Students Discover Shakespeare's Relevance with Creative Projects

By Dr. Teresa Nugent

This course portfolio details how revising a creative project assignment to incorporate a new learning goal—explain how a Shakespeare text relates to today's world—helped students develop critical thinking skills and discover ways that early modern English literature illuminates their own lives.

Background

ENGL 3000-100 Shakespeare for Nonmajors is a large-lecture course designed to satisfy the College of Arts and Science's requirement for upper-division literature and the arts. I've been teaching this course each spring since 2014, and each year I've added or adjusted elements of the course. The Background of this portfolio outlines how my course design has evolved to introduce students to the material culture that influenced Shaksepeare's writing, as well as to the texts and art works that Shakespeare's works have inspired. Students build upon this information to create their own Shakespeare-inspired projects.

Implementation

For the 2017 spring semester, I revised the Creative Project Assignment to task students with identifying themes or issues in Shakespeare's texts that help elucidate interests or concerns in the world today. The Implementation section of this portfolio explains these revisions and the pedagogical theory on critical thinking that informs my redesign.

Student Work

Students in the 2017 spring semester of ENGL 3000-100 took up the challenge to illustrate Shakespeare's relevance in the twenty-first century and created powerful testaments to why we continue to study his works. The Student Work page of this portfolio includes examples of students' creative projects and descriptions, along with their reflections on their learning experience. I've also included a summary and samples of students' responses to an end-of-semester survey question that asks students to describe what they learned from the course.

Reflections

I'm very pleased with the students' performance on the creative projects. Revising the project assignment goals to address how Shakespeare relates to today's world has prompted the students to think beyond the parameters of the texts in the course and discover ways that Shakespeare's works illuminate their own lives and how they think about the world. On the Reflection page of

this portfolio, I share my thoughts about this assignment revision and ways I plan to build upon this work in future semesters.

Background

ENGL 3000-100 *Shakespeare for Nonmajors* introduces students with a range of academic interests to William Shakespeare's literary works and early modern English society. This course satisfies the College of Arts and Sciences core requirement for upper-division literature and the arts. *Shakespeare for Nonmajors* is one of the English Department's most popular courses, and each semester, numerous sections of this course are taught by faculty and Ph.D. candidates. Most of these sections are mid-sized (28-35 students). ENGL 3000-100, however, is a large-lecture format (130-260 students). Students attend two 50-minute lectures and one recitation each week.

I began teaching the large-lecture course of Shakespeare for Nonmajors in the spring of 2014. It was my first experience teaching a course with more than 35 students enrolled. I have continued to teach this course each spring semester.

The learning goals for my ENGL 3000-100 course are for students who actively engage in the work of the course to develop a detailed understanding of Shakespeare's works and early modern English society, and to improve their critical reading, thinking, and writing abilities. The learning outcomes for this course are for students to be able to perform the following tasks:

- Read and comprehend Shakespearean language
- Identify and interpret characters, plots, significant passages, and themes in selected works
- Use close reading techniques to analyze literary texts and be able to identity, define, and discuss genre, poetic language, poetic form, tone, audience, allusions, imagery, rhetorical devices, etc.
- Comprehend scholarship on the early modern English period and analyze Shakespeare's works in relation to the social, political, religious, and economic conditions in which they were composed
- Formulate an interpretative thesis and defend it using textual evidence, as demonstrated through frequent composition of short answers and essays
- Design, build, present, and reflect upon a creative project based on one of Shakespeare's texts

For the spring semester of 2017, I revised the creative project assignment and added the following learning outcome for the course.

Students will be able to:

- Draw connections between themes in Shakespeare's works and their own experiences, interests, and/or concerns in the twenty-first century and articulate the relevance of Shakespeare in today's world.

My goals and course design for ENGL 3000-100 have developed over the last several years. When I first began teaching this course, I modeled the class on my online version of the same course, which I have been teaching and revising since 2004. For the online course, I recently had incorporated a creative project into the usual mix of short writing assignments, formal essays, reading quizzes, and a final exam. Student performance and feedback on the creative project assignment was so positive in my online course that I decided to include the creative project in the large lecture course. Students in the spring 2014 class presented their projects to each other in the recitation sections, and then wrote a two-page reflection of their work, and evaluated projects by their peers.

The students consistently reported that this assignment strengthened their engagement with Shakespeare's texts because they determined the focus of the projects; the following comments represent sentiments expresses by many students over the last several years:

> I think the fact that you let us pick our own topics really helped to ensure that we were more interested and invested in what we were producing.

> I felt like I was able to dive deeper into Measure for Measure because I was looking for themes that I cared about and not just trying to identify certain things that a topic was telling me to find.

> [The creative project] is one of my favorite projects that I have had to do thus far in college because I could incorporate another subject (feminism) that really interests me, and that means a lot to me.

The next year, in spring 2015, I incorporated another learning activity that I had used in earlier, smaller classes: a class visit to the University's Department of Special Collections in Norlin Library to observe artifacts related to Shakespeare studies and to learn about manuscript and early print cultures. This exhibit also helps students become aware of the intense fascination that Shakespeare and his works have enjoyed over the last four centuries, not only in England, but around the globe.

To accommodate such a large class size, the librarians agreed to host 15 separate groups over the course of one week. Students signed up for specific visiting times, and at least one TA and I attended each visit. During the visit, each student completed a worksheet of questions about the exhibit items, including a number of artists' works based on Shakespeare. I asked students to consider how these art works might inspire their own creative projects.

Since the introduction of the Special Collections exhibit into the course in 2015, many students have developed projects based on specific artifacts in the library. The artists' books, in particular, stimulate students' imaginations about possible ways to represent Shakespeare's texts.

At the end of each semester, the recitation sections vote for their favorite projects, and the top picks are presented in the large lecture to the whole class. The Special Collection's librarians attend this class and, afterwards, they invite specific students to donate their projects to the library's permanent collection. For the last two years, when the current semester's class visits

Special Collections, students view projects in the exhibit that were created by other students in previous semesters.

The Department of Special Collections also included these student projects in their Shakespeare Exhibit in April 2016 to commemorate the 400-year anniversary of the Bard's death.

These activities—the Special Collections visit and the Creative Project—successfully prompt students to build upon the information they've learned over the semester to create innovative ways of understanding Shakespeare, and to share their ideas with their peers and the campus community, at large.

Implementation

For the 2017 spring semester, I revised the Creative Project Assignment (included at end of document) to task students with identifying themes or issues in Shakespeare's texts that help elucidate interests or issues in the world today. This new objective is, in part, my response to growing concerns over the status of the humanities in higher education. I believe it is imperative that faculty encourage students to discuss and debate *why* we value literary texts, and facilitate conversations about the role that literature and the arts play in our society.

Each semester, our class discusses issues in Shakespeare's texts that resonate with concerns in today's world, but I wanted to make Shakespeare's relevance a more explicit focus of the students' learning experience. This new focus helps students complete the course with a strong understanding of why people in the twenty-first century continue to study Shakespeare's works.

The revised components of the Creative Project Assignment are:

- The instructions for the Creative Project Proposal now ask students to explain how knowledge of Shakespeare can help us analyze our society in the twenty-first century
- In addition to posting their projects on the course discussion board for the rest of the class to view, students now also post a detailed description of their projects that includes the following information:
    o Summary of the student's goals for the project
    o Brief description of the student's design and construction process
    o Explanation of how this project aims to enhance other students' understanding of a particular play
    o Argument for how the project responds to the question of Shakespeare's relevance in today's world.

- The Reflection Paper part of the Creative Project Assignment now asks students to discuss how Shakespeare's texts resonate for them in relation to today's world.

Part of the overarching goal of this course is to improve students' critical reading, thinking, and writing abilities. The Creative Project Assignment specifically aligns with this goal by encouraging students to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned in the course to the world around them.

In "Critical Thinking: Why is it So Hard to Teach?" (2007), Daniel Willingham argues convincingly that students can only learn how to think critically when they learn critical thinking strategies in tandem with domain knowledge, in order to be able to draw upon specific information and apply it to new scenarios.

Willingham emphasizes that simply remembering a previous answer or solution is not thinking critically:

> For example, solving a complex but familiar physics problem by applying a multi-step algorithm isn't critical thinking because you are really drawing on memory to solve the problem. But devising a new algorithm is critical thinking. ("Critical Thinking," 11)

Students need to use prior knowledge or experience to *create* new solutions. Willingham asserts, "Critical thinking is self-directed in that the thinker must be calling the shots" (11).

The creative project in ENGL 3000-100 prompts students to draw upon what they've learned about Shakespeare's works to craft their own projects and present their work to the rest of the class. This project specifically aims to motivate students to achieve Willingham's vision of critical thinking as "devising a new algorithm" (11). Or, as many of my students would say, "thinking outside the box."

Many of my students have reported that the creative project was their favorite assignment and that they were inspired to put in more time and energy on this project than they had on previous writing assignments. They particularly appreciate having the freedom to develop their own project.

By combining the domain knowledge of Shakespeare studies with the critical thinking strategies of close reading, students take these two key components of the course and apply them to a new dimension—their own world experience. This assignment is necessarily open-ended and unstructured. Each student is responsible for designing and constructing their own creative project, and then explaining it to their peers.

Student Work

Students in the 2017 spring semester of ENGL 3000-100 took up the challenge to illustrate Shakespeare's relevance in the twenty-first century, and they created powerful testaments on why we continue to study his works today.

Here are some examples:

Project Example 1: Portia's Hand

This student selected Portia from *The Merchant of Venice* as the focus of her study of women's status in early modern English society, as well as around the world today. Her project, Portia's Hand, plays on the idiom of a father giving his daughter's hand in marriage. This project asserts that Portia ought to have control over her own hand. However, her deceased father has devised a game to test potential suitors and she must marry the man who wins the game.

The Portia's Hand project looks at the practice of arranged marriage in Shakespeare's play and around the world today. The student's reflection on her Portia's Hand project is included at the end of this document.
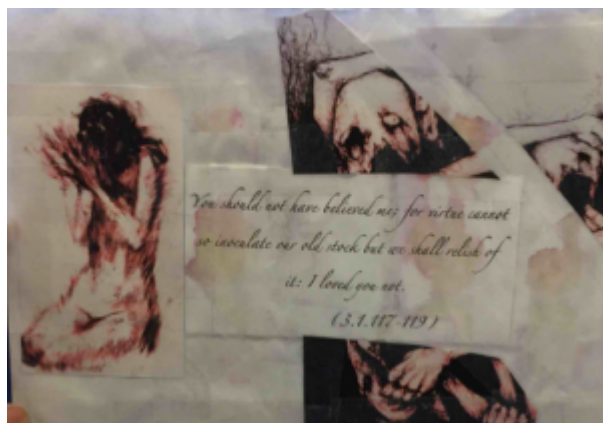

Project Example 2: Ophelia's Descent into Madness

This student explored Ophelia's situation in *Hamlet*. She created a journal, written from Ophelia's viewpoint, which chronicles the decline of her mental state over the course of the play.

The student argues that Ophelia's life and death provide a warning to today's youth, and particularly to young women, to take charge of how they respond to emotional hardships and losses, and to resist the urge to give up hope. This student's description of Ophelia's Scrapbook is included at the end of this document.

Project Example 3: Office Politics & *Richard III*

This student used Richard III's seizure of the crown and tyrannical reign as a model for dysfunctional corporations that are plagued with office politics and in-fighting among employees who compete for recognition and power. He wrote a manuscript for a short novel, "Yorkshire, Inc." that tells the tale of a pharmaceutical company on the verge of a hostile take-over of Lancastrian Chemical. Richard is the conniving Vice President of Finance for Yorkshire Inc. who is back-stabbing his way to the CEO position. This project illustrates how Shakespeare's famous drama of greed, ambition, and murder continues to define our depictions of human nature at its most sinister. Read this student's description of his creative writing project based on *Richard III* at the end of this document.

