

*indianapolis*  
SHAKESPEARE COMPANY



## 2023 TRAVELING TROUPE

Script by

Manòn Voice, Shawnté P. Gaston,  
and Ryan Artzberger (& William Shakespeare)



This project is part of Shakespeare in American Communities,  
a program of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest.

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2023  
TRAVELING TROUPE

  
**Ricky 3**  
A HIP HOP SHAKESPEARE  
RICHARD III

## INTRODUCTION: A SEEMING SAINT INVITES US IN

Act I of Shakespeare's RICHARD III ends with  
Richard's statement of malevolent delight and purpose:

*"And thus I clothe my naked villainy  
With odd old ends stol'n out of holy writ,  
And seem a saint, when most I play the devil."*

From his first moment on stage, this seeming saint—this masterful manipulator—invites us in for a wild ride, for Richard will stop at nothing to fulfill his ambition to become king.

The Indianapolis Shakespeare Company's (Indy Shakes) Traveling Troupe's performance of RICKY 3: A HIP-HOP SHAKESPEARE RICHARD III presents a searing tragedy about performing, about pretending, about the malevolent exercise of power wielded by a charismatic, masterful manipulator.

Indy Shakes' Executive Artistic Director Ryan Artzberger notes that "like all good plays, RICKY 3 operates on multiple levels." And it is our Traveling Troupe's dramatic mission to take you and your students into RICKY 3's world to reveal those compelling, interlaced levels to you.

RICKY 3 will offer students the beauty and wonder of Shakespeare and Hip-Hop poetry; a brilliantly drawn protagonist; dramatic depictions of heartbreak and betrayal; and the intriguing challenge of looking into their own hearts and minds to learn what they value.

You and your students, with our actors, will make exceptional theater happen—as together you create this remarkable and unique performance of RICKY 3!

Estimated Length: 45 minutes

Age Range: Middle & High School

Performance Dates: February 13 - 17, & 21 - 27

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## THE TRAVELING TROUPE

Indy Shakes' Traveling Troupe gives students the opportunity to observe, analyze, and value theater, as they watch a professional theater performance and learn about themselves and Shakespeare.

We created our Traveling Troupe to fulfill three complementary objectives:

- 1) to teach students about Shakespeare and professional theater;
  - 2) to increase our student audiences' understanding and enjoyment of Shakespeare and professional theater; and
  - 3) to help equalize access to arts education for Indianapolis students.
- Please use this Study Guide to enhance your classroom curricula and your students' in-class learning experiences.

**"SHAKESPEARE MAKES YOU  
THINK - SHAKESPEARE MAKES  
YOUR BRAIN BIGGER!"**  
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT,  
INDIANAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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Ricky 3  
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RICHARD III

## SYNOPSIS: A SUMMARY OF THE PLAY

You know that famous line written by Shakespeare: “A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!” (5. 4).

Watch what happens to make Richard want and need that horse so badly! He manipulated and schemed and lied and planned so very carefully to get the crown upon his head! Why, near the end of the play, was Richard willing to give up that much-desired crown and kingdom for that horse?

“From 1455 to 1487, England fought a civil war, the Wars of the Roses. Two rival Plantagenet families, the Yorks and the Lancasters, were fighting for the crown. As the play opens, King Henry VI of the House of Lancaster has been defeated in battle. Edward IV of the House of York is now King of England.

Richard, Edward IV’s brother, feels best when he is at war. He becomes uneasy in times of peace. He says people hate him for his infirmity and ugliness. He plots to take the throne from his brother, King Edward IV, who is ill. Richard hates his sister-in-law, Queen Elizabeth, Edward’s wife, and her powerful relatives. To become King of England, he must eliminate his eldest brother, Edward, Edward’s sons, and his other brother, George, Duke of Clarence. He has to remove Elizabeth and her relatives from power and eliminate anyone who might cause trouble. Using his ample charm and charisma, he recruits powerful allies to help him.

