

# The Nashville Shakespeare Festival



## EDUCATION GUIDEBOOK

A Resource for Teachers & Students  
Shakespeare in the Park 2017



Directed by Santiago Sosa

Education Sponsor:

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## WHAT TO EXPECT . . .

### AT THE CENTENNIAL PARK BANDSHELL and FRANKLIN ACADEMY PARK

The Nashville Shakespeare Festival will have performances of *The Winter's Tale* beginning at 7:30 PM at the bandshell in Nashville's Centennial Park in August and September, and in September in Franklin. This play will be in repertory with *Antony & Cleopatra* and the schedule is on the Nashville Shakespeare Festival website: <http://www.nashvilleshakes.org/>



### . . . DURING THE PERFORMANCE

The bandshell and Academy Park are open-air theaters. Theatergoers are invited to bring blankets and lawn chairs, or cushions for bench seating. Each night, food trucks are present for pre-show and intermission food, or patrons may bring picnics. Many parking areas surround Centennial Park and Academy Park. Expect audience-actor interaction and some sing-along moments in the production of *The Winter's Tale*!

Because this is an open-air theater, the audience will hear street noises, airplane and helicopter noises, and Vandy football cheers. However, the open-air theater creates an informal atmosphere that breaks down any concerns audience members might have that Shakespeare will be hard to understand. Indeed, because the actors are often in the midst of the audience, the entire experience becomes a form of accessible, interactive theater, breaking down the barriers of language and complex plots.

*The Winter's Tale* is a fun and engaging play. Please remain respectful to the actors and your fellow audience members throughout the performance. **Please turn off and put away all cell phones and digital devices before the show begins.** Ushers will ask you to put them away if they see devices in use during the performance.

**Also, please remain in your seats and refrain from talking or whispering while the show is in progress.**  
Remember: The actors can see and hear you just as well as you can see and hear them!

### . . . AFTER YOU LEAVE

What new questions do you have about the characters and their story? How did the design of the production (the lighting, costumes, scenery, music and sound, etc.) help tell the story? Through colors, textures, patterns — what else? Do you relate to any of the characters or anything that happened in this story? How? Why?

Discuss these ideas with your friends and your teachers! How does this play relate to YOU?

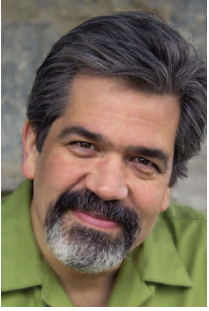
# ***Winter's Tale Synopsis***

**By Santiago Sosa**

Polixenes, the King of Bohemia, has been on a nine-month trip to visit his childhood friend King Leontes of Sicilia, along with Leontes's very pregnant wife Hermoine, and their young son Prince Mamilius. Although Leontes tries to convince Polixenes to stay a little longer, Polixenes doesn't agree to remain in the kingdom until Hermoine persuades him, sparking jealousy in Leontes. Convinced that his wife and best friend are having an affair, Leontes immediately orders his most trusted courtier, Camillo, to poison Polixenes. Camillo is not convinced that the queen is guilty, however, and reveals the plot to Polixenes.

Together, Polixenes and Camillo flee Sicilia for Bohemia. Hermoine is imprisoned by her husband, where she gives birth to a daughter. Leontes commands his courtier Antigonus to abandon the child on a desert shore while Hermoine stands trial for treason. She is found innocent through an oracular declaration sent from the god Apollo, but when Leontes denies the truth of the oracle's proclamation, both Hermoine and her son Mamilius die within seconds of each other. Meanwhile, Antigonus, husband to Paulina, leaves the baby girl, named Perdita, on the sea coast of Bohemia, where she is found by an old shepherd and his son who raise her as their own. Antigonus is prevented from returning to Sicilia when he is attacked and eaten by a bear. Sixteen years later, we find the grown Perdita has fallen in love with the Prince Florizel, son of Polixenes. Polixenes discovers this love when he disguises himself and attends a sheep-shearing festival. Perdita's love for Prince Florizel puts her adopted father and brother, the old shepherd and his son, in danger, and circumstances eventually drive all of them back to Sicilia where they find King Leontes a changed man.

# WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST



## **Leontes (Galen Fott)**

King of Sicilia who is married to Hermione, and through a jealous rage, sends her to jail and curses his best friend, Polixenes. He eventually repents for his actions and is reunited with his long-lost daughter, Perdita.



## **Paulina (Denice Hicks)**

Noblewoman of Sicilia, and wife to Antigonus. Loyal to Hermione, and helps to save Perdita, Leontes' and Hermione's daughter.



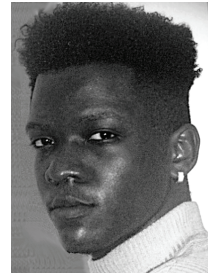
## **Camillo (David Wilkerson)**

Head servant to Leontes, is ordered by Leontes to poison Polixenes, flees to Bohemia with Polixenes and becomes his servant for 16 years before going back to Sicilia in the end.



## **Old Shepherd (Patrick Ryan Sullivan)**

An old and kind shepherd who lives in Bohemia, finds Perdita as a baby and adopts her as his own. Father to his son, played by Joseph Cash.



## **Florizel (Eric Lamont Wilkes Jr.)**

Son to Polixenes, king of Bohemia, and is the prince of Bohemia. Falls in love with Perdita, and disguises himself as a merchant named Doricles to attend a sheep-shearing festival with her.