And worse I may be yet. The worst is not So long as we can say "This is the worst."
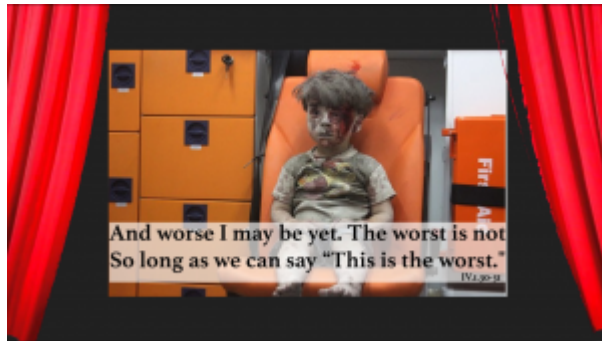
Project Example 4: Yesterday/Today

This student researched Shakespeare's plays that have been banned or criticized for their treatment of specific topics. She combined significant passages from each play with images of specific current events to illustrate how Shakespeare's plays continue to speak to pressing issues in today's societies. Her description of how Shakespeare's words offer powerful commentary on images of current events is included at the end of this document.

Class Survey Responses

In an end-of-semester survey, I asked students, "What is the most beneficial thing you learned this semester?" In 31 out of 99 responses, students identified the relevance of Shakespeare's works in today's world as one of the most significant lessons of the course.

Here are some of the students' answers:

> I think the lesson of how discrimination by race or religious belief was prominent in Shakespeare's time and even more prominent now. Reading the plays that discuss these topics show how relevant Shakespeare still is today.

> I really enjoyed using a feminist lens to study all of Shakespeare's plays. It fascinated me to study the female characters in his plays, and how relevant issues around women's rights are still today.

> Richard III was without a doubt the best play I've ever read. Every action that Richard makes furthers his own political position and is absolutely devious. Beyond that, I feel like Richard III was the play that held the most modern significance as it touches on human nature and deception more than anything else I've ever read besides possibly The Prince.

> I learned that many of Shakespeare's plays share common themes, such as morality, feminism, or the hardships of love. These themes are all relevant to today, and the themes and storylines are what makes Shakespeare's stories interesting even if the language and setting is from hundreds of years ago.

> I learned how to make some modern connections with Shakespeare's plays, such as in Merchant of Venice and Othello. Although these plays were written hundreds of years ago, I find it very interesting to connect with some characters in the play[s]. The characters, such as [Shylock] and Othello both experienced some sort of discrimination or prejudice because of their outside origins, yet they did not let their differences stop them from being who they were.

> Drawing parallels and connections between the plays and modern times was immensely helpful and informative. Relating themes and motifs to current times offered me a fresh perspective on timeless classic[s] from Shakespeare. My appreciation for his work and the intricacy of it has reignited my passion for literature and writing.

I have received feedback from students on the Creative Project Assignment in ENGL 3000 for over five years. They frequently express delight in having an assignment that differs from traditional paper writing, and they voice appreciation for being given the opportunity to design their own project. In terms of what they learned from the course, students often comment on the detailed knowledge they gained about the history of Shakespeare's early modern English society. Connecting Shakespeare's themes with current-day topics has been part of our conversations, but until the spring of 2017 is has not been a primary focus of the course. Going forward, I will continue to make Shakespeare's relevance a major component of my Shakespeare for Nonmajors classes!

Reflections

I'm very pleased with the students' performances on the creative projects. Revising the project assignment goals to address how Shakespeare relates to today's world prompted students to think beyond the parameters of the texts in the course and discover ways that Shakespeare's works can help them understand their world and find meaning in their own lives. In upcoming sections of ENGL 3000, I will continue to focus on how Shakespeare's works speak to students' interests and concerns in the twenty-first century.

Sometimes, as instructors, we are so immersed in our subject matter that the overall purpose of studying the material seems obvious. However, for many students, taking time to discuss *why* we're reading plays that were written over 400 years ago, for example, provides an essential piece of the puzzle that students need. At a time when the value of a college education is being questioned, we need to engage students in conversations about the purpose and significance of what we are asking them to do.

My initial impression from the project presentations, reflections, and survey responses of the ENGL 3000-100 class of spring 2017 is that these students will remember ways that Shakespeare's narratives speak to issues in today's world long after they've forgotten the definition of dramatic irony, the impact of the Protestant Reformation, or how Shakespeare created the illusion of fully-formed characters out of words on a page. Ideally, this project fosters students' sense that art matters because of how it helps us define what is meaningful in our own world.

ENGL 3000-100
Shakespeare for Nonmajors

Syllabus for Spring 2017
MW, noon-12:50pm, VAC 1B20
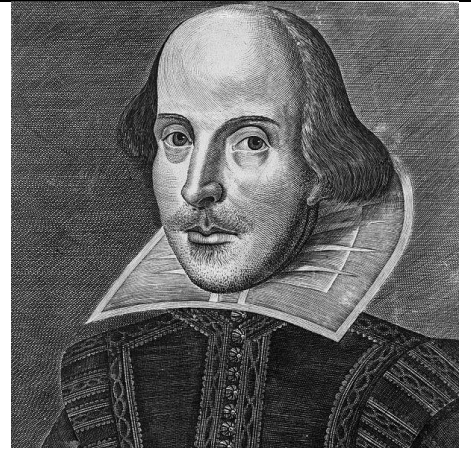
Instructor: Teresa Nugent, PhD

- Email: teresa.nugent@colorado.edu
- Office hours: Mondays, 2-3pm; Wednesdays, 1:30-3:30pm; and by appointment
- Office: Hellems 151

Recitations and TA Contact Info

Enrollment in this course includes one required, weekly recitation meeting. Please check your class roster to see which section you are registered to attend. Your recitation Teaching Assistant (TA) will be your primary point of contact regarding assignments.

R101:	W 2:00–2:50 PM	HLMS 259	Denise Weber, Denise.Weber@colorado.edu
R102:	W 3:00–3:50 PM	HLMS 259	Denise Weber, Denise.Weber@colorado.edu
R103:	W 4:00–4:50 PM	HLMS 259	Tarah Dykeman, Tarah.Dykeman@colorado.edu
R104:	W 5:00–5:50 PM	HLMS 259	Julia Pillard, Julia.Pillard@colorado.edu
R105:	Th 2:00–2:50 PM	MUEN E130	Julia Pillard, Julia.Pillard@colorado.edu
R108:	F 12–12:50 PM	STAD 135	Tarah Dykeman, Tarah.Dykeman@colorado.edu

Course Description and Goals

In 1592, a washed-up dramatist and university wit, named Robert Greene, publicly complained about a new success in the London theater world, an "upstart crow" who stole other writers' works and turned them into stage sensations. Who was this newcomer who was ruffling feathers and raising eyebrows? None other than the son of a glove maker, a 28-year-old from the West Midlands named William Shakespeare.

Welcome to Shakespeare for Nonmajors! In this course, you will explore a selection of Shakespeare's works, including comedies, tragedies, a history play, and a romance. In addition, you'll learn about Shakespeare's background, the atmosphere of early modern London, and how Shakespeare's works reflect and critique the contemporary issues of his day. I'll ask you to ponder how Shakespeare became one of the most famous writers of English literature and created works that many people believe transcend the trappings of place and time.

To be successful in this class, you need to commit to staying on track with the assigned readings and assignments, attending lectures and recitations, and actively participating in your learning experience. If at any point you have questions, don't hesitate to ask. Raise your hand during lectures, ask questions at your recitation, email me or your TA, and come visit me during office hours. The more actively you engage in this course, the more you will gain from it.

Course Learning Outcomes and Objectives

After completing this course, you should be able to:

- Read and comprehend Shakespearean language with ease and understanding. Identify and describe characters, plots, significant passages, and themes in selected works

- Apply close reading techniques to literary texts and be able to identity, define, and discuss genre, poetic language, poetic form, tone, audience, allusions, imagery, rhetorical devices, etc.

- Comprehend scholarship on the early modern English period and discuss Shakespeare's works in relation to the social, political, religious, and economic conditions in which they were composed

- Formulate an interpretative thesis and defend it using textual evidence, as demonstrated through frequent composition of short answers and essays

- Design, build, present, and reflect upon a creative project based on one of Shakespeare's texts

- Draw connections between themes in Shakespeare's works and their experiences, interests, and/or concerns in the twenty-first century and articulate the relevance of Shakespeare in today's world.

In general, my aim for this course is to improve your critical reading, thinking, and writing skills.

- Critical reading is the ability to recognize literary devices, such as allusions, underlying assumptions, subtle implications, and meaningful omissions in a particular text.
- Critical thinking is the ability to analyze the significance of literary devices, and may include assessing the relationship between a text and the cultural and historical period in which it was written.
- Critical writing is the ability to successfully articulate an analysis, explaining how it leads to a particular interpretation of a text. An effective critical essay provides textual evidence to support a particular interpretation of a text.

Course Requirements

- Regular attendance, participation, and performance at lectures and recitation, weekly.
- A copy of *The Norton Shakespeare* textbook and one registered clicker.

- You will need to complete a course quiz, seven discussion posts, one worksheet, two formal   essays, a creative project (including a proposal, project, presentation, and reflection assignment), and one final paper.
- You must complete the project and final paper to be eligible for a passing grade in the course.
- You are responsible for checking the ENGL3000-100 course D2L website at **www.learn.colorado.edu** several times per week for updates and assignments.
- We will have a **limited-electronics policy during lectures**. If you have special circumstances that require the support of electronic devices, please let me know. Students who wish to take notes on electronic devices during class need to sit in the first five rows at the front of our classroom. Otherwise, please refrain from using phones, tablets, or laptops during class.

Required Text

You will need a copy of the required textbook for this course: *The Norton Shakespeare*, edited by Stephen Greenblatt, et al. I've ordered the third edition of *The Norton Shakespeare: Essential Plays and The Sonnets* (2016) [ISBN 978-0-393-93863-0].

There are several other versions of *The Norton Shakespeare* that you may use, including: the first edition (1997) [ISBN 0-393-97087-6] or the second edition (2008) [ISBN 978-0-393-92991-1] or the *Essential Plays & Sonnets* second edition of *The Norton Shakespeare* (2009) [ISBN 978-0-393-93313-0]. There is also a two-volume set of this textbook; Volume 1, Early Plays and Poems [ISBN 978-0-393-93144-0] and Volume 2, Later Plays [978-0-393-93145-7].

Please do not use other anthologies of Shakespeare's plays. For assignments in this course, you will need to refer to specific information included in the introductions and footnotes in *The Norton Shakespeare*. I have selected this edition of Shakespeare's plays because it contains outstanding commentary on the plays and their cultural contexts, written by leading scholars in Shakespeare studies. You may order this text from the CU bookstore. Used copies are often available at bookstores and websites.

I've also placed several copies of *The Norton Shakespeare* on reserve at Norlin Library's circulation desk, available for two-hour check out. Alternatively, you might be able to find a copy of this text at your local library.

Course Assignments

Reading Assignments

For this course, you will read seven plays, the "General Introduction" to *The Norton Shakespeare*, and the *Norton's* introductions to each play. I recommend that you read each play twice. If you find it difficult to understand Shakespeare's language, try watching a film version of a play before reading it; this will help you figure out who's who and what's going on. I've included many film versions of the plays in our D2L course site. Keep in mind, though, that many films skip or rearrange the original play text. You can use summaries and modernized versions of Shakespeare's plays, available online, to help you understand the plays. However, for all writing assignments and discussions (and to get the most out of this class), you need to read the original plays, carefully, with undivided attention and enthusiasm!

Participation and Performance Clicker Scores (worth 10% of course grade)

You need to bring a clicker to each lecture class. It is your responsibility to properly register your clicker so that you receive points for class participation and performance during the semester. It is also your responsibility to make sure your clicker is working, has active batteries, and is logged into the room network for each class. For information on how to register your CU Clicker visit: http://www.colorado.edu/oit/tutorial/cuclickers-iclicker-remote-registration

During each lecture, I will ask several clicker questions (the number of questions per class will vary). If you answer at least all-but-one of the questions asked during a lecture, you will earn 5 points for that day's participation score. In addition, sometimes questions will have specific, correct answers (not always). When you answer these types of questions correctly, you will earn an additional point for each correct answer. At the end of the semester, I will total the number of possible points for the course, deduct ten percent of the total to cover any absences or malfunction of clickers, and then assign you a score based on your total clicker points, based on the following scale:

90-100% participation/performance = 10/10 score
80-89% participation/performance = 9/10 score
70-79% participation/performance = 8/10 score
60-69% participation/performance = 7/10 score
0-59% participation/performance = 0/10 score

DO NOT ASK to have points added to cover excused absences, dead batteries, forgotten clickers, etc. The deduction of ten percent of the possible points earned will cover a reasonable number of such issues. I will not add clicker points on an individual basis.

