



SOUTHERN SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

King Lear Read-Along Activities

These activities were developed by SSC as part of a social media “Community Read-Along” series designed to engage the community in a fashion similar to that of an online book club. Each week 3-4 scenes were “assigned” and SSC’s Facebook Page facilitated a dialogue around the text – providing thought points, discussion questions, and activities for theatre students.

King Lear – ACT 3, SCENES 1-3

At the opening of the Act, the storm that kicked up at the end of the last scene is still raging – the ever-faithful Kent searches for the King who is raving and ranting through the wilderness with the Fool by his side. Gloucester, also still loyal to King Lear, is removed from his home by Regan and Goneril and leaves to join Lear in the wilderness – but not before trusting Edmund with Top Secret information: France will take advantage of the rift between Cornwall and Albany and invade!

What will Edmund, who we already know has questionable intentions, do with this information? Let’s read and find out!

“Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!” – in the famous opening of Act 3, Scene 2 we find King Lear upon the heath, his reason shattered by his daughter’s ingratitude, while a storm (the metaphorical extension of the chaos reigning in Lear’s life) rages.



Frank Langella as King Lear in the storm for a 2014 Production at the Brooklyn Academy of Music



*King Lear in the Storm – Susan Herbert
From her Shakespeare Cats series*

Discussion Questions:

- What lines in Act 3, Scene 2 stand out to you regarding Lear’s true feelings about himself and about his daughters?
- The Fool’s prophecy at the end of Act 3, Scene 2 references the events of the play and eludes to how they will turn out. What are some of the faults and flaws of human nature that the Fool points out in his song/prophecy?



King Lear Read-Along Activities - Act 3, Scenes 1-3

Student Activities

In Act 3, Scene 3 Gloucester reveals to his son Edmund that French forces spurred forth by Cordelia are approaching to re-right all the wrongs done unto Lear by his other daughters. After his father's departure to join Lear in the wilderness, Edmund reveals to the audience that he will go straight to Regan and Goneril with this information.

This reveal from Edmund is an example of an “aside” – a dramatic device employed by Shakespeare and many other playwrights where a character in the play speaks directly with the audience. Usually a brief comment rather than a speech (which would be termed a soliloquy) an aside is used to convey to the audience the honest thoughts of the character. TV shows and films like *Malcolm in the Middle* and HBO's *Euphoria* feature main characters that often have asides with the audience.

“For this activity, write about a short incident that occurred in your life today - in the form of a theatrical scene - and include an aside for at least one of the characters! Remember, an aside is meant to share a character's HONEST thoughts with the audience, and it is understood that the other characters on stage cannot hear asides meant for the audience..



Malcolm in the Middle, Fox/Photofest