



Imagination Makers Theater Company
"Bringing Professional Theater to Young People in Schools..."

TEACHER'S GUIDE

for

"Give It Up"

Imagination Makers Theater Company
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<http://www.imaginationmakers.org>

TEACHER'S FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do you have any materials to help prepare my class for the play?

Yes, this Teacher's Guide contains suggestions for ways to prepare your students for the play, as well as follow-up activities and discussion questions. The upcoming performance of *Give It Up* provides the perfect opportunity for students to experience Shakespearean language and themes, through a script rewritten by children in their peer group. The purpose of the updated script is two fold, bridging an age gap by tailoring the script to contemporary children's experiences and concerns, and creating an appetite for classic literature.

My students have never seen a play. What should I tell them?

We have included some basic guidelines on attending a theater performance under "Some Notes for Students" -- see page 4.

I've gone to some really awful assemblies. How do I know this one will be good?

There is no guarantee you will like our play, but we do have a good track record of meeting the needs of students and teachers (We are still around after 31 years!). Last year on evaluation forms, 98% of teachers gave our plays ratings of "Outstanding" or "Very Good." Feedback we have received from students, teachers and administrators from past performances of this play helps to ensure that it is thoroughly engaging and meaningful for students, as well as beneficial to classroom learning.

We receive these high ratings because the company employs experienced, professional directors and actors who enjoy performing for young people. The actors you will see in *Give It Up* have college degrees in theater, and credentials that include not only theater for young audiences, but also critically acclaimed regional and local productions from dinner theater to Shakespeare. We perform in schools because the mission of Imagination Makers is to give as many kids as possible a chance to see live theater--especially those who would not ordinarily have the opportunity to do so.

Is there any way I can preview the show?

Yes! You can view some segments of this show as well as past productions on our Youtube page at <http://www.youtube.com/user/imaginationmakers>

When should we arrive at the performance?

Please arrive 10 minutes before the performance start time. Your early arrival will ensure that we can get everyone seated and ready to go in a timely fashion. Sometimes there is a second show at your school, or we must go directly to another school to do a show. If you arrive after the performance has started, you will still get to see the show; however, we will seat your class in the back of the audience.

May I take pictures during the show?

So that our audience (and the performers) can stay focused, we ask that you not take flash photographs during the show. For picture-taking purposes, we will re-enact any part of the play for you after the performance is over.

Will there be an opportunity for my class to meet the performers after the show?

Yes. The performers always stand outside the exit door so that they can greet your class as they leave. This is a great time for students to ask a quick question, make a comment or just say, "Hello."

Why don't you create separate plays for primary and intermediate grades?

While it is not financially viable for Imagination Makers to tour separate plays for primary and intermediate grades (it costs approximately \$20,000 to create a new play!), we have designed this play so that the emotional aspects are meaningful to all ages. Although we realize that not all content will appeal to all grade levels--some may be over the heads of the youngest students or seem "babyish" to the oldest--we do our best to balance the needs of students K-6. Our goal is that all grade levels find much of the material relevant, and that all audience members (including you!) be thoroughly entertained.

How can I let the company know what I thought of the performance?

You will receive an evaluation form from us at the performance. Please take a few minutes after the play to fill this out, preferably with your students (if time permits). One of the reasons we are still in business after 31 years is that WE LISTEN TO YOUR FEEDBACK! We use your comments to help us make our plays the very best they can be. Your ratings are also essential for reporting the results of our work to granting organizations. (Your school pays approximately one quarter of what it costs us to bring a performance to your school. The rest of the money comes from grants and individual contributions.)

I don't have time to go to an assembly – I'm swamped and need to correct papers during the show. What should I do?

We understand that sometimes you may need to do paperwork during the performance. If this is the case, we respectfully request that, after seating your students, you sit at the rear of the audience. We would like to express our appreciation, in advance, for your cooperation during the performance. We have noticed that when teachers come to the show with their class, stay for the entire time, and give their full attention to the performance, the students model this audience behavior. The students then benefit more from the play and its themes, and everybody has a more rewarding experience.

Are there any considerations for special education students?