Course Quiz (worth 2% of course grade)

Begin the course by browsing around our D2L course site; log in to our website at www.learn.colorado.edu. Read the Syllabus and Assignment Calendar, review the information in FAQs, and visit the Recommended Shakespeare Sites page. Check out some of these links. Then, take the **Course Quiz by 10pm on Monday, Jan. 23.**

To find the quiz, go to the Assessments tab, select Quizzes, and click the Course Quiz link. Follow the instructions, and be sure to save your answers. You may take this quiz twice. Once you complete the quiz, you will see a low score. Your quiz score will be updated after your TA reads your answers.

Recitation Participation and Performance (worth 10% of course grade)

Your assigned Teaching Assistant will determine your recitation grade, based on criteria that they establish. This criteria will include attendance, may include additional writing assignments, and will be discussed at the first recitation meeting. TAs also grade all course assignments, including discussion posts, worksheets, papers and projects. Treat your TA with respect; they are experts in how to succeed in English literature courses, and they are your primary point of contact for developing your writing and analytical skills in this course. In addition to recitation, each TA will hold weekly office hours. Make good use of this opportunity to learn from them!

Discussion Posts (worth 28% of course grade)

During the semester, you will have seven discussion post assignments. Most of these posts will be due on Sunday or Monday nights, by midnight. These assignments are designed to test your understanding of the reading and to help you develop your skills for analyzing literary texts. They also will help you formulate ideas for your papers. You will need to have completed the assigned reading to be able to fully respond to discussion post prompts. The posts are a significant portion of the writing for this course; be sure to schedule substantial time to compose and proofread your posts. Late discussion posts will earn zero credit.

Papers: (worth 34% of course grade)

You will write three papers for this course. Check the Assignment Calendar for due dates. We will discuss paper assignments in lecture and in the recitation sections. The first and second papers are each worth 12% of the course grade. The final paper (which is the final exam for this course) is worth 10% of the course grade. Students must complete the final paper in order to be eligible for a passing course grade.

All papers should be saved in a MS-Word doc (or docx) file or PDF and submitted in the D2L Dropbox folder for the assignment. Other formats are not acceptable and such submission will earn zero credit. Be sure you receive an email confirmation that your paper was successfully submitted. You will receive feedback on your paper from your TA within two weeks of the assignment due date. Check the Dropbox for this feedback, and be sure to use this information to improve your subsequent writing assignments.

Refer to the Writing Assignment Rubric (included in Course Materials for details on how papers are evaluated.

Policy on Late Papers

Late papers will lose five percentage points for each day that they are late.

Extra Credit for Writing Center Help (can be worth up to 5% of paper grade)

You can earn extra credit on paper assignments by seeking help from one of the many Writing Centers on campus. To earn extra credit points (up to five possible points), you need to complete and submit a completed Writing Center Reflection Form (as an MS.doc file or pdf) with your lesson assignment for which you received tutoring help. You will find a blank copy of the Writing Center Help on the Course Materials page. Check the Assignments Calendar for due dates, and contact Writing Centers early in the semester to schedule appointments.

I've also included writing resources on our D2L site to help you proofread and polish your prose. See the Writing Tips folder in Course Materials for more details.

Creative Project (12% of course grade)

For this course, you will complete a creative project on one Shakespeare play (plays for selection will be determined by your TA). This is an opportunity to explore Shakespeare's

writing through a variety of multimedia tools. Projects may include making a short film, writing an adaptation, or creating an artistic interpretation (physical, digital, musical, etc.) of the work under study. No film comparisons, please. You may find ideas for creative approaches when you visit the Special Collections exhibit (Feb 27 - Mar 2). Begin thinking about which play you would like to explore in more detail, and how you'd like to approach it. **Proposals for play selections and presentation plans are due by March 9.** The proposal is worth 2% of the course grade, and the Creative Project (including project, presentation, and reflection assignments) is worth 10% of your course grade. The Reflection assignment is a short paper (250-500 words) that asks you to assess your project, the work of your peers, and your own learning experience. We will discuss the details for this project in lecture and recitations.

Special Collections Visit and Library Worksheet (worth 4% of course grade)

During the week of February 27 to March 2, you will visit the Department of Special Collections in Norlin Library and participate in a guided tour of Shakespeare-related materials. In early February, you'll sign up for a specific day/time for this visit. During the tour, you'll complete a worksheet with questions on the items in this exhibit and elsewhere in Norlin Library. After you complete the worksheet, you'll need to submit a typed copy of your answers in the D2L Dropbox by 10pm on March 3. If you did not attend one of our class visits, your worksheet will earn zero credit.

Grading Criteria

Assignment	Grade Percentages
Course Quiz	2%
Clicker Participation/Performance	10%
Recitation Participation/Performance	10%
Seven Discussion Posts	28%
Library Worksheet	4%
Two Papers (12% each)	24%
Creative Project (proposal, project, presentation & reflection)	12%
Final Paper	10%

Scores for assignments usually will be posted on the Grades page of the course within a week of each due date. Scores for longer writing assignments and the project may require two weeks.

Assignments will earn percentage points that correspond with letter grades as follows:

Percentage Scale and Corresponding Letter Grade

93-100% = A	83-86% = B	73-76% = C	63-66% = D
90-92% = A-	80-82% = B-	70-72% = C-	60-62% = D-
87-89% = B+	77-79% = C+	67-69% = D+	0-59% = F

Letter grades for written assignments are based on the follows definitions:

- An "A" paper or discussion post is outstanding in terms of content, format, and style. It presents a well-argued, well-defended thesis in thoughtful, lucid prose and the writing is impeccable in

terms of grammar, syntax, and spelling. In addition, an "A" paper exhibits a sophisticated understanding and/or a creative approach to its subject matter.

- A "B" paper or discussion post is above average in terms of content, format, and style. It presents a strong thesis, and offers compelling textual evidence to support it. The writing is polished, but a few lapses in proper form may appear. Sometimes a "B" paper is written with precision, but lacks sophisticated or imaginative treatment of the topic. In other cases, the ideas in a paper have the potential for "A" status, but the writing is "C" quality in terms of mechanics (syntax, grammar, spelling, or punctuation); these papers usually receive a grade of "B-" or "C+".
- A "C" paper or discussion post is average in terms of content, format, and style. The thesis may be self-evident and too general. Or, key pieces of supporting (or contrary) evidence in the text are overlooked. The paper may be flawed with awkwardly written sentences, misspellings, or incorrect grammar and punctuation.
- A "D" paper or discussion post lacks a thesis and usually offers plot summary instead of analysis. Poor grammar, excessive misspellings, and illogical sentence structure also result in "D" grades.
- An "F" paper exhibits almost no effort by the student to compose a coherent essay. It lacks a thesis and an argument, and fails to demonstrate any understanding of the material.

Refer to the Writing Assignment Rubric (in Course Materials) for specific details on how papers are evaluated.

Course Policies

Prerequisites

This course is restricted to students with 27-180 credits (Sophomores, Juniors, or Seniors) only.

Technical Requirements

You will need to bring your own CU-clicker to each class.

You need to login to the course D2L website frequently (every other day is a good habit) to access assignments, see updates, and find new materials. I will upload lecture slides after we finish discussing each play.

OIT recommends a consistent, high-speed Internet connection and either a desktop computer or a laptop to view materials in D2L, rather than a tablet or other mobile device. They also recommend that you install the latest versions of Adobe Flash, Adobe Reader, and QuickTime.

Classroom decorum

Students and faculty each have the responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty and teaching assistants have the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion, and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, and nationalities. See http://www.colorado.edu/policies/student-classroom-and-course-related-behavior and http://www.colorado.edu/osc/#student_code. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this

preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the [policies on classroom behavior](#) and [the student code](#).

Policy on Electronic Devices in Lecture

In the interest of creating a positive learning experience for everyone, I ask that anyone who needs to use an electronic device to take notes during class please sit in the first five rows at the front of the room. Please be respectful of our class time and your peers by not using devices for any purpose other than that day's class work. Otherwise, please turn off and put away all phones, tablets, and laptops during class. Each Teaching Assistant will determine whether and when use of electronic devices is appropriate during recitations.

Late Assignments Policy: Late discussion posts, worksheets and projects are not accepted and will not receive any credit. Late papers will lose five percentage points for each day an assignment is late. No assignments will be accepted after the last day of the course.

University Honor Code

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to [the academic integrity policy](#) of the institution. Violations of the policy include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access, clicker fraud, re-submission of previous work, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code Council as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the academic integrity policy can be found at http://honorcode.colorado.edu.

Course Policy on Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the submission of someone else's ideas or writing without proper citation. Please review "What Is a Violation?" at the Honor Code Office website: http://honorcode.colorado.edu/student-information/what-violation

- Always include a citation anytime you use sentences or phrases from a text, cut and paste text from a website, or paraphrase or summarize ideas from a source; otherwise you are committing plagiarism and it is an extremely serious offence that will be reported to the Honor Code Council.
- Always include citations for any works (including websites) that you consult while researching a project or paper for this class
- Failure to cite research will result in an F grade for the course, and all academic integrity violations will be reported to the Honor Code Council for review.

Accommodation Statement

I am committed to providing everyone the support and services needed to participate in this course. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please send me a copy of your letter from Disability Services in a timely manner (as early in the semester as possible; for test accommodations provide your letter at least one week prior to the exam) so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented

disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by e-mail at dsinfo@colorado.edu. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Injuries guidelines under the Quick Links at the Disability Services website and discuss your needs with me.

Religious Observances

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required assignments/attendance. If you have a conflict, please speak with me directly as soon as possible at the beginning of the term.

Discrimination and Harassment

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. CU-Boulder will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this CU-Boulder policy, "Protected Classes" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. The full policy on discrimination and harassment has more information.

ENGL 3000-100, Shakespeare for Nonmajors
Assignment Calendar for Spring 2017

The reading assignments listed on the schedule, below, should be completed before each class meeting. **Any changes to original due dates will be noted in red.**

Here is a list of important due dates, include when you need to have finished reading specific plays or submit assignments. Refer to the detailed schedule, below this table, for reading assignments and more details.

Complete Course Quiz	Jan 23
Norton "General Introduction" by Greenblatt	Jan 25
Post 1 on "General Introduction"	Jan 29
A Midsummer Night's Dream	Feb 1
Post 2 on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*	Feb 5
The Merchant of Venice	Feb 12
Post 3 on *The Merchant of Venice*	Feb 13
Paper 1 (Close Reading Assignment)	Feb 26
Special Collections Library Worksheet	Mar 3
Measure for Measure	Mar 5
Post 4 on *Measure for Measure*	Mar 6
Creative Project Proposal	Mar 9
Richard III	Mar 12
Post 5 on *Richard III*	Mar 13
Paper 2	Mar 24
Hamlet	Apr 2
Post 6 on *Hamlet*	Apr 3
Creative Project	Apr 11
Othello	Apr 16
Post 7 on *Othello*	Apr 17
The Tempest	Apr 24
Reflection Paper on Creative Projects	May 2
Final Exam Paper	May 10

Reading Assignment for first two weeks: Begin reading Stephen Greenblatt's "General Introduction" in *The Norton Shakespeare*. I've included a PDF of this introduction on our D2L website, in Course Materials, just in case you don't have your copy of *The Norton Shakespeare* during the first week of the semester. Note: Greenblatt's introduction is dense, so allow plenty of time to work through this information. It is rich with details that will enhance your understanding of Shakespeare's world, life, and art (and citing it will improve your grades!).

Week 1   Introduction to Shakespeare
          Begin reading Stephen Greenblatt "General Introduction" in *The Norton Shakespeare* (pp. 1-74)

W Jan 18   Introduction to course: Why read Shakespeare?

