

Shakespeare skills

Your English lessons aren't just about Reading and Writing – you will also cover Literature.

There are some amazing authors published in English, but perhaps the most famous is Shakespeare and everyone studies him in KS3 and KS4. It's a great idea to learn how to read and write about Shakespeare now as you'll have to do it for GCSE in KS4. More importantly, it's good to study Shakespeare because his plays and poems are really, really good!

Shakespeare wrote 37 plays and hundreds of poems. We've focused on the plays here because you have to study one during KS3. The skills you learn from studying a Shakespeare play will help you with your reading, writing and study of all Literature texts.

Literature can appear to be complicated when you start to study it, so it's a good idea to break it down into different areas of focus. We have used four different areas in this section:

- Character and motivation

This means you have to understand the behaviour of the main characters. You need to know and explain why the characters behave as they do.

- Ideas, themes and issues

This means that you have to understand the particular ideas (such as love or revenge) that your play explores.

- The language of the text

This means looking at what Shakespeare's characters say, how they say it and the effect this has on the audience.

- The text in performance

This means understanding and explaining how the scenes would have been performed, and how you might put them on if you were the director.

You'll find a combination of tasks that help you to unpick and understand different aspects of the play you are studying. If the example isn't from your play, don't worry because the tasks can be completed for any play.

You'll also find tasks focused on the language. Lots of people find this a bit daunting, but take your time and try to say it aloud – that really can help to work out the exact meaning. When you are analysing the language try to be as specific as possible and don't be afraid to write down any ideas the words create for you.

The longer tasks are all organised in the same way and have been written to allow you to answer them no matter which play you are studying:

Shakespeare question ← You will need to think about the play you have studied.

Key scenes: _____
_____ ← Your teacher will probably focus your lessons on some key scenes that you will study in detail. Make sure you know what these are before your Teacher Assessment and that you have a copy of them as you work through this section.

In these extracts, how is the idea of power explored through the main character? ← Obviously you know who your main character is!

Support your ideas by referring to both of the extracts which are printed on the following pages. ← It's a really good idea to refer to and quote from more than one key scene as this shows greater knowledge and understanding of the whole play.

(18 marks)