## **Autolycus (Jonah M. Jackson)**

A trickster, peddler and pick-pocket, he comes to the sheep-shearing and ends up stealing from the Shepherd's son.



## **Hermione (Evelyn O'Neal Brush)**

Queen of Sicilia and wife to King Leontes, she is wrongfully put on trial by her husband at the beginning of the play.



## **Polixenes (Warren Jackson)**

King of Bohemia. Is wrongfully accused by his childhood best friend, Leontes, of having an affair with his wife, Hermione. Father to Prince Florizel.



## **Antigonus (Derek Whittaker)**

Husband to Paulina, and is also very loyal to Hermione. Brings newborn Perdita to the Bohemian coast to live, and ends up getting eaten by a bear.



## **Shepherd's Son (Joseph Cash)**

Entertaining and silly Son to the Old Shepherd. Becomes adoptive brother to Perdita.



## **Perdita (Emily Meinerding)**

Daughter to King Leontes and Queen Hermione, she is abandoned as a baby and subsequently adopted by the Old Shepherd and his Son. She is unaware until the end of the play of her royalty.



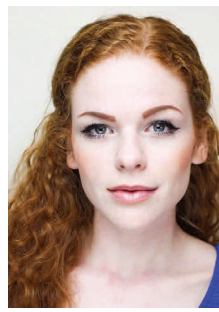
## **Archidamus (Andrew Johnson)**

A lord of Bohemia.



**Rogero (Joe Leites)**

A lord of Bohemia.



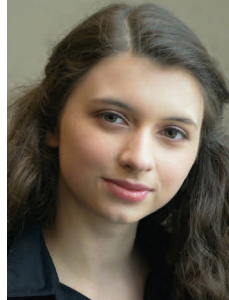
**Time (Delaney Keith)**

Enters into the play after Intermission to inform us that 16 years has passed and that we have now moved from Sicilia to Bohemia.



**Mamilius (Isaac Brush)**

Son of King Leontes and Queen Hermione.  
Dies out of grief for his mother.



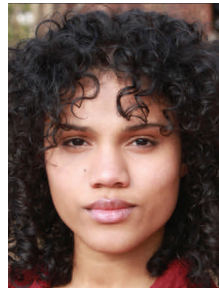
**Cleomenes (Laura Carpenter)**

Is sent from Delphos to present the Oracle's truth concerning Hermione.



**Dion (Nyazia Brittany Martin)**

Is sent from Delphos to present the Oracle's truth concerning Hermione.



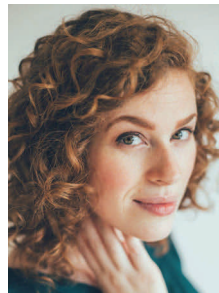
**Dorcas (Miranda Pepin)**

A shepherdess in Bohemia, dating the Shepherd's son.



**Emilia (Amanda Leigh Bell)**

Lady-in-waiting to Hermione in Sicilia, and nanny to Hermione's son, Mamilius.



**Maria/Mopsa (Autumn Tustin)**

Maria: Also a lady-in-waiting to Hermione in Sicilia, and nanny to Hermione's son, Mamilius.

Mopsa: Shepherdess in Bohemia, also dating the Shepherd's son.



**Mariner (Chance Rule)**

Mariner off the coast of Bohemia, reports on weather, is with Antigonus right before he is mauled by bear.



**Gaoler (Seraphim Sherman)**

Jailer in Sicilia who allows Paulina to bring newborn Perdita to leave the jail.



**Steward (Nick Spencer)**

Steward of Sicilia who announces the reunions of Polixenes and Leontes, and Leontes to Perdita and Florizel.

## ***A Note from the Director, Santiago Sosa***

The climactic, accelerated, plot structure of *The Winter's Tale* interweaves love with jealousy, death with birth, and faith with magic into a story that is both simple and sophisticated. As a director, the challenge of staging this complex work has both intrigued and terrified me for many years. The play is proof positive of Harold Bloom's claim that there is no real identifiable genre when it comes to the works of William Shake-



speare. Is it a comedy, a tragedy, a grotesque comedy, a fairy tale, a pastoral play, a morality play, or a romance? I believe it is none and all off these. Plainly, it is a reflection on the ebb and flow of life and the changes that come with its many seasons. How quickly circumstances in life can shift from bad to good, from comical to tragical, and from happiness to the depths of despair. *The Winter's Tale* is a tall tale, the stuff of legends, mythic in its telling and retelling, which has intrigued me for the past decade.

When I first became fascinated with this story, my mind gravitated towards a world inspired by the color, culture, and the music of the Gran Colombia Era that surrounded me when I was a boy growing up in Ecuador. As a student, I studied the life and times of Simón Bolívar and was inundated by his face everywhere I looked: on our currency, magazines, billboards, statues and more. He was the great liberator, an imperfect man of mythic proportions who continually captivated my creativity both as a kid and now as a grown man. I associate that era with color, music, danger, and adventure as I do *The Winter's Tale* because of the epic scope of both Bolívar's story and this one. Shakespeare did not concern himself with true geography or accurate historical facts when setting this story in a Bohemia and a Sicilia that are intermingled with Greek mythology. And so, I have decided to take it a step further and create my own little Bohemian and Sicilian worlds inspired by the days of Simón Bolívar and my travels throughout South America to help tell the story you are about to see. This story encompasses a great many themes, but above all, I would love for you to lean in and see that it is a story about the mystical and mythic powers of repentance and forgiveness.