W/Th/F	Recitations: Check MyCUInfo for the recitation section in which you are enrolled. ***All recitation sections meet this week***

Week 2	**Reading: Greenblatt "General Introduction" (pp. 1-74)**
M Jan 23	Introduction to Shakespeare's England
M Jan 23	**DUE by 10pm, Monday: Course Quiz**
W Jan 25	Discuss key concepts in Greenblatt's "General Introduction" (pp. 1-74)
Recitations:	Discuss terms in Stephen Greenblatt's "General Introduction" and the corresponding assignment for Discussion Post 1

Week 3	**Reading: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Norton* introduction to play**
S Jan 29	**DUE by 10pm, Sunday: Discussion Post 1 (D2L Discussion Board)**
M Jan 30	Jeopardy Shakespeare, based on Greenblatt Intro (pp. 1-74)
W Feb 1	Introduction to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Read Introduction and Act 1)
W-F Sections:	Discuss Greek myths and close reading techniques

Week 4	**Reading: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Norton* introduction to play**
S Feb 5	**DUE by 10pm, Sunday: Discussion Post 2**
M Feb 6	*A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Acts 2-3)
W Feb 8	*A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Acts 4-5)
Sections:	Discussion board posts, close reading, and genre of comedy

Week 5	**Reading: *The Merchant of Venice* and *Norton* introduction to play**
M Feb 13	*The Merchant of Venice* (Read Introduction and Acts 1-2)
M Feb 13	**DUE by 10pm, Monday: Discussion Post 3**
W Feb 15	*The Merchant of Venice* (Read Acts 3-5)
Sections:	Discuss comedy as social critique and Close Reading Paper assignment

Week 6   **Discuss First Paper and Creative Project**

M Feb 20   Discuss genre of comedy and Close Reading Paper

W Feb 22   Discuss Creative Project Assignment and library visit

Sections: Discuss Close Reading Paper and creative project proposals

Week 7   **Special Collections Visits & Library Worksheet Due**

M Feb 27-**Special Collections Exhibit this Week!**
Th Mar 2   (Sign up online for time slot to visit Special Collections, Norlin Library)
                  No lecture or recitation meetings this week.

Week 8   **Reading: *Measure for Measure* and *Norton* introduction to play**

M Mar 6   *Measure for Measure* (Read Intro and Acts 1-2)
M Mar 6   DUE by 10pm, Monday: Discussion Post 4

W Mar 8   *Measure for Measure* (Read Acts 3-5)

Sections   Discuss *Measure for Measure* and Creative Project Proposal
F Mar 9   DUE by 10pm, Friday: Creative Project Proposal (D2L Dropbox)

Week 9   **Reading: *Richard III* and *Norton* introduction to play**

M Mar 13   *Richard III* (Introduction and Acts 1-2)
M Mar 13 DUE by 10pm, Monday: Discussion Post 5 on *Richard III*

W Mar 15   *Richard III* (Acts 3-5) and Paper 2 Assignment

Sections: Discuss Paper 1 comments and Paper 2 Assignment

Week 10   **Paper 2 Assignment**

M Mar 20   *Richard III and Paper 2 Assignment*

W Mar 22   At noon, Thursday & Friday recitations will peer-edit Paper 2 drafts in lecture room.
                  Wednesday recitations will peer-edit Paper 2 drafts at regular recitation meeting
times.

Spring Break, March 27-31

Week 11   *Hamlet* **and Norton Intro to play**

M Apr 3   *Hamlet:* The Philosophy of Revenge (Introduction and Acts 1-2)

W Apr 5   *Hamlet* (Acts 3-4)

Sections: Discuss *Hamlet*

Week 12   **Reading: begin** *Othello*

M Apr 10   *Hamlet* (Act 5)

W Apr 12   Conference on World Affairs Guest Speaker: Amy Fox

Sections: **Project Presentations**

Week 13   **Reading:** *Othello*

M Apr 17   *Othello* (Read *Norton* Introduction and Acts 1-5)

W Apr 19 *Othello* (Acts 4-5)

Sections: **Project Presentations** and discuss *Othello*

Week 14   **Reading:** *The Tempest* **and** *Norton* **Introduction to play**

M Apr 24   *The Tempest* (Acts 1-3)

W Apr 26   *The Tempest* (Acts 4-5)

Sections: **Project Presentations** and discuss *The Tempest*

Week 15   **Assess Creative Projects and prepare for Final Exam Paper**

M May 1   Presentations of class selections for Best Creative Projects

T May 2   <mark>**DUE by 10pm in D2L Dropbox: Reflection Paper on Creative Projects**</mark>

W May 3   Review of Final Paper Assignment and Concluding Thoughts on Shakespeare

Sections: Discuss Final Paper Assignment

Exam Schedule:

<mark>**Wed May 10   Final Exam Paper, Due by 7pm in D2L Dropbox**</mark>

ENGL 3000: Shakespeare for Nonmajors

Creative Project Assignment, Spring 2017

(***Late submissions cannot be accepted and will not receive any credit***)

Due Dates

March 9:   Proposal for Creative Project (Due in Dropbox by 10pm)

April 11:   Post Projects on Discussion Board (Due by 10pm)

April 12-28:   Creative Project Presentations in Recitations

May 2:   Reflection Paper on Creative Projects (Due by 10pm)

Project Objectives
The objectives of the Creative Project are for you to:

- Demonstrate the knowledge you have learned this semester about Shakespeare's works by focusing in-depth on one play from the class reading list;
- Design a project, using a creative approach, to help other students better understand how your chosen Shakespeare play resonates in today's world;
- Build your project, trouble-shoot difficulties and challenges, and create a polished product;
- Present your creative work to your classmates, both on the discussion board and in person;
- Reflect on your learning experience of creating and presenting this project;
- Evaluate your peer's work and projects.

Assignment
Select one Shakespeare play from our course reading list for this semester (you may work on more than one play). This creative project is an opportunity for you to experiment with different approaches to literary texts. Here are some possibilities:

- Create an artistic representation of a play
- Write your own modern adaptation of a play
- Make your own video of scenes from a play

- Write an imaginary sequel to a play
- Compose a creative confrontation between characters from different plays

No film comparisons, please. You may work individually or with one partner who is in your same recitation class. If you prefer to write a formal essay, you may propose a thesis for a creative paper on the play you select and submit that for review.

PROPOSAL (worth 2% of course grade)

You need to submit a proposal for your creative project **by March 9** (in Dropbox, by 10pm). In your proposal, include

1) The title of the play you have selected to study
2) A description of the type of project you plan to create
3) An explanation of how this project will address the question of Shakespeare's relevance in today's world

Check the proposal Dropbox for feedback (usually within 48-72 hours) to see if your proposal has been approved.

PROJECT (worth 10% of course grade)

Presentation
Post your finished project (or a link to it) on the discussion board by 10pm on April 11.
Include a page-long description with the following points:

1) A summary of your goals for this project
2) A brief description of the design and construction process
3) An explanation of how your project enhances our understanding of a particular play
4) An argument for how it responds to the question of Shakespeare's relevance in today's world

You will present your project in your recitation section, between April 12 and 28. TAs will assign specific presentation dates for each student.

Format
Since one of the aims of this project is to encourage creativity, there is not one specific format for the presentation. However, the project should demonstrate considerable thought, time, and effort in terms of concept and development. Whatever format is used, the presentation should be carefully proofed. Any written text should be free of errors. Content should be respectful and appropriate for a general audience (think PG-13).

Reflection Paper
After you have seen all the project presentations in your recitation, you need to submit a Reflection Paper that answers the following questions:

Assess your learning experience:
Describe your experience of completing this project. How did it help you understand the play that you were studying? What challenges did you encounter? Did you make any interpretive decisions about the original play? What would you add or change about this project if you had more time to work on it?

Assess your project:
How does your project respond to the question of Shakespeare's relevance in the world today? What other goals did you set for this project, and did you achieve them? Did visiting Special Collections help you formulate the idea for your project? After reviewing all the presentations in the class, how would you evaluate the quality of your project?

Evaluate other projects:
Which projects of your classmates did you find most informative? What did you learn from these projects?
Which projects of your classmates did you find most creative? What did you learn from these projects?
If you were offering advice to students about to begin the creative project assignment (in a future class), what advice would you give them?

The Reflection Paper is due by 10pm on May 2 in the D2L Dropbox. This paper is a substantial component of your project grade, so take time to craft detailed answers.

Evaluation of Project (100 possible points)
Project grades will be based on the following criteria:

Project (35 pts)

- Does the project demonstrate a detailed understanding of main themes and characters in the play?
- Does the project achieve the stated goals, including addressing the relevance of Shakespeare's works in today's world?
- Does the project demonstrate substantial time, effort and work? (Substantial means at least a 2-week effort, not just pulled together in a few days.)
- Does the project present a creative approach to the play?
- Is the project well produced (accurate information; visually appealing; no typos, grammar errors, etc.)

Presentation (30 pts)

- How well does the description on the discussion board explain this project?
- How well did you present your project to your recitation class?
- Does the project enhance other students' understanding of the play? Does it engage viewers/readers?

<u>Reflection</u> (35 pts.)

- Did you write a thoughtful and detailed reflection of your learning experience in creating the project?
- Did you address the question of Shakespeare's relevance in today's world?
- How thoughtfully have you evaluated other students' projects?

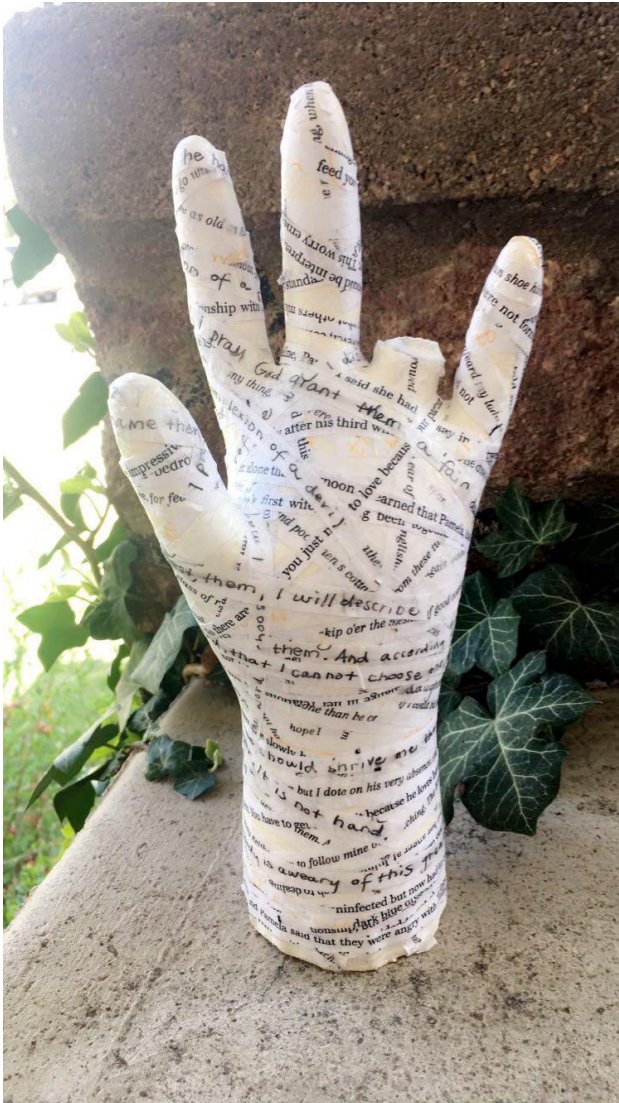***** Late submissions of final projects or peer reviews cannot be accepted and will not receive any credit.**

# THE MERCHANT OF VENICE
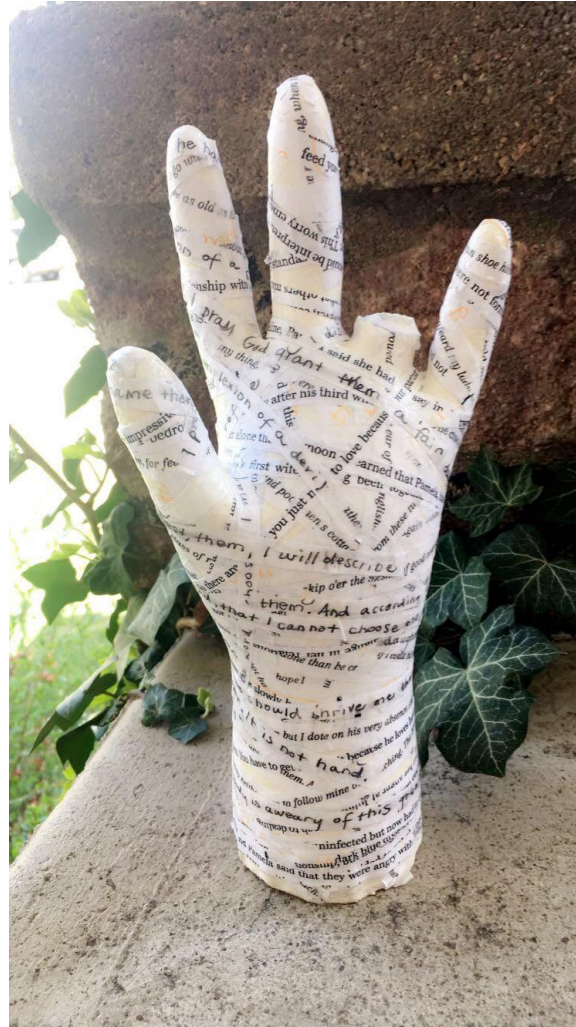
5.1.2017

PORTIA'S HAND

- **Females are not subject to the authority and privilege of hegemonic masculinity.**

- Portia's hand is "off limits" in regard to marriage; she *should* have the freedom of choice to marry who she wants and not who she is told to marry by her father.

