is ample information about the sources Shakespeare used and the context in which he wrote *Richard III*, we will not examine it before reading the play. We will confine our inquiry to the play's text and look specifically at Richard's first and last soliloquies, his seduction of Lady Anne, his interactions with the young princes, his conversations with Buckingham, and the epideictic orations of the female characters. An original soliloquy will be the culminating assignment for this line of inquiry. Students will compose a "deleted" speech in which the literary Richard justifies his actions in the play. The soliloquy should explore Richard's motivations and rationalizations in poetic (blank verse) form. Students will have studied and practiced blank verse during their unit on *Romeo and Juliet*. Thus, they will be building on a skill already addressed, and only minimal supports should be necessary during this unit.

After the study of Shakespeare's play, students will read Josephine Tey's novel, *The Daughter of Time*, in order to complicate their understanding of Richard III. While Tey's work is fiction, it specifically draws on multiple historic sources that provide additional information about Richard's brief reign and his relationships with his

brothers. It also elaborates on the character of Richmond, later Henry VII, the very one-dimensional savior in Shakespeare's *Richard III*. Students will analyze this new information in order to answer the question, Who is the *historical* Richard III? There is an opportunity here to address the recent discovery of Richard III's remains and subsequent funeral and reburial, both of which will depend on available instructional time. Given this modern interest in the subject, the culminating assignment for *The Daughter of Time* will be a eulogy for Richard. Students will draw from the novel and the sources cited in the novel to compose an appropriate tribute to the historic Richard.

Rationale

Every two years I teach 10th grade, in which *Richard III* is a required text for my advanced students. Within this group of high performers there is great diversity in personal background and skill level. In addition, they each bring a personal experience with Shakespeare, and unfortunately, these past experiences are generally negative. The dread that accompanies any mention of Shakespeare's language is the most common form of apprehension with which students approach *Richard III*. Thus, I have endeavored to create a unit in which students have a singular objective: to examine all evidence concerning Richard's character. By providing this specific focus, for a play in which the title character is so focal, I think students will more readily struggle through the language because they know what they are seeking.

But why concentrate on character when approaching *Richard III*? Surely we could discuss other literary elements or examine other aspects of the playwright's craft. However, Shakespeare's Richard is one of the most infamous of literary villains, and an ideal protagonist for intense characterization study. I think the idea of villainy is engaging to students. Exploring the nature of evil and the definition of a villain can attract even reluctant students because everyone can identify a fictional villain. In fact, many students have a favorite villain. This is interesting in itself. Why are audiences attracted to certain villains like the Joker in *The Dark Knight Rises*, Sue Sylvester in *Glee*, or Loki in *The Avengers*? Is it their charm? Intelligence? Persistence? Sometimes villains are just more interesting than their moral opposites. Shakespeare's Richard, who has no rival for attention, absorbs our interest, and in some ways our admiration. He is impeccably crafted as the source and summit of evil, yet audiences can find him magnetic. One might expect Richard's choices and actions to repel an audience, but rather, he captivates with his vitality, honesty, and wit. He brings the audience into his confidence. He is straightforward and self-aware when addressing us, making us complicit in his schemes. Indeed, his breaking of the fourth wall is reassuring.¹ Without this interaction, audiences would perhaps become uncomfortable with the unpredictability of Richard's actions, making him a more frightening villain. Richard's engagement with the audience is a specific literary approach, critical to Shakespeare's development of character. Thus, students can take away many lessons in the craft of characterization.

The Literary Richard

Of all Shakespeare's histories, *Richard III* has been the most produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company². This is likely a testament to the captivating character of the literary Richard. We enjoy watching his malice in action. In fact, his badness and deformity are great comedic material. Laurence Olivier's portrayal of Richard is revered by many actors, but he was entirely unsure of how he should play the character until the moment he stepped on stage for opening night at the Old Vic in 1944. The audience registered his hunchback, his "straggly black wig," his prosthetic nose, and his uneven legs and roared with delight. This moment prompted

Olivier to “play it for comedy,” a most successful approach (Crystal, 170).