Preparing for the Shakespeare test

1 Fill in the information:

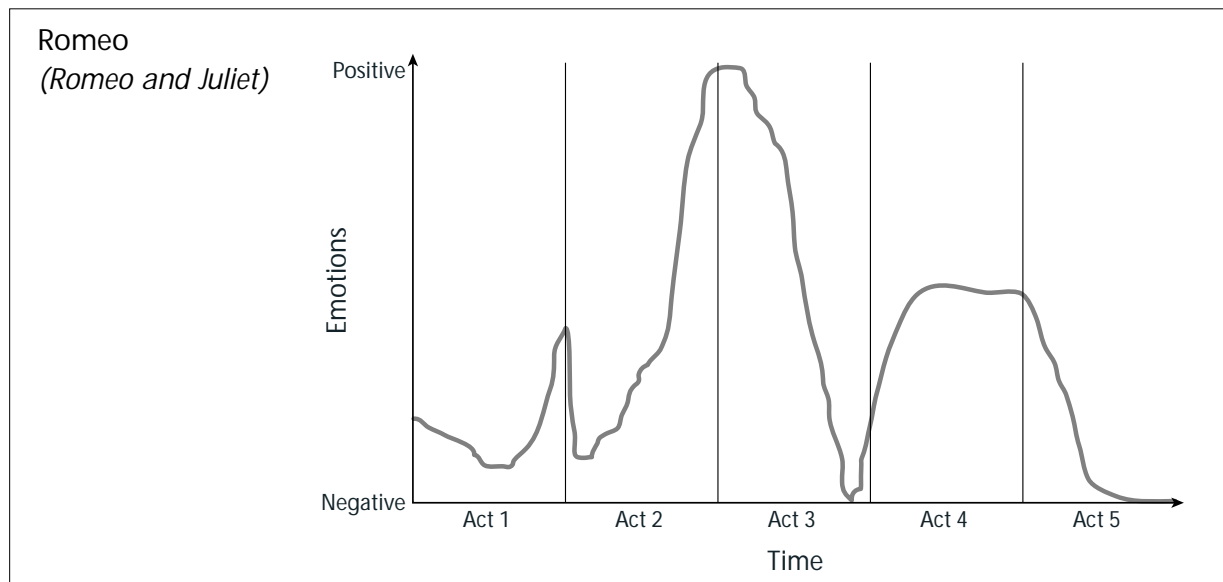
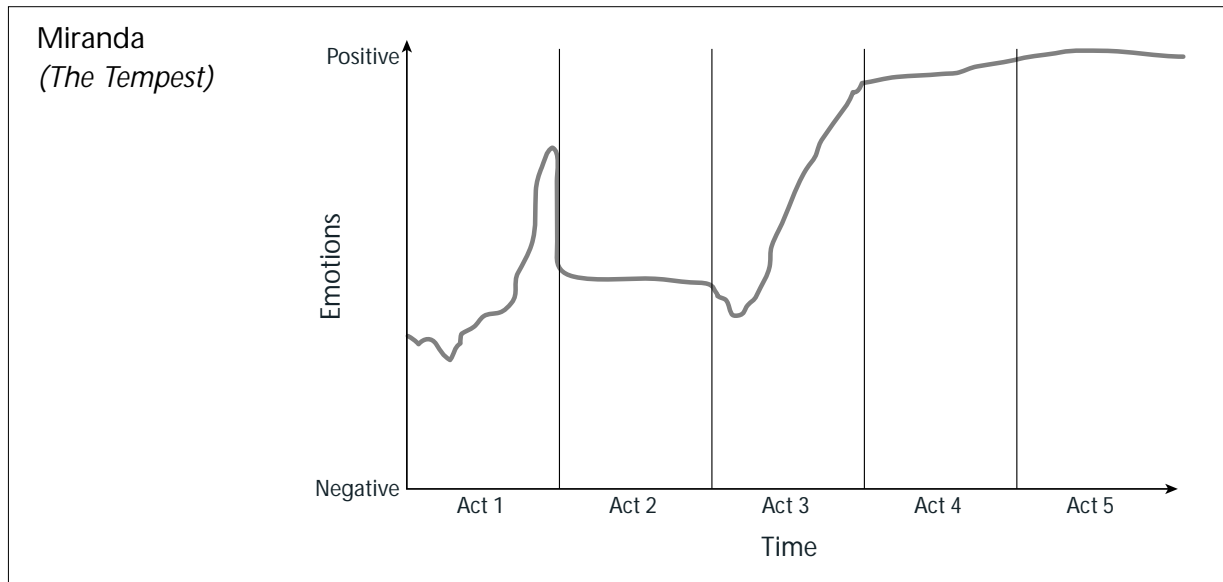
The play I am studying: _____