## **SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE—A BRIEF TIMELINE:**

1558	Queen Elizabeth ascends to the throne
1564	April 23, birth of William Shakespeare, in Stratford-upon-Avon
1572-76	Formation of theater companies in London and building of The Theatre by James Burbage, the first free-standing commercial theatre.
1582	Marriage of Anne Hathaway and William Shakespeare
1583	Susanna Shakespeare born
1585	Twins Hamnet and Judith Shakespeare born
1586-88 (?)	Sometime in the late 1580s, most likely, Shakespeare leaves Stratford-upon-Avon for London, perhaps with a company of players
1590	Shakespeare appears to be writing plays by this time. Early plays include <i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i> , <i>The Comedy of Errors</i> , and <i>Henry VI, Parts 1, 2, 3</i> .
1592	Plague closes London theaters; Shakespeare turns to writing verse
1594	Record of performance of <i>The Comedy of Errors</i> at Christmas festivities at Gray's Inn, a residence and central site for lawyers in London
1598-99	The Burbages and Shakespeare and others finance the building of the Globe Theater on the south bank of the Thames, just outside the city of London. <i>Julius Caesar</i> , <i>Henry V</i> , and <i>As You Like It</i> may have been among the plays to open the Globe Theatre.
1603	Queen Elizabeth dies; James the VI of Scotland ascends the throne of England and becomes James I of England. James becomes the patron of Shakespeare's theater company (now known as "The King's Men")
1605-06	<i>King Lear</i> likely written; first record of court performance is Christmas 1606
1606	<i>Macbeth</i> likely written; perhaps written almost the same time as <i>King Lear</i>
1607	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i> likely written; perhaps staged at the indoors Blackfriar's Theatre, and likely staged at the Globe Theatre.
1610-11	<i>The Winter's Tale</i> likely written; Simon Foreman records seeing a performance in May 1611
1612-14	Shakespeare "retires" to Stratford; however, he continues to collaborate with others writing plays
1616	April 23, Shakespeare dies & is buried at Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon
1623	First Folio—a collected "coffee table" edition of 37 plays—published by Shakespeare's fellow actors, John Hemings and William Condell

### **Useful Resources on Shakespeare's Biography:**

Bate, Jonathan. *Soul of the Age: A Biography of the Mind of William Shakespeare*. New York: Random House, 2010.

Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare*. New York: Norton, 2004.

Schoenbaum, Samuel. *William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1975.

Folger Shakespeare Library website: <http://www.folger.edu/shakespeares-life>

Shakespeare Birthplace Trust: <http://www.shakespeare.org.uk/explore-shakespeare/faqs.html>



## READING THE PLAY IN THE CLASSROOM



SHAKESPEARE  
Allowed!

### **1. Nashville Shakespeare Festival's Shakespeare Allowed! model:**

Often a simple exercise of reading key scenes aloud can make Shakespeare's words meaningful. The Nashville Shakespeare Festival sponsors a Shakespeare Aloud round table read of a play the first Saturday of each month at the main Nashville Public Library. In this format, everyone at the table (or in a desk in a classroom) reads in sequence, rather than taking roles. Everyone participates and gets to try his or her hand at reading the text.

Teachers may emphasize that the effort is primary. Teachers can select a scene or short segment to read aloud as an exercise to lay the groundwork for a class discussion or another class activity.

### **2. Staged readings model:**

Students with limited exposure to or experience with theater can benefit from an effort to read a scene or segment of a play aloud, using basic blocking and interaction among roles. In this model, students select a scene or part of a scene (@ 50 lines makes a good length) to read in roles. Working with their classmates, they can decide upon a few simple movements to dramatize the action. The emphasis is on students' making sense of the language and beginning to envision how interactions are shown on stage. Thus, rehearsal time should be short (15-20 minutes), and the students can rehearse and stage the scenes in one class period. One effective strategy is to have two groups of students stage the same scene, and invite the class members to comment on differences.

### **3. Creating multi-vocal readings of poetry and passages:**

Help students develop a sense of meaning and of shifts in tone or poetic diction by having students work in groups of 3-4 to read a single passage. This project can begin with a sonnet; a typical Shakespearean sonnet divides along quatrains (4 lines, with rhyme) and ends with a couplet: 4- 4- 4- 2. Students can decide pace, inflection, emphasis, and tone. Ask students to think of themselves as a jazz group, or a quartet, or a rap group, using their voices to convey meaning.

# *The Winter's Tale*

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## in the Classroom

\*Note: This section includes ideas for classroom activities, framed in gold. All quotations are from the online "Open Source Shakespeare."