The challenge of playing Richard is considerable. Of all Shakespeare’s characters, only Hamlet has more lines—and only *Hamlet* is a longer play. Thirty two percent of *Richard III* is Richard talking. Coupled with the physical demands of playing a hunchbacked man with a withered arm, the part must be grueling. After the original production, Shakespeare’s leading actor Richard Burbage allegedly told him, “If you ever do that to me again, mate, I’ll kill you,” (Crystal, 63).

Point of View

To discover the literary Richard, students will examine Shakespeare’s craft. After all, characterization is a process, and while each writer may approach this process uniquely, there are some very clear methods that most writers practice. Controlling point of view is a significant element. The play begins with Richard, alone, drawing the audience into his confidence. He consistently engages us through soliloquies and asides, hence we are continually afforded his commentary on the events of the play. For much of the time, the drama is akin to a novel written in the first person. This is a deliberate choice on Shakespeare’s part and it is critical in shaping the audience’s perception of Richard.

Acting, essentially, as the narrator of his story, Richard demonstrates frankness with the audience. Rarely is he coy about his intentions, no matter how malicious they are. In fact, he tells us, after wooing the Lady Anne, “I’ll have her, but I will not keep her long.”³ Richard does not strike most of us as a man with “motiveless malignan[ce]”⁴ but rather as a master manipulator, navigating a specific course toward the throne. Anne is simply a pawn. He tells us in the first scene: “Since I cannot prove a lover/ to entertain these fair well-spoken days,/ I am determined to prove a villain,” (I, i, 28-30) He is just too unsettled in this period of peace and he has a great idea for passing his time. It requires eliminating several of his family members, but Richard is not one to be sentimental. There are plenty of other characters in this play to voice sentimentality, including Richard’s brothers and every female who sets foot on stage. It is in struggle that Richard finds purpose and meaning. His skills lie in combat – either physical or political – and without the clouds of conflict he must stand in the sun, looking at his shadow and remembering what he lacks. His appearance isolates him. He thrives in war while peacetime emphasizes his physical, and perhaps by extension, his relational inadequacies.

Contrasts

Besides point of view, Shakespeare further characterizes Richard through the use of contrasts. He specifically contrasts Richard with the other royal men in the play. Sometimes these are mentioned by Richard himself, and sometimes by other characters. Richard begins the play by noting that his brother, the current king, Edward IV, is as “true and just” as Richard himself is “subtle, false, and treacherous,” (I, i, 36-37). In the following scene Lady Anne mourns her dead father-in-law, the “holy king” Henry VI, as “gentle, mild, and virtuous,” (I, ii, 107). Once Lady Anne leaves this scene, Richard himself describes her dead husband, the late Prince of Wales as “A sweeter and a lovelier gentleman / Framed in the prodigality of nature/ Young, valiant, wise, and, no doubt, right royal,” this last part suggesting that Richard is painfully aware that his pretensions to the crown are illegitimate, (I, ii, 247-249). Later Richard refers to his nephew, the new Prince of Wales, as “bold, quick, ingenious, forward, capable.” (III, i, 156) Richard could be describing himself here, for surely he shares these qualities, but uses them toward the destruction of others. Even Richard’s staunchest ally, Buckingham, refers to the young prince as “true” and “noble,” (IV, ii, 16). Because the young prince is portrayed so positively, the audience is left to wonder, how much better a king would this young prince have become if had he not been eliminated by Richard?

Finally, the duke of Richmond provides the starkest contrast to Richard. He only appears in Act V, in which Shakespeare stages a shamelessly direct good guy/ bad guy dream sequence. All of the deceased characters return to curse Richard and give Richmond their blessing. Perhaps this isn't Shakespeare's greatest moment as a playwright, but the contrast leaves no doubt about Richard's character and serves as a prelude to his absolute isolation in the final scene. The play closes with Richmond's speech to his soldiers in which he insists on a merciful conclusion to the battle: "Proclaim a pardon to the soldiers fled," (V, v, 16). Certainly by the end, the audience can be sure that Richard would not have displayed such clemency.

