

Episode 17: A Midsummer Night's Dream

Clip: Shakespeare in Ballet

Activity: Shakespeare in Dance

Themes: Dance Knowledge

1. As a class, view the clip, *Shakespeare in Ballet*, where it is the school camp and the students learn about, and perform, the choreography for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
2. As a class, list what the students already know about William Shakespeare. Try to draw from the students when Shakespeare lived, what his occupation was, what plays he wrote, who he was married to, who was queen at the time, what was the era like in which he lived. Once the students have offered suggestions for each question ask them to research the correct answers and list these facts beside their suggestions. Particularly, list the plays that Shakespeare wrote, including *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Twelfth Night*, *Julius Caesar*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *King Lear*, *As You Like It*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *The Tempest*, *All's Well That Ends Well*.
3. As a class, discuss why a Shakespearean play might be suitable for dance. Have students research which Shakespearean plays have been adapted for ballet or dance works. (For example, *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Othello*, *The Tempest* and *Hamlet*.)
4. Ask students to independently research a dance adaptation of a Shakespearean play. Have them use **Student Activity Sheet E17.2: Shakespeare in Dance** to compile their research which should contain the following information:
 - a. The name of the ballet/dance work
 - b. Which Shakespearean play it was inspired by
 - c. Which company performed it
 - d. When and where it was performed
 - e. Who the lead dancers were and what characters they played
 - f. Include where possible an image of the performance (photocopy from a book or download an image from online)
 - g. The name of the choreographer

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- h. The name of the composer
- i. A short synopsis of the action for each Act.
- j. Any reviews about the performance.

Download

- Student Activity Sheet E17.2 Shakespeare in Dance

Useful resources

- [William Shakespeare Bio](#)
- [The complete works of William Shakespeare](#)
- [The Dance Journal: Muhlenberg College, The Tempest Production](#)
- [Dance Review, Stuttgart Ballet, Taming of the Shrew](#)
- [Australian Ballet: Romeo and Juliet Performance](#)



NAME:

Student Activity Sheet:
Activity:

E17.2
Shakespeare
in Dance

Episode 17:
Clip:

A Midsummer
Night's Dream
Shakespeare in
Ballet

Shakespeare in Dance

Romeo and Juliet, Othello, The Tempest, Hamlet

A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Taming of the Shrew

Step 1

Choose a ballet that was inspired by one of the above named Shakespeare plays.

Ballet Name: _____

Shakespeare Play name: _____

Step 2

Get the facts...

Name the Ballet Company that performed it: _____

Give detail of when and where it was performed: _____

Name the lead dancers and the characters they played: _____

Name the choreographer: _____

Name the composer: _____

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Step 3

Talk about the ballet...

In your own words, tell the story of the ballet.

Find some quotes from reviews of the performance:

Step 4

Present what you have found...

Find some images of the Ballet and present all the information you have found above to your class.