



BBC LIVE LESSONS AND ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

Henry V

Key Objective

To introduce the story of *Henry V* along with key characters

Classroom Resources

To complete the following activities you will need:

- An open space
- Pens, card, paper, paints, clay and sticky notes.

Worksheets

1. Context
2. Journey of a King
3. Molding Soldiers Lines
4. Once more unto the breach Extract

Introducing the story of the play

For the following activity you will need the resource sheet entitled '*Journey of a King*' which divides the story of *Henry V* into 8 sections.

- Organise the class into 8 equally sized groups and allocate each of them a section of the story to work on.
- Ask each group to create a still image (or freeze frame) of their section of the story.
- Explain that you will narrate the whole story and as you read the story you will ask each group to present their image.
- Encourage each group to include the line of text from the play they have been given as part of their image. For example, one of the students could speak the line as the others present their image.

Exploring the language

During the Live Lesson we will focus on section 3 of the story in particular. This is the section in which the newly crowned king is encouraging his tired troops to attack the city of Harfleur.

The following activities will help you to look specifically at the language in this part of the story and could be done either before or after the Live Lesson.

'Once more unto the breach'

Explain to students that the speech they are going to look at is delivered by Henry V when the French city of Harfleur is surrounded. However, Henry and his army have been unable to capture the city. The soldiers are very tired, hungry, ill and demoralized.

- Arrange pupils into a circle and provide each of them with a copy of the Once more unto the breach worksheet.
- Ask pupils to read out the last word from each line of the speech all together
- Reflect with pupils on which words stand out. What kinds of words are they?
- Ask pupils to put their scripts face down on the floor and sit with their eyes shut. As they are listening, read the speech to them so that they can hear the text being spoken.
- Invite pupils to open their eyes again and tell you what they remember about the speech. Encourage them to keep their scripts face down as they remember. What do the words make you feel or think?
- Allow pupils to read through the speech once more, taking turns to read round in a circle and changing reader at each punctuation mark.
- Discuss with pupils any words or phrases that they find difficult to understand as they read. What do they think Henry is trying to achieve with this speech?
- Organise pupils into pairs and ask them to label themselves A and B.
- Ask each pair to choose a line each from the 'Molding a Soldier' worksheet.
- Invite the pupils labelled A to mold their pair into a soldier using the line they have chosen to help them think about what the soldier might be like.
- Allow each pair to swap over so that the pupils labelled B have the opportunity to mold a soldier using their lines as well.



- Ask all pupils labelled A to freeze in their soldier molds once more, creating a gallery around the space. Encourage all the Bs to walk around the gallery and look at the soldier images they have created from Henry's speech. Once the Bs have looked round, ask them to freeze in their molds and let the As do the same.
- Reflect with pupils on what impression they get of the 'ideal' soldier from Henry's speech.

Learning the speech

Explain that you are going to work on the last few lines of the speech and then make a film of it to send in to BBC Live Lessons.

You can film this on your phone, upload this to your computer and send it in to live.lessons@bbc.co.uk using any file transfer site. Examples of file transfer sites include Box, Dropbox, WeTransfer and MailBigFile.

We would ideally like you to do this before the Live Lesson.

- Arrange pupils into pairs and ask them to label themselves A and B.
- Explain that they are going to read aloud the last 5 lines of the speech, which are numbered at the bottom of the worksheet, taking it in turns to speak one line each. A begins with the first line, B the second and so on.
- Each time they speak, they try to spur on and encourage their partner using their line of text. Repeat this until the students are fluent and confident with it.
- Split the whole class into 2 groups A & B. All the A's say their lines together and all the B's say their lines together.
- Now film the children speaking the text and send it to us at live.lessons@bbc.co.uk.

Henry V Resources

Context

Henry V has recently been crowned King of England after the death of his father King Henry IV. Before becoming King, Henry was a rebellious youth with a reputation for drinking and hanging out in Taverns. This play sees him keen to prove himself as King and lead an invasion of France winning the famous battle of Agincourt in 1415 against great odds.

Journey of a King

1

Henry discusses with the Archbishop of Canterbury whether it is his birthright to demand that the whole of France be his and whether he is right to invade.

“May I with right and conscience make this claim?”

2

The Dauphin (Prince) of France sends Henry V tennis balls as an insult and Henry has 3 traitors put to death. Henry is now determined to invade France.

“No King of England if not King of France!”

3

Henry tries to rally his soldiers to make a final attack on the walled French city of Harfleur.

“Cry ‘God for Harry, England and Saint George!’”

4

Henry threatens the French Governor of Harfleur in an attempt to get him to surrender.

“Your naked infants spitted upon pikes”

5

The night before the battle of Agincourt Henry feels the weight of responsibility for his soldiers lives and his subjects

“Upon the King! ‘Let us our lives, our souls, our debts, lay on the king’.

We must bear all”

6

Henry tries to cheer and encourage the soldiers before the Battle of Agincourt. The British are outnumbered 5 – 1 by the French.

“We few, we happy few, we band of brothers”

7

After Henry hears of the amazing victory against the French he gives credit to God

“O God, Thy arm was here!”

8

Henry woos the Princess of France to be his wife

“Do you like me, Kate?”

Molding Soldiers Lines

imitate the action of the tiger

Stiffen the sinews,

conjure up the blood

set the teeth

stretch the nostril wide,

Hold hard the breath

Bend up every spirit to his full height!

stand like greyhounds in the slips

straining upon the start

Once more unto the Breach

Act 3 Scene 1

Edited version

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;
Now set the teeth, and stretch the nostril wide,
Hold hard the breath, and bend up every spirit
To his full height! **On, on, you noblest English!**
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!'

- 1. On, on, you noblest English!**
- 2. I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,**
- 3. Straining upon the start. The game's afoot!**
- 4. Follow your spirit, and upon this charge**
- 5. Cry, 'God for Harry, England, and Saint George!'**

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The Royal Shakespeare Company
3, Chapel Lane
Stratford on Avon
Warwickshire
CV37 6BE
www.rsc.org.uk