

**Student Days**  
at Scarborough Renaissance Festival®

# Language Arts/ English

***Scarborough Curriculum  
Guide Outline by Subject  
For Teachers' Use***

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Scarborough Renaissance Festival®

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## Language Arts/English

**Objectives:** Students will-

- Communicate with historical characters through interactions and performances to practice proper English speech patterns and accents.
- Use Accelerated Reader program to springboard understanding and interest in the history, folk lore and character portrayals of the Renaissance.
- Identify and express feelings about real and imagined people, events, and ideas.
- Generate a list of rhyming words.
- Recreate a scene from a story or play.
- Review rhyming schemes and sample poems from the time period.
- Distinguish differences in rhyming schemes.
- Discuss the meanings behind several Old English nursery rhymes.
- Participate in an educational court game from the Late Middle Ages that demonstrates a learning technique from that period.
- Explain the effect that the use of the vernacular had on literature at this time.
- Demonstrate the rhythm of poems through choral readings from the time.

### **Elementary 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>**

TEKS: 1. 15, 17-19; 2. 1-4, 7a, 14-20; 3. 1-4, 6-9, 13; 4. 1-5, 6-14, 15-21; 5. 1-5,6-14,15-21

### **Middle School 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>**

TEKS: 6. 1-12, 14-25; 7. 1-12, 14-25; 8. 1-12, 14-25

### **High School 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>**

TEKS: 1, 2-11, 13-23, 24

**Sample Lessons:** A Court Game called “Horse”  
Poetry Slam

**Resources:** Suggested Reading List (attached)

## **Suggested Reading List:**

- As You Like It by William Shakespeare
- Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer
- The Daughter of Time by Josephine Tey
- Don Quixote by Miguel de Cervantes
- Henry the Navigator – The World's Great Explorers by Charnan Simon
- Ivanhoe by Sir Walter Scott
- Merry Adventures of Robin Hood by Howard Pyle
- Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare
- The Three Musketeers by Alexandre Dumas
- Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare

# A Court Game called “Horse”

## Materials:

- Attached learning game to be played with characters at the festival

## Discussion:

- The following oral language activity is meant to be flexible in duration, participants, and difficulty level. Use all, some, or none of the format presented depending on your students' interests and maturity. Have students interact with the characters they encounter during their visit to the Festival who may participate with them in this vocabulary word/spelling word game. Encourage the students to seek out costumed characters who will be able to contribute to subject matter of game. Poll students while on the bus back to campus to identify the most engaging rounds of this game played at the Festival.

## Challenge:

- Have students make up a period appropriate acrostic chant to use in place of example given.
- Have students research other mnemonic devices that are helpful in retaining new information.

## A Court Game called "Horse"

During the Middle Ages education was at an all time low. Books were few in number and very expensive since each had to be copied by hand. Most often the clergy and nobleman were the only people to be given an education. As learning became fashionable during the Renaissance, people began seeking ways to learn in spite of the limited supply of books. One practice that took hold during social events among the wealthy was oral learning games. A game like the one below was used to teach people how to spell.

To play this game someone volunteers a word to be spelled. Everyone gathers around this person forming a circle. The person in the middle begins a chant using the first letter of the word to be spelled in a descriptive word beginning with that letter sound. We will use the word "horse". So the first descriptive word used in the chant would have to start with an "h". Everyone claps as they chant using the word given by the one in the middle. The person in the middle turns around during the chanting and comes to a stop when the chant is over selecting a person to supply the next descriptive word that starts with the next letter in the word to be spelled. If the selected person cannot come up with a word on the spot then he becomes the next person in the middle and starts the chant using the same descriptive word as before. Again someone is selected at the end of the chant to supply the next letter word for the chant, if they succeed, they do not have to go to the middle, the chant is started again using the new letter word. The game progresses in this way until the selected word is spelled out completely.

The chant goes like this:

The minister's cat is a \_\_\_\_\_ cat, a \_\_\_\_\_ cat I say.

The minister's cat is a \_\_\_\_\_ cat, hip, hip, hip, hurray.

To spell "horse" descriptive words might include:

H - hot

O - old

R - rude

S - sloppy

E - evil

# Poetry Slam

(elementary, middle, and high school)

## Proficiency Outcome: Language Arts and English

### Grade 6

- Generate a list of rhyming words
- Review sample poems
- Display understanding by creating a two line poem using the word list or other rhyming pairs.

### Grade 9

- Distinguish differences in rhyming schemes, such as ABAB and AABB
- Review rhyming schemes of sample poems
- Distinguish differences in the rhythms of poetry. Whether soft - hard or hard - soft, duh-DAH or DAH-duh
- Review rhythms of sample poems
- Write a four line poem utilizing rhythm and rhyme

### Grade 12

- Differentiate iambic from other types of poetic meter.
- Learn to distinguish iambic pentameter in Shakespearean and modern verse.
- Write six to eight lines of a speech in iambic pentameter
- Understand the structure of a Shakespearean sonnet
- Write a sonnet.

