

Bringing Forth the Bard

A Guide to Teaching Shakespeare
in the English Classroom

Zoe Enser



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Foreword

One of my favourite Shakespeare on-screen cameos comes from the unlikely place of the Arnold Schwarzenegger movie, *Last Action Hero*.¹ Young Danny is a boy looking for heroes and he does not find them at school. When his teacher (played by a pained Joan Plowright) introduces the film version of Hamlet, starring Laurence Olivier, Danny watches in frustration as the effete Dane thinks about whether to act and lets his dagger drop limply from his pampered hand. Urging him 'don't talk, just do it', Danny imagines how Hamlet might look if he really were an action hero. His daydream superimposes Schwarzenegger's beefy physique onto the moody prince and he watches with delight as this new testosterone-fuelled Hamlet goes on a killing spree through the corridors of Elsinore. 'To be or not to be?' the Terminator-tragedian asks, opting for 'not to be' as he pulls the trigger on his enemies. A voice-over affirms that 'no one is going to tell this sweet prince goodnight' as the castle explodes in CGI flames.

As a self-conscious response to Olivier's film, *Last Action Hero* is splendid. As a parable of the place of Shakespeare in the classroom, less so. What Joan Plowright clearly needed was not her classically trained actor-husband ('You may have seen him as Zeus in *Clash of the Titans*,' she tells her bored pupils), but rather *Bringing Forth the Bard*. This practical and informative study, written by Zoe Enser, comes from a place of real love of Shakespeare's works and of experience and commitment in teaching them. It covers lots of background, critical approaches and classroom tips, bringing forward content in ways designed to help busy teachers meet – and generate – students' questions.

I admire the way this book combines openness to interpretation with clarity about how to work effectively with these texts. It points the way to a range of resources, many freely available online, from which teachers can develop their thinking and recharge their love of their subject. And most refreshing of all, it is not bound by narrow assessment objectives or reductive frameworks, even as it is astute about what is feasible in real

1 *Last Action Hero*, dir. John McTiernan [film] (Columbia Pictures, 1993).

schools with real students. Anyone teaching Shakespeare will find in it stimuli, ideas and reassurance about why it matters.

Emma Smith, Professor of Shakespeare Studies, Hertford College,
University of Oxford, and author of *This Is Shakespeare:
How to Read the World's Greatest Playwright*

Acknowledgements

This book is dedicated to some of the most important players who have walked the stage with me.

First, Kallum, who came with me to watch some of the most enlivening amateur productions of the Bard's plays I have seen and whose curiosity kept me questioning what was contained within.

Then Dave, whose much-coveted tome of Shakespeare's works enticed me to the bookshelf, just as he tantalised me with ideas of 'all that glitters is not gold'¹ and 'the green-eyed monster', weaving them amongst my childhood fairy tales.

To Pat and Mervyn who, whilst never able to fully join me on this voyage, would never have doubted what it meant to me.

I would also like to thank all those teachers who have contributed to this book by sharing their practice in the case studies, and Emma Smith for her foreword and the valuable insights she always shares in her own work on the Bard.

And finally, for my own spinner of stories, creator of dreams and master wordsmith – Mark:

'I love you more than words can wield the matter,
Dearer than eyesight, space and liberty'

(*Lear*, I, i, 57–58)

1 William Shakespeare, *Othello*, in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (The Oxford Shakespeare)*, ed. with a glossary by William J. Craig (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1916), III, iii, 166. Available at: <https://oll4.libertyfund.org/title/craig-the-complete-works-of-william-shakespeare-the-oxford-shakespeare>. All further references are to this edition.

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Chronology of Shakespeare's work¹