Richard lies to King Edward that his middle brother, George, Duke of Clarence, is plotting to kill Edward and his sons. Furious, Edward imprisons George in the Tower of London. Then Richard woos Anne Neville of York. Anne was married to Edward, the son of King Henry VI. Richard killed Edward in battle, and killed Henry VI who was imprisoned in the Tower of London. In spite of hating Richard for these evil deeds, Anne marries him. She dies soon after she becomes Richard’s Queen.

Richard loves drama and conflict. In one crucial scene, we meet Queen Margaret, the widow of King Henry VI. She refuses to go into exile, preferring to live in England. She listens as Richard and his allies argue bitterly with Edward’s wife, Queen Elizabeth and her allies. Margaret, mourning her husband and son (both killed by Richard) curses them all. By the time the play ends, her curses have come true.

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## SYNOPSIS: A SUMMARY OF THE PLAY (cont.)

Richard has Clarence murdered. King Edward IV dies, perhaps of “natural causes.” After their deaths, Richard becomes Lord Protector of Edward IV’s oldest son, Edward V. Edward is still a boy, but first in line for England’s throne. Supposedly for their safety, Richard orders Edward V and his brother to be “housed” in the Tower. He hires someone to kill the two boys. The way is clear for Richard to seize England’s throne.

Despite being King, Richard does not enjoy his triumphs. He is gripped by fear and wild imaginings. He manipulates and destroys people who disagree with him. When the powerful Lord Hastings refuses to support Richard’s attempts to become king, he is beheaded. The Duke of Buckingham, another ally, asks for time to think when Richard asks him to kill the two Princes in the Tower. Buckingham returns and asks for an Earldom that Richard promised him.

Furious, Richard cuts him off. Buckingham flees and tries to join Richmond’s army. When he is caught, Richard has him executed. Desperate to keep power, he tries to marry his brother’s daughter, Elizabeth, but her mother, once Queen Elizabeth (widow of Edward IV) secretly arranges for her to marry Henry, Earl of Richmond. Soon Richard faces rebellion everywhere he looks. His allies desert him to join the enemy army. Henry, Earl of Richmond, leads an army to remove Richard from the throne. The night before the final battle at Bosworth Field, the ghosts of those murdered on Richard's orders come to him in a dream to curse him; and they come to Richmond in a dream, wishing him joy and success.

Richard fights bravely. He is killed by Richmond, which ends the Wars of the Roses. Richmond is crowned King Henry VII. He marries Elizabeth (Richard’s niece), uniting the York and Lancaster families. England is finally at peace.” “Richard III: Myth or Reality?”

<https://www.shakespeare.org.uk/explore-shakespeare/blogs/shakespeares-richard-iii-myth-or-reality>

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## CHARACTER LIST (\*Also Known as Dramatis Personae)

### RICKY III

Also known as the Duke of Gloucester, eventually crowned King Richard III. A corrupt and seductive manipulator, Ricky stops at nothing to get the throne.

### BUCKINGHAM

Richard's wingman and direct counsel in his schemes to gain power.

### KING EDWARD IV

The older brother of Richard and Clarence and King of England before Ricky 3 is crowned.

### CLARENCE

The gentle, trusting middle brother of Ricky 3, born between Edward and Richard in the York family.

### QUEEN ELIZABETH

The wise and cunning wife of King Edward IV and the mother of the two young princes (heirs to the throne) and their older sister, young Elizabeth.

### DORSET and RIVERS-GRAY

The kinsmen and allies of Queen Elizabeth; members of the Woodeville and Gray families.

### LADY ANNE

The young widow of Prince Edward, son of former King Henry VI, who was murdered by Ricky 3.

### DUCHESS OF YORK

The widowed mother of Richard, Clarence, and King Edward IV and Queen Elizabeth's mother-in-law.

### QUEEN MARGARET

The widow of King Henry VI and mother of the slain Prince Edward.

