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The American Shakespeare Center, now in its thirtieth year, celebrates the joys and accessibility of Shakespeare’s theatre, language, and humanity by exploring the English Renaissance stage and its practices through performance and education. With its performances, theater, exhibitions, and educational programs, the ASC seeks to make Shakespeare, the joys of theatre and language, and the communal experience of the Renaissance stage accessible to all. By re-creating Renaissance conditions of performance, the ASC explores its repertory of plays for a better understanding of these great works and of the human theatrical enterprise past, present, and future.

In its hometown of Staunton, Virginia, the ASC has constructed the Blackfriars Playhouse, the world’s only re-creation of Shakespeare’s original indoor theater. While the legendary open-air Globe Theatre of London is most associated with Shakespeare, the original Blackfriars was used by his performance company in the winter months. By following the basic principles of Renaissance theatrical production, the ASC gives its audiences some of the pleasures an Elizabethan playgoer would have enjoyed.

In addition to giving performances at its Blackfriars Playhouse, the ASC on Tour travels the United States and abroad with the same unique brand of Shakespeare that thrills, delights, and educates its audiences.

SOURCE: Adapted from American Shakespeare Center, www.americanshakespearecenter.com
A deadly feud between cities; not one but two sets of twins separated as infants; family relationships torn and tested. While it sounds like a setup for tragedy, this early Shakespeare play is actually a comedy, its characters pinballing at slapstick speed through a madcap sequence of melodramatic mishaps, can-you-believe-it coincidences, and mistaken-identity-fueled misunderstandings. In the several centuries since its stage debut, the play's become so well known that its title is now part of the English vocabulary; the Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines a **comedy of errors** as “an event or series of events made ridiculous by the number of errors that were made throughout.”

So here’s how it all goes down… There’s bad blood between the cities of Ephesus and Syracuse, so when Egeon, a merchant from Syracuse, arrives in Ephesus, he’s promptly arrested and will be executed if he doesn’t cough up some serious cash. Egeon tells Duke Solinus, the city’s ruler, his story: Many years ago, Egeon’s wife, Aemilia, gave birth to identical twin boys while the family was away on business in Epidamnum. At the same time, a peasant woman there just happened to also give birth to identical twin boys, but, unable to care for them, she sold them to Egeon, who intended to raise them as servants to his own sons. As Egeon, his wife, and the two sets of baby twins traveled home, their ship was destroyed in a shipwreck. Egeon managed to save one of his sons and one of the other twins, and Aemilia saved the other set. But Aemilia and her boys were rescued by a different ship than Egeon and his boys, and poor Egeon never saw them again. Egeon named his set of boys in honor of their missing twins, Antipholus and Dromio. When Egeon’s son, Antipholus of Syracuse (whom we’ll call Antipholus S.), grew up, he and his servant, Dromio of Syracuse (we’ll call him Dromio S.) left home to search for their long-lost twins. Sad and alone, Egeon eventually set out after them, but in his five-year journey, which has now brought him to Ephesus, he hasn’t found them.

The Duke is moved by Egeon’s tale of woe, so instead of executing him immediately, the ruler gives Egeon until the end of the day to pay his fine. But if Egeon can’t come up with the money—well, bye-bye Egeon.

Meanwhile, unbeknownst to the old man, his son, Antipholus S., has also just happened to arrive in Ephesus with his servant, Dromio S. Antipholus S. sends Dromio S. off to their lodgings to lock up their money, but is surprised when his servant immediately returns with no knowledge of the money. Antipholus S. doesn’t realize that he’s actually speaking with Dromio of Ephesus (yep, that’s our Dromio E.), who just happens to live in town and works for his master, Antipholus of Ephesus (you guessed it—Antipholus E.), an esteemed gentleman of the city. Dromio E. is similarly perplexed when his master—actually Antipholus S.—denies being married to Adriana, who is Antipholus E.’s wife.

Let the errors begin!

Adriana encounters Antipholus S. and, thinking he’s her husband, drags him home to midday dinner, along with Dromio S. There, Antipholus S. finds himself more interested in his supposed sister-in-law, Luciana, while Dromio S. is definitely not thrilled to learn he’s engaged to the kitchen maid, Nell. When Antipholus E. and Dromio E. arrive home for dinner, they find themselves locked out of their own house, since, you know, the real (not!) master and servant are already inside.