The Two Gentlemen of Verona (*Two Gent.*) (1589–1591)
Henry VI, Part 2 (*2 Hen. VI*) (1591)
Henry VI, Part 3 (*3 Hen. VI*) (1591)
Henry VI, Part 1 (*1 Hen. VI*) (1591–1592)
Titus Andronicus (*Tit. A.*) (1591–1592)
The Taming of the Shrew (*Tam. Shr.*) (1590–1591)
Richard III (*Rich. III*) (1592–1593)
Edward III (1592–1593)
The Comedy of Errors (*Com. Err.*) (1594)
Love's Labour's Lost (*LLL*) (1594–1595)
Love's Labour's Won (*LLW*) (1595–1596)
Richard II (*Rich. II*) (1595)
Romeo and Juliet (*Rom. & Jul.*) (1595)
A Midsummer Night's Dream (*Mids. N D.*) (1595)
King John (*John K.*) (1596)
The Merchant of Venice (*Merch. V*) (1596–1597)
Henry IV, Part 1 (*1 Hen. IV*) (1596–1597)
The Merry Wives of Windsor (*Merry W.*) (1597)
Henry IV, Part 2 (*2 Hen. IV*) (1597–1598)
Much Ado About Nothing (*Much Ado*) (1598–1599)
Henry V (*Hen. V*) (1599)
Julius Caesar (*Jul. Caes.*) (1599)
As You Like It (*AYL*) (1599–1600)

¹ This chronology is approximate due to the fragmented nature of the surviving plays. Plays such as *Cardenio* were attributed to Shakespeare much later (1653), alongside John Fletcher. Work around authentication and collaboration continues as part of the academic discipline.

Hamlet (*Haml.*) (1599–1601)
Twelfth Night (*Twel. N*) (1601)
Troilus and Cressida (*Tr. & Cr.*) (1600–1602)
Sir Thomas More (1592–1595; Shakespeare's involvement, 1603–1604)
Measure for Measure (*Meas. for M.*) (1603–1604)
Othello (*Oth.*) (1603–1604)
All's Well That Ends Well (*All's Well*) (1604–1605)
King Lear (*Lear*) (1605–1606)
Timon of Athens (*Timon*) (1605–1606)
Macbeth (*Mach.*) (1606)
Antony and Cleopatra (*Ant. & Cl.*) (1606)
Pericles (*Per.*) (1607–1608)
Coriolanus (*Coriol.*) (1608)
The Winter's Tale (*Wint. T.*) (1609–1611)
Cymbeline (*Cymb.*) (1610)
The Tempest (*Temp.*) (1610–1611)
Cardenio (1612–1613), with John Fletcher
Henry VIII (*Hen. VIII*) (1612–1613)
The Two Noble Kinsmen (*Two Noble K.*) (1614–1615), with John Fletcher

The First Folio¹

The Comedies

The Tempest

The Two Gentlemen of Verona

The Merry Wives of Windsor

Measure for Measure

The Comedy of Errors

Much Ado About Nothing

Love's Labour's Lost

A Midsummer Night's Dream

The Merchant of Venice

As You Like It

The Taming of the Shrew

All's Well That Ends Well

Twelfth Night

The Winter's Tale

¹ William Shakespeare, *Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies. Published According to the True Originall Copies* [The First Folio] (London: Issac and William Jaggard and Edward Blount, 1623); the order of the *First Folio* is included here as it has been influential in terms of how we think of the chronology of Shakespeare and the categorisation of the plays. As you will see, if you compare this to the actual chronology, this can be problematic – especially as readings of plays such as *The Tempest* can be heavily influenced by whether you regard this as one of the first of his plays or his last. There are also some significant omissions such as *Pericles*, *The Rape of Lucrece* and the Sonnets, meaning this is far from a complete compendium, but it has frequently shaped how we think about the development of his writing and which play fits into which category.

The History Plays

King John

Richard II

Henry IV, Part 1

Henry IV, Part 2

Henry V

Henry VI, Part 1

Henry VI, Part 2

Henry VI, Part 3

Richard III

Henry VIII

The Tragedies

Troilus and Cressida

Coriolanus

Titus Andronicus

*Romeo and Juliet*²

Timon of Athens

Julius Caesar

Macbeth

Hamlet

King Lear

Othello

Antony and Cleopatra

Cymbeline

2 *Troilus and Cressida* was originally intended to follow *Romeo and Juliet* in this collection but the typesetting was stopped (probably due to a conflict over the rights to the play); it was later inserted as the first of the tragedies, when the rights question was resolved. Therefore, it does not appear in the Folio's table of contents.