<https://www.opensourceshakespeare.org/views/plays/playmenu.php?WorkID=winterstale>

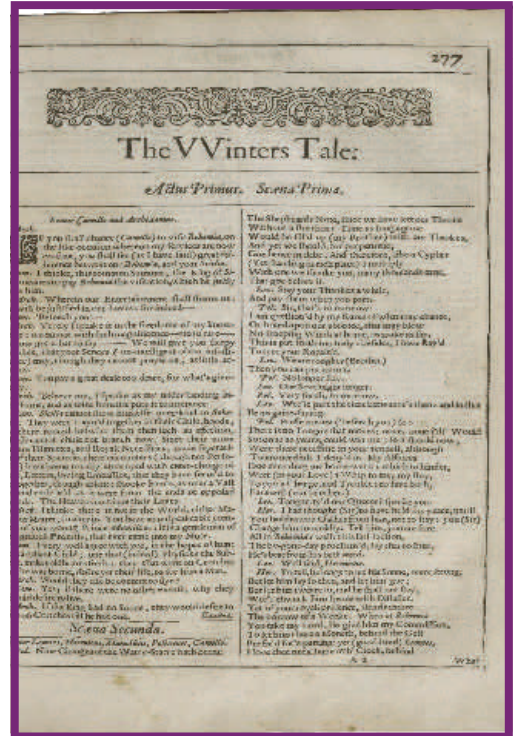
Additional resources, including online resources, are embedded in the pages below and also listed at the end.

# The Winter's Tale in the Classroom

## 1. Overview of the Play

**Date, text, and source:** Simon Forman, a “doctor” and astrologist, records in a notebook that he saw the “Winters Talle at the glob 1611 the 15 of maye.” Given that Shakespeare likely took ½ to a full year to write a play, the date of composition is most likely 1610-1611. This play is in the cluster of late plays now commonly labeled “romances,” including *Cymbeline*, *Pericles*, and *The Tempest*, all written 1607-1611. In the 1623 First Folio, the only text for this play, *The Winter's Tale* is the last play in the Comedies. Shakespeare's source was a tragic prose narrative by Robert Greene titled *Pandosto* (1588); Shakespeare stays close to the story, but makes major changes in having both Leontes and Hermione live and reunite at the end of the play. Both die in Greene's narrative.

**First performances:** We have few records of audience comments on actual productions during Shakespeare's day. Simon Forman's notes provide us with not only a date, but the theater—the Globe. Given the geographical expanse of this play across the Mediterranean and into Bohemia, the Globe Theater's flexible stage can morph from Sicilia to Bohemia and back again, as can the Centennial Park and Academy Park stages for the Nashville Shakespeare Festival production. Forman also summarizes the plot as he remembered it. He notes most of the main events, but, perhaps surprisingly, does not mention the famous “exit pursued by a Bear” moment or the return to life of Hermione at the end. He does note in some detail “how he [Leontes] sent to the Orakell of appollo & the Aunswer of appollo. That she [Hermione] was giltles. And that the king was Jelouse &c and howe Except the Child was found Again that was loste the kinge should die without yssue.” He also was impressed by Autolycus, “the Rog that cam in all tottered like coll pixci. and how he feyned him sicke & to haue bin Robbed of all that he had and howe he cosoned the por man of all his money . . . .”



# *The Winter's Tale* in the Classroom

## 1. Overview of the Play CONT'D

**Genre:** Shakespeare's last plays have proved an interesting conundrum for the editors of the First Folio as well as contemporary scholars, for they mix elements of comedy and tragedy. These four plays—*Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*—all include plot elements from both tragedy (e.g., a fatal choice by a person in power) and comedy (e.g., a reunion or a festive event that signals renewal). In Shakespeare's day, such plays were labeled "tragi-comedies," and not always well-regarded. Sir Philip Sidney, in his *Defence of Poesy* (1595), one of the major treatises on the nature and function of poetry and dramatic art, calls plays that mix tragedy and comedy "mongrel tragi-comedy," and laments the lack of generic purity in many stage plays. Heminges and Condell, the editors of the First Folio, placed these plays in different generic locations: *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale* are in with the Comedies; *Cymbeline* is with the Tragedies. *Pericles* is printed in a quarto only and is labeled a "history" on its title page. Because of the similarities in these four plays, scholars in the 19<sup>th</sup> century began using the term "romance" to define their genre.

While many "romances" include love stories, a "romance" as a story does not have to emphasize romantic love. Instead, a romance is characterized by adventure, often a quest or search for wisdom, truth, or a magical object. Romances are often set in a distant or unfamiliar landscape and do not have to obey the laws of the everyday—they may stretch across time or place and may include events or people associated with magic or the supernatural. This description may immediately conjure up the world of King Arthur and his knights, Merlin, the quest for the Holy Grail, and indeed, the middle ages (1100-1400) produced numerous romances. The contemporary *Game of Thrones* is often compared to a medieval romance. Romances emphasize a quest and often include personal transformation; romance characters who err are often able to be forgiven; personal and civic ruptures are often restored and romances often end with the promise of renewed kingdom. Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale* fits well with this generic label, with its cataclysmic rupture caused by Leontes' jealousy, which is healed, after a long period of suffering for Leontes and maturing for his daughter Perdita, by the restoration of the family. This movement from tragedy to comedy is manifested in the sheep-shearing festival that invokes the natural cycle of winter to spring. However, Shakespeare's play is not a "starry-eyed" romance. We do not get Mamillius back, nor Paulina's husband Antigonus—jealousy has some irreversible consequences. But we are invited in this play to experience the restorative power of community and nature, to feel the movement from winter to spring.

**Topic for class discussion:** Students may enjoy exploring the concept of genre and to try applying these concepts to contemporary narratives in books, film, television, video games, and other forms. Is the Harry Potter series a romance? *Game of Thrones*? Why might a genre like romance be popular today?

