

TEACHING WITH PRIMARY SOURCES ACROSS TENNESSEE

NEWSLETTER: JULY 2012

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 7

WELCOME!

Teaching with Primary Sources across Tennessee, administered by the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University, engages learners of all ages in using primary sources to explore major issues and questions in many different disciplines.

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NEWS

- **NEW LESSON PLANS!** Visit the TPS-TN Web site for new lesson plans on [“Preparing for Revolution”](#) and [“Walt Whitman and the Civil War.”](#) Both can be found in the Grades 6-8 section of our Lesson Plans page.
- **NEW PRIMARY SOURCE SET!** A recent addition to the Civil War Resources page of the TPS-TN Web site is a primary source set on the topic of [occupation](#) during the Civil War.
- **NEW TOOLS!** We have updated and reorganized the [Civil War Links](#) guide and its [“Top Ten”](#) version. Another new tool is called [“Key Things to Consider When Selecting Primary Sources for the Classroom.”](#)

“AWESOME” SOURCE OF THE MONTH:



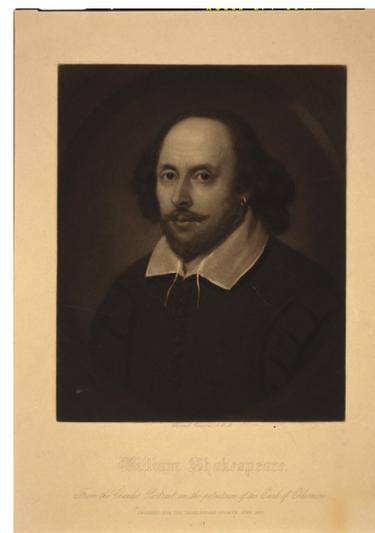
[James Moran & Co.'s Romeo, fine cut, chewing tobacco / C. Hamilton & Co. lith., St. Louis, Mo. \[c1874\]](#)

This chewing tobacco company also used a [“Juliet” themed ad](#) featuring the balcony scene.

THEME: SHAKESPEARE

William Shakespeare died on April 23, 1616—almost 400 years ago. And yet Shakespeare and his works are far from dead or forgotten. As Ben Jonson, one of Shakespeare’s contemporaries, famously said, “he was not of an age, but for all time.”

This month’s newsletter highlights some of the many ways the works of William Shakespeare have appeared in American culture, history, and the arts over the last two hundred years. From tobacco advertisements to political cartoons to Broadway posters, traces of Shakespeare’s influence can be found in many of the Library of Congress’s collections. The following lesson ideas can help students build on some of these traces to explore Shakespeare’s past and continuing relevance.



[William Shakespeare / Samuel Cousins, A.R.A. \[1849\]](#)



Teaching with Primary Sources is a program of the Library of Congress, and is administered in Tennessee by the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **July 10**—(Morristown) “Getting Started with TPS,” Hamblen County In-service, Lincoln Middle School, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Register with Hamblen County Schools.
- **July 11**—(Lebanon) “Bringing the Library of Congress to Your Students,” Tennessee Educational Technology Association Summer Institute, Winfree Bryant Middle School, 2:15 to 3:15 p.m. To register, click [here](#).
- **July 25**—(Granville) “Using Primary Sources in Your Community,” Sutton General Store, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register, call the store at (931) 653-4151.

LESSON IDEA— SHAKESPEARE IN POLITICAL CARTOONS

Shakespeare's popularity and the public's familiarity with his works are two of the reasons his plays have been a frequent inspiration for political cartoons. In fact, Shakespeare's influence is so pervasive that cartoons have sometimes been incorrectly connected to his work by artists. [This cartoon from 1777](#) mistakenly attributes its caption to Shakespeare, while in [this 1874 cartoon by Thomas Nast](#), a caption quoted from one of Aesop's fables is misattributed to "Shakespeare or Bacon," reflecting both the former's popularity and a nineteenth-century theory that Sir Francis Bacon was the "real" author of Shakespeare's works. Another element of Shakespeare's popularity is the adaptability of his work to numerous situations. [This cartoon](#) uses imagery from *Macbeth* to comment on American sectionalism in 1850, *Othello* was used in 1864 to [attack Abraham Lincoln](#), and [this commentary](#) on the election of 1824 supporting Andrew Jackson is captioned with a quote from *Coriolanus*. The cartoon to the left uses a famous scene from *Romeo and Juliet* to ridicule William Jennings Bryan, Grover Cleveland, and William Randolph Hearst. For more recent cartoons, students can check out the Library's exhibitions on Herbert Block, whose work includes [Lyndon B. Johnson as Caesar](#), [Richard Nixon as Juliet](#), and a [quote from *Macbeth*](#) used as a comment on nuclear war.