## Discussion:

### Shakespeare

William Shakespeare (page 24) is considered one of the greatest writers of all time. He is known through his sonnets and plays (which were written in verse). You can gain a better appreciation of Shakespeare by understanding poetry.

### Poetry

Poetry is a form of literary art where words are used for their beauty and memory associations. Poem styles range from simple nursery rhymes to Shakespearean sonnets to book length epic poems. They can also be plays, hymns and song lyrics. Modern pop music, country songs, rap and hip hop are all poems set to music. Poetry in its simplest form consists of a set of rhymes and rhythms. What poetry do you know? How about song lyrics?

### Basic exercise

Lead students in creating a list of rhyming words: cat - rat, hair - chair, dog - log, etc. After a list of 10 to 20 rhyming pairs is created, introduce the concept of a rhyming couplet.

#### Example #1

Little Boy Blue come blow your horn  
the cow's in the meadow, the sheep's in the corn. *Old Nursery Rhyme*

#### Example #2 -

Today you are you, That is truer than true. *Dr. Seuss*

Ask students to create their own rhyming couplet and share it with the class.

(*Teacher Note - Any length of line and rhythm scheme is acceptable.*)

## Grade 9 Exercise

### Rhyming schemes in poetry

In poetry, a rhyming "scheme" means the way the words are rhymed. For example, a rhyming scheme of ABAB would mean that the word at the end of the first line would rhyme with the word at the end of the third line and the word at the end of the second line would rhyme with the word of the fourth line.

#### Example

Busted flat in Baton Rouge, headin' for the train,  
Feelin' nearly faded as my jeans.  
Bobby thumbed a diesel down, just before it rained,  
Took us all the way to New Orleans. *Bobbie McGee by Kris Kristofferson*

On the other hand a rhyming scheme of AABB would rhyme the last word of the first line with the last word of the second line and the last word of the third line with the last word of the fourth line.

#### Example

Music starts playin' like the end of a sad movie  
It's the kinda ending you don't really wanna see  
'Cause it's tragedy and it'll only bring you down  
Now I don't know what to be without you around. *Breathe by Taylor Swift*

### Rhythms in poetry

A line of poetry is made up of a certain number of feet. A foot is made up of hard (stressed) syllables and soft (unstressed syllables).

#### Example #1 (Soft - Hard)

Hard syllables are **bold**  
If you **liked** it then you **shoulda** put a **ring** on **it**. *Beyonce*

#### Example #2 (Hard - Soft)

**Once** upon a **midnight dreary**, **while** I **pondered weak** and **weary**,  
*The Raven by Edgar Allan Poe*

Ask students to create a four line poem using rhythm and rhyme and share them

(**Teacher Note** - It is suggested that an eight syllable form be used such as (Da-dee, Da-dee, Da-dee. Da-dee, Da-dee - where the first syllable is stressed and the second syllable is unstressed, or da-Dee, da-Dee, da-Dee, da-Dee where the first syllable is unstressed and the second syllable is stressed.

## Grade 12 Exercise

### Iambic Pentameter

In Shakespeare's iambic pentameter you have five "feet" of soft- hard syllables. Iamb means "soft-hard" or "unstressed - stressed". Pentameter means five feet. Penta, from the Greek, meaning five. Meter meaning foot.

#### Example 1

But, **look**, the **morn**, in **russet**<sup>1</sup> **mantle clad**,  
Walks **o'er**<sup>2</sup> the **dew** of **yon** high **eastern hill**:  
Break **we** our **watch** up: **and**, by **my** advice,  
Let **us** impart what **we** have **seen** tonight  
Unto young **Hamlet**: **for**, upon **my** life,  
This **spirit dumb**<sup>3</sup> to **us** will **speak** to **him**. *Act I, scene 1 of Hamlet by William*

*Shakespeare*

- Notes - 1. a reddish brown colored cape - as a metaphor for the sun rising  
2. Contraction of over  
3. Unable to speak

#### Example 2

Yo **man**, why **have** you **skipped** from **school** all **week**?  
The **football team** needs **you** at **Quarterback**  
so **if** you **fail**, then **we** are **gonna' suck**!  
And **with** the **playoffs** **just** two **weeks** away,  
I'll **let** it **slip** to **Beverly** that **you're**  
all **up** on **some** girl **that** you **met** 'cross **town**.  
It **ain't** no **lie**, I **will** be **watching** you. *Anonymous*

Notice that neither of the examples rhymed.

Ask students to create a 6 to 8 line speech in iambic pentameter



## Shakespearean Sonnets

A Shakespearean sonnet is a iambic poem of fourteen lines with ten syllables per line that follows a strict rhyming scheme: ABABCDCDEFEFGG. The last two lines are a rhyming couplet.

