

# 1 • The First Folio Technique

An interpretation of Shakespeare's Language

## 2 • Why the First Folio Technique?

- The closest thing we have to Shakespeare's original writings and intent
- Particular acting clues that enable anyone to access the language. We get to play detective!
- Actor's Script – Not the altered piece of "literature" that editors and publishers made to be read
- You'll read it differently, you'll act it differently.
- Helps us find the conflict and variety in the conflict

## 3 • Language

- Clues for conflict & characterization
- Iambic Pentameter
  - Short, long, short, long
- Complex - Heightened/Verse
  - forms of speech not found in everyday use: Similes, Metaphors, Elevated ideas
  - Produced through rhythm & sound
  - Clue into character's class, state of mind
- Simple - Direct/Prose
  - is what it says
  - Language of everyday speech
  - Clue into character's class, state of mind

## 4 • Language (cont)

- Spelling and Pronunciation
  - Phonetic spelling
- "ED" vs "D"
  - Blessed = Blessèd
  - Bless'd = Blest
- Ecphosis – single "O" = emotion
  - "O" ≠ "Oh"
- Interchanged Letters and Words
  - s=f i=j u=v l=aye Ayre= aire, heir
  - Most of these have been fixed in our version
- Elizabethans also had many words with an extra "e"
  - heare, keepe, soule, againe, selfe, etc
- Words printed both with and without the extra "e" indicate extra choice or stress
  - "Mee" is not the same as "Me"

## 5 • Punctuation

- Punctuation marks are like notations in a musical score
  - gives clues to the naturalistic breathing spaces
  - helps us release the meaning of the line
  - gives clues to the emotional state of the character

## 6 • Punctuation (cont)

- Full stops – end of a thought ( .?! )
  - Full stops at the end of a verse line indicate a full breath (count to three)
  - keep the thought going until the full stop, no matter how long or short that thought may be
- Mid Stop
  - full stop punctuation ( .?! ) found in the middle of a verse line
  - finish the thought and get on with the next one! Don't take time to breath or break meter

## 7 • Punctuation (cont)

- Commas
  - are used to keep the main thought going by linking mini thoughts
  - at the end of a verse line allow for a quick catch-up breath to propel the next phrase
  - in the middle of a verse line = lift and keep the energy up without a breath
- Colons and Semi-colons
  - Never treat as a full stop or period
  - Always use as a chance to take a quick catch-up breath
  - Colons = "therefore" or "because"
  - Semi-colons = "and"
- Parenthetical Phrases
  - diversion or digression indicated by ( ) or commas
  - Action, or vocal change in speed or pitch

## 8 • Breathing

- Shakespeare uses punctuation and breath for emotional, physical and dramatic effect.
- The only times you should not breathe are at commas, full stops in the middle of a verse line, or where there is no punctuation at the end of a verse line

## 9 • Breathing (cont)

- Full stops at end of verse line
  - expect an answer, think, breathe
- Colons, Semi-colons
  - take a thinking breath
  - they make a shift in thought
- Commas at the end of a verse line
  - take a catch-up breath if needed
- Commas in the middle of a verse line
  - do not breathe
- Parentheticals
  - take a catch-up breath
- No punctuation at end of line
  - no breath
- Mid-stop
  - no breath

## 10 • Miscellaneous

- Capitalization
  - the word is important
  - the word can be used for irony, contrast or as a tool for a deeper emotional connection
  - Capitalizations not to stress are those found at the beginning of a verse line, proper names, and locations
- Monosyllabic words, phrases or lines
  - slow down! i.e. “To be, or not to be, that is the question”
- Theory of separation
  - not/trust that's/soon hand/down
  - if the words become harder to say...slow down
- Small words (but, and, yet, or, therefore)
  - indicate a change of thought
- Repetition
  - treat each repetition differently!

## 11 • Miscellaneous (cont)

- Antithesis
  - finding opposites in text can help to convey meaning
- Irony
  - Bring it out!
- Assonance and Alliteration
  - Like sounding vowels and like sounding consonants – make them fit!
- Rhymes
  - allow the character to enjoy his or her own cleverness
- Double Entendre
  - Sexual puns...nuff said...
- Banter
  - light playful joking, sometimes with deeper sub-text
- Shared Lines
  - lie right on top of each other
  - complete each other's scansion...how cute!

## 12 • The Comedy of Errors

- The Applause First Folio
  - Prepared and annotated by Neil Freeman
- “[F1 is based on] documents written by Shakespeare, a theatre person, for theatre people.”
- Peculiar grammar gives us insight to emotion/feeling of character
- Myself vs. myselfe
  - Corporeal vs. spiritual
- More than one prefix per name
  - Aegeon: Merchant/Father
  - Angelo: Angelo/Goldsmith
- Major entrances/exits – different type settings
  - Not in our version of the script