When the local goldsmith, Angelo, asks Antipholus E. to pay for a gold chain he ordered, Antipholus E. refuses because he never received it; Angelo had actually delivered the chain earlier to a surprised Antipholus S., whom the goldsmith mistook for Antipholus E. Angelo has Antipholus E. arrested for nonpayment of a debt. Furious, Antipholus E. hatches a plan to get bail money from his wife.
Meanwhile, Antipholus S. plans an escape from this crazy city where everyone acts and speaks strangely, as if they’re insane or possessed. Both the Antipholuses’ plans are thwarted, though, because each time one man sends his Dromio on an errand, he encounters the other man’s Dromio coming back. It’s not long before everyone believes that everyone else is completely crazy or a witch—so Adriana brings in the part-time exorcist Pinch to cast out the evil spirits apparently possessing her husband.

Just as Pinch and company manage to bind and carry off Antipholus E. and Dromio E., Antipholus S. and Dromio S. appear with swords drawn. Of course, everyone freaks because they think they’re the “madmen” who were just hauled away. Angelo freaks too, enraged when he sees Antipholus S. wearing the gold chain he (actually Antipholus E.) has refused to pay for. Antipholus S. and Dromio S. flee the commotion and hide in an abbey. When the Abbess, the old woman who runs the abbey, refuses Adriana’s demand that she hand over her husband, Adriana asks the Duke—on his way to Egeon’s impending execution—to intervene.

Suddenly, Antipholus E. and Dromio E., having escaped Pinch, arrive and Antipholus E. pleads his case to the Duke, who, exasperated by the mayhem, declares everyone is insane. Adding to the craziness, Egeon chimes in that he recognizes Antipholus as the son he raised in Syracuse. Naturally, Antipholus E. says he’s never seen his father in all his life, and naturally, Egeon despairs that his apparent son would deny him.

Just then, the Abbess arrives with Antipholus S. and Dromio S. in tow. When everyone sees the two identical sets of twins, they realize what’s been going on. Antipholus S. recognizes his dad, and the Abbess reveals that she’s actually Aemilia, Egeon’s long-lost wife. After the shipwreck, she tells, she was also separated from the Ephesian Antipholus and Dromio and went into a life of religious seclusion, believing she’d lost her entire family. There’s much rejoicing as the family is reunited and all the “errors” are explained. Antipholus E. offers to pay Egeon’s fine, everyone is reconciled, and Aemilia invites the entire group back to the abbey so they can share the stories of their lives since their separation.

**THINK ABOUT THIS**

_The Comedy of Errors_ is about mistaken identity, but not just in a humorous way. One of the play’s most famous speeches comes in act 1, when Antipholus S. reflects on being a twin in search of his brother and mother. He frets that in the process of finding his family, he may lose his own identity, comparing himself to a drop of water in a vast ocean. Does Antipholus S. lose his identity? Does he regain it? How?

**TRY THIS**

The two sets of twins in the play not only look alike, they even share the same names. How do our names shape our identity? Write a paragraph about your own first name. Where did the name come from? Do you like it? Why or why not? Does it represent your identity? If you could change it, what would you change it to and why?
WHO’S WHO IN THE COMEDY OF ERRORS

Need help keeping track of all the people (identity-swapping and not!) in The Comedy of Errors? Here’s a handy guide to the key characters.

**Egeon:** A merchant of Syracuse arrested for arriving in Ephesus; father to the twin Antipholuses. Though he appears only at the beginning and ending of the play, his serious situation and speeches bookend all the silliness, giving The Comedy of Errors depth and dimension. Life isn’t all zany shenanigans, Shakespeare seems to suggest with this character.

**Duke Solinus:** Ruler of Ephesus; he takes pity on Egeon upon hearing his tale of loss, yet is still willing to see him executed by day’s end.