[Anything to oblige / Keppler](#). [1906 July 11]

Have students analyze two or three of the linked cartoons using the Analysis Tool (see the Teacher's Guide for [Analyzing Political Cartoons](#) and [this TPS blog entry](#) for helpful suggestions) and discuss their observations as a class. Then have students choose a current issue and design a cartoon that comments on that issue using characters, situations, or quotes from Shakespeare.

This lesson idea can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for High School Contemporary Issues (Standards 1.0: Culture; 2.0: Economics; 4.0: Governance & Civics; 5.0: History; and 6.0: Individuals, Groups, & Interactions) and English/ Language Arts (Standard 7.0: Media).

IMPORTANT LINKS:

- [Shakespeare in American Life](#) (Folger Shakespeare Library)
- [Primary Sources Archive](#), part of the Folger's [Teaching Resources](#)
- [Teaching Shakespeare with Primary Sources](#), part of PBS.org's [In Search of Shakespeare](#)
- [Nast and Shakespeare](#), the Shakespeare-inspired political cartoons of Thomas Nast (HarpWeek)

LESSON IDEA – PRESIDENT LINCOLN AND SHAKESPEARE

President Abraham Lincoln greatly admired Shakespeare's plays. He read them and attended productions of them on the stage in Washington, D.C., during the Civil War. In a [letter](#) written in 1863 to Shakespearean actor James Hackett, Lincoln confided that he had read several of Shakespeare's plays multiple times. "I think nothing equals *Macbeth*," wrote the president. "It is wonderful."



[Lincoln's address at the dedication of the Gettysburg National Cemetery, November 19, 1863](#) [c. 1905] [detail]

After Lincoln's assassination, a [broadside](#) (click on document to enlarge) appeared with several quotations from *Macbeth*.

The first two are from speeches by Macbeth about King Duncan, whom he murdered so that he could become king. The third is a conglomeration of quotations from the play, along with one line from *King Lear*. Distribute copies of the broadside to your students. Brainstorm as a class about how the lines from Shakespeare apply to President Lincoln, the assassination, and the Civil War.

Later, a friend of Lincoln's gave a [speech](#) in which he noted that both Lincoln and Shakespeare succeeded in communicating with everyday people. He also suggested that evidence of Lincoln's love of Shakespeare could be found in the [Gettysburg Address](#). Read the address as a class, and then break students into small groups and ask each group to list three characteristics of the address that seem Shakespearean. As an extension or for homework, ask students to write a scene for a play about President Lincoln, the assassination, or the Gettysburg National Cemetery.

This lesson idea can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for Grades 7-8 English/ Language Arts (Standards 3.0: Writing and 8.0: Literature) and Grade 8 Social Studies (Standard 5.0: History, Era 5).

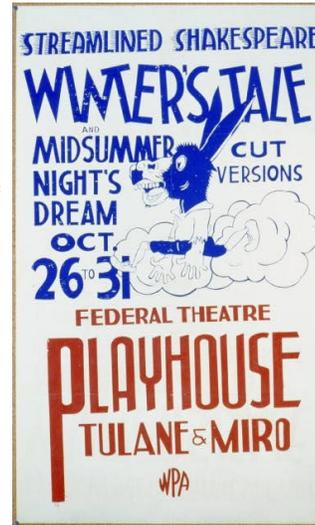
LESSON IDEA— RE-IMAGINING SHAKESPEARE

The Library of Congress's collections include many examples of how Shakespeare's works have been altered, adapted, and re-imagined in the 400 years since they were first performed. Since that time, Shakespeare's works have been "streamlined," bowdlerized, and turned into vaudeville acts. They have provided the librettos for numerous operas, sparked the inspiration for popular musicals, and, of course, been translated onto the silver screen. One of the most popular ways to reinvent Shakespeare's plays for a new audience has been to reimagine them in a different time and place.

Two examples of this method represented in the Library's collection are Orson Welles's "Voodoo" *Macbeth* (see our Featured Feature below) and Leonard Bernstein's musical *West Side Story*. The Library's exhibition on [West Side Story: Birth of a Classic](#) honored the 50th anniversary of the musical. The first section of the online exhibition, [Birth of a Musical](#), begins with several items related to the evolution from Romeo and Juliet to Tony and Maria, including [an early synopsis titled "Romeo"](#) and a [page](#) of Bernstein's annotated copy of Romeo and Juliet. (Another page can be found [here](#).)

Have students watch scenes from two or three versions of a Shakespeare play. For example, you might use Zefferelli's *Romeo and Juliet* set in the Italian Renaissance, *West Side Story*, or Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet* set in a modern-day fictional Verona Beach. Then ask students to write a short essay comparing and contrasting the scenes they've viewed, and answering questions such as: How has the play been adapted to fit the various settings or vice versa? What effects do these changes have on how you understand the characters? Which version works the best for you?

