

SHAKESPEARE

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

This Shakespeare Syllabus seeks to offer Learners the opportunity to:

- Develop imagination and creativity
- Increase self-confidence
- Develop vocal techniques
- Develop physical stage techniques
- Introduce the work of William Shakespeare through a themed series of progressive steps
- Develop an understanding of themes, subtext and underlying motives
- Instill an enthusiasm and interest in the language and writing of Shakespeare and also Elizabethan theatre

Guidelines for Shakespeare Learners:

- All selections must be performed from memory.
- Learners should bring legible copies of their pieces to the examination for the Examiner, and must adhere to all copyright laws.
- Full costume or make up is not permitted, although a suggestion of costume (eg: shawls, practice skirt or hat) and hand props are allowed. (eg: scrolls, sticks, etc.).
- Learners are permitted to play either gender.
- During the course of this Syllabus Learners should be encouraged to study a wide range of Shakespeare's plays as well as details of his life and the history of the Elizabethan theatre. This should include knowledge of religious and political influences on his themes, the meaning of his dramatic language and how Elizabethan theatre shaped his writing.
- It is suggested that the texts used for study are from the **Arden Shakespeare Series**. This series provides detailed notes including, a glossary and language guide and also biographical and historical notes.
- Comprehensive theoretical and historical background notes to support this Syllabus are available on request from the NEA Office.
- Learners are not permitted to present work which they have already submitted at another grade. Learners found to be repeating work will be disqualified and fees will be forfeited.
- In line with current standard Health and Safety advice, all Learners should ensure they are warmed up both vocally and physically before the examination.

LEVEL 1 – FOUNDATION

Marks at this Level taking into consideration technique and interpretation throughout each section:

Foundation - Level 1	Technique and Interpretation	Discussion
Grade 1	90	10
Grade 2	90	10
Grade 3	90	10

GRADE 1 (10 Minutes)

Theme - Introductions

Learners should:

1. Perform one of the following from **A Midsummer Night's Dream**:

- Puck
Act II Scene 1
"Fairy thou speakest ..."
- Lysander
Act I Scene 1
"Therefore hear me, Hermia ..."
- Bottom
Act III Scene 1
"Masters you ought to consider ..."
(Omit Snout)
- Fairy
Act II Scene 1
"Over hill, over dale ..."
- Helena
Act II Scene 2
"O, I am out of breath ..."
- Titania
Act II Scene 1
"Set your heart at rest ..."

1. Discuss with the Examiner:

- How the speech chosen helps the audience understand more about a character or explains what is going on
- The plot of A Midsummer Night's Dream

GRADE 2 (10 Minutes)

Theme - Communication with audience

Learners should:

1. Perform one of the following speeches:

- The Boy - Henry V
Act III Scene 2
"As young as I am ..."
- Sebastian - Twelfth Night
Act IV Scene 3
"This is the air ..."
- Lancelot - The Merchant of Venice
Act II Scene 2

“Certainly my conscience ...”

- Viola - Twelfth Night
Act II Scene 2
“I left no ring with her ...”
- Imogen - Cymbeline
Act III Scene 6
“I see a man’s life ...”
- Helena - A Midsummer Night’s Dream
Act I Scene 1
“How happy some or other ...”

2. Discuss with the Examiner:

- The events leading up to the speech
- The play from which the speech is taken
- The different parts of the Elizabethan playhouse where the audience would sit or stand

GRADE 3 Foundation Medal (10 Minutes)

Theme - Prologues and Chorus

Learners should:

1. Perform a prologue from one of the following (an extract may be selected from the prologues, but it must not be less than 15 lines):
 - Chorus - Henry V
Act I
“O for a muse of fire ...”
 - Chorus - Henry V
Act II
“Now all the youth of England ...”
 - Chorus - Romeo and Juliet
Act I
“Two households both alike ...”
 - Chorus - Romeo and Juliet
Act II
“Now old desire doth in his deathbed ...”
 - Rumour - Henry IV Part 2
Act I
“Open your ears ...”
 - Time - The Winter’s Tale
Act IV
“I, that please some ...”