- This is symbolic of the notion that Portia should marry who she desires instead of the winner of the casket game. It is unjust that men were able to dictate who women married during this time.

-

- **Missing ring finger**: I chose to break the ring finger off of the hand to best represent the notion that her hand is off limits to men.

- **Powerful female quotes**: I wrapped her hand in quotes from the play that are symbolic of Portia's female autonomy and right to choose.

- **Arranged marriage quotes from SSA**: I then layered on quotes from a powerful piece I read about arranged marriages in sub-Saharan Africa today. I wanted to reveal the normality of arranged marriages still today in some parts of the world to contrast to the atmosphere of Elizabethan England.
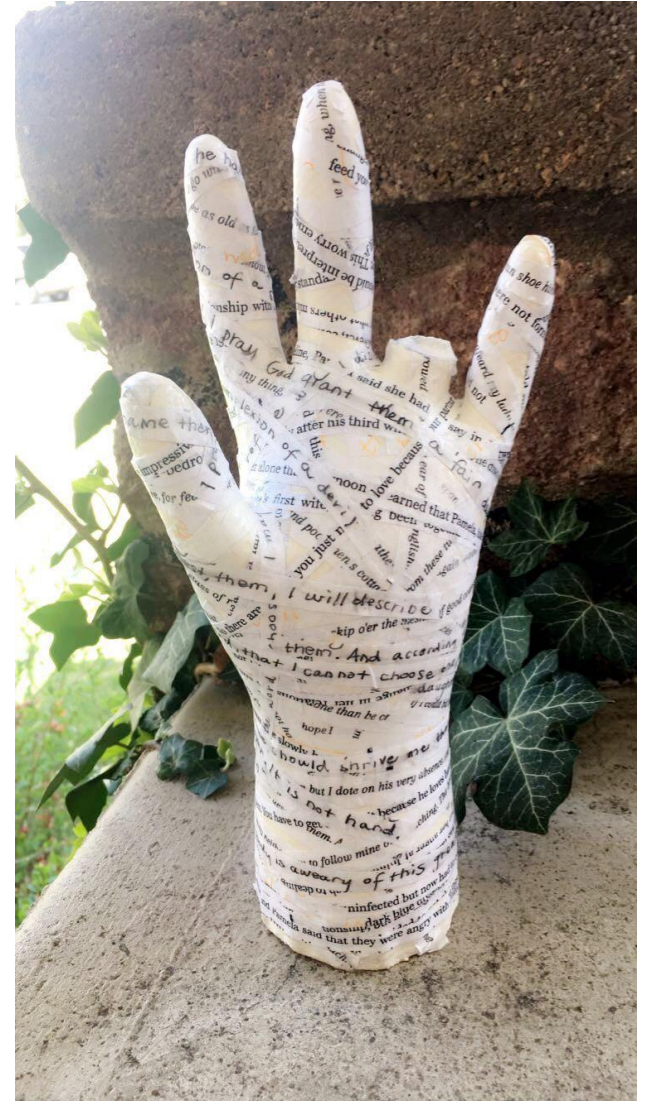
WHY DOES IT MATTER?

- **400 years later...Women's rights are still human rights**

- Women often maintain less rights than men and battle various obstacles including women's reproductive rights, abortion rights, freedom against discrimination, freedom from violence, FGM, sex trafficking, abuse, arranged marriage, etc.

In the developing world
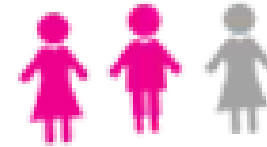
1 in 3 girls will be married before they are 18
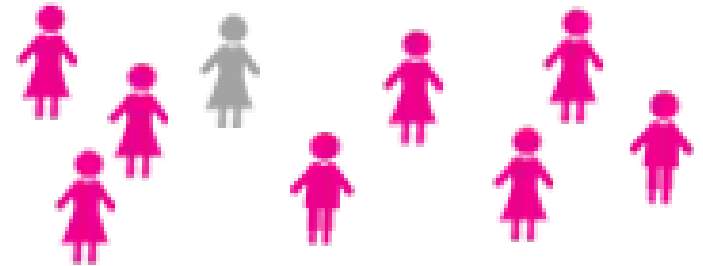
and 1 in 9 before their 15th birthday

ARRANGED MARRIAGE TODAY

- **Today in sub-Saharan Africa:** Niger, Central African Republic, Chad, Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso have rates of child marriages that soar above 50%.

- I hope this project brings to light the **importance of women's individual and sexual autonomy,** which is something that as a global community, we should aspire to achieve.

COUNTRIES WITH THE HIGHEST RATES OF CHILD MARRIAGE*
*Percentage of women aged 20-24, who were first married/in union before the age of 18.

75% NIGER
55% MALI
68% CHAD
65% BANGLADESH
63% GUINEA
52% SOUTH SUDAN
52% BURKINA FASO
50% MALAWI
68% CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
56% MOZAMBIQUE

#GirlSummit

unicef
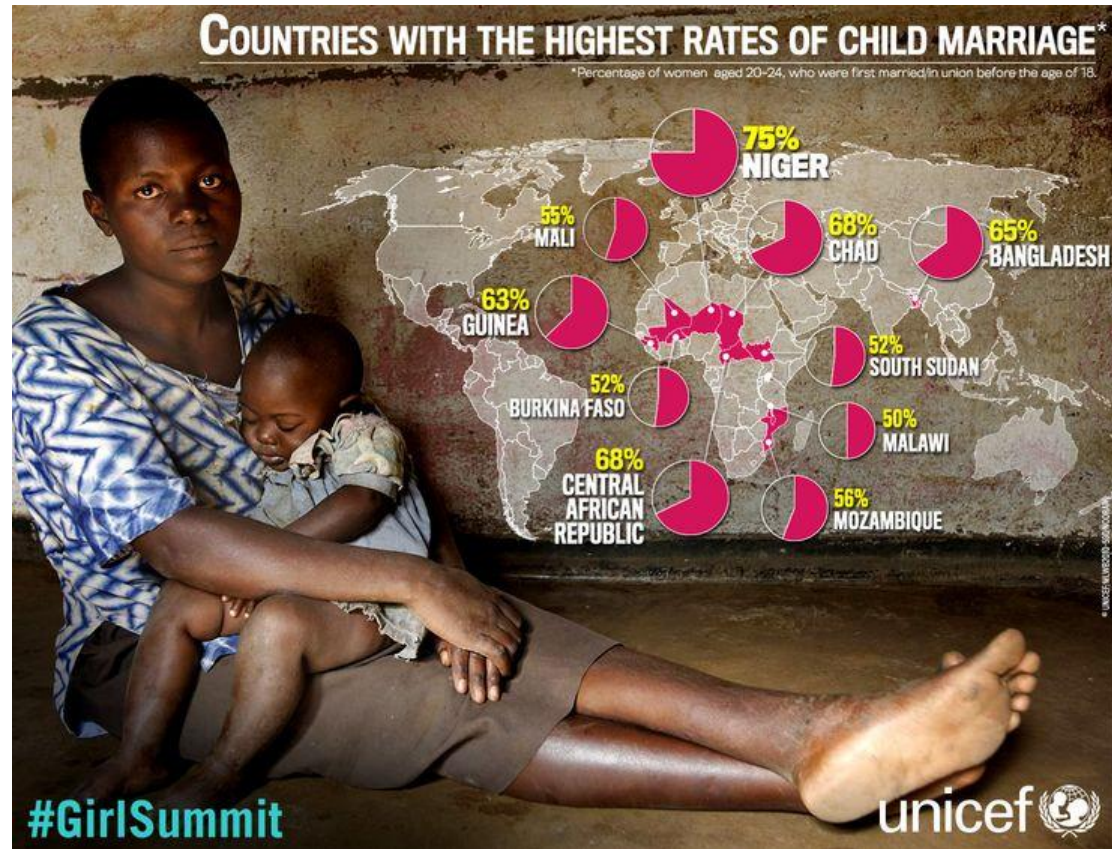
Reflection on Portia's Hand Project

Time To Reflect!

1. Assess your learning experience:

My experience completing the creative project was incredibly rewarding and fulfilling. This project forced me to think critically about Shakespeare's work, and make connections on a deeper level. Who would have thought I would parallel the oppressive experience of the rich and beautiful Portia to women all over the world 400 years later. This connection makes you think, how much has society evolved over the past 400 years? In some ways, we see incredible technological advancements in science, but regarding extremely simple human rights, such as women's rights, it appears we have not come very far. This project gave me the opportunity to appreciate Shakespeare's profound understanding of the norms of society during his time, and how they are relevant today.

My project helped me understand the specifics of the Merchant of Venice, including the complexities of all characters, especially Portia and Nerissa, as well as various scenes and events of the play. To a much closer degree, I studied Portia's cleverness and wit throughout the play and came to attain a much deeper appreciation for her actions and motivations. Moreover, this project helped me understand the psychology of society during Elizabethan England and today. Creating Portia's ceramic hand tormented me, in a sense, because I was constantly asking myself how the consciousness of society has not progressed further since Shakespeare's time. Yes, we've made strides in women's rights issues and other human rights, however, we are not there

yet. The rate of forced marriages today is hideous in tens of countries around the world.

Additionally, women's rights issues are prevalent in all countries, not only the global south

including sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. Countries like the United States are battling

various women's rights issues like abortion rights, equal pay, discrimination, and lack of political

representation. The United States ranks 82nd in the world for women's representation in

government. England ranks 42nd in the world. For such "exemplary" and "progressive"

nations, this appalling number makes one think, what is going on here? In sum, this project

taught me that Shakespeare was incredibly brilliant and was able to dramatize basic concepts of

humanity, and was also able to see long term trends in society.

 If I had started my project on the first day we received the assignment, I would've spent

more time collecting individual accounts of arranged marriages, like Portia's, from all over the

world. On Portia's hand, I only included one case study from sub-Saharan Africa. While I was

successful in making the connection between Portia and individual women in sub-Saharan

Africa, I think the project would have been more impactful if I had included cases from each

continent, exposing the notion that women's rights issues are problematic all around the globe,

and that Shakespeare is relevant and relatable, in some way, to all people on earth.

