

2011

NEW ZEALAND  
**playhouse**

**Shakespeare**  
**AS YOU WRITE IT**



**Teaching information**  
for Drama and English teachers

Dear Teacher

If we are visiting your school in 2011 with *Shakespeare: As You Write It*, you may choose to use the show as a supplement to a unit you are teaching.

This resource is designed to show you what material will be covered in the show, helping you make more informed lesson plans. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with us if you have any questions about the content of the show - we would be pleased to talk.

Sincerely,

New Zealand Playhouse

**0800 894 500**

**[resources@newzealandplayhouse.co.nz](mailto:resources@newzealandplayhouse.co.nz)**

## Contents

<b>General overview</b> .....	4
<b>Drama</b> .....	5
Major achievement standard	
Level Two	
Secondary achievement standards	
Level One	
Level Three	
<b>English</b> .....	7
Major achievement standard	
Level Three	
Secondary achievement standards	
Level One	
Level Two	
Level Three	

## General overview

*Shakespeare: As You Write It* is performed by three actor improvisers.

Over one hour, they will create an entirely new play as if Shakespeare himself had written it.

To do this, they will begin by discussing some of the restrictions Shakespeare had to work with, and some of the conventions and idioms which Shakespeare used. These will include (but not be limited to) most of the following:

- Countries his plays are often set in
- History, comedy and tragedy plays
- Elizabethan staging techniques
- Prose vs. soliloquies
- Iambic pentameter
- A and B plots
- Character traits

The play, whilst being analysable in its own right, will aid students in analysing all Shakespearian plays and identifying and discussing common Shakespearian conventions.

Prior knowledge of Shakespearian plays and conventions is not essential. While students who have studied Shakespearian plays in the past are likely to understand more of the references, get more of the jokes and have their knowledge enriched, the play equally serves as a great introduction for students who have not studied Shakespeare before.

Please don't hesitate to get in contact with us if you would like to check any details against your lesson plans.

## Drama

### Major achievement standard

#### Level Two

**14178** Explore the work of a playwright who has made a significant contribution to world theatre.

*Shakespeare: As You Write It* will demonstrate aspects of Shakespeares' writing (ie recurring themes) and will make references to a selection of his work through improvisation. The show will also explore the world that Shakespeare worked in and the boundaries he had imposed upon him. This play would be a superb introduction to William Shakespeare and his work, for both students who are totally unfamiliar with Shakespeare to those who have previous experience or particular interest in his plays. Designed to both teach the basics of Shakespearian theatre and inspire an interest in these great plays, teachers will be able to use this show as a teaching tool to build upon back in the classroom.

### Secondary achievement standards

#### Level One

**14166** Explore basic improvisation skills for drama

*Shakespeare: As You Write It* will demonstrate:

- **Spontaneity:** imagination, concentration, offering and accepting vocally and physically.
- **Narrative skills:** advancing, extending, storytelling (long form storytelling)
- **Sensitivity to others in group**

*Shakespeare: As You Write It* is a long-form improvised show; the structure is pre-defined however the content is improvised.

**90011** Describe the techniques, elements, conventions and technologies of drama in a new context and reflect on performance

Students may like to reflect on the construction/ performance of *Shakespeare: As You Write It* and explore the techniques, elements, conventions and technologies our actors demonstrate and talk about during the show.

**90299** Apply drama techniques in an improvised group context

As they look into their own improvisation, students may benefit from seeing our actors use voice, body, movement and use of space in an improvised setting. Contact us if you are interested in booking an improvisation workshop after the play.

**90302** Apply knowledge of a drama/theatre form or period through performing a role within a presentation

In their study towards their own performance of a theatre form/period, students will benefit from our demonstration, teaching and exploration of Elizabethan theatre.

**Level Three**

**90612** Analyse drama processes in a new context and reflect critically on drama performance.

Students will be able to reflect, analyse and respond critically to our live improvised performance of *Shakespeare: As You Write It*.

In general, level three students will benefit from seeing drama devised live onstage. They will explore the Elizabethan period and the dramatic techniques and writing elements used by William Shakespeare and gain understanding of how we can use these elements today to create a new play (Shakespearian or not Shakespearian).

## English

### Major achievement standard

#### Level Three

**90722** Respond critically to Shakespearean drama studied

*Shakespeare: As You Write It* would make an excellent introduction to William Shakespeare for a study of his work. The show explores and breaks down elements used in all of Shakespeare's writings and will help students gain understanding as they join our actors in using these techniques to create a new play. Aspects such as themes, setting, characterisation, context, conventions of genre, structure, method of narration, style, literary features will be explained and explored. Students will be able to draw upon the visual teaching of these techniques to aid and inspire their responses to the drama studied in class. Whether a student is brand new to the works of Shakespeare or a young veteran, *Shakespeare: As You Write It* is a fun, creative and inspiring way to lay the foundation for further classroom study.

### Secondary achievement standards

#### Level One

**90056** View/listen to, study and show understanding of visual or oral text

If you are studying Shakespeare in the classroom as a visual/oral text, *Shakespeare: As You Write It* will give students a better understanding of this genre. After viewing *Shakespeare: As You Write It*, students may like to discuss the narrative, themes, character development, dialogue, and other 'methods or procedures used in crafting and shaping text' that have been showcased by our actors, to prepare them for their response to other oral texts.

**90059** Produce a media or dramatic presentation

In watching our actors improvise and explain *Shakespeare: As You Write It* live onstage, students will be able to gain understanding and draw on a selection of dramatic elements for their own productions.

### Level Two

**90374** Deliver a presentation using oral and visual language techniques.

Students will gain further understanding of oral and visual language techniques as *Shakespeare: As You Write It* breaks down, explains and demonstrates a variety of techniques. Though we focus on Shakespearian techniques, this may benefit them as they explore language and devise their own presentations (depending on the type of presentation the student is giving).

### Level Three

**12459** Present moving images based on analysis of a chosen genre

*Shakespeare: As You Write It* analyses the genre of Elizabethan theatre, drawing on the writings of William Shakespeare. During the performance, meanings and/or effects of conventions are explained and analysed.





NEW ZEALAND  
**playhouse**

[www.newzealandplayhouse.co.nz](http://www.newzealandplayhouse.co.nz)  
PO Box 13221, Christchurch 8141