**Antipholus of Syracuse (Antipholus S.):** Son raised by Egeon; he seeks his long-lost identical twin brother, Antipholus of Ephesus. It’s Antipholus S.’s decision to search for his twin that kicks the whole course of events into action. He doesn’t just wander geographically, but emotionally too—this twin feels lost without his brother and mother, like a drop in an ocean, and sees love interest Luciana as a way to ground himself.

**Dromio of Syracuse (Dromio S.):** Servant to Antipholus of Syracuse and twin of Dromio of Ephesus. Both this Dromio and his twin from Ephesus provide much of the hilarity with their clever wordplay and mischievous behavior. Each Dromio also functions as a sort of stand-in brother for his master, encouraging us to reflect on what family, class status, and blood ties really mean.

**Antipholus of Ephesus (Antipholus E.):** Son of Egeon and Aemilia and twin of Antipholus of Syracuse, lost as an infant and raised in Ephesus, where he is now an important member of the community. This Antipholus is the polar opposite of his brother from Syracuse: Antipholus E. doesn’t fret about his missing brother because he so embraces his comfy life in Ephesus; he’s not lost or lonely because he’s surrounded by his new family (wife and sister-in-law).

**Dromio of Ephesus (Dromio E.):** Servant to Antipholus of Ephesus and twin of Dromio of Syracuse. See Dromio of Syracuse, above, for more.

**Adriana:** Wife of Antipholus of Ephesus. In Shakespeare’s time, wives were often portrayed as nagging shrews. While Adriana certainly has her cranky moments—she’s definitely no doormat—it’s obvious she cares for her husband and his well-being, showing the give-and-take reality of married life.

**Luciana:** Adriana’s lovelorn sister, whose idealistic, old-fashioned notions of marriage are contrasted by Adriana’s real-life musings on the husband-wife relationship. Luciana also demonstrates family loyalty, turning down her supposed brother-in-law’s romantic attentions in favor of honoring her sister.

**Angelo:** A goldsmith who just wants to be paid for his services.

**Nell:** A kitchen servant; engaged to Dromio of Ephesus.

**Abbess:** Keeper of the abbey who shelters the Syracusan twins and is later revealed to be Aemilia, Egeon’s wife and mother of both Antipholuses. She went into religious seclusion not knowing that the boys she’d saved from the shipwreck, but from whom she’d also become separated, lived in Ephesus as well.

**Pinch:** Part-time exorcist summoned by Adriana to cast the supposed madness out of her husband.
Ephesus, located on the western coast of modern-day Turkey; home of Antipholus E., Dromio E., Adriana, Luciana, Abbess/Aemilia, Duke Solinus, Angelo, Nell.

Ever hear of the book in the Bible called Ephesians? It was a letter from the Apostle Paul to Christians living in Ephesus, telling them how they should live by contrasting godly behavior with the pagan behavior of the Ephesians. See, Ephesus—a major port city of the Greek and Roman empires and a melting pot of cultures and religions—had a reputation for being kind of a wild place. From the sorcery described in the Bible to the partying at the Temple of Artemis, the Greek goddess of the wilderness, wild animals, the hunt, and fertility (and herself a twin, of the god Apollo), Ephesus was definitely no sleepy village. Elizabethans thought of Ephesus as a place of witchcraft and wickedness.

Syracuse, located on the island of modern-day Sicily, Italy; home of Egeon, Antipholus S., Dromio S.

Compared to Ephesus, Syracuse was businesslike and orderly. A colony of Corinth founded around 734 BCE, it grew to become an important city-state, one of the political, military, and cultural powerhouses of the Mediterranean. The famous Roman orator and statesman Cicero described Syracuse as “the greatest Greek city and the most beautiful of them all.” The brilliant Greek mathematician and engineer Archimedes, whose innovations in weapons technology helped hold the Romans at bay for decades, was a Syracusan.

Shakespeare often based his plays on historical events or figures, but he wasn’t always true to the facts. There is no historical evidence of a feud between Ephesus and Syracuse.

**THINK ABOUT THIS**

Why do you think Shakespeare chose Ephesus as the setting for The Comedy of Errors? How do the Syracusan twins, who buy into the city’s wild reputation, react or behave differently than the Ephesian twins, who’ve lived in the city their whole lives?