  
**Ricky 3**



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A HIP HOP SHAKESPEARE  
RICHARD III

## WHY RICHARD III?

A NOTE FROM RYAN ARTZBERGER, INDY SHAKES' EXECUTIVE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Like all good plays, this play operates on multiple levels. It can be a GAME OF THRONES kind of political intrigue with a bloodbath on the side. It can also serve as political commentary about the treachery of seeking power without concern for the harm caused in the search.

On yet another level, it speaks to us as people. We can see easily ourselves in Richard's constant striving for something that won't ultimately fulfill him and the resulting anxiety he feels in trying to keep that unfulfilling thing. Almost immediately after being seated on the throne, Richard asks, "But shall we wear these honors for a day? Or shall they last, and we rejoice in them?" This speaks to us about the deeply human tendency to continue to be unsatisfied no matter how much we obtain.

And it is a tragedy, of course. We follow all the people Richard manipulates, mars, and murders to achieve his goals. We feel their heartbreak and wince at their physical pain.

And it's also a tragedy of a subtler nature. As we watch Richard navigate the play as this antihero, we laugh at his jokes; we are drawn in by his charm and charisma; we wonder at his power of persuasion; we marvel at his gall. We watch him misuse his excellence; as Elizabeth says to him in the depth of her grief: "Thyself is self-misused." And, maybe at some point we think, "What if he had used all those powers for good? What if he had lived in a world that nurtured charm, intelligence, and charisma? What if he had lived in a world that valued these qualities and shunned violence?" WHAT IF WE DID?

## WHY HIP HOP AND SHAKESPEARE?

I have been a fan of both Shakespeare and Hip-Hop for decades, and I have often found the reflection of one in the other.

Shakespeare and Hip-Hop both contain rhythmic language. They both express the human experience through layered, nuanced, and complex language and storytelling. They both have the ability to be completely immediate and in the now. They both have infinite possibilities of interpretations and styles. And they both have the ability to make the listener say, "Yes! I feel the same! I've been there, I felt that!"

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## A LOOK BENEATH A NOTE FROM MIKAEL BURKE, DIRECTOR, 2022 TAGGART MEMORIAL AMPHITHEATRE PRODUCTION

Perhaps, this remarkable artistic reflection of Hip-Hop and Shakespeare exists because both Shakespeare's words and Hip-Hop's words give us a rich, evocative language to express our joys, our sorrows, our hopes, and our dreams. It is the language-and the beat-of our hearts. Although it was written more than four centuries ago, Shakespeare's RICHARD III is a casebook study of the many demagogic icons of the modern era. Richard is determined to be King, and following his lust for power and the throne, he manipulates, kidnaps, and kills all who stand between him and his goal, using brilliant words and dark charm to conceal his dismantling of government and justice.

When we think of Richard, we imagine him as Shakespeare describes, a figure dramatically physically deformed whose image alone frightens dogs and people alike—an outward manifestation of the evil within. While the actual historical figure who inspired Shakespeare's character did indeed suffer from a slight scoliosis of the spine, in considering this play in 2022— in the wake of the global pandemic, the Black Lives Matter resurgence, and the current state of American politics—I find myself less concerned with the exact physical disability. Instead, I'm incited by the other, more insidious ways those in power effectively "disable" those who do not perfectly fit their chosen narrative.

Richard is of the royal family, and in a picture-perfect world of pretty, educated, well-fed people, how different do you have to be in order to be different enough to have people slight you? Perhaps, what is most disabling to Richard are the attitudes, prejudices, and assumptions of those around him. His whole life is full of "perfect" people pointing out that he doesn't fit, ignoring him, and casting him off. What does that do to a person?

At the end of the day, RICHARD III is not just a deliciously compelling portrait of literature's most alluring villain. It is a charge to all of us to look beneath the swaggering allure and confident poise of the would-be savior and root out the impending tragedies that will befall us all. RICKY 3 is a savagely comic analysis of the exercise of power. It reminds us both of the dangers of tyranny and of our duty not to let it go unchecked.