2. Assess your project:

 As stated prior, my project reveals the relevance of women's rights issues in the world

today. Portia's left hand, missing her ring finger, demonstrates the notion that women are not

subject to men's power and authority. Rather, women should have their own personal autonomy

to make decisions regarding marriage, sex, and overall livelihood. One of my main goals for this

project was to raise awareness about women's rights issues that have persisted centuries from

Shakespeare's era to today. During my presentation, I was hopeful to spark a sense of empathy

in individuals who had not prior concerned themselves with women's rights issues. Women's rights are human rights, and they are relevant to all sexes, not just women. I also wanted to demonstrate both the delicacy and durability of oppressed women. When women are stripped of basic human rights, it is degrading and dehumanizing, however, they often continue to fight for their autonomy and equality. This was demonstrated through the incredible physical durability and strength of Portia's hand.
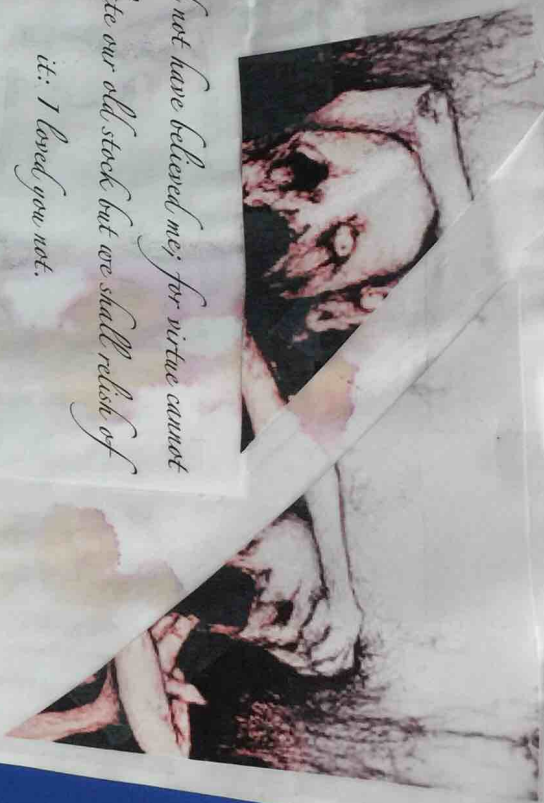
GET
OUT OF
MY HEAD
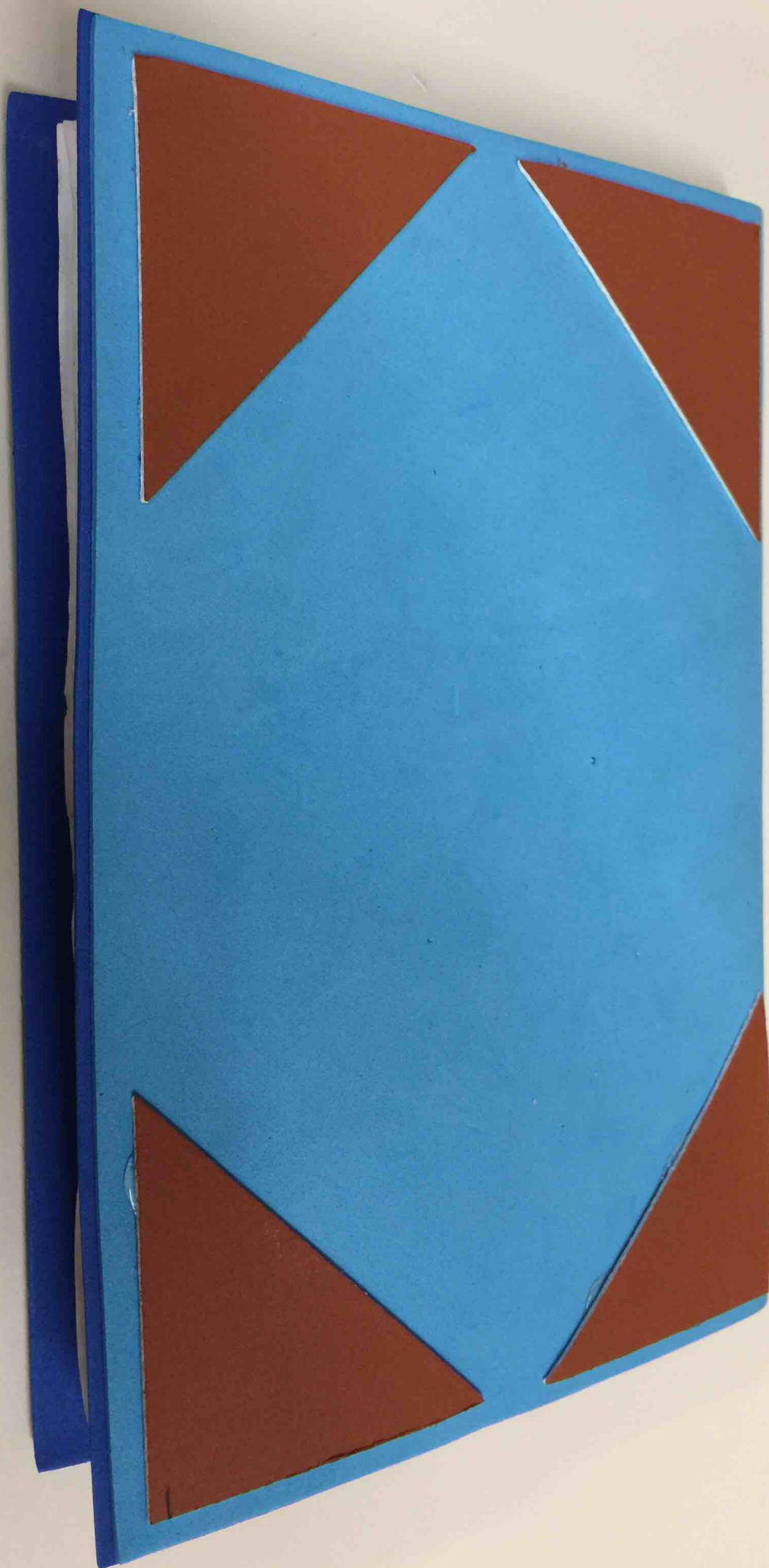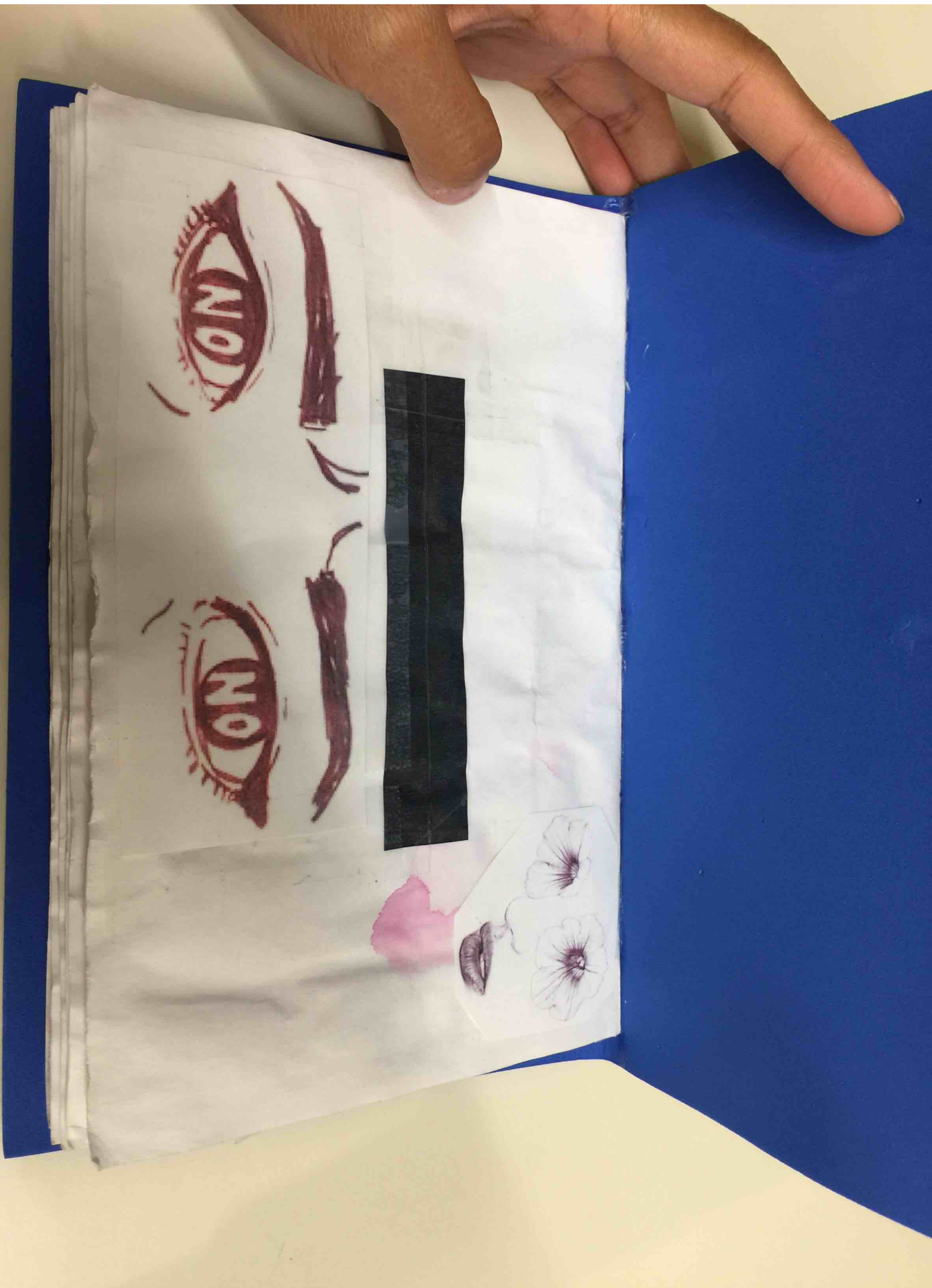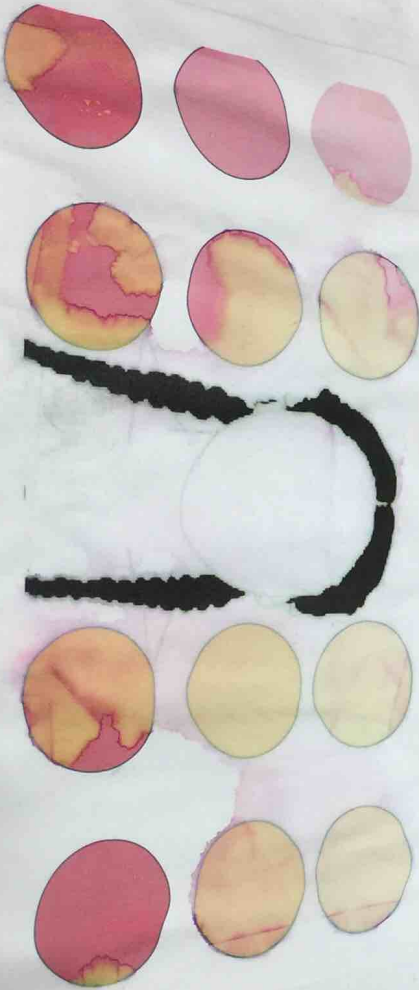
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,
And keep you in the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid is prodigal enough.

(1.3.33-36)
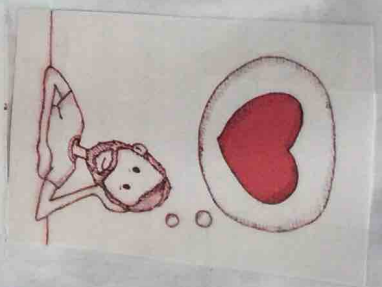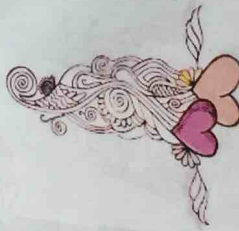
You should not have believed me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

(3.1.117-119)

If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for
thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as
snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a
nunnery, go: farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs
marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough
what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go,
and quickly too. Farewell.
(3.1.135-140)

By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight,
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!
O heavens! is't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?

(4.5.157-161)
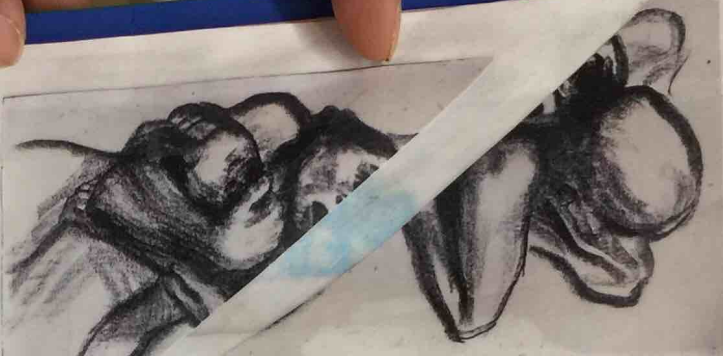
Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will; when these are gone,
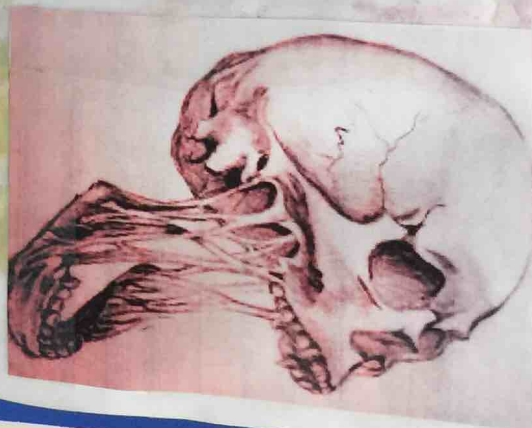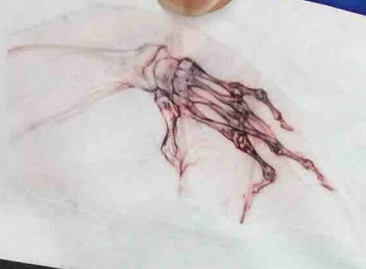The woman will be out.