Epidictic Oratory

While other royal men are frequently praised in the play's dialogue, Richard is the object of some of the severest invective in the Shakespearean catalog. The female characters, in particular, launch some stinging descriptions of Richard directly to his face. When he meets Lady Anne in the first act she greets him as the "devil" and "minister of hell." (I, ii, 47). She goes on to call him a "defused infection of a man," a "devilish slave," and a "hedgehog," (I, ii, 79, 92, 106). Meanwhile, the widowed Queen Margaret also refers to Richard as the "devil," a "murderous villain," and a "cacodemon," (I, iii, 118, 134, 144) While arguing with him in Act I, scene 3, her insults culminate with "Thou elvish-mark'd, abortive, rooting hog! / Thou that wast seal'd in thy nativity / The slave of nature and the son of hell! / Thou slander of thy mother's heavy womb! / Thou loathed issue of thy father's loins! / Thou rag of honour!" (228-233). Shakespeare uses Margaret, who is historically misplaced in this play, as a Fury-like presence, proclaiming the vengeance that awaits the murderous Richard. Her role has little connection to the plot, but she lurks about the stage lamenting her losses and cursing Richard. This moves the play's action from mere political scheming to a supernatural battle of good and evil with Margaret acting as a prophet of justice, (Fry).

Later in the play, even Richard's mother, the Duchess of York, echoes Margaret's insults. In the play's longest scene, Act IV, scene 4, the Duchess declares to her son, now the king, "Thou camest on earth to make the earth my hell. / A grievous burthen was thy birth to me; / Tetchy and wayward was thy infancy; / Thy school-days frightful, desperate, wild, and furious, / Thy prime of manhood daring, bold, and venturous, / Thy age confirm'd, proud, subdued, bloody, treacherous," (166-171). The boldness of these women's affronts can be explained by their lack of power in this play. Their loved ones have all been murdered and they have little to lose. The male characters by contrast, such as Stanley, can still maintain some degree of power or influence if they keep their feelings about Richard to themselves. Hastings practically signs his own death warrant when he declares the crown is "foul misplaced" on Richard's head, (III, ii, 44). Regardless of the repercussions of these various characters' remarks, their invective serves to characterize Richard as repulsive to those around him.

Effect on Others

While the quotations above provide significant evidence of how other characters feel about Richard, examining his effect on others merits further discussion. In Act I, scene 2, he has a fearful effect on Henry VI's pallbearers. They obviously have strict orders to bury the former king, but Richard's threats are enough to send them running. In the same scene, Anne curses Richard and suggests he kill himself, but within moments he has appealed to her with such flattery that she accepts a ring from him and finds his professed remorse for the death of her husband credible. This scene should be carefully examined with students because it perfectly captures Richard's rhetorical skill. His conversation with Anne is written as a battle of wits between equals, but Richard prevails with his seduction. In the previous scene, Richard lamented his inability to prove a lover, but he can certainly play a lover. He is a confident performer with a strong effect on his audience. Perhaps his

seduction of Anne parallels his seduction of the theater audience.

Richard has a far different effect on his young nephew, the Prince of Wales, but this also serves to characterize Richard. A rather ominous exchange between the two in Act III, scene 1, demonstrates Richard's perceptible treachery. The young prince declares, "I fear no uncles dead," to which Richard replies "Nor none that live, I hope." There is a sense of knowing in the prince's response, "An if they live, I hope I need not fear," (146-148). It can be inferred that Richard has a disquieting effect on children and this young prince's better judgment is steering him away from his uncle. Even Richard's "other self," (II, ii, 150) the Duke of Buckingham, is disquieted by Richard's increasingly heinous plans. While Buckingham is instrumental in executing Hastings and the Queen's relatives, securing the Mayor's support, and spreading lies about their enemies (even Richard's mother), he is not comfortable with murdering the young princes. When Richard suggests it, Buckingham is clearly unsettled, asking "Give me some breath, some little pause, my lord / before I positively speak herein" and quickly leaving the stage, (IV, ii, 25-27). Apparently, Richard has rendered his wingman speechless with such a cruel suggestion, thus enhancing his villainy.