**TRY THIS**

On a map, locate the cities of Ephesus and Syracuse, plus London, England, where Shakespeare lived and worked. Now create your own illustrated map: label each of these cities, then add pictures or symbols for each character according to where they’re from. Include the playwright too!

Imagine you’re in charge of a brand-new production of The Comedy of Errors set in a completely different time and place. Where will each of your sets of twins be from? How will their time and place affect their appearance, how they travel, the type of home they live in, what they believe in? Research, then put together a visual representation—a poster, collage, PowerPoint, comic strip—showing these things and share it with your class.
Records reveal that in 1582, when William was eighteen, he married Anne Hathaway. Together, they had three children, Susanna and twins Judith and Hamnet. Hamnet, William’s only son, died in 1596 when he was just eleven. There is no conclusive documentation of William’s whereabouts between 1585 and 1592, a period commonly called Shakespeare’s “lost years.”

Scholars estimate that Shakespeare arrived in London around 1588 and began working as an actor and playwright. By 1594 he was acting and writing for the Lord Chamberlain’s Men, a performance troupe. The company was later known as the King’s Men, after King James I took the throne upon Queen Elizabeth I’s death in 1603. Until 1642, when the religious Puritans closed the theaters, the King’s Men troupe was a favorite with both royalty and the public.

Shakespeare’s acting company performed at the Globe Theatre, built by the troupe around 1599. Evidence suggests that the venue was a polygonal, three-story, open-air amphitheater that could accommodate an audience of three thousand. From 1609 the King’s Men performed at the Globe during the summer months and at Blackfriars, a second indoor theater owned by the troupe, in the winter.

William’s plays were in such demand that they were published and sold in “penny-copies” to his more literate fans. This was a major accomplishment; no playwright before him had become so popular that his plays were sold as literature. William retired from the King’s Men in 1611 at age forty-seven and returned to Stratford. He died on April 23, 1616.

In his lifetime, it’s estimated that William Shakespeare wrote thirty-seven plays, 154 sonnets, two narrative poems, and added more than two thousand words to the English language. Today, Shakespeare’s works are read, studied, performed, and enjoyed all over the world. As playwright and poet Ben Jonson, one of Shakespeare’s contemporaries, once wrote, “He was not of an age, but for all time.”

Those new to Shakespeare may wonder what all the hoopla is about. Sure, he’s one of the world’s most popular playwrights and poets, but what makes him so special?
Perhaps the most important reason Shakespeare is revered is the way he makes us think about life’s big-picture issues, things most everyone grapples with sooner or later. In *The Comedy of Errors*, for example, the playwright asks us to ponder the importance of identity. Shakespeare launches the play with Egeon trying to regain his identity as a father by searching for his missing son. Antipholus of Syracuse tries to find his brother and mother to complete his own sense of identity. Adriana and Luciana disagree about what a wife’s identity should be. Believing he has no existing biological family, Antipholus of Ephesus bases his identity on his in-laws. Further, with the Dromios often functioning as stand-in brothers for their masters, and Luciana spurning her supposed brother-in-law’s affections to honor her sister, Shakespeare gets us thinking about the significance (or insignificance) of social status and blood ties when it comes to who is really our “family.”

Other reasons Shakespeare remains timeless include his remarkable storytelling—his works still inspire modern authors, playwrights, filmmakers, even dancers and artists—his complex and dimensional characters, who are fun to read and challenging for actors to play, and his ability to turn an elegant or colorful phrase. Many of the best-known phrases in the English language, words we hear every day, came from the mind of Shakespeare: *for goodness’ sake, neither here nor there, the short and long of it, dead as a doornail, in a pickle, love is blind, heart of gold*, and from *The Comedy of Errors, neither rhyme nor reason*.

*The first page of Shakespeare’s “The Comedy of Errors”, printed in the First Folio of 1623. Folger Shakespeare Library.*

**THINK ABOUT THIS**

What do the characters in *The Comedy of Errors* learn about themselves each time they encounter a mistaken identity mix-up? How have they changed by play’s end when everyone’s true identity is revealed?