If you would like to discuss how Imagination Makers can make the performance more accessible to your special education class, please call our Performance Manager, Mary McGroary, at 720-565-1055 or e-mail <mailto:mary@imaginationmakers.org>. We will be happy to provide a copy of the script ahead of time for sign language interpreters. We will try to meet any special disability needs as best we can. We can also arrange for students with special needs to come to the performance early and meet the performers.

What if I still have more questions?

We are dedicated to serving students and teachers. Feel free to call 720-565-1055 or e-mail <mailto:mary@imaginationmakers.org> with any questions or comments you have.

Can my students write letters to the performers?

YES! We love to receive letters and artwork from students. We include some of these in our grant evaluations. We also save the best ones for our scrapbook and pick some of our favorite pictures to frame and put up in our office. Our address is:

Imagination Makers Theater Company, 2590 Walnut Street, Suite 3, Boulder, CO 80302
 Our email: info@imaginationmakers.org

SOME NOTES FOR STUDENTS

Theater is an incredible experience, and we are pleased that you get to see our play, *Give It Up!* Here are some things about seeing a play that are different from watching TV and movies:

Theater is live!

At a play, the audience is an important part of the performance. This is because the performers can hear everything that goes on in the audience. When you laugh at the funny parts, are quiet at the serious parts, and give your total attention to what's going on in the play, you actually *help* the actors. If you do a great job as an audience, then the actors do a great job performing and you will see a fantastic show!

Listening is very important

Once the show starts, be respectful of other people in the audience. If you talk to others around you, they will miss part of the play and so will you. You can't rewind a play! Save your thoughts and comments for the conversations you will have with friends and your class after the play is over.

Imagine

The name of our company is Imagination Makers because you will need to use your imagination to create parts of the play that you do not see on the stage. The actors in *Give It Up* play more than one character, and the action takes place in many different settings. The office, the town and the boat are all areas that you will have to visualize. You help to make the story complete by using your imagination!

Applause

The performers work very hard to give you a great show. The way to show them that you like what they are doing is to clap. Applause can be short and polite if you think the play is just "OK," or it can be loud and long if you have really enjoyed the play.

Feedback

After the play, the performers will greet you as you leave. This is a good time to shake their hands, ask a question, or tell them what you liked about the play. If you have more to say to the performers, they would be happy to receive a letter from you. Your teacher has our address. (*Teachers: This can be found on page 3.*)

HAVE FUN!



We post pictures every day from the schools where we perform. To see pictures from your school, go to our Facebook page. You can also become our fan and "like" us. <http://www.facebook.com/imaginationmakers>

Imagination Makers is a nonprofit 501(3)(c) organization, and we appreciate tax-deductible donations to help us continue our work in the community. If you are interested in helping us reach more children, feel free to visit our website <http://www.imaginationmakers.org/donate/>

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Putting together this play was a great experience! For many years I wanted to do a Shakespeare play for elementary school students, but it really didn't fit what Imagination Makers usually does. I have always loved the plays the company has created that have come from student writing. When I got the idea to have students rewrite a Shakespeare play, I knew we had a great project!

Three different classes, two at University Hill Elementary in Boulder and one at Gilpin Elementary in Denver, spent over 20 hours each rewriting a shortened version of *The Merchant of Venice*. First we told students the story of the play. Then they did improvised versions of the scenes, acting them out over and over until they all understood the story and plot points. At this stage, students wrote the scenes in script form. After many rewrites, they arrived at the scenes that you will see in the performance of *Give It Up*. This teacher's guide has a lot of follow-up suggestions for writing activities. We hope you choose to use the play as an event to inspire *your* students to write!

SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY

Shakespeare for elementary school students? You can't be serious!

Yes we are! But this is not your average Shakespeare play. *The Merchant of Venice* has been rewritten by a group of elementary school-aged kids! Student writers incorporated their own unique perceptions of the story while keeping the original plot and flavor of Shakespeare's language. While *Give It Up* tackles serious subject matter, the student writers have managed to include lots of humor and fun while maintaining the power of the message.

Here is a simple version of the storyline: Shylock lends money to people and charges interest to make a living in Venice. Antonio is a merchant who buys and sells things to make a living. They are enemies. Antonio does not agree with Shylock's practice of charging interest to people who come to borrow money, so he constantly makes fun of Shylock in the marketplace. Shylock tries to get revenge, but his plan backfires. When this happens, Antonio now has his chance for revenge but instead chooses to forgive his enemy.

