

# ACT ONE

# LEADERSHIP

# AND POWER

Are leaders born or made ?

## Objectives

To explore the qualities of strong leadership and effective speech-making through Shakespeare's plays and modern examples. To read, perform and talk about lines, scenes and speeches from Shakespeare's plays.

## Curriculum links

English, Drama, Citizenship, Personal, Social and Health Education, Politics.

## Citizenship skills and outlooks

Communicating, collaborating, creative and critical thinking.

## Resources required

Large open space for practical work, large pieces of paper and pens, internet access, digital cameras, copies of the play excerpts and Barack Obama's speech.



## LEARNING FOCUS

Leadership qualities, persuasive speech-making and rhetoric.

There is a further in-depth exploration of leadership and power in **Julius Caesar** using theatre-based approaches at the end of the pack for those who wish to examine this theme or play in greater detail. You could use these approaches either before, after or as part of the following sequence of work.

## INTRODUCTION

Think about a leader in your school, town or country. What skills do they have that make them good leaders? How do they earn and keep their power?

Invite pupils to think about their responses to these questions. Can they think of any examples of rulers from the past or present who have been 'made' and any who have been 'born'?

Shakespeare's plays are full of characters who are born into power, have lost power or are trying to achieve it. What kind of leaders are these Shakespearean characters? What kind of actions are they taking to try and attain or keep power?

## WARM UP ACTIVITIES

### ? KEY QUESTIONS

**What impact does a leader have on you?**

**How would you behave around them?**

**How would you greet your Head Teacher or Head of State if they entered this room now?**

Shakespeare's plays often open with a situation where the normal order is disrupted and where rulers and leaders are changing. This means that the other characters often have to change their behaviour very quickly to impress the new ruler and keep themselves safe.

- Invite pupils to move freely around an open space.
- Appoint one pupil to be the leader. You may want to call them 'king' or 'queen' depending on the play you are going to be looking at, and give them a crown to wear.

- As the leader moves around the space, ask the rest of the group to react to them in the way you think you should to a new leader. Explain that this person has just become their leader so they don't yet know what their leadership will be like. How will they react to the new leader?
- Pause the movement and question the new leader: What kind of behaviour did they like? What annoyed them? From their responses, establish three new 'rules' for the room. The rules might be, for example, that the leader likes to be bowed to but that they don't like people smiling too much and they don't like people coming too close to them or touching them.
- Allow pupils to act on these rules and to change their reactions to the leader, seeing how the room changes.
- Repeat this again, starting from the beginning, but with a different leader encouraging them to think about different rules.
- Reflect with pupils on what it felt like to have to adapt and change. How easy was it to work out what the new leader liked? What was it like to be in that period of crossover between leaders?

This activity is a good way to introduce the idea of leadership style and influence. With Shakespeare's **Richard II** or **Henry IV Part I**, for example, this can be a great way of encouraging pupils to think about what happens when rulers change and their courts have to adapt to new leadership.

For many of Shakespeare's plays, the opening scenes will often reveal a state of change and uncertainty like this. You could also adapt this activity so that you focus more on how it feels to be the leader, giving the pupils playing the leaders different characteristics which allow you to introduce characters, like Oberon and Titania in **A Midsummer Night's Dream** or Cleopatra in **Antony and Cleopatra**.

## EXPLORING CITIZENSHIP THEMES, SKILLS AND OUTLOOKS

### ? KEY QUESTIONS

**What are the qualities of a good leader?**

**How do impressions of a leader change over time?**

Organise pupils into a line down the centre of the classroom. Read out a list of actions by leaders in Shakespeare's plays. Ask the students to step forward if they think this is likely to be the action of a good leader and back if it is likely to be the action of an unfit leader. Compare where students are standing at the end of the activity and ask some of the students to explain their decisions.

**Macbeth:** Killed the king in order to become the new ruler.

**Henry V:** Encouraged his troops into battle and to fight bravely.

**Henry IV:** Took the crown from an unfair and disliked ruler.

**Richard II:** Used money from his subjects to buy himself expensive things.

(You can add in examples from characters in the play/s you are studying.)

