

Sample Teaching Lesson Plan & Museum Exhibit Plan  
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Below are two documents.

First, a sample teaching lesson plan using Shakespeare's *Hamlet* to introduce the concept of iambic pentameter – why Shakespeare used it and how powerful a tool it is.

Second, a sample pitch turning the lesson plan into an immersive museum exhibit. This demonstrates my ability to not only craft an engaging initial lesson, but also to take educational material and translate it into a fully dimensional and immersive experience.

**Teaching Lesson Plan**

**“How ill all’s here about my heart.” – Act V, Scene II**

**Aim:** How does Shakespeare’s use of iambic pentameter inform the play’s tempo, mood, rhythm, pacing and character?

**Time:** 35 minutes.

**Objectives:** Students will be able to define and explain iambic pentameter.  
Students will be able to recognize basic variations and aberrations in iambic pentameter.  
Students will apply this knowledge to the openings of the five scenes in Act One of *Hamlet*.

**Intended Audience:** High school English and Drama students.

**Assessment:** At the end of the class, students will hand in correct metric breakdown of the first lines of a scene and provide explanation for this breakdown.

**Materials:** Text of *Hamlet*.  
Handout on iambic pentameter.  
Copies of first page of each scene in Act One for groups.

**Lesson:**

1. (8 minutes) *Whole Class:* What is **iambic pentameter** and why is it important?  
Elicit definition of iambic pentameter – **iamb – two syllables of unstressed/stressed foot; pent – five; meter – sound pattern of verse**  
**Foot – basic unit of verse**  
Demonstrate heartbeat of iambic with beating on heart.  
Demonstrate how to break down iambic pentameter – **But soft? What light through yonder window breaks?**  
Pass out hand out on common metric patterns in Shakespeare.
2. (2 minutes) *Student writing:* Why did Shakespeare use iambic pentameter?
3. (2 minutes) *Share.* Elicit: Not only to fit into poetic conventions of the day, but to inform **mood, tempo, rhythm, pacing**. Sometimes most important is when there’s an **aberration** in the pattern – why is this night different

from all other nights? Look at the breakdown of the feet – how do the five feet breakdown?

4. (1 minute) Draw rollercoaster on board – include terms **introduction, climax, denouement/falling action**. For full story – but mini rises and falls within scenes, chapters, sections of a story. With Shakespeare – rather than a rollercoaster, we'll call it our **EKG**.
5. (7 minutes) Look at hand out of Act 1, Scene 1: 1-12. Note from the very top an aberration in iambic – not a complete line. Why? What else do you notice? Where are the aberrations? What do they tell us? Elicit nervous, scared, heart racing, uncertain. Note 6-10 – normal iambic – heart rate returns.

**Draw EKG on board.**

6. (5 minutes) 4 Groups of 4-5 students – assign
  - Act 1, Scene 2: 1-7
  - Act 1, Scene 3: 1-12
  - Act 1, Scene 4: 1-7
  - Act 1, Scene 5: 1-7

Each group breakdown the feet and explain how this affects the scene – focus on mood, tempo, rhythm, pacing and character. Each person take a line to breakdown – group, agree or disagree. Come up with a consensus. Will add it to our EKG on the board.

7. (8 minutes – 2 minutes/group) Share. Member of group to **draw continuation of heartbeat/rollercoaster on board**.
8. (2 minutes) Closure – How can a reader use Shakespeare's rhythmic choices to further their understanding of a text?

Homework: Pick another 10-15 opening lines of a scene and properly break it down. Write an explanation of why you think Shakespeare chose to open the scene in this manner.

## Museum Exhibit Plan

### Heartbeats of Shakespeare: Exploring the Rhythms of Hamlet

*"My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time, and makes as healthful music."*

**Objective:** The objective of the exhibit "Heartbeats of Shakespeare: Exploring the Rhythms of Hamlet" is to immerse guests in the world of Shakespearean literature, specifically focusing on the use of *iambic pentameter* in Hamlet. Through interactive activities, exploration stations, and multimedia displays, the exhibit aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. **Understanding of iambic pentameter:** Guests will gain a clear understanding of the rhythmic structure of iambic pentameter and its significance in Shakespearean verse.
2. **Analysis of text:** Guests will learn how to analyze Shakespearean text for rhythmic patterns, mood shifts, and character development, particularly within the opening scenes of *Hamlet*.
3. **Engagement with the material:** By participating in interactive activities and exploration stations, guests will actively engage with the material, deepening their comprehension and appreciation of Shakespeare's use of language.
4. **Connection to modern culture:** Through multimedia displays showcasing modern adaptations of Shakespearean works, guests will recognize the enduring influence of iambic pentameter on contemporary literature, music, and art.
5. **Creative expression:** Guests will have the opportunity to engage in creative activities, such as composing their own lines of iambic pentameter, fostering a deeper connection to the creative process behind Shakespeare's writing.

Overall, the exhibit aims to provide a multi-sensory and immersive experience that educates, entertains, and inspires guests to explore the rhythmic beauty of Shakespeare's language.

**Intended Audience:** Anyone interested in theatre and literature, students studying Shakespeare, educators teaching Shakespeare, those who don't see a connection between science and art (but soon will).

#### Introduction Section/Entrance:

- Upon entering the exhibit, guests are greeted with a towering mural that dominates the entrance. Larger-than-life depictions of iconic Shakespearean characters leap from the canvas, their faces twisted in anguish, love, fury, and despair.

But what truly captivates the senses is the mesmerizing interplay of light and shadow dancing across the mural. Illuminated lines of iambic pentameter surge through the artwork like veins of pulsating energy, casting a spellbinding glow that literally pulses with the rhythm of an audio heartbeat alongside the voices of actors reciting the key lines.

