

KING LEAR



ON-THE-BUS GUIDE

A REMINDER FOR STUDENTS ABOUT THEATER ETIQUETTE

- LISTEN, EXPERIENCE, IMAGINE, DISCOVER, LEARN!
- GIVE YOUR ENERGY AND ATTENTION TO THE PERFORMERS.
- PLEASE DO NOT EAT OR DRINK IN THE THEATER.
- TALK ONLY BEFORE AND AFTER THE PERFORMANCE.
- TURN OFF WIRELESS DEVICES.
- NO PHOTOS, VIDEOS, TEXTING, OR LISTENING TO MUSIC.

*These are guidelines... We understand that some students may need to experience the performance in their own way, and we are here to support all students and their unique needs.

WRITE AND RESPOND

King Lear has a particular expectation of his daughters both as a father and as a long-standing monarch. When it's time to divide his kingdom at the beginning of the story, he expects his daughters to profess their love of him. You could say that his expectation comes from his sense of power. Journal or discuss your answer to any of these questions:

- What does power mean to you and how would you expect others to use their power?
- If someone gains or loses power, how does it impact their character or identity?
- Was there a time when you had certain powers that you didn't use wisely? What was the impact?
- Have you seen power have a positive impact on a leader? How was this kind of power expressed?

CASTING LEAR

Ask students, if you were casting a movie of King Lear, what stars would you get to be in it? Ask each student to work independently and cast each of the characters above using actors and celebrities. Have students share their casting if they feel comfortable, explaining why they think their choices are well suited for King Lear.

A BIT OF BACKGROUND

Founded in 1975, **Actors From The London Stage** (AFTLS) is one of the oldest touring Shakespeare theatre companies in the world. Housed and workshopped in the UK and based in the United States at Shakespeare at Notre Dame, this intensive residency program is truly one of a kind.

Be it in classroom workshops, onstage demonstrations and performances, text readings, or informal meetings with students, AFTLS actors are committed to teaching and being entirely accessible to students during each visit.

Actors From The London Stage provide a one-of-a-kind experience of Shakespeare. The performance involves five actors who take on multiple roles and use minimal props, costumes, and set. The staging of the show highlights the talent of each actor and the ensemble as a whole. Instead of relying on other actors or costumes to distinguish between characters, Actors From The London Stage are trained to switch from one character to another within and between scenes. The focus of the performance is on the words Shakespeare uses to tell the story. Whether students are familiar with or new to the body of work, Actors From The London Stage provides an inclusive, interactive gateway to experiencing the richness of Shakespeare's writing.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Given each actor plays multiple roles, how do the actors use their bodies and voices to change from one character to another?
- In a show that uses minimal props and setting, it takes imagination to bring to life each scene. What was used in this performance to convey location or scene changes?
- Were there any parts of the play that you found Shakespeare's language challenging to interpret? How did the actors help you to understand even if the language was unclear?
- How does loyalty (or the lack of it) impact this family and kingdom?
- What's your opinion about people who tell the truth and risk not getting what they want vs. people who lie to get what they want?
- What do you think the message of this story is about?