Useful discussions of "romance":

Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms

<http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199208272.001.0001/acref-9780199208272-e-997?rsk=IPYoYQ&result=1>

Shakespeare (McCarter) Theater production of *The Winter's Tale*, article by Cara Tucker:

<http://www.mccarter.org/winterstale/pages/shakespeareromance.html>

# *The Winter's Tale* in the Classroom

## 2. Imagining Tragic and Comic Worlds

One of the great experiences of live theater is the anticipation created by the set. The audience is in the world of the play as soon as they see the set—which is right as they enter the park for Nashville Shakespeare Festival productions. Students can often gain an understanding of Shakespeare’s language and actions if they first contemplate the world of the play. *The Winter's Tale* provides a wonderful opportunity for creating two distinct, but related, worlds, each of which needs the other. Shakespeare roots his tragic action in the Mediterranean world of Sicilia, the island kingdom ruled by Leontes, and the comic action in the world of Bohemia, ruled by Polixenes, but more famous for its peasants and sheep-shearing festival. Thus, theater directors, set designers, and costumers have the opportunity to create two worlds to dominate the stage. In Sicilia, we are focused on the court and the hierarchy and “winter,” and in Bohemia on the natural world and the life of the peasants and “spring.” This summer, director Santiago Sosa is re-imagining the play in South America, specifically in the Gran Colombia Era.

The world of Sicilia, is a world of winter. The court, the seat of power, is emphasized. In addition to having a sumptuous court setting fitting a king, it also has a prison and courtroom, where Hermione is held and then put on trial. Thus, this set and the characters are often bathed in darker colors, as in the 1999 Royal Shakespeare Company production, left, and the Folger Theater production (2009) below.



Bohemia, by contrast, is often light, airy, green, and bright, as in the Royal Shakespeare Company production (left) and the St. Louis Shakespeare Company (right):



# *The Winter's Tale* in the Classroom

## 2. Imagining Tragic and Comic Worlds CONT'D

Often, **Bohemia** is understood as a fusion of a mythical classical world, as illustrated in Botticelli's painting *Primavera* (Spring) (top, 1480), and a realistic shepherd community, as pictured in Pieter Breugel's painting of the *Peasant Dance* (bottom, 1568). Florizel's compliment to Perdita, "No shepherdess, but Flora / Peering in April's front" (4.4.2-3), links these two elements of Bohemia.



**Class activity:** Students can often gain an understanding of Shakespeare's language and actions if they first contemplate the world of the play. Students can conceptualize these two major settings in costumes, set design, color choices, or in creating a page similar to a Pinterest page, collecting images that signal the qualities of these two worlds. After building a portfolio of images or designs, students can write about what understanding of human experience or what potential for human thriving each world represents. Students can connect the language of the play to their images by finding captions for their images in the lines from scenes set in each world.

# *The Winter's Tale* in the Classroom

## 3. The Tragedy: Leontes & Hermione

*The Winter's Tale* presents an incredibly challenging opening action. King Leontes, for no apparent external reason, becomes intensely jealous of his wife and his best friend Polixenes, King of Bohemia. To add to the difficulty of understanding this action, Shakespeare has Leontes speak in complex, at times almost incoherent language. The sections of Act 1, scene two, where Leontes becomes jealous can become meaningful by reading them out loud. The following passages reveal Leontes' increasing jealousy:

[Aside] Too hot, too hot!

To Mingle friendship far is mingling bloods.  
I have tremor cordis on me: my heart dances;  
But not for joy; not joy. This entertainment  
May a free face put on, derive a liberty  
From heartiness, from bounty, fertile bosom,  
And well become the agent; 't may, I grant;  
But to be paddling palms and pinching fingers,  
As now they are, and making practised smiles  
As in a looking-glass, and then to sigh, as 'twere  
The mort o' the deer – O, that is entertainment  
My bosom likes not. Mamillius,  
Art thou my boy? (1.2.108-119)

Affection! Thy intention stabs the centre,  
Thou dost make possible things not so held,  
Communicatest with dreams – how can this be?  
With what's unreal thou co-active art,  
And fellow'st nothing: then 'tis very credent  
Thou mayst co-join with something; and thou dost,  
And that beyond commission; and I find it, -  
And that to the infection of my brains (1.2.138-146)



*Charles Fry as Leontes, 1907 production*

**Class activity:** Students can begin to build the character of Leontes by trying out ways of reading these passages. Is he delusional? Or experiencing a “mid-life crisis”? Or voicing his own fears? Because these passages are particularly complex, students may find the glossed texts available on the Shakespeare's Words site helpful:

<http://www.shakespeareswords.com/Plays.aspx?Ac=1&SC=2&IdPlay=35>

## *The Winter's Tale* in the Classroom

### 3. The Tragedy: Leontes & Hermione CONT'D

**Hermione**, by contrast, retains her dignity and integrity throughout the first three acts. Her speeches in the courtroom in Act Three, scene two, as she is accused of adultery, provide a benchmark for her character and are empowering speeches for students to speak aloud.