The key scenes I am studying: _____

The main characters in those scenes: _____

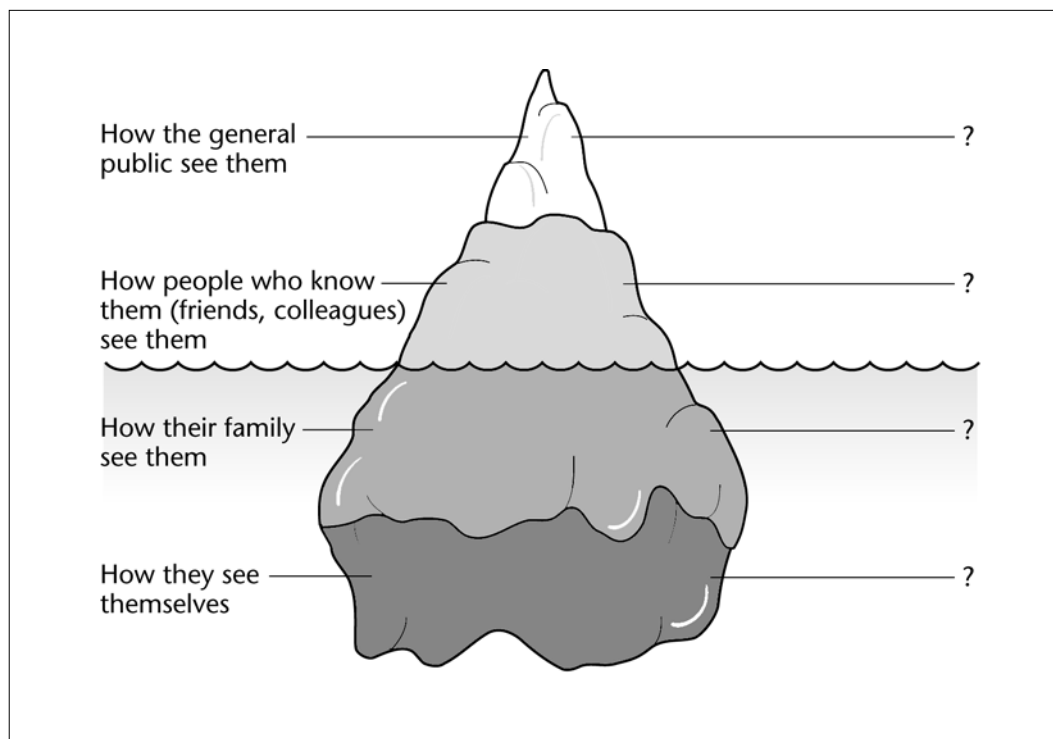
2 Character development

Look at the graph for your play. Track how each key character changes on this emotion graph. Use a different colour for each character to make it clear. You already have one character's changing emotions shown, to start you off.



3 Character analysis

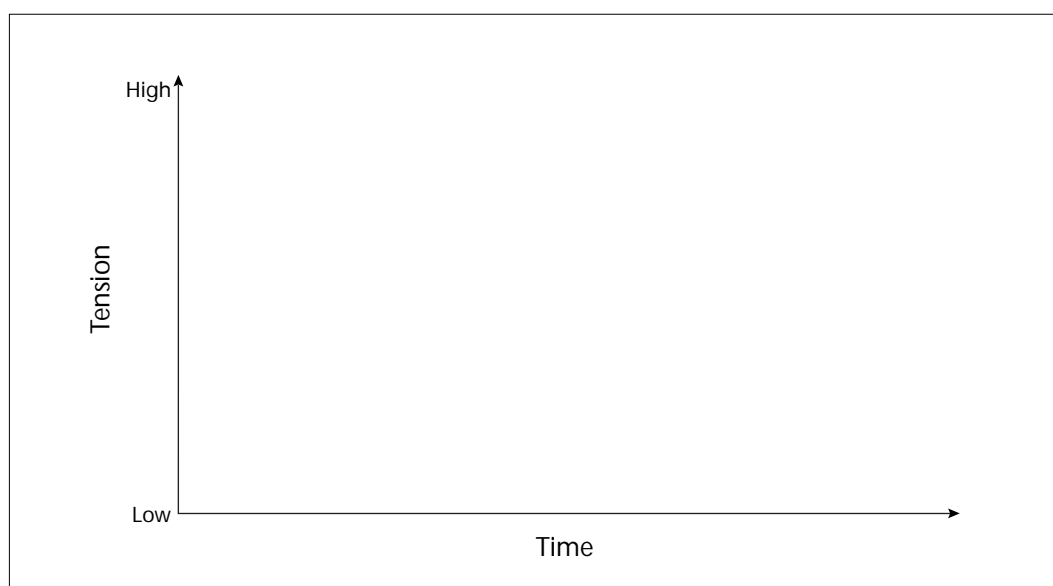
Many characters in Shakespeare's plays are like icebergs – they don't show everyone what they are really like. Complete an 'iceberg' for each of your main characters.



Try to find quotations to support your ideas at each level.

4 Understanding the scenes

You've focused on the characters; now think about the way Shakespeare has structured the scenes. Fill in this tension graph for each of your key scenes.



Shakespeare's language

The Tempest

1 Match the meanings

Draw lines to match the modern English versions with these quotations.