Performance

Finally, Shakespeare uses Richard's performance skill to characterize him. Certainly this is apparent in his seduction of Anne. This is the first scene where Richard's knack for improvisation is on full display. He offers Anne his sword. (What a bold choice!) She says she wishes him to kill himself, so he shifts to the argument that she only wished that out of anger. In effect, he claims that angry words are not sincere. Indeed, Richard himself feigns anger in Act II, scene 1 when complaining that some courtiers think he doesn't like them. He declares, "Tis death to me to be at enmity," (II, I, 64) when we, the audience, have already gathered that he thrives on it. Here, Richard's outrage could be played to great comic effect because of the dramatic irony it produces. Since we are in Richard's confidence, we know when he's performing for other characters.

In Act III, Richard performs for his nephews, playing the loyal and protective uncle. Again, the dramatic irony is critical to the scene. Richard's asides and double talk provide ample comedic material, as when the young duke of York asks to see his uncle's dagger. Richard replies, "My dagger, little cousin? With all my heart," (III, i, 112). This layered response conveys Richard's performance skill, his cruelty, and his wit all at once. Another example of the same would be when he suggests sending the boys to the tower for their "health and recreation," (III, i, 67). This might have elicited an ironic laugh from contemporary audiences and even modern ones who are familiar with the "princes in the tower" narrative. Richard is playing to his nephews and to us, the audience.

Richard's real tour de force comes later in Act III when, with the help of Buckingham and Catesby, he pretends to be a pious, saintly nobleman, entirely uninterested in the crown. He goes so far as to surround himself with clergymen, who are effectively props in his performance. He describes his "poverty of spirit," and claims "so many my defects," (III, vii, 158-159) all to encourage more pleading from Buckingham, his co-star. The back and forth escalates until Buckingham leaves and others take up his pleading, "Do [accept their suit] my lord, lest all the land do rue it," (220-221) at which point Richard must reluctantly accept the crown "against my conscience and my soul," (225). The dramatic irony in this performance can be played for great comic effect. The fact that the mayor is so easily swayed could point to his own character flaws, or to Richard's deft scheme to use this particular man for his own advantage.

Rounding out the Character

Because Richard is constantly performing for other characters, we only begin to see his vulnerabilities toward

the end of the play when he feels insecure on the throne. Richard's ramblings after his visits from the ghosts present several contradictions. He declares, "I am a villain" (V, iii, 203) suggesting his success, given his opening soliloquy. However, he quickly changes his mind, eventually concluding that "There is no creature that loves me," and not even he can pity himself, (V, iii, 212). This is the pinnacle of Richard's isolation. While he is aware that he uses others to meet his own ends, he becomes painfully aware that he has killed or excluded any potential, true allies. This is the failure of his political maneuvering.

In the final scene of the play, Richard repeatedly cries out, "My kingdom for a horse!" (Act V, iv, 7). While his final words could be played as cowardice, I think this is rather the pinnacle of vitality that has enthralled the audience for the entire play. Bloom calls it Richard's "gusto."⁵ This is the truest Richard. He is determined to get to Richmond and refuses to accept Catesby's help or protection. To the end, he is vigorously engaging in a fight. At Bosworth he obtains the "heroic death that was his only possible fulfillment."⁶ Interestingly, Shakespeare writes no dialogue for the final fight with Richmond. Unsurprisingly, Richmond has no words about Richard besides, "The bloody dog is dead," (V, v, 2).