### Example 1

When forty winters shall besiege thy brow  
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,  
Thy youth's proud livery, so gaz'd on now,  
Will be a tatter'd weed, of small worth held:  
Then being ask'd where all thy beauty lies,  
Where all the treasure of thy lusty days;  
To say, within thine own deep sunken eyes,  
Were an all-eating shame and thriftless praise.  
How much more praise deserv'd thy beauty's use,  
If thou could answer - "This fair child of mine  
Shall sum my count, and make my old excuse -"  
Proving his beauty by succession thine!  
This were to be new made when thou art old,  
And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold. William Shakespeare

NOTE - Contractions such as tatter'd and ask'd were to make sure that the reader did not pronounce the work correctly, i.e Tatter-ed or ask-ed

## **Example 2**

As age shall make your hair all thin and grayed  
While wrinkles steal the smoothness from your face,  
Your youthful looks and beauty now displayed,  
Shall be worth nothing as you end your race:  
Then asked where all your beauty can be seen,  
Bright eyes, smooth skin and graceful strength now past,  
The answer, "here within my withered mien",  
Would be a wrongful thing to say at last.  
Look outward for the beauty that was yours  
And say instead "This is my little one.  
My child, release my hand, open new doors,  
Go now and take my place when I am done."  
As you live on and I give way to age,  
The book of life will gently turn the page.

*A modern interpretation of Shakespeare's Sonnet*

Ask students to write their own original sonnet.

# Suggested Projects and Classroom Activities

## **Complementing Contest:**

Hold a complimenting contest in your classroom. Students will create their own compliments, and then select an opponent. The more elaborate the compliment, the better, and the last person to run out of compliments wins. (The best formula for creating a renaissance-style compliment is to compare your subject to beautiful things. For example: "Your eyes are more radiant than a thousand stars on a crisp, clear night." One of the richest sources for inspiration is Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.)

## **Build a Castle:**

Design and build a model of a castle. During Henry VIII's reign, he built the castles of Deal, St. Mawes, Walmer, Sandown, Pendennis and rebuilt Dartmouth. However, due to the utilization of gunpowder and cannons during this period, the design of castles changed from that of medieval castles. Tudor castles were circular or semicircular structures made up of several circular sections. Medieval castles, for the most part, were square or rectangular. Rounded walls gave Tudor castles a more deflective surface against cannon fire and a better field of fire for their own guns and cannons inside the castle. Tudor castles also had a lower profile (less of a target for cannons) and thick walls.

## **Royal Feast:**

Research and create a menu for a feast. Remember that England is an island. There were plenty of sheep, but spices were quite a luxury because of their expense.

## **Greetings:**

Have your class practice greeting one another in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century style (see "Customs and Mannerisms" herein).

## **Present a Petition:**

Elect your own Parliament and have its members present a petition to Henry VIII.

## **Historical Writing:**

Write a letter or journal entry from the point of view of a historical figure. For example: a letter from Wolsey to Henry VIII regarding Parliament's refusal to grant him funding for a war, or a journal entry from Anne Boleyn concerning her long awaited marriage to Henry VIII. Be creative! Pick any one or make one up but be sure the letter or journal entry deals with a specific event.

## **Role Playing:**

Act out a meeting between Henry VIII and Pope Clement VII in regard to Henry's divorce from Catherine of Aragon, or between Henry VIII and one of his advisors regarding a matter of national concern.

## **Create a Newspaper:**

Although there were no newspapers in Renaissance England, create one for your class and include stories regarding the King's progress, Parliament's activities, and various military and religious happenings. Look at your local newspaper to gain a better understanding of story placement, writing style, and use of advertisements.

## **Obituaries:**

Write an obituary notice for King Henry VIII, Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn or another important figure of the day. Examine the obituary section in your local newspaper to learn writing style and pertinent information.

## **A Renaissance Christmas:**

Stage a Christmas celebration in Renaissance England. What would be on the menu? What songs would be sung? Was there a Santa Claus, etc.?

## **Panel Discussion:**

Create a panel discussion or debate regarding an unpopular policy of national or domestic concern.

**Timelines:**

Create a timeline based on the information presented herein. Remember to highlight the important dates in Henry VIII's reign.

**Calligraphy & Illumination:**

Study some different calligraphic alphabets, and then try to learn one. Copy or write a paragraph in your new handwriting. Have students look at examples of manuscript illumination and have them illuminate a bookmark using their own initials.

**Coat of Arms:**

Have students create a Coat of Arms. Many coats of arms contained lions, eagles, and mythical beasts. An excellent resource is *A Complete Guide to Heraldry* by A.C. Fox-Davies.

**Translating Conversation:**

As an exercise, try to translate an ordinary 21st century conversation into Old English.

**Old English**

Faith, Jack, where hast thou been?

Thou wast to have been up betimes!

Aye, even so. My good grey mare threw a shoe upon the road; naught could I do but lead her to the smithy in Stratford, some seven miles off.

By St. Christopher, t'is ill luck

Too true, alack. Hast supped? I fear me thy trenchers be bare

Nay, in good sooth; we kept a cold partridge wing and a tankard of cider against thou shouldst arrive.

**21st Century**

Wow, Jack, where have you been?

I thought you were gonna get up early!

Yeah, but I had a flat tire and no spare. I had to hitchhike to World of Auto Parts.

Yeah, bummer

You're telling me. Is there any food left? I bet you guys ate it all.

No, as a matter of fact we saved you some pizza and a Pepsi.