Ask each group to draw a large picture to show what they think a good leader looks like. Around the outside of the picture invite them to write the knowledge, skills and attributes that they think a great leader should possess. Should they be a good organiser, an inspiring speaker or a ruthless soldier?

Once they have done this, ask them to compare their results with other groups in the class. How do they differ? Decide what they think are the three most important character traits of a good leader – are they different to the qualities of a good person?

## IN DEPTH ANALYSIS – RHETORIC

### ? KEY QUESTIONS

**How do leaders use language to persuade people to follow them?**

Rhetoric is the art of persuasive speech-making. The main purpose of rhetoric is to persuade people to follow your ideas. Effective leaders often use the following persuasive techniques in their speeches:

- Repetition.
- The rule of three (repeating something three times for emphasis).
- Questions.
- Lists.
- Opposites (or antithesis).

The traditional ordering of the arguments in a speech, according to Aristotle, are: ethos, logos, pathos.

**Ethos** – This is an appeal to the listener based on the character of the speaker. The tone of the speech should establish the speaker's virtue and moral worth. You should listen to me because... I have a good reputation and authority; I entertain you and appear to know what I am talking about.

**Logos** – An appeal based on logic or reason. The argument is demonstrated by examples and maxims. You should listen to me because... of the incontrovertible facts.

**Pathos** – An appeal based on emotion, often associated with suffering or sympathy and the emotions induced in the audience. You should listen to me because... here is a problem and this is how the problem affects you personally. Arguments involving pathos often use metaphor or simile to allow the audience to make an emotional connection with an abstract notion.

Watch productions of rousing speeches from leaders in Shakespeare's plays – such as Brutus's speech in **Julius Caesar Act 3 Scene 2**, and Henry V's speech in **Henry V Act 3 Scene 1**.

Ask the students to identify the qualities of persuasive rhetoric used in these excerpts. What impression does the class get of the leader? How does the language suggest this?

## EXPLORING A SPEECH

Activities that will help your pupils to explore Shakespeare's language further are **Choral Reading** and **Punctuation Shift** where they read the passage aloud walking around the space and changing direction each time they reach a punctuation mark.

This can open up discussions about a character's state of mind. For example, if they are changing direction a lot and seem restless what does this reveal about the leader? You can see an example of how this might work with **Julius Caesar** on pages 60 and 61, but it can be used with any text.

Encourage your pupils to try writing a version of one of the speeches you have looked at in modern day English or in your own language. Does it have the same effect?



## APPLY YOUR LEARNING – CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Share a copy of Barack Obama's New Hampshire Primary speech, from the US presidential campaign in 2008, with your pupils (give written and video versions). Ask your pupils to identify any of the rhetorical features and language of persuasion they noted in the Shakespearean language. Why and how is the speech persuasive?

Ask your pupils to compare this with the version made by artist will.i.am (video available on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjXyqcx-mYY>)

Who might this version appeal to? Discuss how politicians can engage with younger people in the 21st century? Is rhetoric still important?

## AND FINALLY...

### ? KEY QUESTIONS

**Return to the original provocation: Are leaders born or made? Discuss this as a class. Have their opinions changed?**

How can you be a good leader in your community? What skills do you need? Perhaps watch the British Council film which shows a school partnership where pupils make a difference to their schools in Scotland and South Africa through their involvement as young leaders: <https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/classroom-resources/commonwealth-class/bbc-films>

Ask the pupils to use what they have learned to write a speech or plan a script for a music video to persuade people to get actively involved in plans to improve aspects of their school or community.