Shakespeare presents Richard as a fully self-aware villain, and in the process highlights society's lack of self-awareness. "The ambiguity of his role: to be the logical outcome of his society, and yet a pariah rejected by that society; a hypocrite, yet more sincere in his self-awareness than those he ruins and deceives."⁷ Shakespeare is careful to mention that several characters, including Elizabeth, have been on the other side of the ongoing conflict for the throne. During the play itself, several characters play turncoat, including Buckingham and Stanley. Perhaps we ignore or accept their shifting allegiances because they are moving away from Richard, who, while we enjoy watching him, is evil. In fact, he tells us several times that he's evil, so of course, people should get away from him. The point is that Shakespeare makes little effort to create a virtuous foil for Richard. Richmond, the most obvious foil, is not developed, and has minimal stage time. We don't care about him as a character; we just accept that there must be a balance, so somebody good needs to show up in the end.

The Historic Richard

The source of Shakespeare's Richard is the biography by St. Thomas More. "Though More is willing to grant Richard his cleverness, sardonic humor, and theatrical instinct, he describes him as an explorer might describe a rare and horrifying species of poisonous snake," and presents Richard's triumphs as "an occasion for moral outrage," (Ornstein, 63). For Shakespeare, other characters refer to Richard as poison incarnate, but we, the audience, delight in his triumphs. Even as he murders his way to the throne, we are amused by his performances, and captivated when he turns to us to share his cynical commentary on his victims. We are not morally outraged because we are taken by the character's zest.

Novelist Josphine Tey opted to challenge More's depiction of Richard - immortalized in Shakespeare's play - by writing *The Daughter of Time*.⁸ While this unit should focus on the study of Shakespeare's play, Tey's novel will be read, not to examine its literary value, but to provide an interesting access point to counter-narratives of Richard III's life. Tey uses the bedridden detective, Alan Grant, as the vehicle for expounding on Richard. Grant sits in a hospital bed examining old portraits when he comes upon a painting of Richard III and concludes that he cannot be the villain illustrated by More and Shakespeare. With the help of a young

academic, Brent Carradine, Grant sifts through historic documents, history books, and Renaissance fiction to determine just what the historic Richard III was like.

Richard's Relationships with his Family and the English People

Alan Grant reads *The Rose of Raby*, an account of Richard's family. This text – of which full excerpts appear in the novel - presents young Richard as a marginalized child who slinks behind his older, blonder, more extroverted siblings. This version emphasizes Richard's hero-worship of his oldest brother Edward, who visited his younger brothers every day while they were being tutored. Once Edward became king, Richard was invaluable to him. Proving to be a fierce soldier, he was a brigadier by 18 and a general by 25. From a history by Sir Cuthbert, Grant discovers that the hunchback and withered arm, critical attributes to Shakespeare's Richard III, are myths. While Richard's left shoulder was lower than his right, he had no apparent deformities, and certainly none that would impair his fighting ability. Thus, he was a critical ally to Edward and was given the role of "Protector of the North."

Although he was aware of Edward's marriages prior to Elizabeth Woodville, there is no evidence to suggest Richard ever betrayed this information. In fact, Richard stood by Edward when their brother George rebelled with the Warwicks. It was Richard who approached George's army and negotiated Edward's safe passage to London upon his return from France. It is thus not surprising that prior to his death, Edward appointed Richard sole protector of his seven children. When Richard became king his motto was "Loyalty blinds me," (92). This would certainly be ironic if he had indeed arranged the murder of his two nephews. However, Tey continually casts doubt on Richard's involvement in those murders because if the boys had truly been threats to succession, their five sisters would also be threats.

Detective Grant gets his hands on additional documents that detail Richard's actions after the sudden death of Edward IV. Richard never took his nephews to the Tower, but rather delivered Edward's oldest son to Bishop's Palace. Furthermore, Grant discovers that the widowed Queen Elizabeth Woodville sent a written request to her older son from her first marriage, Dorset, to return from France and make peace with the new king, Richard. Not only does Tey present evidence to cast considerable doubt on Richard's malicious intentions toward his family, she shows how Richard was perceived by the English people as he took the throne. From his reading Grant concludes that the common citizens did not know much of anything about Henry Tudor and were not yearning for him to cross the Channel and take the throne. In fact, when Richard was killed at Bosworth, the town of York published, "This day was our good King Richard piteously slain and murdered; to the great heaviness of this city," (201). Furthermore, when a clergyman named Stillington convinced Parliament that he had married Edward IV to someone else, prior to Elizabeth Woodville, there is no indication of a public outcry regarding the de-legitimizing of Edward's children and the shifting of the crown to Richard. Grant concludes that the English people welcomed Richard as their new ruler.