2. Discuss with the Examiner:

- The role of the prologue
- Why some plays need prologues
- Elizabethan Playhouses (the Learner can bring a plan or drawing to aid discussion)
- The play from which the speech is taken

LEVEL 2 – INTERMEDIATE

Marks at this Level taking into consideration technique and interpretation throughout each section:

Intermediate - Level 2	Technique and Interpretation	Discussion
Grade 4	80	20
Grade 5	80	20

GRADE 4 (15 Minutes)

Theme - Character Parts

Learners should:

1. Perform a speech by one of the following:

- Porter - Macbeth
Act II Scene 3
“Here’s a knocking indeed ...”
- The Shepherd - The Winter’s Tale
Act III Scene 3
“I would there were no age ...”
- Malvolio - Twelfth Night
Act III Scene 4
“O,ho! Do you come near me now? ...”
- Mistress Quickly - Henry IV Part 2
Act II Scene 1
“Marry if thou wert an honest man ...”
- The Nurse - Romeo and Juliet
Act IV Scene 5
“Mistress, what, mistress ...”
- Paulina - The Winter’s Tale
Act V Scene 3
“What sovereign sir I did not well ... something near”
(Omit Leontes)

2. Discuss with the Examiner:

- How the chosen character fits into the play and whether the character supports, drives the action along or is there another reason for their presence
- The character’s use of language
- The characters and the play from which the speech is taken

GRADE 5 (15 Minutes)

Theme - Speeches which inform the audience of events that have taken place off-stage

Learners should:

1. Perform one of the following speeches:

- Friar Lawrence - Romeo and Juliet
Act V Scene 3
"I will be brief ..."
- Duke of Exeter - Henry V
Act VI Scene 6
"The Duke of York commands him ... tears"
(Omit Henry)
- The Clown - The Winter's Tale
Act III Scene 2
"I have seen two such sights ... at it now"
(Omit The Shepherd)
- Gertrude - Hamlet
Act II Scene 7
"One woe doth tread upon ... muddy death"
(Omit Laertes)
- Hostess (Mistress Quickly) - Henry V
Act II Scene 3
"Nay, sure he's not in hell ..."
- Calpurnia - Julius Caesar
Act II Scene 2
"What mean you, Caesar? ...I do fear them"
(Omit Caesar)

2. Discuss with the Examiner:

- Shakespeare's reasons for not showing these scenes but relying on another character's narrative
- The technique needed to bring the described events vividly to life
- The play from which the speech is taken

LEVEL 3 – ADVANCED

Marks at this Level taking into consideration technique and interpretation throughout each section:

Advanced - Level 3	Technique and Interpretation		Discussion
Grade 6	40	40	20
Grade 7	40	40	20
Grade 8	40	40	20

GRADE 6 Bronze Medal (20 Minutes)

Learners should be 15 years old or over

Theme - Rhetoric and Oratory

Learners should:

1. Perform a speech by one of the following:

- Henry - Henry V
Act III Scene 1
“Once more unto the breach ...”
- Brutus - Julius Caesar
Act III Scene 2
“Romans, countrymen, lovers ...”
- Prince of Verona - Romeo and Juliet
Act I Scene 1
“Rebellious subjects ...”
- Queen Katherine - Henry VIII
Act II Scene 4
- Portia - The Merchant of Venice
Act IV Scene 1
“The quality of mercy ...”
- Hermione - The Winter’s Tale
Act II Scene 2
“Since what I am to say ...”

2. Perform a **contrasting speech** of their own choice from another of Shakespeare’s plays.

3. Discuss with the Examiner:

- The events leading up to the speeches chosen
- The effect the speaker hopes to have on his/her listeners
- How he/she achieves this
- The plays from which the speeches are taken
- How Shakespeare uses metre

GRADE 7 Silver Medal (20 Minutes)

Theme – Heroes, Heroines and Major Characters

Learners should:

1. Perform a speech by a **hero, heroine or major character** of their own choice.
2. Perform a **contrasting speech** of their own choice from another of Shakespeare's plays.
3. Discuss with the Examiner:
 - The reasons for the choice of speeches
 - Any aspect of the characters chosen and their situations
 - The plays from which the speeches are taken
 - Aspects of performing Shakespeare in an Elizabethan theatre

GRADE 8 Gold Medal (25 Minutes)

Theme - Soliloquy

Learners should:

1. Perform a true **soliloquy** from any Shakespearean **tragedy** of their own choice.
2. Perform a **contrasting speech** of their own choice from another of Shakespeare's plays.
3. Discuss with the Examiner:
 - Shakespeare's use of the soliloquy
 - The reasons for the choice of speeches
 - Any aspect of the characters chosen and the techniques involved to perform them
 - The plays from which the speeches are taken
 - Aspects of the rhythm and metre used by Shakespeare
 - Aspects of Shakespeare's life and the times in which he was writing