## PARTNER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

- Exchange and compare your portraits of leaders. Are the characteristics similar or different in both schools?
- Share examples of leaders making rousing speeches from both countries and across the world.
- Exchange your speeches, films and ideas for effective leadership in your communities with your partner school.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### Henry V Act 3 Scene 1

**Henry V** Once more unto the **breach**, dear friends,  
once more,  
Or close the wall up with our English dead.  
In peace there's nothing so becomes a man  
As modest stillness and humility,  
But when the blast of war blows in our ears,  
Then imitate the action of the tiger:  
Stiffen the sinews, conjure up **the blood**.  
Disguise fair nature with **hard-favoured** rage,  
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect:  
Let it pry through the **portage** of the head  
Like the brass cannon, let the brow **o'erwhelm** it  
As fearfully as doth a **galled** rock  
O'erhang and **jutty** his **confounded** base,  
Swilled with the wild and wasteful ocean.  
I see you stand like greyhounds in the **slips**,  
Straining upon the start. The game's afoot:  
Follow your spirit, and upon this charge  
Cry 'God for Harry, England, and Saint George!'



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## ! OVERVIEW

In **Act 3 Scene 1** of **Henry V**, the young King Henry rallies his troops to go bravely into battle and fight for England against the French.

## ✍ NOTES

**breach**: a gap in defensive walls

**the blood**: heat, courage and ferocity

**hard-favoured**: ugly, terrible or terrifying

**portage**: a porthole

**o'erwhelm**: overhang or project over

**galled**: battered

**jutty**: jut out over

**confounded**: ruined

**slips**: leashes designed for quick release

## Julius Caesar Act 3 Scene 2

### ! OVERVIEW

**In Act 3 Scene 2 of Julius Caesar, Brutus tries to persuade the crowd he was justified in leading a conspiracy to kill Caesar.**

**Brutus** Romans, countrymen, and **lovers**, hear me for my **cause**, and be silent, that you may hear. Believe me **for** mine honour, and have respect to mine honour, that you may believe. **Censure** me in your wisdom and awake your **senses**, that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Caesar's, to him I say, that Brutus's love to Caesar was no less than his. If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer: not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more. Had you rather Caesar were living, and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all free men? As Caesar loved me, I weep for him: as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it: as he was valiant, I honour him: but, as he was ambitious, I slew him. There is tears for his love; joy for his fortune; honour for his valour; and death for his ambition. Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so **rude** that would not be a Roman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so **vile** that will not love his country? If any, speak, for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.

### 📖 NOTES

**lovers**: friends

**cause**: grounds for action/explanation/  
subject of concern

**for**: because of

**censure**: judge

**senses**: minds, wits

**rude**: uncivilised

**vile**: lowly, contemptible, offensive

Other examples of well known speeches in audio and text can be found at:

<http://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/series/greatspeeches>

## Barack Obama's New Hampshire Primary speech 2008

When we have faced down impossible odds, when we've been told we're not ready or that we shouldn't try or that we can't, generations of Americans have responded with a simple creed that sums up the spirit of a people: Yes, we can. Yes, we can. Yes, we can.

It was a creed written into the founding documents that declared the destiny of a nation: Yes, we can.

It was whispered by slaves and abolitionists as they blazed a trail towards freedom through the darkest of nights: Yes, we can.

It was sung by immigrants as they struck out from distant shores and pioneers who pushed westward against an unforgiving wilderness: Yes, we can.

It was the call of workers who organized, women who reached for the ballot, a president who chose the moon as our new frontier, and a king who took us to the mountaintop and pointed the way to the promised land: Yes, we can, to justice and equality.

Yes, we can, to opportunity and prosperity. Yes, we can heal this nation. Yes, we can repair this world. Yes, we can.

And so, tomorrow, as we take the campaign south and west, as we learn that the struggles of the textile workers in Spartanburg are not so different than the plight of the dishwasher in Las Vegas, that the hopes of the little girl who goes to the crumbling school in Dillon are the same as the dreams of the boy who learns on the streets of L.A., we will remember that there is something happening in America, that we are not as divided as our politics suggest, that we are one people, we are one nation.

And, together, we will begin the next great chapter in the American story, with three words that will ring from coast to coast, from sea to shining sea: Yes, we can.