Introduction

Regardless of how you personally perceive Shakespeare's work, there is no doubt his appeal and influence is enduring. His plays have been adapted for film many times, with at least 525 listing him in the writing credits.¹ His works are available in print in over 100 different languages, and volumes of his plays and poems dominate many collections.² People travel worldwide to visit his birthplace and the famous Globe Theatre, despite the current Globe being a reconstruction of the original where the plays would have been performed, and his plays are studied in the compulsory education system in over 20 countries across the world.³ A study by the British Council in 2016 found that his popularity is still sky high worldwide, the English national curriculum continues to stipulate the inclusion of two plays for study at Key Stage 3, one at Key Stage 4 and his work continues to be studied at A level in most literature courses.⁴ Cinematic productions, such as the wonderfully Bergmanesque production of *Macbeth*, directed by Joel Coen, continue to draw people into his world, breathing new life into words written over four centuries ago.⁵

Whilst he is still prevalent on school curriculums across the globe, the importance of his work goes beyond the school room; Harold Bloom, in his famous exploration of the Bard's work entitled *The Invention of the Human*,⁶ explores how Shakespeare shaped the way we think about ourselves and the world around us. Over the centuries we have turned to Shakespeare, as we have other fiction, to seek an understanding of ourselves and in doing so we have come to project some of his ideas onto our everyday lives. Bloom also frequently riffs on Sigmund Freud's obsession with reading Shakespeare, relating this to our collective psyche

1 Stephen Follows, 'How many movies based on Shakespeare's plays are there?', *Film Data and Education* (14 April 2014). Available at: <https://stephenfollows.com/movies-based-on-shakespeare-plays/#:~:text=Of%20the%20movies%20based%20on,film%20adaptations%20of%20Shakespeare%20plays>.

2 See <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/why-is-the-bard-so-poular-abroad/zhcjrj6>.

3 See <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/why-is-the-bard-so-poular-abroad/zhcjrj6>.

4 Mark Brown, 'Shakespeare more popular abroad than in Britain, study finds', *The Guardian* (19 April 2016). Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2016/apr/19/shakespeare-popular-china-mexico-turkey-than-uk-british-council-survey#:~:text=The%20report%2C%20called%20All%20the,countries%20on%20an%20unprecedented%20scale>.

5 *The Tragedy of Macbeth*, dir. Joel Coen [film] (Apple Original, 2021).

6 Bloom, *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* (London: Penguin, 2001).

and how this has now supported much of our understanding of the human mind. It seems Freud, another influential thinker in our Western culture, was very much led by Shakespeare's presentation of humanity and Bloom jokingly claims it was not Freud who was reading Shakespeare, but Shakespeare who was reading Freud, and that the 'Freudian map of the mind is (in fact) Shakespeare's.'⁷ This gentle mocking aside, what Bloom alludes to here is the notion that Shakespeare's writing has shaped who we are, inventing us, reflecting the concerns, anxieties, loves and complexities of who we are – even as he guides us into being who we are.

References to the Bard have also infiltrated our everyday speech, cropping up in idioms and references which help construct the way we see the world. The British rapper Stormzy even appears to be a fan, crowning himself a troubled king of the Shakespearean ilk with his *Heavy is the Head* album,⁸ paraphrasing a line from *2 Henry IV* which reads, 'uneasy lies the head that wears a crown' (III, i, 31).

Fully understanding his oeuvre – with 37 plays, 159 sonnets and four longer poems – is a vast undertaking. To study everything written about Shakespeare's life, world and work is an undertaking which would be even more vast; Bill Bryson anticipates it would take over 27 years just to read what has been written about Shakespeare contained in the Library of Congress (at the rate of one text per day) with the eminent *Shakespeare Quarterly* journal publishing 4,000 new works, including books and studies, every year.⁹

Even just starting to explore the catalogue of work around the Bard is certainly not something the majority of those teaching English in schools would have the time to do and, despite most being English graduates (if their experience was anything like mine), their studies would merely scratch the surface. During my formal education I encountered *Romeo and Juliet* at GCSE, *Twelfth Night* and *Antony and Cleopatra* at A level and a strangely intensive collection of six plays at undergraduate level. My postgraduate studies introduced me to *Coriolanus* and the opportunity to delve into three plays in depth for my dissertation. My own teaching career, spanning over 20 years, saw me teaching only a handful of plays again. His appeal to me has endured, though – starting

7 Harold Bloom, *The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages* (London: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1994), p. 25.

