

Objective

By the end of this lesson, the student will have a basic understanding of Shakespeare's life and works, including key themes and characters from one of his plays. The student will also engage in creative activities to express their understanding of Shakespearean language and storytelling.

Materials and Prep

- Pencil and paper for notes and activities
- Access to a computer or device for research (optional)
- Printed copies of a short excerpt from a Shakespeare play (e.g., "A Midsummer Night's Dream")
- Art supplies (colored pencils, markers, etc.) for creative activities
- Preparation of a brief biography of Shakespeare to discuss

Activities

- **Shakespearean Biography Exploration:**

Start the lesson by discussing Shakespeare's life. Create a timeline of key events in his life, including his birth, major works, and death. This will help the student understand the historical context of his plays.

- **Reading and Understanding an Excerpt:**

Read a short excerpt from "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Discuss the language used and its meaning. Encourage the student to ask questions and express their thoughts on the characters and plot.

- **Creative Character Drawing:**

Have the student choose a character from the excerpt and draw a representation of them. They can also write a short description of the character's personality and role in the story.

- **Shakespearean Insult Contest:**

Introduce the fun of Shakespearean insults! Together, create a list of Shakespearean insults, and then have a friendly contest to see who can come up with the most creative insult using the language of Shakespeare.

Talking Points

- "Did you know that Shakespeare was born in 1564? That's over 450 years ago!"
- "Shakespeare wrote 39 plays, and many of them are still performed today. Can you think of any?"
- "His plays often explore themes like love, betrayal, and ambition. What do you think those themes mean?"
- "In 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', there are magical fairies and love potions. How do you think these elements affect the story?"
- "Shakespeare's language can be tricky! What words or phrases do you find interesting or confusing?"
- "Creating characters can be fun! What kind of character would you like to draw and why?"
- "Insults in Shakespeare's time were often clever and funny. What's your favorite insult from our list?"

- "Shakespeare wrote in iambic pentameter, which means he had a specific rhythm in his writing. Can you find that rhythm when we read together?"
- "Why do you think Shakespeare's works are still popular today? What lessons can we learn from them?"
- "If you could ask Shakespeare one question, what would it be?"
- "What do you think makes a good story? How does Shakespeare use characters and plot to create his stories?"
- "Let's think about how we can bring Shakespeare's characters to life in our own way. How would you act out a scene?"