Meanwhile, in Belmont, Portia's father leaves a will that says that in order for her to inherit his money, she must get married. In order for her to get married, a man must choose the right box--either the gold, silver or lead box. The man who chooses the right one gets to marry Portia. Many men try and many men fail, until Bassanio arrives.

This play shows that revenge doesn't pay and provides a model for how to make the difficult choice to end the cycle of vengeance.

Character List for *Give It Up*:

- *Antonio* - A merchant in Venice
- *Bassanio* - A friend of Antonio's and suitor to Portia
- *Shylock* - A man who lends money to people
- *Launcelot* - Shylock's servant
- *Jessica* - Shylock's daughter
- *Portia* - A woman whose very rich father has just died
- *Nerissa* - Portia's personal maid
- *Prince Arragon* - Suitor to Portia
- *Prince Morocco* - Suitor to Portia
- *Gratiano* - Friend to Antonio and Bassanio
- *Salerio* - Friend to Antonio and Bassanio
- *Messenger*

There are two other characters that you will hear about in the play:

- *Bellarion* - A smart judge that is talked about but not seen
- *Balthazar* - (Portia in disguise as a judge)

Settings in *Give It Up*:

- Venice - Various locations including Shylock's house, a street and a courtroom
- Belmont - Portia's palace

ESL Teachers: If you are interested in receiving a synopsis of the play in Spanish, please email our performance manager, <mailto:mary@imaginationmakers.org>, and we will send one right out to you!

DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITIES

PLEASE NOTE: The following suggestions are only a guide. You will need to judge what is appropriate for your grade level and individual class.

BEFORE THE PLAY

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Approach the play enthusiastically and intelligently with an understanding of what to expect.
- Begin thinking about some of the issues that will be addressed in the play.
- Show familiarity with the characters in the play and with Shakespearean language.

DISCUSSION

Choose from among the following topics to discuss with your students:

1. Discuss "Some Notes for Students" (*Teachers: This can be found on page 4.*)
2. Plays in general
 - Have you been to a play by Imagination Makers before? If so, what do you remember about it?
 - Have you been to other plays? What do you remember about them?
 - Has anyone ever been in a play?
 - Have you ever seen a play written by William Shakespeare?
3. Revenge
 - Why do you think somebody would want to "pay a person back" if that person has hurt them?
 - When were you in a cycle of revenge that you were able to stop?
 - How did you stop?
 - List some other ways people can get out of a cycle of revenge.

4. Friendship

- Did you ever turn an enemy into a friend? How?
- Did you ever make a deal with someone and find out you wanted to change it later? Did you? Or did you stick to your agreement?

ACTIVITIES

Art

This activity is a great way to generate enthusiasm for the performance within your class and also throughout the school.

1. Make posters advertising the play: "Imagination Makers presents *Give It Up* at (name of school), in the (gym or cafeteria) on (date of performance)." Include pictures of one or more of the following:

- Shakespeare (either from your imagination or find a book that has a picture)
- People in Shakespearean costumes
- Two people forgiving each other

Vocabulary Words

Review the Shakespearean vocabulary listed below. Give students the Shakespearean word and see if they can guess the meaning.

- | | |
|--|---|
| • <i>In sooth, for sooth</i> --In truth | • <i>Ere</i> --Before |
| • <i>Must needs</i> --Have to | • <i>How now!</i> --What's up? |
| • <i>Fie</i> --No way | • <i>Hie thee</i> --Hurry |
| • <i>Ye</i> --You (as in "Fare ye well my love") | • <i>Alas or alack</i> --Unfortunately |
| • <i>Thee, thou, thyself</i> --You | • <i>Zounds!</i> --Yikes! |
| • <i>Thy, thine</i> --your | • <i>Speakest</i> —Speak |
| • <i>Good Morrow</i> --Good morning | • <i>Goest</i> —Go <i>Doth</i> --Does |
| • <i>Well met</i> --Hello | • <i>Whither</i> --Where? (As in "Whither thou goest?") |
| • <i>In faith</i> --In truth | • <i>Tarry</i> --Wait |
| • <i>'Tis</i> --It is | • <i>Aye</i> --Yes |
| • <i>'Twas</i> --It was | • <i>Anon</i> --Later |
| • <i>I pray you</i> --I ask that you tell me | • <i>Wherefore</i> --Why? |
| • <i>I beseech you</i> --I beg you | • <i>Ducats</i> --Dollars |
| • <i>By my troth</i> --I swear | |