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## SHAKESPEARE'S GUMBO: A MIX OF BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS



A gumbo is a delicious New Orleans' originated, stew containing a mixture of different ingredients, aromas, and colors to entice your appetite.

Shakespeare's Gumbo is a pre-show mixture of thoughts, questions, and fun facts to enhance your students' enjoyment of RICKY 3 - A HIP-HOP SHAKESPEARE RICHARD III

### PRE-SHOW THOUGHTS

"Enormous Language Dorks"

Indy Shakes is looking forward to sharing this fresh new twist on the classic words of Shakespeare and the contemporary beats of Hip-Hop with you and your students through our presentation of RICKY 3!

Music Critic Sam Anderson writes that "The secret is out: Hip-Hop poets love words. The toughest, coolest, most dangerous seeming MCs are, at heart, basically just enormous language dorks." Cited in McCollum, Sean. "Hip-Hop: A Culture of Vision and Voice." October 30, 2019.

HipHop: A Culture of Vision and Voice ([kennedy-center.org](http://kennedy-center.org))

At Indy Shakes, we don't think we would be far wrong in saying that Shakespeare, too, at heart, was "an enormous language dork!"

And this brilliant language dork wrote plays to entertain, to wonder, and to question, as acclaimed British actress Glenda Jackson notes, "All Shakespeare ever asks is: "Who are we, what are we, why are we?" It is a question often asked by Hip-Hop artists. Indeed, this thought-provoking, soul-stirring, three-part question is integral to Indy Shakes' Hip-Hop presentation of RICKY 3!

This melding of Shakespeare and Hip-Hop flows quickly thematically, culturally, politically, and poetically. Richard and battle rappers are masters of clever word play. The play's fast-moving action, engendered by Richard, echoes the power struggles so intrinsic to Hip-Hop. The concept of royalty within Hip-Hop as artists hold sway over a region and as Richard dominates the Royal House of York is clear and true. The evocative language, the rhymes, and the rhythm are the heartbeat of both.

Four hundred years ago, William Shakespeare tapped into what it means to be human and created crystal-clear, hilarious, tragic, and mesmerizing characters and scenes that magically ring true today. RICKY 3 honors that legacy and makes it its own.

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**FAMOUS QUOTATIONS from RICHARD III**

"A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!"

*Now is the winter of our  
discontent Made glorious summer  
by this sun of York.*

And thus I clothe my naked villainy  
With old odd ends stolen out of holy writ;  
And seem a saint, when most I play the devil.

So wise so young, they say, do  
never live long.

True hope is swift, and flies  
with swallow's wings;  
Kings it makes gods, and  
meaner creatures kings.

Since I cannot prove a lover . . .  
I am determined to prove a villain.

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# Ricky 3

A HIP HOP SHAKESPEARE  
RICHARD III

## QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

1. What do you know about Shakespeare?
2. What positive qualities do you think a leader should have?
3. Can a person be both charming and mean?

**"Conscience is but a word that  
cowards use, Devised at first to  
keep the strong in awe."  
RICHARD III, Act 5, Scene 3**

In these lines from RICHARD III, we learn more about the events of England's historical past and gain insight to some feelings of the time.





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RICHARD III

## DID YOU KNOW?

On stage in Shakespeare's time, female roles were played by young men, so, in *RICHARD III*, Lady Anne, Queen Margaret, the Duchess of York, and Queen Elizabeth would have been played by young men. In our 2022 Taggart Amphitheatre production in Riverside Park, *RICKY* was played by a female!

*A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*, *ROMEO AND JULIET*, *TWELFTH NIGHT*, *HAMLET*, and *KING LEAR* are Shakespeare's most performed plays.

Shakespeare has been credited by the Oxford English Dictionary with introducing almost 3,000 words into the English language.