This lesson idea can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for Grades 7-10 and 12 English/Language Arts (Standards 3.0: Writing; 7.0: Media; and 8.0: Literature).



[Streamlined Shakespeare-winter's tale and midsummer night's dream Cut versions: Federal Theatre Playhouse, Tulane & Miro.](#) [between 1936-1941]

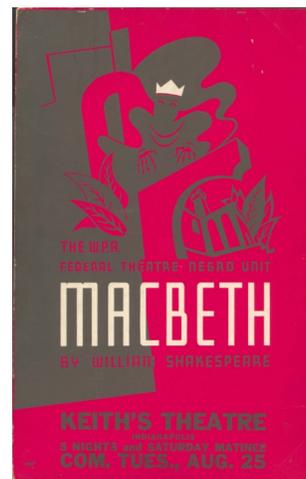
FEATURED FEATURE— THE NEW DEAL STAGE

During the Great Depression, the Works Progress Administration created the [Federal Theatre Project](#) to provide work opportunities for unemployed theatre professionals. From 1935 to 1939, federally funded productions took place across the country, and touring groups reached many areas where such performances were rare. Among the plays performed by the Federal Theatre Project's various units were a number of Shakespeare's works. In the Library's online collection [The New Deal Stage: Selections from the Federal Theatre Project 1935-1939](#), you can find [playscripts](#) for productions of *As You Like It*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Othello*, as well as a large selection of stage and costume designs, still photographs, posters, scripts, and playbills for [11 productions of Macbeth](#).



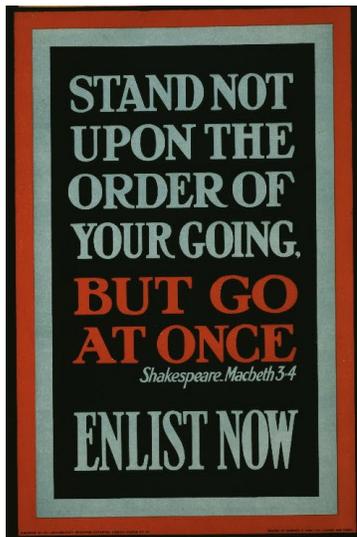
[Photographic Negative from New York production of Macbeth \(Lafayette Theatre, #33\). Finding Aid Box 1221.](#) [n.d.]

Included among the collection of *Macbeth* productions is [a famous one directed by Orson Welles](#). Performed by an all-black cast and set in nineteenth-century Haiti, the "Voodoo" *Macbeth* became hugely popular and helped establish the Federal Theatre Project as a viable program. To learn more about this famous *Macbeth*, students can read ["The Play That Electrified Harlem: At the height of the Depression, Orson Welles and an all-black cast used federal money to transform Macbeth"](#), by Wendy Smith, one of four illustrated essays included in [The New Deal Stage Special Presentation](#). Teachers can also find many lesson ideas, including several using the *Macbeth* material, in the [Collection Connections](#) for *The New Deal Stage*.



[Poster from Indianapolis production of Macbeth \(Keith's Theater\). Finding Aid Box 1146.](#) [n.d.]

SHAKESPEARE WANTS YOU



[Stand not upon the order of your going, but go at once. Shakespeare, Macbeth 3-4. Enlist now / printed by Bemrose & Sons Ltd., London and Derby. \[1915\]](#)

Why might this quote from Shakespeare have been considered an effective means of convincing British men to enlist during World War I?

SARAH BERNHARDT AS HAMLET



[Sarah-Bernhardt \(Hamlet\) / Lafayette - photo - London. \[between 1885 and 1900\]](#)

Originally all the female roles in Shakespeare were played by male actors. However, in this photograph a famous actress plays the male role of Hamlet. Recently, Julie Taymor filmed a version of *The Tempest* in which Prospero is a woman, played by Helen Mirren. What other Shakespeare characters could be re-envisioned as the other sex?

THE BOOTH BROTHERS



[Edwin Booth \[as\] Hamlet "to be or not to be, that is the question" \[c1870\]](#)

Edwin Booth was one of the most popular American actors of the nineteenth century—and the brother of John Wilkes Booth. He was particularly acclaimed for his portrayal of Hamlet, even after his younger brother assassinated President Abraham Lincoln.

SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE



[Hollywood Playhouse \[presents\] "Will Shakespeare" by Clemence Dane His life and loves. \[1938\]](#)

This poster was for a Federal Theatre Project production. Do you think this play was a drama, a comedy, or a tragedy? Why? Why would Shakespeare's "life and loves" make an attractive subject for a play?