Richard the Ruler

Tey's novel touches upon, but does not elaborate on Richard's positive relationship with Parliament. Once Edward IV's children were deemed illegitimate, Parliament, with no apparent resistance, gave Richard title to the crown through the document known as *Titulus Regius*. Grant quotes the *History of the English Race* which notes that Richard's Parliament was liberal and progressive.

Grant also gathers several documents from Richard's brief reign which contradict the events depicted in Shakespeare's play. While records confirm Hastings was beheaded for treason, they also confirm that he was conspiring with Lord Stanley and John Morton, both of whom were shown mercy by Richard and both of whom

were later instrumental in Henry Tudor's take-over. To further characterize Richard as merciful, Grant discovers that Hastings' family was able to keep his land and title despite his fall from grace. In addition, Grant finds a letter written by Richard about Hastings' mistress, Jane Shore. The note conveys kindness at best and ambivalence at worst regarding this woman whom, according to Shakespeare, Richard blamed for his withered arm. The other woman Richard had purportedly blamed, Queen Elizabeth Woodville, was given a pension during Richard's reign.

Illuminating Richmond (Henry VII)

Tey's novel proves to be most critical of Thomas More and secondly of Henry Tudor, the duke of Richmond. Throughout the novel, Grant questions why Henry would create a Bill of Attainder against Richard after the Battle of Bosworth. In fact, Grant discovers that Henry had the *Titulus Regius* revoked and destroyed while banning the production or possession of any copies. Grant continually wants to know why neither Henry nor anyone else during the 1480s and 1490s accused Richard of killing his nephews. Both Grant and Carradine are stunned by their discovery that Tyrrel was hanged for the murders, nearly 20 years after they occurred, in 1502.

Through some crafty detective work, Grant and Carradine are able to link the rumor of Richard's involvement in the princes' disappearance with John Morton, whom Richard had pardoned for his conspiracy with Stanley and Hastings. After switching to the Lancastrian side, Morton became Henry VII's Archbishop of Canterbury. Most interestingly, Grant discovers that Thomas More's childhood was spent in Morton's home. The detectives conclude that Morton aided Henry VII as a career move, and it was in his interest to undermine Richard's reputation, even after Bosworth.

Henry's various other actions as a young king are sprinkled throughout Tey's book, and none of them cast a flattering light on him. While Grant and Carradine wonder about Henry's repeal of *Titulus Regius*, they conclude that he had re-legitimized Edward IV's children for the sake of his wife, the young Elizabeth Plantagenet. However, this creates suspicion about Henry's role in the disappearance of the princes, since he had effectively given back their claim to the throne. Lastly, his mother-in-law, the dowager Queen Elizabeth Woodville, was sent to a convent early in Henry's reign. Whereas she had enjoyed a comfortable pension under Richard, she lived in relative isolation and simplicity under Henry.

Can a Novel Accurately Portray a Historic Figure?

The Daughter of Time is a complex work, especially for students attempting to answer the question, Who is the *historic* Richard III? All information about Richard is filtered through the author, Tey, and then the protagonist, Grant. While the novel presents historic information that certainly counters Shakespeare's narrative, Grant must still speculate because there are no clear answers. Additionally, Tey is not interested in proving Richard's innocence, but rather criticizing how history is created. Grant and Carradine have numerous conversations about the Boston Massacre and Tonyandy as parallels to Richard's exaggerated villainy. Through Grant's exploration of Richard, we the readers come to understand the process of making historical sausage, so to speak.

Tey's novel challenges the anti-Richard III narrative that has pervaded western culture for centuries. In doing so, she does not create a distinct character out of Richard, but presents us with numerous possibilities. From these possibilities students will craft a tribute to this man who remains difficult to know. Perhaps the greatest lesson from this portion of the unit is that sometimes we cannot know.