Writing

Use a writing or composition exercise as an opportunity to familiarize your students with Shakespearean language. Have your students write out a short script in contemporary language, and then have them substitute modern words for Shakespearean words from the list above.

EXAMPLE:

Charlie: What's happening Tony?
 What news, Tony?

- Tony: The truth is I feel sad.
 In sooth, I am full of woe.
- Charlie: Why?
 Wherefore?
- Tony: Unfortunately, my friend leaves in a little while.
 Alas, my friend doth leave anon.
- Charlie: Perhaps she will return.
 Perchance she shall return.

Research

Encourage your students to explore the history of Shakespeare and his time.

1. Choose one character from the list of characters on page 5. You will write about this character after you see the play. (*Teacher Hint: A couple of weeks before the performance, talk about one character each day. Have your students keep a list, adding characters as you go. The students will come to the play feeling like they “know” the characters.*)
2. Read the scene from the actual text of *The Merchant of Venice* included at the end of this guide.
3. Read the interesting facts about Shakespeare (below). Create a bulletin board with these facts, pictures and anything else you can gather that applies to Shakespeare.

SOME INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT SHAKESPEARE

- His birth and death occurred on the same date - April 23.
- He was born in 1564 and died in 1616.
- He married Anne Hathaway at the age of 18.
- His first play was presented around 1590.
- He wrote 37 plays.
- During his time no women appeared on stage in plays.
- Women’s roles were played by boys.

Shakespeare invented some 2000 words and expressions. We use many of them without even knowing it. Here are some of them:

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| • bandit | • blushing |
| • football | • well-behaved |
| • anchovies | • never-ending |
| • shooting star | • downstairs |
| • dawn | • too much of a good thing |
| • love-letter | • don’t budge an inch |
| • excitement | • for goodness’ sake |
| • lonely | • in my mind’s eye |
| • gloomy | • good riddance |

4. You can look up more about Shakespeare and the times he lived in by going into these web sites:

The complete works of William Shakespeare are offered online:

<http://www-tech.mit.edu/Shakespeare/>

Shakespeare-inspired games and activities:

<http://www.folger.edu/template.cfm?cid=1967>

A full-service Shakespeare website, including podcasts of performances, reference material, photographs of Shakespeare's birthplace, the Globe Theatre, and more:

- <http://www.shakespearehigh.com/>

AFTER THE PLAY

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the play.
- Deepen the understanding of the theme areas and apply this understanding in their own lives.
- Analyze problems and evaluate possible solutions.
- Relate appropriate curriculum areas to the play.

DISCUSSION

Choose from among the following topics to discuss with your students:

1. The play in general
 - Which part of the play was your favorite? Were there any parts you didn't like?
 - Which characters were your favorites? Least favorite?
 - How did the costumes and set help you to enjoy the play? Give examples. Would you have chosen different costumes or set? Why?
2. Revenge
 - Did the play remind you of anything that has ever happened to you?
 - How did Antonio and Shylock finally work out their differences and get out of the cycle of revenge?
 - What do you think you would have done if you were Antonio?
 - Can you think of any other ways that Shylock could have dealt with his problems with Antonio?
3. Concepts of the Play
 - What do you think Antonio learned? Shylock? Jessica? Portia? Bassanio?
 - What do you think was the message of the play?

ACTIVITIES

Art

Many fun art projects can result from students' impressions of the play. Here are a few ideas:

1. Draw a picture of your favorite part of the play or favorite character.
2. Make a mural that depicts the story of the play.
3. Draw a picture of Antonio and Shylock at various stages during the play. Do the same for Portia and Bassanio. Then, make a collage of all the pictures.