#### [HERMIONE

Since what I am to say must be but that  
Which contradicts my accusation, and  
The testimony on my part no other  
But what comes from myself, it shall scarce boot me  
To say 'not guilty.' Mine integrity  
Being counted falsehood shall, as I express it,  
Be so received. But thus: if powers divine  
Behold our human actions – as they do –  
I doubt not then but innocence shall make  
False accusation blush and tyranny  
Tremble at patience. You, my lord, best know,  
Who least will seem to do so, my past life  
Hath been as continent, as chaste, as true,  
As I am now unhappy. For behold me,  
A fellow of the royal bed, which owe  
A moiety of the throne; a great king's daughter,  
The mother to a hopeful prince, here standing  
To prate and talk for life and honour 'fore  
Who please to come and hear. For life, I prize it  
As I weigh grief, which I would spare. For honour,  
derivative from me to mine,  
And only that I stand for. I appeal  
To your own conscience, sir, before Polixenes

Came to your court, how I was in your grace,  
How merited to be so; since he came,  
With what encounter so uncurrent I  
Have strain'd to appear thus. If one jot beyond  
The bound of honour, or in act, or will  
That way inclining, harden'd be the hearts  
Of all that hear me, and my near'st of kin  
Cry fie upon my grave!  
(3.2.21-54)



*Marie Drofna as Hermione, 1900*



## *The Winter's Tale* in the Classroom

### 3. The Tragedy: Leontes & Hermione CONT'D

#### HERMIONE

Sir, spare your threats.  
The bug which you would fright me with I seek.  
To me can life be no commodity;  
The crown and comfort of my life, your favour,  
I do give lost, for I do feel it gone  
But know not how it went. My second joy  
And first-fruits of my body, from his presence  
I am barred, like one infectious. My third comfort  
Starred most unluckily, is from my breast,  
The innocent milk in its most innocent mouth,  
Haled out to murder; myself on every post  
Proclaimed a strumpet; with immodest hatred  
The childbed privilege denied, which 'longs  
To women of all fashion; lastly, hurried  
Here to this place, i' the open air, before  
I have got strength of limit. Now, my liege,  
Tell me what blessings I have here alive,  
I should fear to die? Therefore proceed.  
But yet hear this – mistake me not – no life,  
I prize it not a straw, but for mine honour,  
Which I would free – if I shall be condemned  
Upon surmises, all proofs sleeping else  
But what your jealousies awake, I tell you  
'Tis rigor and not law. Your honours all,  
I do refer me to the oracle.  
Apollo be my judge.  
(3.2.92-116)



*Marie Drofna as Hermione, 1900*

**Class Activity:** Students can begin to build the character of Hermione by examining and speaking these courtroom speeches. What are the hallmarks of her character? How would you stage these moments? How does her language in both vocabulary and syntax contrast with that of Leontes? The glosses provided on by the Shakespeare's Words website may help students explore the meaning of these speeches. <http://www.shakespeareswords.com/Plays.aspx?Ac=3&SC=2&IdPlay=35>

# *The Winter's Tale* in the Classroom

## 3. The Tragedy: Leontes & Hermione CONT'D

**The Change Agent:** While the messengers from Apollo bring the verdict from the gods that Hermione is innocent, it is **Paulina**, a straight-talking lady-in-waiting to Hermione who actually pushes Leontes to confront what he has done and to endure a punishment for the havoc he has brought on his family and his kingdom. In response to the messengers from Apollo, Leontes makes an about-face ("I'll reconcile me to Polixenes, New woo my queen"), but Paulina lets him know that his sins cannot be so quickly rectified:

**Paulina:** Woe the while!

O, cut my lace, lest my heart, cracking it,  
Break too.

What studied torments, tyrant, hast for me?

What wheels? Racks? Fires? What flaying, boiling

In leads or oils? What old or newer torture

Must I receive, whose every word deserves

To taste of thy most worst? Thy tyranny

Together working with thy jealousies –

O, think what they have done

And then run mad indeed, stark mad, for all

Thy bygone fooleries were but spices of it.

That thou betray'dst Polixenes, 'twas nothing;

That did but show thee, of a fool, inconstant

And damnable ingrateful. Nor was't much,

Thou wouldst have poisoned good Camillo's honour,

To have him kill a king – poor trespasses,

More monstrous standing by; whereof I reckon

The casting forth to crows thy baby-daughter

To be or none or little, though a devil

Would have shed water out of fire ere done't.

Nor is't directly laid to thee the death

Of the young prince, whose honourable thoughts

Thoughts high for one so tender – cleft the heart

That could conceive a gross and foolish sire

Blemished his gracious dam. This is not, no,

Laid to thy answer, But the last – O lords,

When I have said, cry woe! The queen, the queen,

The sweet'st, dear'st creature's dead, and vengeance for't

Not dropped down yet. She's dead. But, O thou tyrant,

Do not repent these things, for they are heavier

Than all thy woes can stir. Therefore betake thee

To nothing but despair. A thousand knees,

Ten thousand years together, naked, fasting,

Upon a barren mountain and still winter

In storm perpetual, could not move the gods

To look that way thou wert. (3.2.173-214; from the NSF's production text)

**Class activity:** Develop a staged reading of this speech, Paulina's severe rebuke to Leontes. Consider the implications of her charges and her demands on Leontes in a patriarchal, hierarchical society. Paulina's role here is largely of Shakespeare's invention, not in his source. While it does spoil the ending, students can debate Paulina's big lie here—she tells Leontes that Hermione is dead. She pushes him to a state of despair and into his own "winter's tale." How would you characterize Paulina? How costume her had direct her in this key moment on stage?