Objectives

I want my students to comprehend Shakespeare's text at the literal level, but also to develop a keen awareness of what he communicates between the lines. I want students to become attuned to irony and other layered meanings that pervade Richard III's monologues and dialogue. I want students to be comfortable digging through a Shakespearian text in order to draw conclusions and develop arguments, both orally and in writing. Finally, I want them to critically look at how Shakespeare crafted his play to form an impressive villain, so that they too can employ the various forms of characterization.

With regard to *The Daughter of Time*, I want students to develop a more complex understanding of how historical figures are shaped in our modern consciousness. Furthermore, I want them to become more critical consumers of information.

My other objectives can be found in the Pennsylvania Core Standards for English Language Arts. They are detailed in the Appendix.

Strategies

The most critical instructional strategy for this unit is reading aloud in class. While I commonly assign reading to be completed outside of class, particularly for my advanced students, *Richard III* is best consumed as a performance. I will assign character parts the day before class so that students may run through their lines for homework before we read the scene together the following day. This will help students take ownership of the play if they are assigned a character. It will also help each scene to be read with greater fluency, which of course is preferable to cold reads, which often impair comprehension. I will continually re-assign parts so that all students are included in the reading throughout the unit. As always, I will consider students' particular strengths and weaknesses when deciding on whom to assign to each role. The arrangement of desks in a circle is significant for dramatic read-alouds because each reader should be seen by the other students in the class. While I do not expect students to get up and physically perform their character, I do emphasize that their reading is a performance and energy is expected. I will also attempt to read *The Daughter of Time* as a play in class. The majority of the novel is dialogue between Grant and the various characters who visit his hospital room. In the past, students have found much of this novel to be dry and unengaging. By assigning character parts and reading it like a drama, students will be kept on their toes.

Since students are tasked with identifying the literary Richard in Shakespeare's play, it is essential that they track evidence of his looks, speech, thoughts, actions, and effect on others. Because students are using old copies of the play, it is best that they take notes outside of the text. This will also allow them to better organize their findings. I will provide a note-taking organizer on which they can continually add to their evidence. I will model appropriate note-taking for the first scene of the play, but thereafter, students will be responsible for documenting their own evidence while we read aloud in class, or for homework after we have completed a scene. Their notes will be the basis for their culminating assignment, the "deleted" soliloquy in which Richard justifies his actions.

Reading any of Shakespeare's plays affords opportunities to include theater exercises in the classroom. For

Richard III, acting games can be used to dissect Richard's character. For example, while we are reading Act III, scene 1 in class, I will plan for two to three sets of actors to read the parts. One cast will be given the task of playing the scene as if Richard is cold and distant. Another group will play the scene as if Richard is snarky and intentionally ironic. Another group will play the scene as if Richard is excessively annoyed with the young princes. After viewing the scene several ways, students will discuss which approach was most appropriate. Of course, students will need to articulate reasonable critiques and observe our class's discussion norms.

Once students have read *The Daughter of Time*, they must compose a eulogy for Richard III. When the compositions are due in class, students will read them aloud as if we were holding a memorial service for Richard. Then students will view the recent funeral held for Richard at Leicester Cathedral and discuss the vicar's tribute to Richard. They will then write a brief critique of it in which they comment on what type of eulogy is most appropriate for such an unprecedented event.

Implementing District Standards

PA Core Standards for English Language Arts

While this unit touches on many aspects of the Pennsylvania Core, the following standards are most directly addressed through the study of Shakespeare's *Richard III*. The first two are specific to the character analysis of Richard and the third is specific to the soliloquy assignment.

CC.1.3.9-10.C Analyze how complex characters develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

CC.1.3.9-10.F Analyze how words and phrases shape meaning and tone in texts.

CC.1.4.9-10.O Use narrative techniques such as dialogue, description, reflection, multiple plotlines, and pacing to develop experiences, events, and/or characters; use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, settings, and/or characters.

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Notes

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