

# What Is the Folger Method?

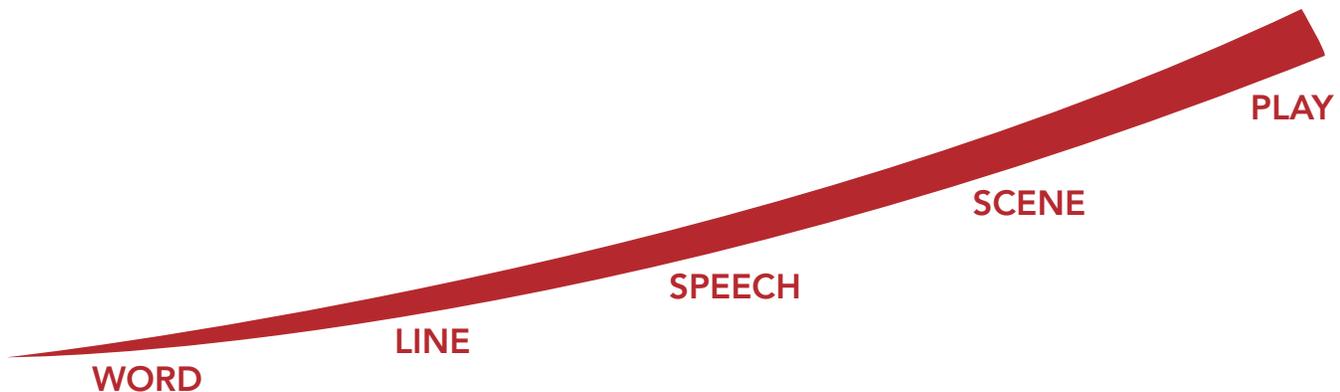
## 8 FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

- 1 Shakespeare's language is not a barrier but a portal.** The language is what enables students to discover amazing things in the texts, the world, and themselves.
- 2 All students and teachers deserve the real thing:**
  - Shakespeare's original language
  - Primary source materials from the Folger and elsewhere
  - Facts that present a complete picture of the Early Modern world
  - Honest conversations about the hard questions raised in the plays
- 3 The Folger Method is a radical engine for equity.** Every single student can learn this way, and every teacher can teach this way. Use our tools to help all students read closely, interrogate actively, and make meaning from texts.
- 4 Give up Shakespeare worship.** If your Shakespeare lives on a pedestal, take him down and move him to a space where he can talk to everyday people... and other great writers like Toni Morrison and Julia Alvarez, Scott Fitzgerald and Azar Nafisi, James Baldwin and Homer, Frederick Douglass and Joy Harjo, Jane Austen and Pablo Neruda, Amy Tan and George Moses Horton.
- 5 Throw out themes, tidy explanations, the idea of a single right interpretation.** Together with your students, embrace the questions.
- 6 The teacher is not the connector or explainer but rather the architect.** Set up the interactions through which your students and Shakespeare discover each other.
- 7 Amplify the voice of every single student.** Shakespeare has something to say to everybody, and everybody has something to say back to Shakespeare. The future of the humanities—and our world—depends on the insights and contributions of all our students.
- 8 Set students on fire with excitement about literature.** When students learn this way, these things improve:
  - their ability to read closely,
  - their ability to cite evidence from the text,
  - their confidence in tackling the next challenge.

# How Does the Folger Method Work?

## THE ARC

Students progress through an arc of learning that reflects the architecture of a play (or long text). Right from the start, students are doing things directly with the original language. No teacher modeling. Learning is scaffolded by increasing the length and complexity of the language.



## 9 ESSENTIAL PRACTICES

Along the arc of the Folger Method, students engage in 9 essential activities that get them connecting directly and deeply with Shakespeare's language. For a play-by-play description of each essential practice—along with tons of related lesson plans and professional development—join the Folger Shakespeare Library community of Teacher Members. Keep reading to learn how!

## WHAT TEACHERS SAY ABOUT THE FOLGER METHOD

- "With this method, my students are reading more deeply than they ever have before. They are breaking down language and really understanding it." – *High school English teacher, Washington, DC*
- "The Folger Method has changed how I teach not just Shakespeare but everything. It has transformed my classroom, my students, and me." – *High school English teacher, Iowa*
- "I am equipped and empowered to take risks as a teacher and let my students own their learning." – *High school English teacher, New York*
- "Connecting with the words this way empowers [students] to become stronger, more confident and enthusiastic readers and communicators." – *Community college English instructor, Massachusetts*

## LEARN MORE ABOUT THE FOLGER METHOD!

Become a Teacher Member of the Folger to access the latest and most comprehensive resources for reaching success with the Folger Method: live-streamed teacher workshops, lesson plans, handouts, primary sources, paired texts, and more!

<https://www.folger.edu/teacher-membership>