8 Stormzy, *Heavy is the Head* (Atlantic Records UK, 2019).

9 Bill Bryson, *Shakespeare: The World as Stage* (New York: Atlas Books, 2007), p. 20.

with marvelling at Mickey Rooney's depiction of Puck in the 1935 version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*¹⁰ which I stumbled upon one rainy afternoon as a child, and a play which continues to fascinate me in a way that I hope translates to the students I have taught over the years.

Subject knowledge matters

In the current educational climate, having a deep understanding of your curriculum and how it builds over time is key. This also means that thinking deeply about our subject – its different components and what knowledge is important to develop – is of utmost importance if we are to deliver a curriculum that provides all that our students will need in order to become lifelong readers and explorers of English literature. There is an increasing amount of research into the area of continuing professional development (CPD) and what it is that makes it effective. The new *Early Career Framework*,¹¹ along with the newly developed national professional qualifications programme and the *Initial Teacher Training Core Content Framework*,¹² highlights the need for subject and content knowledge to be a key consideration in teacher development.

The review of international teacher development, commissioned by the Teacher Development Trust and TES Global and conducted by a team from Durham University, CUREE and the UCL Institute of Education, found the research highlighted:

the equal importance of both pedagogic and subject knowledge. Professional development programmes must consider both subject knowledge and subject-specific pedagogy in order to achieve their full potential. Findings from the strongest review went even

10 *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, dir. Max Reinhardt and William Dieterle [film] (Warner Bros. Pictures, 1935).

11 Department for Education, *Early Career Framework* (2019). Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/978358/Early-Career-Framework_April_2021.pdf.

12 Department for Education, *ITT Core Content Framework* (2019). Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974307/ITT_core_content_framework_.pdf.

further, showing that professional development focussed on generic pedagogy is insufficient, particularly in maths.¹³

However, I would argue that this is just as important in English literature and other humanities subjects too, where the breadth of knowledge required to make significant curriculum decisions and design effective teaching opportunities really challenges teachers to know their content thoroughly. Our students need to be able to develop conceptual responses to his work, which means we need to understand what that means too. We therefore also need to have the opportunity to explore, debate and discuss those texts and ideas we want to include in our curriculum as well as be able to examine how the best approaches apply to that content and our classrooms.

The 2021 Ofsted review of history identifies that effective curriculum choices are not only reliant on the big decisions we make about content, though – and they argue that:

teachers make additional ‘live’ curriculum decisions as they teach lessons. The micro-choices they make can add additional detail to their oral storytelling or to particular aspects of source material that they choose to explain and emphasise. This ‘live’ decision-making by individual teachers is likely to be better judged and managed when underlying rationales for content selection are fully understood and when teachers have had opportunities to regularly discuss content selection and its purposes, as well as the marriage of disciplinary and substantive content.¹⁴

This suggests that it is not only having knowledge of the already highlighted subject area that is important, but how we hold a deep and broad understanding of the subject, the stories that surround it, as well as the substantive knowledge (the inflexible and immovable facts) and the disciplinary knowledge (how we think about and explore our subject – for example, by taking a particular literary or historical perspective). The more we ourselves know and understand about this topic, the better the position we are in to utilise this in the classroom.

13 Teacher Development Trust, *Developing Great Teaching: Lessons from the International Reviews into Effective Professional Development* (2014), p. 20. Available at: <https://tdtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/DGT-Summary.pdf>.

14 Ofsted, *Research Review Series: History* (14 July 2021). Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-review-series-history/research-review-series-history>.

Aims of this book

This subject focus is therefore one of the key aims of this book. After my own experiences in teaching his work, I wanted to collate the substantive and disciplinary knowledge around Shakespeare that will help readers to be more effective in the teaching of his plays. What becomes more apparent as we return to his work over the years is the significance of looking at Shakespeare as a topic in itself – not to be confined to individual plays or poems, but as a body of work. Many of the themes and ideas developed over his lifetime and, the complexity that arrives with editorial decisions or arguments regarding additions and omissions aside, there is much to be gained by enhancing your understanding of his work as a whole. Building a detailed schema about his work, his world, his ideas and his influences will enrich how we approach teaching his texts to our students, as well as building our own cultural literacy along the way.

