

## **SHAKESPEARE/GENRES**

**AGES:** Middle School

### **DESCRIPTION**

Teach Shakespearean language and the concept of genre all at the same time. Great for an introduction into studying Shakespeare, or a stand alone lesson as well.

### **MATERIALS**

Notecards with different genres written on them (western, horror, adventure, mystery, etc.) A copy of a synopsis of "Hamlet". The first 11 lines of Hamlet.

### **FULL LESSON PLAN**

Split your classroom into two large groups. If you have a projection system, place the first 11 lines of Hamlet on the wall with no stage directions or title showing.

Have one side of the room read out loud the lines of Barnardo while the other side reads Francisco. Discuss the language being used and what context clues tell you about the story. (ie: Look at the language. What types of language is being used? What does "get thee to bed mean"? Etc. Is this the beginning of a play? How do you know? Where are they? Who are these characters? During what time period do you think the play takes place? etc.).

Switch the roles and have them read aloud again. This time discuss what they can infer: What time of day? What is the temperature? What kind of scene is it? Dramatic? Comedic? Are these the main characters? Etc.

Next, pass out copies of the scene. Give them each a partner and have them read to each other again and allow them time to play both partners.

Afterwards, pass out "genre cards" to each twosome. Give them about 10 minutes to work on their scene in that "style".

Allow each group the chance to perform their scene in their genre. Then have the class guess what genres each twosome chose.

Afterwards, I always read them a synopsis of Hamlet. It's always fun for them to learn they were studying the language of Shakespeare without even knowing it. It's doubly fun for them to learn how incredibly messed up and twisted of a story it is! Disclaimer: this is not my original lesson. I sat in on another teacher doing this lesson a few years ago and have used it since. It's great fun!