**TRY THIS**

Shakespeare gives *The Comedy of Errors* a feel-good ending as long-lost family members reunite and head off to celebrate. What do you think happens to this family after the play is over? What issues might arise between relatives who’ve grown up apart? Will they share an automatic connection because of their blood ties, or will there be tensions between them? Write a scene—as a script, poem, or prose—about the characters adjusting to family life a few years down the road and share or perform it with your class.
Shakespeare lived most of his life during one of the most remarkable periods in English history, the Elizabethan Age. Queen Elizabeth I ascended to England’s throne in 1558, six years before Shakespeare was born. Her reign until 1603 was a time of extraordinary achievement for the country, marked by relatively stable politics, a flourishing of the arts, and England’s emergence as the military and commercial leader of the Western world.

When Elizabeth became queen, she upheld many of the Protestant edicts of her late father, King Henry VIII, whose relationship with the Catholic church had ruptured. She shrewdly managed to avoid a rebellion by making concessions to Catholic sympathizers. She was a firm and canny leader whose navy defeated the attacking Spanish Armada in 1588, establishing England as a world superpower. She supported Sir Francis Drake, first to circumnavigate the globe, and funded Sir Walter Raleigh, whose exploration of the New World, with its vast resources of tobacco and gold, brought tremendous riches to England.

Under Elizabeth, the arts in England blossomed. The queen was fond of the theatre, and many of the country’s most important playwrights worked during her reign, including, along with Shakespeare, Ben Jonson and Christopher Marlowe. Elizabeth permitted construction of professional theaters for the first time in the country’s history. In London, a city with a population of nearly two hundred thousand, each week fifteen thousand people attended the theater.

Elizabeth’s successor upon her death in 1603 was King James I, who also had a great love for the literary arts, especially drama. It was at his invitation that Shakespeare’s acting company, Lord Chamberlain’s Men, was rechristened the King’s Men. An accomplished writer himself, King James commissioned an English translation of the Bible so that more people could read it, since only the educated classes knew Latin. The King James Version of the Bible, completed in 1611, is believed to be the world’s bestselling book.

King James’s big-spending lifestyle and untrustworthy colleagues ultimately landed him in hot water with the Parliament, though, then controlled by the strictly religious Puritans. Relations between the monarchy and Parliament worsened when Charles I, son of King James, ascended to the throne upon his father’s death in 1628. A brutal civil war followed, which King Charles I lost to the Puritans; Charles was executed in 1649.

Among the many reforms enacted by the Puritans at the height of the civil war was the closing of all theaters. In 1660 Charles I’s son was restored to the throne of England. King Charles II allowed theaters to reopen, but by then the curtain had fallen on the heyday of English drama.
WHERE DID THE COMEDY OF ERRORS COME FROM?

Scholars believe that The Comedy of Errors is one of Shakespeare's earliest plays, probably his first comedy, and definitely the shortest of his dramatic works, clocking in at just under 1,800 lines (the average play length in Elizabethan England was 3,000 lines). To craft the comedy’s plot, Shakespeare drew from two plays that he likely studied as a schoolboy, the ancient Latin The Menaechmi and Amphitruo of Roman writer Titus Maccius Plautus.

Plautus was born in the Umbria region of Italy around 254 BCE and died in 184 BCE. Like Shakespeare, he rose from humble beginnings (it’s thought he started as a scenic carpenter or stagehand) to become a celebrated actor and the leading dramatist of his day. Plautus’s witty, polished verse, written in Latin, was widely studied in Elizabethan grammar schools, where boys were required to copy, recite, and imitate the “Plautine” style. No doubt the school in Shakespeare's hometown required its students to learn passages from Plautus, perhaps even from the very plays on which he based The Comedy of Errors.

The Menaechmi’s story follows a pair of identical twins, sons of a Syracusan merchant. One of them, Menaechmus, is lost as a child and the other is given his name in his memory. As an adult, the remaining twin goes off in search of his brother and, after many mistaken-identity mishaps, the brothers find each other and live happily ever after. Sound familiar? Shakespeare did a lot of tweaking to the Menaechmi story to create The Comedy of Errors, expanding the wife's role and adding a sister, father, and mother, plus the new location of Ephesus. Another of Plautus’s plays, Amphitruo, likely gave Shakespeare the idea of adding a second pair of identical twins, the Dromio servants. In this Plautus play, the gods Mercury and Jupiter impersonate, or “twin,” a mortal servant and his master.