Having spent time studying the breadth of Shakespeare's work, now I could no longer teach students about the intricacies of Lady Macbeth's character without making reference to Shakespeare's other female characters – such as Beatrice from *Much Ado About Nothing* or Portia from *The Merchant of Venice*, who have given me a broader understanding of the role of women in his work – anymore than I could teach it without making reference to her 'the raven himself is hoarse' speech (*Macb.*, I, v, 38–55). Comparing and contrasting his representation of characters and themes can build greater understanding of those ideas, as well as introducing students to the surrounding debates and discussions that allow them to begin to create new and exciting interpretations.

These links across his work, his use of source materials and his influences are important elements to consider in relation to this. The act of *imitatio*, where writers consciously make use of familiar ideas and structures, is a key element of Shakespeare's writing and is deployed freely in his work, both as an exercise in intellectual athleticism – the writer demonstrating their education and academic prowess – and a way in which the audience can take pleasure in spotting cross references and familiar tales. It was a method also deployed by his contemporaries, who drew upon similar source material or revised and reworked their own texts and those of their peers. This isn't a method that would be unfamiliar to modern audiences either; consider the joy derived from

spotting our own references to popular culture as we read, or the world-building and crossovers that exist in the Marvel universe or in the work of writers such as Terry Pratchett. What has happened with Shakespeare's writing, though, is that those references have lost some of their resonances with us over time – eroded over the years where we have not been immersed in the theatre and writing of the period. This does not mean we cannot derive pleasure from the plays without it, but there is much to be gained by exploring these crossovers – both for us as teachers and scholars of English literature and our students, who can equally enjoy the experience of seeing connections between stories and writers.

As mentioned before, though, how would English teachers have the time to explore his work in that level of depth? It was certainly not something I would have been able to achieve, especially in my early career or as a head of department. That is why I wanted to write this book. It is an opportunity for teachers to be able to access the information they need in order to enrich their teaching beyond a single play and begin to unpick the threads of his work as a whole, in a way that will enrich their explanation and understanding of the texts. It is an opportunity for them to widen their knowledge – and that of their students, who we want to empower to engage with the ideas and allusions both within and to his work, which remain prevalent throughout much of the English-speaking world.

No precis can act as a substitute for years of high-quality academic study, but this book offers a starting point and a way to quickly access some of the main discussion points around the plays. It introduces some of the most common threads woven throughout his work in relation to his world and context, his themes, his language and the wide variety of performances – and provides a gateway into exploring these in more depth. We, of course, don't need our students to know absolutely everything about the plays they study either (wonderful as that may be), so we need to be selective in what we present and when. The more we know about his work though, the more confident we can be in making those choices for them.

Breaking down barriers

Sometimes the very first hurdle we encounter is, 'Why do we bother to teach Shakespeare at all?' Adults and students hold many misconceptions about his work, thinking of him as an archaic figure and lacking in relevance to our everyday lives. His world, as well as the man as a historical figure, can feel totally removed from our lived experiences and therefore why on earth should we study the work of 'a dead white man'? How can his work be relevant to us today and should we allow this dominance to continue? The world of literature can feel dominated by the likes of Dickens, Wordsworth, Shelley and Shakespeare and there are rightly concerns about who and what may be crowded out of the world of literature by their dominance. This debate continues to appear in many forums, and academics and teachers alike are unable to reach a consensus as to how we might address this. But the inclusion of Shakespeare can still enable us to create diversity. Novels, plays and poems from a wide range of different perspectives continue to discuss the same topics that concerned Shakespeare – and using his work as a conduit can allow us to explore, challenge and question the ideas he presents in his texts, amplifying new voices and experiences as we go. Exploring who is represented, how and, indeed, who is missed out, is an important issue to discuss in our classrooms too.

However, even if we worry about his dominance in our exam specifications, there is always value to be found in his work – something that English teacher Patrick Cragg explores with his students as a starting point to any study of Shakespeare. He outlines his approach in the following case study.

Eventually, one of your students will ask, 'Why are we doing Shakespeare?' How do you answer? How do you explain why one Elizabethan playwright is now a whole subdiscipline in the subject called English? Perhaps you could talk about rich vocabulary and developing critical skills. Perhaps you could talk about the canon and its role in our national identity and academic life. Perhaps, if you're feeling frazzled, you could simply say, 'Because it's in the exam.' The answer I like to give is: 'Because Shakespeare is brilliant, and this is why.'