Shakespeare's words	Modern version
1 The fringed curtains of thine eye advance, And say what thou see'st yond.	A I am chattering without control and forgetting my father's commands to ignore you.
2 Most sure the goddess On whom these airs attend!	B As soon as I saw you I fell in love with you and my heart became yours, to serve you. As my heart is still with you, I am slave to you. Therefore I will move logs without complaint.
3 But I prattle Something too wildly, and my father's precepts I therein do forget.	C Open your eyes, with their lashes that act as a fringe to the curtain of your eyelids, and say what you see before you.
4 The very instant that I saw you, did My heart fly to your service – there resides, To make me slave to it – and for your sake Am I this patient log-man.	D You must be the goddess that this music is played for

2 Analyse the language

Look at the quotations below. For each one, identify the language technique that has been used and explain the effect it has. The first one has been done for you.

alliteration metaphor simile

Quotation	Technique	Effect
'the wild waves whist	alliteration of 'w'	Reflects the movement of the waves and spray.
'the fringed curtains of thine eye'		
'thou shalt be as free / As mountain winds'		
'Poor worm, thou art infected!'		
'But you – o you, So perfect and so peerless – are created Of every creature's best'		

Romeo and Juliet

1 Match the meanings

Draw lines to match the modern English versions with these quotations.

Shakespeare's words	Modern version
1 Who set this ancient quarrel new abroad? Speak, nephew. Where you by when it began?	A Why does a name matter? What does a name mean? The flower we call a rose would still smell sweet if it had a different name.
2 So early walking did I see your son. Towards him I made, be he was ware of me, And stole into the covert of the wood.	B Don't swear by the moon because it changes every month. If you do, your love might also change all the time.
3 What's in a name? That which we call a rose By any other name would smell as sweet.	C Who started this old argument up again? Nephew, did you see it start? Tell me what happened.
4 O swear not by the moon, th' inconstant moon, That monthly changes in her circled orb, Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.	D I saw your son when I was out walking really early one morning. I went towards him, but he was aware of me and went into the wood where he was hidden from sight.

2 Analyse the language

Look at the quotations below. For each one, identify the language technique that has been used and explain the effect it has. The first one has been done for you.

alliteration oxymoron metaphor assonance

Quotation	Technique	Effect
'the bud bit with an envious worm'	alliteration of 'b'	Reflects the harsh and secret way the worm has infected the bud.
'O brawling love, O loving hate'		
'What light through yonder window breaks? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun'		
'love's light wings'		
'Love goes toward love as schoolboys from their books'		

Character and motivation

Choose the question that relates to the play you are studying. Use the space under the question to make notes and to write your plan. Write your actual answer on lined paper.

For more practice, you could have a go at answering the question(s) on the other play. Just substitute the name of the character.

Top Tip!

You need to make sure you cover both the scenes you are directed to. It's a good idea to mention events and ideas from outside these scenes, but you must make sure your focus is on the scenes you are given.

The Tempest

Focus on the key scenes of your play.

What impression do you get of Miranda in these scenes?

Support your ideas by referring to at least two of the scenes you have studied in detail.

(18 marks)

The Tempest

Focus on the key scenes of your play.

What impression do you get of Ferdinand in these scenes?

Support your ideas by referring to at least two of the scenes you have studied in detail.

(18 marks)

Romeo and Juliet

Focus on the key scenes of your play.

How does Romeo change in these scenes?

Support your ideas by referring to at least two of the scenes you have studied in detail.

(18 marks)

Themes

Choose the question that relates to the play you are studying. Use the space under the question to make notes and to write your plan. Write your actual answer on lined paper.

For more practice, you could have a go at answering the question(s) on the other play. Just substitute the theme.



The Tempest

Focus on the key scenes of your play.

How is the theme of love explored in these scenes?

Support your ideas by referring to at least two of the scenes you have studied in detail.

(18 marks)

Romeo and Juliet

Focus on the key scenes of your play.

How is the theme of love explored in these scenes?

Support your ideas by referring to at least two of the scenes you have studied in detail.

(18 marks)

Romeo and Juliet

Focus on the key scenes of your play.