# *The Winter's Tale* in the Classroom

## 4. The Comedy: Perdita & Florizel, Autolycus & the Shepherds

In Act 3, scene 3, with the surprising stage direction, “Exit pursued by a Bear,” and the Shepherd father’s line, “thou meet’st with things dying, I with things new born,” the play shifts gears from tragedy to comedy. The cast of characters changes also, to predominantly the citizens of the countryside, and the main action is a sheep-shearing festival.

Perdita, the daughter of Hermione and Leontes rescued by the Shepherd, presides over the festival and has attracted the attention of Florizel, the son of Polixines (remember him?), King of Bohemia.

The role of a hostess of a festival is to welcome everyone and to insure that everyone has food and fun. This is a comedy of abundance—nature has produced sheep and food, and human beings form a community sharing it. The Shepherd coaches his daughter in Act 4, scene 4:

Fie, daughter! When my old wife lived, upon  
This day she was both pantler, butler, cook,  
Both dame and servant; welcomed all, served all,  
Would sing her song and dance her turn, now here,  
At upper end o' the table, now i' the middle;  
On his shoulder, and his, her face o' fire  
With labour and the thing she took to quench it  
She would to each one sip. You are retired,  
As if you were a feasted one and not  
The hostess of the meeting. Pray you, bid  
These unknown friends to's welcome, for it is  
A way to make us better friends, more known.



*Pieter Breugel, Peasant Wedding, 1567*

**Class Activity:** The sheep-shearing festival provides a window into the material conditions of shepherds and peasants. Students can explore the details of this festival by considering the passage above as well as others in Act 4, scene 3 (lines 35-50), and Act 4, scene 4 (Autolycus’s goods he’s hoping to sell at the festival).

The happy festival attracts both **Autolycus**, a clever, comic, con man, and the King **Polixines**, in disguise, searching for his wayward son. Autolycus makes an excellent character for analysis.

**Class Activity:** Autolycus provides ample opportunity for comedy, for song and dance, and for satire. Why does Shakespeare include this con man in the festivities? Why show the kindly shepherds as victims of his deceptions? How does he expand the comedy of this section of the play? Consider how the music, dancing and singing adds to the comic context of the action in these scenes. Do you think Act 4 establishes a sufficient counterbalance to the earlier part of the play? Are you drawn into the comic spirit now? How might you set Autolycus’s songs to music?

Though Act Four is predominantly comic, it ends with a father interrupting the romance of a son. While this is typical of comic plots—the fun is then seeing if the son and his beloved can outwit the father—in this play it may signal an ominous note.

# *The Winter's Tale* in the Classroom

## 5. The Amazing Ending!

Should any of Shakespeare's original audience in 1611 have read the story that is the source for *The Winter's Tale*, they would be quite surprised by the ending. In Greene's *Pandosto*, Hermione dies after her trial. In Shakespeare's play, Paulina has kept her alive for sixteen years. Leontes and Perdita are invited to see her "statue," which comes to life when Paulina signals. Perdita is reunited with her mother, and Leontes, who had falsely accused Hermione, regains a wife. While this is a miraculous and amazing ending, it is not without a note of sadness—Mamillius, Leontes and Hermione's son, is dead, as is Antigonus, Paulina's husband.



On left, Viola Allen as Hermione, 1904.

On right, Judi Dench as Paulina, Miranda Raison as Hermione, Garrick Theater, 2015

**Class activities:** This final scene requires virtuoso acting. Students may want to attempt to remain still, as required by the actor playing Hermione, for the duration of the scene. Students should try this with other student actors reading lines, so that the challenge of remaining still is experienced while stage activity is going on. Likewise, students may try out costumes here for Hermione; how does one depict a statue? Finally, consider how Hermione's awakening should be portrayed. Do you think she is happy to be reunited with Leontes? What is particularly meaningful about the mother-daughter reunion? How should Paulina act as her amazing deception is made manifest? How might Paulina react to the reactions of the main characters?

# *The Winter's Tale* in the Classroom

## Class Discussion

The *Winter's Tale* opens up a number of issues that make good discussion or essay topics. Here are suggestions:

--Does Leontes "deserve" to get Hermione back? What values or ideals does the play seem to affirm in the cycle from tragedy to comedy, from rupture to romance?

--When the court of Leontes and the countryside of the shepherds are compared, which seems to offer the most humane context for human community? Do you think the values of the countryside can reform the abuses of the court? Likewise, in broader terms, can nature or grace realign human greed or jealousy?

--What role does Paulina play in this action? What does her character suggest about human agency and capacity to restore order and values? Is she the most human, and the most humane, of the characters?

--Why does this play need to span 16 years? What is important about "time" in human affairs?

## *The Winter's Tale* in the Classroom

### 6. Write Your Review!

Productions of all kinds are regularly reviewed in the mainstream media, on blogs, in speciality publications, and in conversation. A formal review needs to present a justification for its rating of a production. Create a rating and then in a page or so, provide your justification. You may enjoy debating a classmate, as Siskel and Ebert used to do about movies.

--Using stars or another image, provide a rating of this production of *The Winter's Tale*

--Because not all readers of your review will have seen the play, provide a brief plot overview and the basic details about the production (when, where, what company, names of leading actors, name of director).

--List, with explanations, the three main reasons for your judgment. These should focus on the production itself. Possibilities include casting, acting, set design and costuming, overall concept (see the Director's note), clarity of language and action, interactions among the characters, music and lighting.

