



Shakespeare Newsletter



Hempshill Hall 2023-24

What a fantastic year we have had in our school's partnership with the RSC (Royal Shakespeare Company). Here's some of the highlights of this academic year...

Shakespeare Ambassadors

Each year we choose 3 ambassadors from Year 5 to support in raising the profile of Shakespeare and his work across school. The ambassadors took part in training at our local theatre partner, the Theatre Royal, to generate ideas for how to raise the profile of Shakespeare within school. They also conducted a Pupil Voice survey after our Shakespeare Week to gauge what children thought and how much they enjoyed the play we studied. The ambassadors have taken full advantage of their role this year. Thank you to Alexia, Hope and Noah for all your help and enthusiasm this year!



Drama Club

In the spring term, helped by our enthusiastic ambassadors, drama club was opened up to Year 4 children who were interested in learning some Rehearsal Room Techniques and more importantly, having some fun with drama!

In the summer term, those taking part in our Playmaking Festival also had a club to rehearse and refine the scenes. They had great fun coming up with ideas to enhance our scenes and making them the best they could be ready for our performance!



Pupil Voice

An important part of the ambassadors' work this year was conducting pupil voice surveys, the results of which they fed back to our RSC partners at their ambassador meetings. Here are some of the comments our children across the school have made about our Shakespeare work:

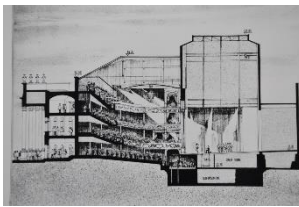
'I love history and Shakespeare is a part of our history.' Year 2 child

'Acting the scenes out really helps us with our writing because it brings the scenes to life.' Year 5 child

'The Shakespeare writing of the market scene description was fun- his plays spread enjoyment!' Year 6 child

Theatre Royal Tour – June 2024

To ensure all Year 4 children had access to the Theatre Royal, those who weren't involved in the Playmaking Festival this year were able to enjoy a Front of House and auditorium tour of the venue. During this the children learned how the Theatre Royal was designed and built in the Victorian times, the social history of theatre, as well as learn specific theatre design terminology.





Shakespeare Week– March 2024



Our Shakespeare Week this year took place at the end of our Spring Term, where children from Y1-6 learned about our chosen play, 'Romeo and Juliet'. We were incredibly lucky to welcome our Associate Artists, Jane and Martha, to work with our children across KS1 and KS2. Their valuable activities allowed us to explore 'Romeo and Juliet' through drama and art.

Art with Jane:

Jane worked with our Year 2 children to create beautiful masks for the masked ball. The children thoroughly enjoyed using collage to create their own individual mask.



Drama with Martha:

Martha worked with our Year 5 and 6 children to draw out certain themes of the story and use Rehearsal Room Techniques to get to grips with the language! The children had a great time taking part in all the drama activities on offer.



Art with Mrs Gregg:

Years 1 and 3 worked with Mrs Gregg to create some natural art for our school garden! This art explored some key themes and words associated with the play.



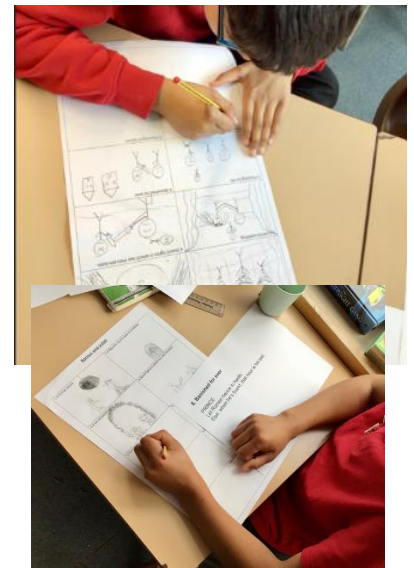
Year 1 worked to create shapes using leaves and foliage that directly linked one of the themes, in this case 'love'.

Year 3 children used key words from the play to create a wooden decoration.



Writing Outcomes:

Across the school, the children took advantage of the writing opportunities that came from studying the play. They first studied certain key scenes and discussed some of the trickier language, before using what they had learned to do some writing. From setting descriptions, fact files and cartoon strips in KS2, to writing a narrative of the masked ball in KS1, the children enjoyed what the week had to offer!



Live Performances

Nothing beats a live performance and Shakespeare is meant to be seen and acted....just as Will himself intended! The Summer term has seen children enjoy live 'theatre' and some of our children go to The Theatre Royal to perform on stage to a real audience.

First Encounters Tour– April 2024

On Monday 15th April a group of children from Y5 and Y6, including our Shakespeare Ambassadors, visited Bluecoat Beechdale Academy to watch an RSC First Encounters performance of 'Romeo and Juliet'. The use of props and colour within the performance was particularly interesting to watch, as well as the cast playing multiple roles throughout the performance! The children thoroughly enjoyed it and were sat in the perfect spot (front row!) to enjoy some interaction with the actors throughout the play. Some feedback from our ambassadors included:

'I absolutely loved seeing how they put the scenes together for the performance.' Year 5 child



The Nottingham RSC Playmaking Festival – July 2024

As part of our partnership with the other RSC schools in Nottingham, we put together a playmaking performance to showcase our Shakespeare work. The Theatre Royal hosted us and the staff did an incredible job of helping us to put on a fantastic performance of 'Romeo and Juliet'.

The play was broken up into 8 parts and each school was given scenes to rehearse and perform. When it came to the performance, each school performed their scenes in order, which then made up the whole play. Miss Burton and Mrs Trout worked with 17 children from Year 4 to create our scenes, where Romeo and Juliet's proposal and wedding takes place. We were also supported by Peter Bradley, a director/mentor from the RSC and are incredibly grateful for his advice and direction. This was an amazing experience and opportunity for the children to perform on a professional stage. Their hard work, commitment and enthusiasm were absolutely brilliant, and their performance was a joy to watch by family members, staff and the rest of the Year 4 cohort. We hope the experience will stay with them!



Parting is such sweet sorrow...

Taken from 'Romeo and Juliet'

We hope that this newsletter has given you a taste of what Shakespeare at Hempshill Hall looks like. Shakespeare remains relevant to this day, from the joy and excitement it brings to the messages it teaches. We are incredibly lucky in our school to be a part of such an important and creative partnership.