Teenagers are professionally unenthused, so a good question to ask yourself when you approach a new unit of work is what moments excite you, the teacher, and how you might convey some of that excitement in class. What is it, exactly, that Shakespeare does to you?

The first of those moments arrives for me when our Year 7 pupils study Act II of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; specifically, Titania's two speeches to Oberon as they argue over the fortunes of a 'little changeling boy' whom Titania possesses and Oberon wants for his own fairy retinue. The first speech, beginning 'These are the forgeries of jealousy,' depicts a great upset in the natural world. The fairy king and queen bring down floods, plagues and destruction on a biblical scale. It's the sort of imagery we might find today in a fantasy novel or the second act of a Marvel movie:

The winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea
Contagious fogs; which, falling in the land,
Have every pelting river made so proud
That they have overborne their continents

(*Mids. N D.*, II, i, 88–92)

There may be teachers who can read this without declaiming it (like Cate Blanchett playing Galadriel), or covering the whiteboard in apocalyptic pictures, or diving headlong into creative writing. I am not one of those teachers. But I think Shakespeare really shows his superpowers on the next page, in Titania's second speech, beginning 'His mother was a votress of my order.' Now the fairy queen recounts her friendship with the changeling boy's mother. It's beautiful: an affectionate, funny and wistful account of a friendship between two women:

Full often hath she gossip'd by my side,
And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,
Marking the embarked traders on the flood;

When we have laugh'd to see the sails conceive
And grow big-bellied with the wanton wind

(*Mids. N D.*, II, i, 125–129)

Titania's friend later dies in childbirth, and the speech comes to a moving end:

But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;
And for her sake do I rear up her boy,
And for her sake I will not part with him.

(*Mids. N D.*, II, i, 135–137)

That's the moment, I tell Year 7. Now we're in the presence of greatness, when we see Shakespeare's ability to switch between the widescreen and the close-up, to flip the mood on stage in just a few lines: one moment it's floods and contagious fogs; the next we're sitting by the riverside with two friends, watching the boats go past; and the next we hear Titania's declaration of love and loyalty, fierce in its simplicity. I can understand that friendship. I can picture the trading ships. I can hear Titania's laugh when she jokes about her pregnant friend. I can feel her grief and her protectiveness over the boy.

Keeping up with Shakespeare's plots can be hard; analysing his dense imagery in class can be a slog. So, in those moments when the characters snap into focus, suddenly alive and present, I make sure my students know just how much awe and enthusiasm I think they deserve. They're the best possible answer to why we're doing Shakespeare.

The beauty of what Shakespeare has to offer should not be ignored in favour of more modern or, as some may argue, more relevant texts. Nor should modern texts be shunned in his favour. Instead, the works of Shakespeare can sit beautifully alongside them all, enriching our understanding of the world, and ourselves, and reverberating in its splendour as any work of art would.

An artful and articulate guide that links together the golden threads which run through Shakespeare's work and highlights how teachers can best explore these with students.

The more you explore the plays of Shakespeare, the more you realise how they are an interrelated network of ideas and themes – linked to his context, his audience and his understanding of the world. In this book, Zoe Enser aims to equip busy teachers with the core knowledge that will enable them to make links between the themes, characters, language and allusions in Shakespeare's oeuvre.

Each chapter includes tips on how to bring his plays to life in the classroom, and features case studies from practising teachers in a range of contexts to illustrate how they can ensure that their students develop an appreciation of his work – moving beyond the requirements of exams and empowering them to engage in the discussion around his influence and enduring appeal.

Suitable for teachers of English in all phases.

Bringing Forth the Bard is erudite yet accessible, comprehensive yet pacey, and brimming with clever theory yet eminently practical.

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Zoe Enser was a classroom teacher for 20 years, during which time she was also a head of English and a senior leader with a responsibility for staff development and school improvement. She is now the lead specialist English adviser for Kent working with The Education People and is an evidence lead in education (ELE). Zoe also writes for *TES* and is the co-author of *Fiorella & Mayer's Generative Learning in Action* and *The CPD Curriculum*.

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