How is the idea of deception explored in these scenes?

Support your ideas by referring to at least two of the scenes you have studied in detail.

(18 marks)

Language

Choose the question that relates to the play you are studying. Use the space under the question to make notes and to write your plan. Write your actual answer on lined paper.

For more practice, you could have a go at answering the question(s) on the other play. Just substitute the name of the character.

Top Tip!

Make sure you explain the impact key words and phrases have on our understanding, and use really short quotations as evidence to show you know the exact words that are having the effect.

The Tempest

Focus on the key scenes of your play.

The language used in these scenes emphasises the high emotions experienced by the characters. Explain how Shakespeare has used the language to create this emotion.

Support your ideas by referring to at least two of the scenes you have studied in detail.

(18 marks)

Romeo and Juliet

Focus on the key scenes of your play.

Romeo and Juliet both play with language. Explain how Shakespeare uses language to show they are a good match.

Support your ideas by referring to at least two of the scenes you have studied in detail.

(18 marks)

Romeo and Juliet

Focus on the key scenes of your play.

Romeo's language is used to create his personality. Explain how Shakespeare does this.

Support your ideas by referring to at least two of the scenes you have studied in detail.

(18 marks)

The text in performance

Choose the question that relates to the play you are studying. Use the space under the question to make notes and to write your plan. Write your actual answer on lined paper.

For more practice, you could have a go at answering the question(s) on the other play. Just substitute the name of the character.



Top Tip!

Don't forget, this is **not** about saying you want an actor to 'move to the front of the stage and look upset' – it is focused on **language**, not movement.

The Tempest

Focus on the key scenes of your play.

Ferdinand's emotions change dramatically in this play. Imagine you are directing this play. Explain how you want the actor playing Ferdinand to show his thoughts and emotions in these scenes.

Support your ideas by referring to at least two of the scenes you have studied in detail.

(18 marks)

The Tempest

Focus on the key scenes of your play.

The relationship between Prospero and Miranda is very important. Imagine you are directing this play and explain how you want the actors playing these characters to show their thoughts and emotions in these scenes.

Support your ideas by referring to at least two of the scenes you have studied in detail.

(18 marks)

Romeo and Juliet

Focus on the key scenes of your play.

Romeo's emotions change dramatically in this play. Imagine you are directing this play and explain how you want the actor playing Romeo to show his thoughts and emotions in these scenes.

Support your ideas by referring to at least two of the scenes you have studied in detail.

(18 marks)

Practice Shakespeare paper

Try this practice Shakespeare paper.

Make sure you are in a quiet place and can spend 45 minutes without being disturbed.

You need to keep an eye on the time so that you spend 10 minutes planning, 30 minutes writing your answer and 5 minutes checking and improving.

- You will need your copy of the key scenes.
- You will also need a pen and lined paper.



Shakespeare paper

This is worth 18 marks and you should spend 45 minutes on it.

This paper contains one task and you should answer it with reference to the key scenes of the Shakespeare play you have studied.

Answer the task that relates to the play you have studied.

The Tempest

Focus on the key scenes of your play.

Miranda's emotions change dramatically in this play. Imagine you are directing this play and explain how you want the actor playing Miranda to show her thoughts and emotions in these scenes.

Support your ideas by referring to at least two of the scenes you have studied in detail.

(18 marks)

Romeo and Juliet

Focus on the key scenes of your play.

What impression do you get of Romeo in these scenes?

Support your ideas by referring to at least two of the scenes you have studied in detail.

(18 marks)

You may use this page to plan your answer.

Shakespeare checklist

I am able to:

- Understand the events in the play
- Understand the characters and their motivations
- Describe what happens in my set scenes
- Select key quotations to support my ideas
- Make specific references to events in the play
- Deduce and infer ideas from the events in the play
- Identify structural features that add to the meaning of the play
- Comment on stagecraft
- Explain and comment on Shakespeare's use of language, including:
 - metaphor
 - simile
 - alliteration
 - onomatopoeia
 - imagery
 - repetition
 - symbol
- Explain the impact the text has on the audience

Notes

Notes