(4.7.185-189)
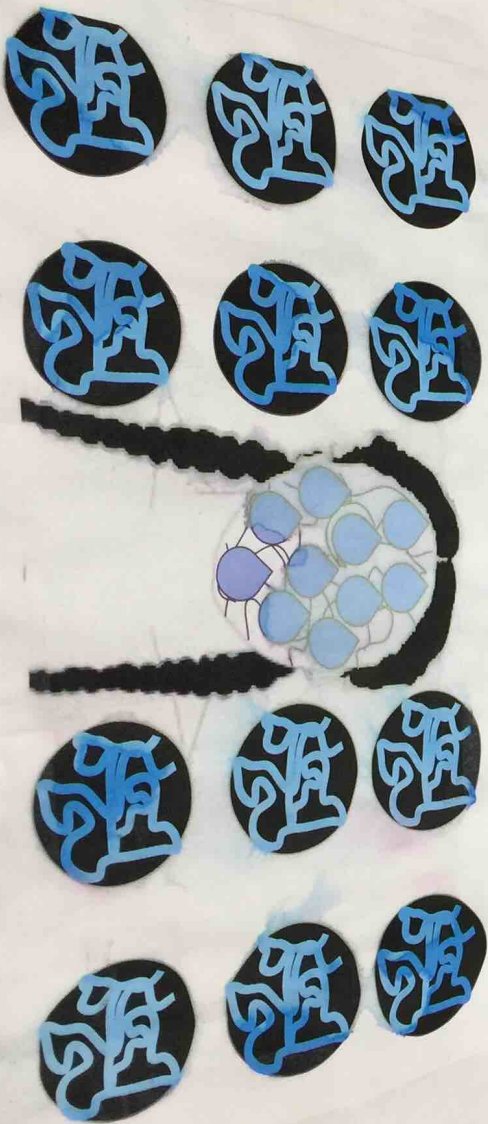
There's fennel for you,

and columbines;

there's rue

for you; and here's some for me; we may call it

herb-grace o' Sundays: O you must wear your rue with

a difference.

There's a daisy:

I would give you
some violets, but they withered all when my father
died: they say he made a good end.

(4.5.180–186)

Student Description of Creative Project: Ophelia's Descent into Madness (scrapbook)

My goals for this project were to somehow represent Ophelia's descent into madness visually, while connecting it to the problems that my generation faces in the world today. Given that Ophelia is quite possibly the youngest character in the play, but not so young where she is considered a child, I figured choosing her character to help me connect to the younger generation was a good idea. She is at a point in her life where a lot of college students are right now: grown up, and yet still unaware of what decisions to make in life; innocent, and yet still somewhat aware of the reality of the world. Her character is a victim to circumstance, but that is not what I want to view my generation as. Often times I feel like my generation feels like we are victims of circumstance, but my goal in this project is to showcase the mistakes that Ophelia made that essentially allowed herself to be a victim, causing her descent into madness.

My project is a simple one – there was no fancy software involved, nor was there any complicated process that brought it together. I wanted to keep it simple, because that seemed like the most genuine and raw way to represent my message. It did, however, take a long time to come up with the idea and actually make scrapbook/journal. I used very basic software like google slides, and a couple of the artistic tools included, to make a journal of the process of Ophelia's descent into madness. This journal is supposed to the journal of Ophelia, where she scrap-books about her life throughout the play. It involves quotes about her each step of the way in the journey, and on the following pages, a visual representation of what she feels on the inside. I also made the project seem a bit rough around the edges: I sprinkled the book with water and let the ink stain the pages it was touching. Due to to her unstable mental condition, it is not perfect.

The booklet starts off with the introduction to Ophelia when her brother warns her to stay away from Hamlet. The dots around her represent the cyclical nature of life, which are full of a gradient of pink, because emotions of love are never one color. The pink color represents her naivety and her equally naïve love for Hamlet, which is hopeful and unaware. She appears in pigtails that represent this naivety. She has no face in order to deliver the point that she can be anonymous, and therefore, can be considered everyone. The cycle starts to break as cracks appear in the circles, and her face, representing a crumbling of the hopes and dreams she fosters, alongside the tears that come with rejection and victimhood, when Hamlet tells her he doesn't love her. More tears and cracks are added to her face as the times goes on, and a darkness starts to appear in some of the circles. The blue within the cracks mimics the blue within her tears, it is the water that will eventually drown her. More cracks, more tears, and more darkness follow the quotes that showcase the progression of her life through other characters until her face is covered in her tears that eventually drown her, and darkness is all that surrounds her.

Following this visual representation is a quote from when she is handing out her flowers at the end. These flowers have a multitude of meanings, some addressing remembrance, regret, and an overall attention to flowers that were thought to induce a miscarriage. In that sense, it can be interpreted that Ophelia is pregnant and has a new life in her: a chance at another shot, but she would rather hand out regret and remembrance and symbols of death, rather than hold onto her chance at a new life because she has gone through hardships. She lets the madness take over, even though she has a chance, however slight it may be, at redemption.

The book itself has a lot of water damage so as to suggest that it was floating with her when she died, and pulled out as a means to look into her mind. On each page, there are pictures that are supposed to seem like they were ripped or cut from somewhere and taped into the book.

These images are the inner most feelings of Ophelia, and they represent her mental state. Often they are fragmented and cut into pieces, representing the fact that even her insanity is fragmented, much like what she feels she is. The images start off with being very love-struck and hopeful on the first page at her introduction. But following the quote where Hamlet tells her he doesn't love her the pictures are cut, and show a very distraught and blurred image of a girl. Ophelia has placed her identity in the love she holds for Hamlet and due to this, she is being pulled apart as her own identity becomes unknown to her. When Hamlet tells her to go to a nunnery that is the biggest rejection she has ever faced in her life. She has included an image of a diseased hand, almost like she is diseased with the rejection that just won't leave her. As she progresses throughout the play, and when Laertes begins to speak about her madness, the images get more and more gruesome. These are images that she feels represent her - cut and fragmented, always screaming, and never at home in their own skin. Ophelia begins to accept her identity as that of a victim, hence the pictures of something strangling a woman in the images she has cut out and pasted with the quote that speaks of her death. This is supposedly the last journal entry she makes, showing her final thoughts before she commits suicide.

At the time of the following quote, when she is handing out the flowers, she is at a point where her madness is at the highest intensity it has ever been. She doesn't not know who she is, other than the fact that she is a victim. Therefore, none of the images have an identity, are all blurred out, and have their faces scratched off. They progress to faces that show an even higher intensity of stress. This is contrasted with the images of the flowers that are being talked about on the bottom. Just like Ophelia's insanity makes her make sense of contradictions around her, it also thinks that beautiful flowers belong in a place of madness and death, something she is very close to. The final page ends with images of hands, almost reaching out to grab something, but

finding nothing - just as she never found a solution to her insanity. The loss of her father has also made her feel like she is literally lost in life - reaching, but never finding what she is looking for.

My generation, the millennials, are often called the lazy generation; the generation of the unfulfilled, entitled, and the inactive. This representation is a warning not to fall victim to what Ophelia fell victim to, so as to avoid any proof to support these untrue accusations. Like Ophelia we stand at a point in our lives where some of us have already faced some losses, and others have yet to face them. Every single quote describing Ophelia's death is said by another character in this story, meaning it is not her that is driving herself mad, but letting the ones around her drive her mad. In the same sense, we're told who we are, and a lot of us cave under the stress, responsibilities, and labels that are put on us by others, meaning we also let others decide how our lives progress. This is the single biggest mistake that Ophelia made – she let the characters around her define who she was. The fact of the matter is; nobody goes through life without losses. The difference between Ophelia and us lies in whether or not we will choose to be victims of circumstance or not. Will we end up handing out the flowers at the end, choosing regret, submission, and a maddening stagnancy, extinguishing the life within us just because the chances might seem slim? Or will we end up giving the life a chance and choose to keep moving forward despite the losses that we have faced? I argue that if we learn from Ophelia's submissive and frail quality, we can turn away from an end like hers, and create an end that doesn't belong in a Shakespearean tragedy.

Project Example 3: An excerpt from:

Office Politics – Yorkshire Inc.

Introduction:

Quarter after quarter of lawsuits, acquisitions, and patents led what was once a small, family owned business into greatness. At the beginning of our story, Yorkshire Incorporated (a pharmaceutical manufacturing company which has been passed down for generations) is finally about to announce its initial public opening (IPO) after its hostile takeover of Lancastrian Chemical. After the IPO, a board of directors will make nearly every decision that will impact the future of Yorkshire Incorporated. Several of the original family members and their friends (who all happened to be high ranking officials within the company) are beginning to fight for position to ensure a strong career path and a wealthy future for themselves and hopefully their immediate family.

Among the quarreling family members, we meet Richard. Richard is as cunning as they come, ruthless in his means of attaining wealth, a skilled debater, and possesses absolutely no disregard for the wellbeing of anybody besides himself. One can be assured that Richard will use whatever means are necessary to ascend to the CEO position within Yorkshire.

Richard is a complex man who possesses a questionable moral code. Within the following tale, you will see his decision making process and the desperation that leads him to commit crimes against his family and all that they stand for.

Chapter 1

"Textbook Deception"

After two solid years of negotiating with Lancastrian Chemical, the current corporate executive officer of Yorkshire, Edward IV, and his legal team managed to seal a deal with the shareholders to purchase the controlling stake of the company. The agreement wasn't pretty, but it was the first step towards monopolizing the supply chain for every major pharmaceutical company in America.

It is the first Monday after the completion of the acquisition agreement and Richard couldn't help but show up a bit late. Strolling through his office near the top floor of the sky scraper that is Yorkshire Inc., Richard looked out the window at the city below.

"It would seem that the last two years of constant paperwork and negotiation are coming to a close," Richard pondered to himself, "thanks to my brother, Edward IV, our pens and legal binders will make their way back where they belong: into our desks. Instead of early morning conference calls riddled with the debate of legal framework, we get to sleep in with our families and enjoy the standard nine-to-five workday. Instead of having a lawyer within arms-length at all time, we get to have them on retainer in a separate building."

The corporate financial officer's face turned from a slight smirk to a horrible grimace.

"However, I am not designed for such a calm workplace. I cannot stand small talk before meetings and keeping up with the general gossip. I've got a mug that only a mother could love and most of my coworkers cannot stand me unless I'm helping them land sales contracts. As such, I've decided that I will be overthrowing this company by any means necessary. I've already put my

brother, Clarence, close to the chopping block by pitting Edward IV against him. All it took was an interview with *Market Watch* mentioning a 'certain financial officer's malicious intent for the company' to get Edward's hackles up. For good measure, I mentioned a few accounting errors I discovered in an 'audit' of Clarence's work and the addition of a few misplaced liabilities and... Voila. Clarence is a fool for trying to challenge the CEO of our great company, but his pride often gets in his way. He will be fired by the end of the day, leaving me one step closer to his rightful claim as CEO."

Through the glass entrance of his office, Richard could see two burly men wearing black suits, sunglasses, and ear pieces escorting Clarence to the elevator. Each man was armed with a handgun. Ecstatic to see his plan in motion, Richard walked out to greet Clarence and inquire about his current state of affairs.

"Good morning, Clarence. What's the deal with the armed guards?" Richard feigned ignorance with a deviously timed frown.

Office Politics – Yorkshire Inc.

Goals:

For this project, I would like to write a modern adaptation of *Richard III* that takes place in an office setting. My primary goal is to show the audience that Richard's actions in *Richard III* fit into an archetype that is still practiced today, albeit in less violence ways. Essentially, I would like to show the audience that deception, lust for power, and greed are all parts of human kind and those concepts still apply to the world today as opposed to only the world of Elizabethan England. Another goal is that I would like to add a bit of humor into *Richard III* and make my adaptation more accessible to a wider audience. Some of the themes present in *Richard III* are a bit difficult to understand and I believe that they would be easier to comprehend if they were presented in a more humorous fashion.