--Cite at least three specific moments in the production that support your judgment.

--Discuss the themes or issues that this play and this production raise for an audience.

--Conclude by considering the value of this production or of theater in general. If you have aspirations to be an artist of any kind, consider what a reviewer might say that would enable you to grow as an artist.

## **ABOUT THE NASHVILLE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL**

The mission of the Nashville Shakespeare Festival is **to educate and entertain the Mid-South community through professional Shakespearean experiences.**

The Festival enriches and unifies our community with bold, innovative and relevant productions along with empowering, participatory educational programs, setting the community standard of excellence in educational outreach and performances of Shakespeare's plays.

The Festival stages Shakespeare's plays in the summer at Centennial Park and in January at the Troutt Theater at Belmont University.

The Festival also sponsors numerous workshops, educational outreach programs, and public events. Please visit our website for specific information: <http://nashvilleshakes.org>

## **NSF Apprentice/Journeyman Company**

The Apprentice/Journeyman Company is a training intensive for aspiring theatre lovers age 13+ led by the Artistic Director and Education Director, along with guest artists hired from the professional talent in Nashville. Apprentices receive over 70 hours of performance training in movement, voice and diction, acting, text analysis, and character work, and then perform supporting roles in the Shakespeare in the Park production. Auditions for the 2018 Apprentice Company will be announced in January. For further information on this program, visit:

<https://www.nashvilleshakes.org/apprentice-company/>

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## ADDITIONAL TEACHER RESOURCES

### Online Resources

Text: The Folger Shakespeare Library

[http://www.folgerdigitaltexts.org/?chapter=5&play=WT&loc=p7&\\_ga=2.217027158.1370179081.1500042996-706213339.1500042996](http://www.folgerdigitaltexts.org/?chapter=5&play=WT&loc=p7&_ga=2.217027158.1370179081.1500042996-706213339.1500042996)

Additional Folger Library resources, including images from 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century productions

<http://www.folger.edu/winters-tale>

Recent Productions:

Globe Theater, London:

This page provides images from the Globe 2016 production:

<http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/discovery-space/previous-productions/the-winter-s-tale-4>

Royal Shakespeare Company:

This page provides images of recent and past productions by the RSC:

<https://www.rsc.org.uk/the-winters-tale/>

Public Theater, New York City:

An upcoming September 2017 production of *The Winter's Tale*:

<https://www.publictheater.org/Tickets/Calendar/PlayDetailsCollection/1415/Public-Works-The-Winters-Tale/?SiteTheme=Shakespeare>

Shakespeare Resource Center:

A good, general information site for Shakespeare:

<http://www.bardweb.net/index.html>

### Print Resources:

Dickson, Andrew. *The Globe Guide to Shakespeare: The Plays, The Productions, The Life*. New York: Pegasus Books, 2016. Indispensable for anyone who teaches or acts in Shakespeare regularly!

Pitcher, John, ed. *The Winter's Tale*. The Arden Shakespeare. London: Bloomsbury, 2010.

### Productions on DVD:

Royal Shakespeare Company. *The Winter's Tale*. Feat. Anthony Sher. 2005.

A recent adaptation, by the novelist Jeanette Winterson:

Winterson, Jeanette. *The Gap of Time*. London: Hogarth, 2016.



## **Shakespeare, Class Activities, and Tennessee English/Language Arts Standards, Grades 9-12**

All the class activities suggested throughout this guidebook have been reviewed in light of Tennessee's 2016 adoption English/Language Arts Standards. The activities as a whole meet the following standards. Teachers using these activities may shape them to emphasize one or more of these standards as part of the overall curriculum.

TN State English/Language Arts standards:

[https://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/sbe/attachments/4-15-16\\_V\\_B\\_English\\_Language\\_Arts\\_Standards\\_Attachment.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/sbe/attachments/4-15-16_V_B_English_Language_Arts_Standards_Attachment.pdf)

### **Language standards:**

Knowledge of Language (9-10, 11-12, L.KL.3)

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use (9-10, 11-12, L.VAU.4)

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use (9-10, 11-12, L.VAU.5)

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use (9-10, 11-12, L.VAU.6)

### **Reading standards:**

Key Ideas and Details (9-10, 11-12, RL.KID.1)

Key Ideas and Details (9-10, 11-12, RL.KID.2)

Key Ideas and Details (9-10, 11-12, RL.KID.3)

Craft and Structure (9-10, 11-12, RL.CS.4)

Craft and Structure (9-10, 11-12, RL.CS.5)

Craft and Structure (9-10, 11-12, RL.CS.6)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (9-10, 11-12, RL.IKI.7)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (9-10, 11-12, RL.IKI.9) Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity (9-10, 11-12, RL.RRTC.10)

### **Speaking and Listening standards:**

Comprehension and Collaboration (9-10, 11-12, SL.CC.1)

Comprehension and Collaboration (9-10, 11-12, SL.CC.2)

Comprehension and Collaboration (9-10, 11-12, SL.CC.3)

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas (9-10, 11-12, SL.PKI.4)

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas (9-10, 11-12, SL.PKI.5)

### **Writing Standards:**

The Class Activities and Class Discussion assignments all can be adapted for writing assignments, meeting Writing Standards 1-10 for 9-10, 11-12 grades.

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