To shape his comedy, Shakespeare followed the guidelines of ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle. In his famous book Poetics, Aristotle set forth the concept of unity of time, place, and action in theatre. He thought that the very best plays took place in a single location, over the course of a single day, with every scene supporting the main storyline. The Comedy of Errors is one of two Shakespearean plays that observe all three unities (the other is one of his last plays, The Tempest). Shakespeare uses the unities to turn up the tension as the Antopholuses try to figure out how their lives got so confused: time passes so quickly that neither has a chance to stop and think—they can only react in the moment and keep going.

TRY THIS

Can you think of any other plays, movies, musicals, or TV shows that follow Aristotle's unities (all action takes place in one place, in one day, and supports one main storyline)? Create a storyboard, comic strip, or timeline summarizing that dramatic work's (or The Comedy of Errors') action/plot.

Does reading *The Comedy of Errors* feel like reading one super-long poem? That’s because Shakespeare—nicknamed the Bard, another word for poet—including loads of verse in his plays. Verse is language with a set rhythm, also known as poetry. Why would Shakespeare do that? Two main reasons: tradition and memorization. Since the beginning of theatre, plays had been written in verse, and verse is easier to memorize than prose—kind of like how a song or rap lyric can get stuck in your head. Shakespeare generally used verse, a formal way of speaking, for the dialogue of nobility and other important people.

Shakespeare used a verse form called blank verse. While blank verse doesn’t rhyme, each line does have an internal rhythm, like a heartbeat. That rhythm of blank verse is called *iambic pentameter*. Sounds fancy, but it’s pretty easy to understand. Let’s break that name down. An *iamb* is one short, unstressed syllable followed by one long, stressed syllable. It’s that heartbeat rhythm: da DUM, da DUM, da DUM (or i AM, i AM, i AM, for an easy way to remember). *Penta* means five, like the number of sides on a pentagon. And *meter* means a rhythmic pattern. So iambic pentameter is a rhythmic pattern made up of five iambs—or heartbeats, or da DUMs (or i AMs)—per line.

Here one of Antipholus S.’s lines from act 2, scene 2:

Am I \ in EARTH, \ in HEA \ ven, \ OR \ in HELL?

Hear the five heartbeats, the five da DUMs (i AMs)? That’s iambic pentameter.

But Shakespeare liked to mix it up; he was one of the first playwrights to use both verse and prose—language without a set rhythm or structure—when it suited him. Prose is the form typically used by the servants and common citizens in Shakespeare’s works; it’s closer to informal, everyday language – speech Shakespeare’s audiences would easily identify with. Sometimes Shakespeare would have characters switch back and forth between verse and prose, and at specific points in the play.

For example, though the two Dromios are servants, check out how Dromio E. breaks out the verse to scold his master on behalf of his mistress for being late to the meal in act 1, scene 2:

The CA \ pon BURNS, \ the PIG \ falls FROM \ the SPIT,
The CLOCK \ hath STRUCK \ en TWELVE \ up ON \ the BELL;

But when Dromio S. discusses Nell, the kitchen maid, with his master in act 3, scene 2, he uses prose:

*Marry, sir, she’s the kitchen wench and all grease; and I know not what use to put her to but to make a lamp of her and run from her by her own light.*

**THINK ABOUT THIS**

In Shakespeare, lines of verse begin with capital letters, while prose appears in paragraph form. Why do you suppose that is?
THINK ABOUT THIS

Does your language change depending on whom you’re speaking to or what you’re speaking about? Where else do characters do this in The Comedy of Errors? What does it tell you about their relationships, their opinions?

And speaking of mixing it up, in The Comedy of Errors Shakespeare throws in with his iambics another type of two-syllable verse pattern, the trochee (pronounced TRO-key). Like an iamb, a trochee is a type of poetic foot, or basic unit of a poem’s meter. Its pattern of a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable is the exact opposite of an iamb: DA dum (or TRO key). Compared to an iamb, this felt surprisingly unnatural to English-language speakers in Shakespeare’s day, so the Bard often used trochees for his supernatural characters, like witches and ghosts. He also tossed trochees into lines of iambic pentameter for special effect.