Writing

We hope that your students will be inspired to write after they see the play. Here are some suggestions to get them started:

1. In your own words, write the story of what happened in the play.
2. Write a letter to:
 - A character in the play. Tell him or her why you liked or disliked them.
 - The actors. Tell them what you liked about the play.
 - The parent group, principal or whoever sponsored the show in your school. Tell them what you liked about the play and thank them for sponsoring it.

(Teacher hint: Here are some "starters" for letter: "The part of the play that really stuck in my mind was..."; "I had a connection to the play because...")
3. Make a list of words or phrases that the play evoked. What do you remember from the show? Did it make you think of anything from your own life? What feelings and images were sparked by the play? Use these words to create a poem about the play.
4. Write a newspaper review of the play. It could include elements such as:
 - How you felt about the story in general.
 - Whether you think the costumes and set were good and fit the play.
 - What you thought of the acting, whether you thought it believable and realistic.
 - Give the performance a star rating (1 is lowest, 4 is highest) and say whether you would recommend it to other people.
5. Write a story that begins when the play ends. You could describe what happens in the future for Shylock, Antonia, Portia and Bassanio.

Drama

Now that your students have had a chance to see live theater, they might enjoy doing some acting of their own.

1. Get into groups and act out your favorite part of the play.
(Teacher hint: This is a very easy drama activity and it helps students to process the play. It takes no theater expertise on your part, and their interpretations of the play can be a lot of fun!)
2. Do the above activity but, instead of acting out your favorite parts, do a tableau of your favorite part of the play. A tableau is like a frozen picture – like in the game

“Statues”. Use your bodies to pose the picture. Then, each group shows their picture to the rest of the class.

3. “Role play” as a character from *Give It Up*. The rest of the class acts as if they are news reporters and interviews the character. The class then writes their news stories. Don’t forget the headline!

Here is a short excerpt from the actual script of *The Merchant of Venice*, by William Shakespeare. This is from Act 1, Scene 3:

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

[Enter BASSANIO and SHYLOCK]

SHYLOCK Three thousand ducats; well.

BASSANIO Ay, sir, for three months.

SHYLOCK For three months; well.

BASSANIO For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

SHYLOCK Antonio shall become bound; well.

BASSANIO May you stead me? Will you pleasure me? Shall I know your answer?

SHYLOCK Three thousand ducats for three months and Antonio bound.

BASSANIO Your answer to that.

SHYLOCK Antonio is a good man.

BASSANIO Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

SHYLOCK Oh, no, no, no, no: my meaning in saying he is a good man is to have you understand me that he is sufficient. Yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves, I mean pirates, and then there is the peril of waters, winds and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats; I think I may take his bond.

BASSANIO Be assured you may.

SHYLOCK I will be assured I may; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

BASSANIO If it please you to dine with us.

ABOUT IMAGINATION MAKERS THEATER COMPANY

Imagination Makers is a professional company presenting innovative theater that is both entertaining and emotionally powerful. Internationally acclaimed, the company has given over 4,000 performances and reached close to one million kids with performances of 27 original plays since 1980. Reaching over 60,000 audience members on average per year, Imagination Makers ranks first in the state among theater companies for the number of kids served yearly. In all, the company reaches one out of every four public elementary school students in the metro area with its productions.

For 31 years, Imagination Makers has toured successfully in Colorado. Out of state, we have done shows in New York, Connecticut and England. Highlights include invitations to perform in London at the Newham International Festival of Theater in Education and Take Off, an international theater festival. We were selected to perform at the national conference of the American Alliance for Theater and Education. A play created by Imagination Makers, in collaboration with students from Brighton High School, was performed by those students at the Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland. IMTC is a proud recipient of 2010 and 2011 grants from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The company has completed 36 Drama Residency programs at schools across Colorado. In the last few years, we have designed and conducted residencies that are intensive writing and theater experiences for students.

The creation of Give It Up was funded in part by The Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD) through the Cultural Councils of Boulder, Jefferson, Douglas and Arapahoe counties, the Denver Foundation, the Boulder Arts Commission (an agency of the Boulder City Council), the AHAB/Neodata Endowment Grant Program, US Bancorp and the Community Foundation Serving Boulder County.

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Making It Possible.



THE DENVER FOUNDATION



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