The Royal Shakespeare Company sells more than half a million tickets a year for Shakespeare productions at their theaters in Stratford-on-Avon, London, and Newcastle, England—introducing an estimated 50,000 people to a live Shakespeare performance for the first time.

Shakespeare has been translated into 80 languages, including Klingon (a *STAR TREK* language) and Esperanto (an international language).

The longest word in Shakespeare's plays is honorificabilitudinitatibus in *LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST*. How many words can you make from honorificabilitudinitatibus?

## SHAKESPEARE'S SOURCE: A HISTORY BOOK

Shakespeare's source for *RICHARD III* was Sir Thomas More's unfinished *HISTORY OF KING RICHARD III*, which was written around 1513. Wow! Did Shakespeare ever finish that history book!

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## POST PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you think motivates Richard to do the horrid things that he does?
2. Why do you think Lady Anne agrees to marry Richard?
3. Does Richard seem like a realistic character to you? Why or why not?
4. What four adjectives would you use to describe Richard?

### WRITING

Write a review of RICKY 3.

- What was your favorite part of the play?
- How did seeing the play make you feel? Why?
- What ideas did the play make you think about?
- How did the set, props, and costumes used by the Traveling Troupe work together to tell the story?
- Would you recommend the play to a friend? Why or why not?

### LINKS

<https://www.folger.edu/richard-iii>

Plot summary and introduction to the play, with links to on-line texts, digital images, and other resources.

<http://www.shakespeare-online.com/>

Excellent source of all things Shakespeare with frequent updates.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aFDAGM30KCO>

The African Company presents RICHARD III.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PrQ0c5udMBk>

"Now that Richard III's remains have been found, The Daily Beast takes a look at the celebrated actors that have played the villainous monarch, from Ian McKellen to Al Pacino. 2013."

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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### LINKS

Hip-Hop: A Culture of Vision and Voice (kennedy-center.org)

<https://pudding.cool/projects/vocabulary/index.html> A chart of Hip Hop artists ranked by unique word count in their first 30k words; it ranks them in relation to Shakespeare's average word count.

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### FURTHER READINGS

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Chang, Jeff. *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation*. London: Picador, 2005.

Day, Gillian, ed. *King Richard III: Shakespeare at Stratford Series*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing USA, 2001.

Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2005.



# THIS INDY SHAKES PRODUCTION PROVIDED TO YOU BY:



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Nicholas H. Noyes, Jr.,  
Memorial Foundation Inc.

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## INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR THEATRE

Indy Shakes' Traveling Troupe's production of RICKY 3 - A Hip Hop Shakespeare will give students the opportunity to observe, analyze, and value theatre, as they watch a professional theatre performance, learn about themselves, and are introduced to Shakespeare.

This Study Guide is designed to complement Indiana Academic Standards for Theatre: History and Culture and Analysis and Response.

### HISTORY AND CULTURE

#### Standard 1

Students understand the significance of theatre and its relationship to history and cultures.

#### Standard 2

Students recognize significant works of the theatre and comprehend various performance styles.

### ANALYSIS AND RESPONSE

#### Standard 3

Students understand and analyze the dramatic structure of plays and performances.

#### Standard 4

Students identify, develop and apply criteria to make informed judgments about theatre.

#### Standard 5

Students reflect on and interpret the nature of the theatre experience and its personal and artistic significance.

Indy Shakes inaugurated our Traveling Troupe to fulfill three complementary objectives:

- 1) to introduce students to Shakespeare and professional theatre;
- 2) to increase our student audiences' understanding and enjoyment of Shakespeare and professional theatre;
- 3) to help equalize access to arts education for Indiana students.

### Measurable outcomes for the Traveling Troupe are as follows:

- Students will attend a professional theatre production;
- Students will participate in pre- and post-show activities facilitated by the production director and cast; and
- Teachers will use the production study guide to enhance curricula and in-class learning experiences.