Here’s an example from The Comedy of Errors, when Luciana confronts Antipholus S., believing he’s her brother-in-law Antipholus E., about his confession of love for her in act 3, scene 2:

Or IF | you LIKE | ELSE where, | do IT | by STEALTH;
MUFF | le | your FALSE | LOVE with | some SHOW | of BLIND | ness.

Did you pick up on the trochees (the DA dums/TRO keys) among all the iambics (the da DUMs/i AMs)? But wait a minute—what about that extra unstressed syllable hanging out on the end? That’s called a feminine ending. It throws off the rhythm of the verse just a bit; Shakespeare used it to suggest a character feeling thrown off or unsettled, like Luciana at that moment. Shakespeare sure used every poetic tool he could to get his meanings across, right?

THINK ABOUT THIS

What words stick out from Luciana’s lines above? How might an actor take these trochees as a sort of cue from Shakespeare? If you were delivering these lines onstage, how might your voice change at these trochees, and what effect might it have on the scene?

TRY THIS

Got skills? Try your hand at writing in Shakespearean verse. Pen a few lines in iambic pentameter, then mix it up by tossing in a few trochees, and maybe even a feminine ending. How do the trochees and feminine ending change the meaning or effect of what you’ve written?

RESOURCES

**Absolute Shakespeare**
www.absoluteshakespeare.com
Extensive online resource for Shakespeare's plays, sonnets, poems, quotes, biography, and Globe Theatre information.

**Complete Works of William Shakespeare**
http://shakespeare.mit.edu
MIT's online collection of full-text versions of Shakespeare's plays and poetry.

**Folger Shakespeare Library**
www.folger.edu
The Folger is a world-renowned research center devoted to Shakespeare and the early modern age in the West and holds the world's largest and finest collection of Shakespeare materials. Its online teaching resources include Shakespeare lesson plans and other classroom materials.

**No Fear Shakespeare**
www.nfs.sparknotes.com
No Fear Shakespeare puts the Bard's language side-by-side with a modern English translation—the kind of English people actually speak today.

**Shakespeare Online**
www.shakespeare-online.com
Named one of Microsoft's top ten websites for students, Shakespeare Online provides free, original, and accurate information on Shakespeare to students, teachers, and Shakespeare enthusiasts.

**William Shakespeare Info**
www.william-shakespeare.info
Vast online resource for Shakespeare's works and biographical and background information.

**The Comedy of Errors Study Guides**
Free comprehensive, downloadable The Comedy of Errors study guides:
https://www.shakespearetheatre.org/_pdf/first_folio/folio_COE_about.pdf

**VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING**

**Music:** 2.7, 8, 13; 3.9, 11, 12, 14–16; 4.7, 8, 10; 5.7, 8, 10, 11; 6.18, 19; 6.7, 8; 7.7, 8; 8.7, 8; 9.1, 3, 5, 6, 8; 10.1, 3, 5, 6, 8; 11.1, 3, 5, 6, 8; 12.1, 3, 5, 6, 8

**English:** 2.1, 2, 6, 8, 10, 12; 3.1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10; 4.1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9; 5.1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9; 6.1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9; 7.1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9; 8.1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9; 9.1, 3, 5, 6, 8; 10.1, 3, 5, 6, 8; 11.1, 3, 5, 6, 8

**History and Social Science:** 3.1, 6, 13; USI.1, 2; USII.1, 4, 9; WG.1, 3, 9, 15; WHI.1; WHII.1, 4, 13; VUS.3, 8
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**WorldClass® Event:**

How did your students respond to the performance?

How did you prepare your students for this performance? Did you use the Education Guide? If so, how? Did students enjoy the materials?

How did this performance contribute to experiential learning in your classroom?

What role do the arts play in your school? In your classroom?

If you could change one thing about this experience, what would it be?

Please include quotes and comments from your students as well!

(Optional)

Name: ____________________________________________________________

School: ___________________________________ City: ___________________________________ 

Would you like to be part of our database?  □ Yes    □ No