As guests approach, they find themselves drawn into the midst of the scene, surrounded by the swirling emotions and poetic cadence of Shakespeare's timeless words. It's a breathtaking introduction to the immersive journey that awaits, igniting a sense of wonder and anticipation for the exploration that lies ahead.

### **Interactive Activity 1: "Feel the Beat"**

- Guests step into a booth equipped with heart rate monitors. As they listen to audio recordings of famous Shakespearean soliloquies and dialogues, their own heartbeats are displayed on a screen, synchronizing with the rhythm of iambic pentameter.

### **Exploration Stations: "Decoding the Heartbeat":**

- The five scenes from the first act of *Hamlet* are represented in separate areas of the exhibit, allowing guests to explore the rhythmic patterns and mood shifts within the text.

In each section:

- Guests are given access to tablets or interactive screens where they can analyze the opening lines of each scene. Using digital tools, they break down the iambic pentameter and identify deviations from the pattern.
- **"Building the EKG"** - Guests construct a giant EKG chart on a wall where they can plot the rhythmic fluctuations as they analyze the text for mood, tempo, and character development.
- **"The Writer's Perspective"** – Guests step into the shoes of Shakespeare himself. Using quills and parchment, they compose their own lines of iambic pentameter to represent the emotion of the moment, and reflect on how rhythm can enhance storytelling.

The five sections:

#### **1. Scene 1: The Platform Before the Castle**

- **Description:** Guests step into a chilling, mist-covered platform outside the imposing walls of Elsinore Castle. The platform is surrounded by dense fog, and the sounds of distant waves crashing against the shore echo in the background.
- **Multimedia Elements:**
  - Projected visuals display shadowy figures moving through the fog, evoking the eerie presence of the ghost of King Hamlet.
  - Sound effects of creaking doors, howling winds, and faint whispers enhance the sense of unease and anticipation.
  - Lighting effects alternate between dim and flickering, creating dramatic shadows and highlighting the spectral atmosphere.

#### **2. Scene 2: A Room of State in the Castle**

- **Description:** Guests are transported into the grandeur of a royal chamber within Elsinore Castle. Ornate tapestries line the walls, and a large throne sits at one end of the room. Courtiers clad in rich garments mill about, engaging in hushed conversations.
- **Multimedia Elements:**
  - Projected visuals showcase regal portraits and heraldic symbols, emphasizing the opulence and power of the royal court.
  - Soft, ambient music reminiscent of medieval court music fills the air, adding to the sense of pomp and ceremony.
  - Lighting effects bathed in warm hues create a cozy yet formal atmosphere, evoking the majesty of the courtly setting.

#### **3. Scene 3: A Room in Polonius' House**

- **Description:** Guests enter a modest yet cozy chamber within the house of Polonius. Wooden beams line the ceiling, and shelves filled with books and scrolls line the walls. A large table occupies the center of the room, where Polonius imparts wisdom to his son Laertes.
- **Multimedia Elements:**

- Projected visuals depict family portraits and ancestral heirlooms, conveying a sense of tradition and familial pride.
  - Sound effects of crackling fireplace and ticking clock create a homely ambiance, inviting guests to linger and listen to Polonius' advice.
  - Lighting effects cast warm, soft light throughout the room, fostering a sense of intimacy and comfort.
4. **Scene 4: The Platform**
- **Description:** Guests return to the desolate platform outside Elsinore Castle, where Prince Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus await the appearance of the ghost. The atmosphere is tense, with a palpable sense of anticipation and apprehension.
  - **Multimedia Elements:**
    - Projected visuals of moonlit clouds drifting across the sky create a haunting backdrop, enhancing the sense of mystery and suspense.
    - Sound effects of rustling leaves and distant footsteps heighten the feeling of isolation and vulnerability.
    - Lighting effects shift between stark shadows and eerie moonlight, intensifying the sense of foreboding and uncertainty.
5. **Scene 5: Another Part of the Platform**
- **Description:** Guests explore a different section of the platform, where the ghost reappears before Hamlet and speaks cryptic words. The atmosphere is fraught with tension and fear as Hamlet attempts to communicate with the spectral figure.
  - **Multimedia Elements:**
    - Projected visuals depict spectral apparitions and ghostly visions, blurring the line between reality and illusion.
    - Sound effects of echoing whispers and ghostly moans create an unsettling atmosphere, heightening the sense of otherworldly presence.
    - Lighting effects flicker and dim erratically, mirroring the ghost's ethereal nature and adding to the sense of supernatural dread.

### **Interactive Activity 2: “The Play’s the Thing”**

- Guests step onto a mini-replica of the Globe Theater stage and, karaoke-style, are given the opportunity to perform some of Shakespeare’s famous speeches out loud. A rack of costumes is provided for guests to select and wear for their performance if they’d like.

### **Interactive Activity 3: “Speak the Speech”**

- Guests enter a small recording studio and are provided with a selection of lines to record from *Hamlet*.

### **Conclusion Section/Exit:**

- A reflective space featuring multimedia displays showcasing modern adaptations of Shakespearean works, highlighting how iambic pentameter continues to influence contemporary literature, music, and film. Additionally, recordings from the past hour made in Interactive Activity 3 are played and hopefully guests will get to hear their own voices featured and have a further sense of being a part of it all.

### **Takeaway Activity:**

Guests are encouraged to continue their exploration of iambic pentameter outside the exhibit by participating in a social media challenge, where they share their favorite Shakespearean lines and interpretations.