Design / Construction:

This project has been fairly difficult to construct as there are a fair number of characters within *Richard III* that interact with each other. Essentially, I made a character list of everyone in *Richard III* and attempted to associate their political power with a certain position within the office setting. For example, King Edward IV became a corporate executive officer who is nearing retirement.

After assigning each of the characters a position within the company, I set out to figure out who they would interact with and what those interactions would be. The scene in which King Edward brings everybody together and tries to reconcile their differences became an office lunch among the higher ranking officials. Another example would be Richard's conversation with Queen Elizabeth about marrying her daughter, Elizabeth. I adapted that to become Richard talking to Queen Elizabeth (Director

of Marketing) about moving her daughter, Elizabeth (an up and coming intern), into his department. Essentially, the interactions needed to have ramifications within the office that would disrupt the work-day equally as much as the ramifications to the kingdom in the original play.

Finally, I needed to make certain themes fit into the office more effectively. To do this, I changed the deaths of characters into them being fired. If you're fired within the office, you're as good as dead to the company which seemed like a comparison that had similar gravity for the story. However, the curses and superstition held true, I just changed the nature of them. Margaret (CPA) cannot believe how under-appreciated her department is after Richard asks her to "fudge" some numbers, and ends up cursing him so that he will never have a clear copy, he will always run out of staples before important meetings, his alarm clock won't go off, etc. The theme of the aristocracy is also alive and well within my adaptation; all of the executives within the company heavily favor their own family members and give them priority on projects as well as promotions so that they can strengthen their position within the firm.

Except from student's reflection on this creative project:

As it comes to addressing Shakespeare's modern relevance, I feel that my project did that exceptionally well. I used the same themes in Richard III but transferred them over to an office setting which had a more modern feel to it. I showed that deception, betrayal, and charisma can help someone reach their goals but that it is simultaneously their downfall in many cases; I feel this is a timeless archetype with relevance in any period.
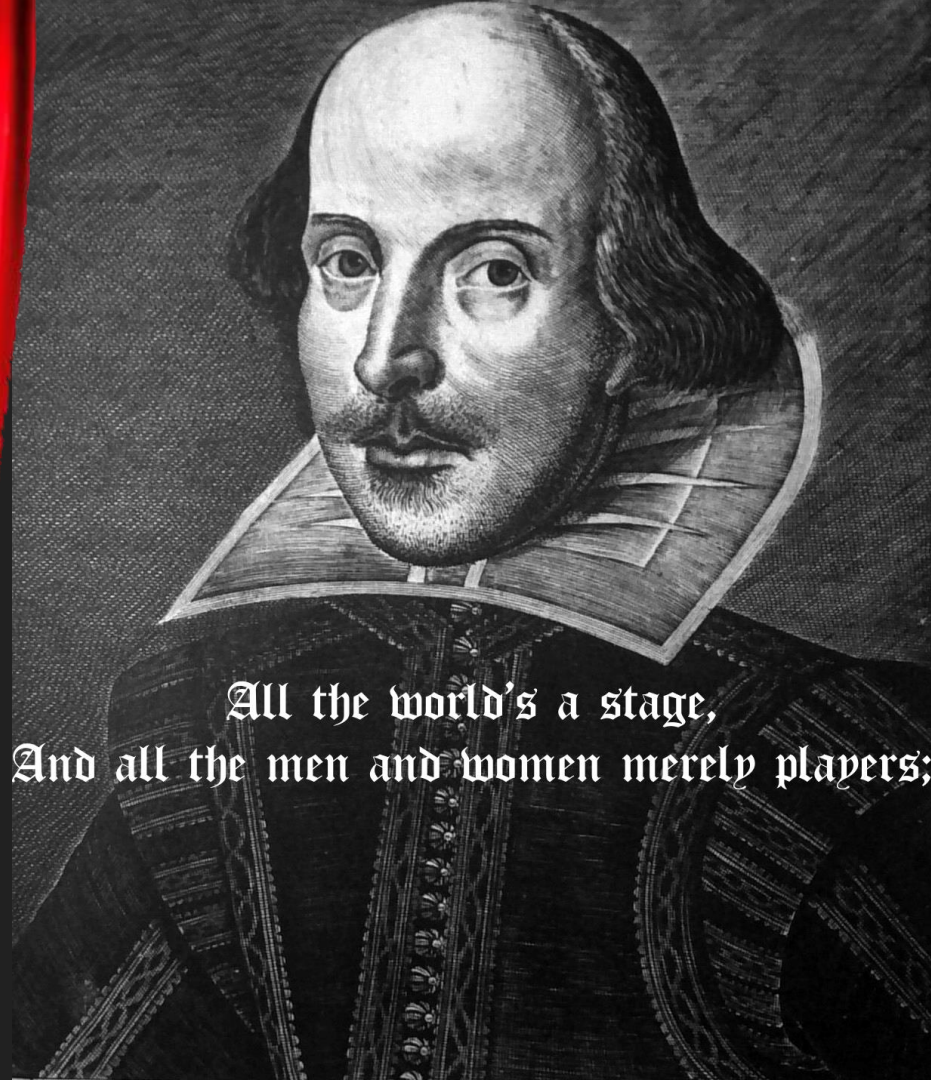
All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
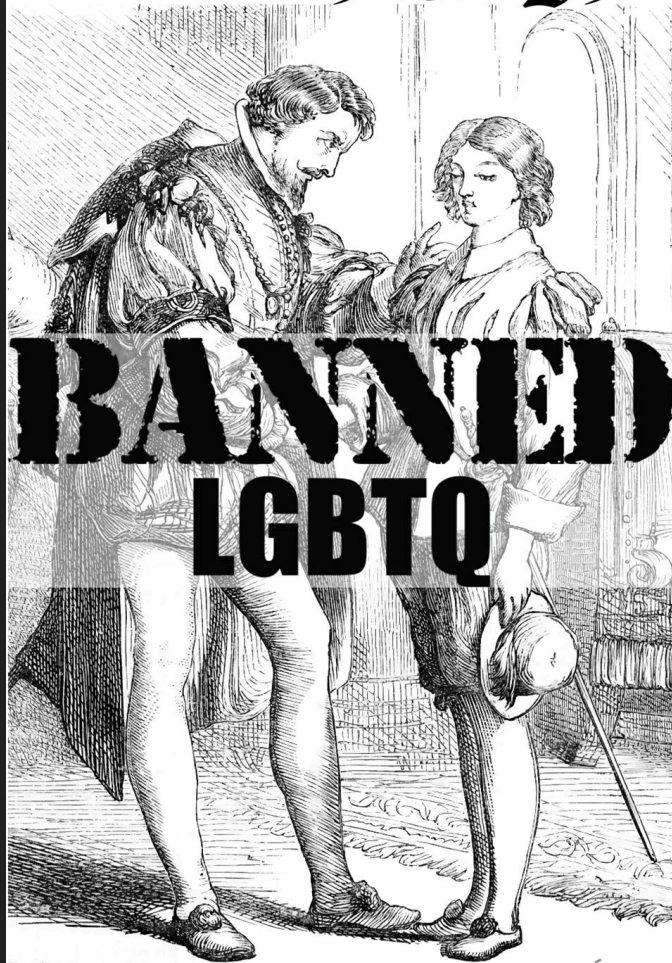
Shakespeare:

yes
ter
to day
mor
row

Why, because he was mad.
He shall recover his wits there,
or, if he do not,
it's no great matter there.

'Twill not be seen in him there.
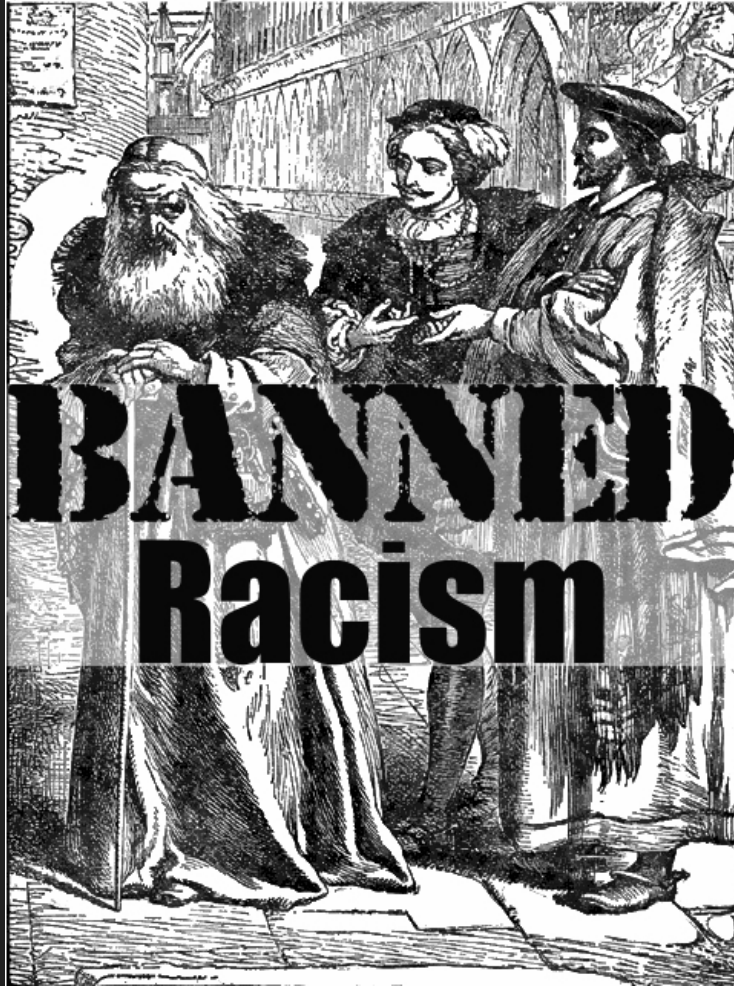There the men are as mad as he.

V.i.165-167,169-170

Cesario, come;
For so you shall be,
while you are a man;
But when in other
habits you are seen,
Orsino's mistress
and his fancy's queen.

V.i.407-411

WE DON'T
CARE

King Lear

BANNED

Violence

And worse I may be yet. The worst is not
So long as we can say "This is the worst."

IV.1.30-31

Yesterday/Today Project
Description to class:

My goal for this project was to mirror modern life with depictions of Shakespeare's plays. For this project, I printed images onto fabric and tried/failed to make them into stage curtains so I made them into a flipbook instead. The curtains show a depiction of one of four banned plays and the reason it was banned, followed by an image of a current day situation that follows the same theme. The modern photograph is overlaid with a quote from the play that shares a lesson we can still learn from in modern day.

My project enhances understanding of the plays by positioning them in a way that we can understand. For example, *King Lear* has been banned for violence, however we still see violence, especially in areas like Syria. *The Merchant of Venice* is a play that depicts mostly around the anti-Semitism feelings of the characters. While it could be argued that we have outgrown racism in many parts of the world, our own country has racist views against Muslims. As Shylock's treatment led him to seek revenge against Antonio, the treatment of Muslims in America is being used as propaganda to raise support for ISIS. *Twelfth Night* was banned for its depiction of "alternative lifestyles", however understanding that alternative lifestyles are a part of the world, and as Orsino struggles to accept Cesario's gender change to Viola, many in our government have refused to accept transgenders in the world. This can be seen through bathroom bans and other laws against transgenders. *Hamlet* was banned for its depictions of mental health problems, though the depictions are still relevant today. Just as Hamlet was sent away because of his madness, we incarcerate people with mental illness without properly treating them.

This depiction of plays relevance in the real world clearly shows how the themes found in Shakespeare are still seen today. By removing these plays from schools and universities, we don't allow students the opportunity to see how these very real life situations play out in Shakespeare's parallel universe.

Excerpt from Student's Reflection Paper:

My project took a very literal interpretation of the prompt and I tried to find parallels with the negative themes in the play to today's world. This shows a complete relevance to today's world, as the themes are still very apparent and still very relevant.

Our best way to learn from a society is from art and history, and Shakespeare's plays are both art and history, so we should take from them what we can and use the warnings he gives. I set the goal of finding meaningful themes that were very relevant within our culture and I feel like I did achieve that. The visit to Special Collections was very helpful for me, as it helped inspire me on both the physical method of delivery with curtains and also the metaphorical sense of the project in terms of censoring Shakespeare.