



# **New Era Academy Syllabus 2023- 2026**

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**Performance Exams  
Shakespeare Syllabus Extract**

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# PERFORMANCE EXAMS

## 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
- Instil 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 (e.g.: shawls, practice skirt or hat) and hand props are allowed. (e.g.: 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.

## Shakespeare: Level 1 Foundation

### Grade 1 (10 Minutes)

**Marks Awarded****Learners should:**

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. Perform a scene from A Midsummer Night's Dream:<br>(Time limit 3 minutes)   | 90 |
| 2. Discuss with the Examiner   | 10 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where this speech occurs in the play</li><li>• The plot of A Midsummer Night's Dream</li></ul> |    |

**Total Marks Awarded 100**

### Grade 2 (10 Minutes)

**Marks Awarded****Learners should:**

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. Perform a speech from any of Shakespeare's plays where the character is sharing their thoughts with the audience.<br>(Time limit 3 minutes)   | 90 |
| 2. Discuss with the Examiner   | 10 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The events leading up to the speech</li><li>• The play from which the speech is taken</li><li>• The different parts of the Elizabethan playhouse where the audience would sit or stand</li></ul> |    |

**Total Marks Awarded 100**

### Grade 3 – Foundation Medal (10 Minutes)

**Marks Awarded****Learners should:**

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| 1. Perform a prologue from any of Shakespeare's plays with a minimum of 15 lines. (Time limit 3 minutes)  | 90 |
| 2. Discuss with the Examiner  | 10 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The role of the prologue</li><li>• Why some plays need prologues</li><li>• Elizabethan Playhouses (the Learner can bring a plan or drawing to aid discussion)</li><li>• The play from which the speech is taken</li></ul> |    |

**Total Marks Awarded 100**

## Shakespeare: Level 2 Intermediate

### Grade 4 (15 Minutes)

### Marks Awarded

#### Learners should:

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. Perform a character speech from any of Shakespeare's plays.<br>(Time limit 4 minutes)   | 80 |
| 2. Discuss with the Examiner   | 20 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• The character's use of language</li> <li>• The characters and the play from which the speech is taken</li> </ul> |    |

<b>Total Marks Awarded</b>	<b>100</b>
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### Grade 5 (15 Minutes)

### Marks Awarded

#### Learners should:

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. Perform a speech where the character tells the audience about unseen events that have taken place. (Time limit 4 minutes)   | 80 |
| 2. Discuss with the Examiner   | 20 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shakespeare's reasons for not showing these scenes but relying on another character's narrative</li> <li>• The technique needed to bring the described events vividly to life</li> <li>• The play from which the speech is taken</li> </ul> |    |

<b>Total Marks Awarded</b>	<b>100</b>
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## Shakespeare: Level 3 Advanced

### Grade 6 - Bronze Medal (20 Minutes)

### Marks Awarded

#### Learners should:

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. Perform a well-known speech from any of Shakespeare's plays.<br>(Time limit 5 minutes)  | 40 |
| 2. Perform a contrasting speech of their own choice from another of Shakespeare's plays. (Time limit 5 minutes)  | 40 |
| 3. Discuss with the Examiner   | 20 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The events leading up to the speeches chosen</li> <li>• The effect the speaker hopes to have on his/her listeners</li> <li>• How he/she achieves this</li> <li>• The plays from which the speeches are taken</li> </ul> |    |

<b>Total Marks Awarded</b>	<b>100</b>
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**Grade 7 - Silver Medal (25 Minutes)****Marks Awarded****Learners should:**

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. Perform a speech by a hero, heroine or major character of their own choice. (Time limit 6 minutes)  | 40 |
| 2. Perform a contrasting speech of their own choice from another of Shakespeare's plays. (Time limit 6 minutes)  | 40 |
| 3. Discuss with the Examiner   | 20 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reasons for the choice of speeches</li> <li>• Any aspect of the characters chosen and their situations</li> <li>• The plays from which the speeches are taken</li> <li>• Aspects of performing Shakespeare in an Elizabethan theatre</li> <li>• How Shakespeare uses metre</li> </ul> |    |

**Total Marks Awarded****100****Grade 8 - Gold Medal (30 Minutes)****Marks Awarded****Learners should:**

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| 1. Perform a true soliloquy from any Shakespearean tragedy of their own choice. (Time limit 6 minutes)  | 40 |
| 2. Perform a contrasting speech of their own choice from another of Shakespeare's plays. (Time limit 6 minutes)   | 40 |
| 3. Discuss with the Examiner  | 20 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shakespeare's use of the soliloquy</li> <li>• The reasons for the choice of speeches</li> <li>• Any aspect of the characters chosen and the techniques involved to perform them</li> <li>• The plays from which the speeches are taken</li> <li>• Aspects of the rhythm and metre used by Shakespeare</li> <li>• Aspects Shakespeare's life and the times in which he was writing</li> </ul> |    |

**Total Marks Awarded****100**

## Shakespeare: Duologues

The criteria for Duologue examinations are as for Solo Examinations.

Duologue students are marked individually and given individual marks and reports.

Five minutes is added for each exam from Grade 3 upward.

### General Objectives

The Duologue section of this Syllabus provides Learners with the opportunity to:

- Work with a partner
- Explore different texts
- Increase confidence
- Understand a sense of dependency

### Guidelines for Shakespeare Duologue Learners

- Learners may enter for the Shakespeare examinations as specified above in Duologue form up to and including Grade 8.
- The criteria for marking Duologues are the same as that for the Solo Grades.
- All selections must be in duologue form for Duologue Examinations.



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