Repercussion Theatre presents

**Shakespeare and the Power of the Spoken Word
Performance & Workshop**

Study Guide

Developed by Amanda Kellock, MFA
For Repercussion Theatre

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A Brief Introduction to Watching (or Hearing) a Shakespeare Play

Things to consider before watching the show

Most stage, film and television productions consist of what is called a fourth wall. The audience is separated from the drama, as if peering through an invisible wall into a different reality. This reality is usually artificially lit, furnished with sets and props and peopled by actors whose costumes, gestures and speech suggest a world that corresponds closely with our own. Shakespeare's stage also held, as Hamlet put it, a mirror up to nature, but it did not do so by the same means, and its reflection tended to be less realistically detailed. Perhaps the greatest difference is that what contemporary dramas often accomplish through sets, props and costumes, Shakespeare gave his audiences almost entirely through language. We know that we are in the Forest of Arden, for example, or on the battlements of a Danish castle, or on the seacoast of Bohemia, because the characters tell us so, not because we can see or hear for ourselves that we are; there are no trees or battlements or roaring surf but only a bare stage jutting out among the spectators, flanked by galleries and balconies and backed by an inner recess into which the action might move. Visual spectacle, though not unimportant, was secondary to dialogue; we speak of going to "see" a play where audiences, up to the nineteenth century, spoke of "hearing" one.

Our productions of Shakespeare's plays often emphasize this aspect by *suggesting* rather than indicating place and time through the elements of set, lights, and costumes. The goal is not to recreate reality (in a naturalistic way) but rather to hint at the world being created onstage.

The Language of Shakespeare

Shakespeare was a dramatic poet – he wasn't writing grammar books. He used language to express ideas, to create characters, and to propel dramatic action. While Shakespeare was able to capture the cadence and language of his own period, he was also writing about characters in very extraordinary circumstances. The thoughts and words used in his plays reflect the inner journey of the characters within these heightened circumstances. To achieve this, his characters often step into a poetic realm, in which the language, words and sentence structure is very precise, to best to express the entirety of the situation.

When Shakespeare wrote his plays (about 1590-1611) there was no such thing as a dictionary. The language hadn't been nailed down yet. Syntax and grammar were still flexible, as the language was in the process of moving from Middle English to Early Modern English.

Sometimes these differences between modern English and Shakespeare language can stand in the way of understanding. But it is important to note that Shakespeare has been credited by the Oxford English Dictionary with the introduction of nearly 3,000 words into the language: many of the words and sayings we use today were invented by Shakespeare.

Let the words work on your imagination

It's easy to get stuck on the few words in Shakespeare's plays that seem strange or outdated, but his language is not that far away from ours, and sometimes your greatest tool can actually be your imagination.

Language is a living thing, and always in the process of changing. We're inventing new words everyday. Take the word "fantabulous." Even if you've never looked it up, chances are you can guess what it means. It sounds like something Shakespeare would have written.
It is true that language changes with the times – what would Shakespeare have understood by the word "download," for instance? How about "Japanimation," "shopaholic," "spam," or "krunk?" – but

certain themes and ideas are no less fascinating now than they were to Shakespeare, which is why we continue to read and perform his plays.

As you watch and listen to *Shakespeare Unplugged*, see if you can let your imagination uncover the meaning of the words. It will help if you think of the words as tools used by the speaker in order to achieve something…

Words as Weapons
Shakespeare wrote plays that were to be performed. That is important to remember. He imagined actors speaking his words. Actors understand that every character in a play wants something and uses language in order to get it. Sometimes it is obvious – from "pass the butter" to "don't leave me!" – and sometimes a character has to work much harder to get what they want. In essence, every character has an argument to make and must persuade the other character(s) to do what s/he wants them to do. Shakespeare was especially good at creating characters with strong and opposing arguments. He was a master of what we call rhetoric.

Rhetoric and the Art of Persuasion

In today's world, just as in Shakespeare's, the art of persuasion through language is everywhere you turn. Politicians sway us with their choice of words; advertisers try to get our business with their clever taglines and catchy jingles; newspapers and newscasters catch our attention with headlines; even friends and relatives try to convince us to do things, all using the art of persuasion. You persuade through language, too – whether you know it or not! Every time you try to bargain for a larger allowance, convince your friends to go see the movie you want to see, or defend your position on an issue, you are likely using techniques that Shakespeare himself employed in writing for his characters. And chances are that as you move through life, your need for understanding how to get your point across in a convincing manner will only increase, whether you become a lawyer, writer, salesperson, politician, project manager, or parent (to deal with children who bargain for larger allowances!).

This art of persuading through language is called **rhetoric**. A speaker who wants to convince his/her listener of something, has a number of tools to choose from in order to do this. These are called **rhetorical devices**. The more tools a speaker or writer has at his/her disposal, the more convincing an argument s/he can make. Shakespeare wrote in a period in which everyone with an education studied rhetorical devices extensively, so his plays consist of characters that have a masterful facility with these tools.

Part of the art of persuasion was not only to convince the other person but also to have fun doing it. This is also true today as evidenced by the plethora of entertaining television commercials.
First, let's look at three major modes of persuasion.

Three Modes of Persuasion: Ethos, Pathos and Logos

A speech consists of three basic elements:
1. The speaker
2. The hearer(s)
3. The content of the argument itself

There is a mode of persuasion attached to each of these elements.
1. **Ethos** is an appeal based on the character of the speaker. (For example, "I am a doctor, therefore I know what I'm talking about.")
2. **Pathos** is an appeal to the emotions of the hearer. (As in, "If you care about the children, you will call this number now." Advertising tends to be pathos-based.)
3. **Logos** is an appeal based on the logic of the argument itself. (Facts and figures fall under this category. However, a speaker can sometimes manipulate the facts for his/her purpose. Logos also enhances Ethos, since a speaker who knows his/her facts seems to have more authority.)

Most great speeches involve a bit of all three modes, but it is often possible to identify a speech as being ethos-driven, pathos-driven or logos-driven.

Rhetorical Devices

The following are descriptions of some techniques that writers (including Shakespeare) and speakers use in everything from poetry to advertising. They are ways of using language that make a speech or sentence more beautiful and/or memorable – but almost always more persuasive. They may have complicated names, but you will probably recognize most of these techniques, especially once you read the examples. We have grouped them into 6 categories:

- Imagery
- Balance
- Repetition
- Sounds
- Syntax
- Wordplay

1. Imagery
Definition: Painting a picture with words in order to move your listener/reader.

Metaphor: Implied comparison achieved through the figurative use of words.

"All the world's a stage." (William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, II, vii)

"You turn me on, I'm a radio." (Joni Mitchell)

Simile: An explicit comparison between two things using "like" or "as"

"My love is as a fever, longing still
For that which longer nurseth the disease" (William Shakespeare, Sonnet CXLVII)

"Life is like a box of chocolates." (*Forrest Gump*)

2. Balance
Definition: Balancing ideas or words in various ways.

Antithesis: Juxtaposition, or contrast of ideas or words in a balanced or parallel construction. (This is one of Shakespeare's favourite devices) – it's everywhere…)

"Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more." (William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, III, ii)

"O brawling love! O loving hate!" (William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, I,i)

"We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools."
(Martin Luther King, Jr.)

Chiasmus: Two corresponding pairs arranged in a parallel inverse order.

"Fair is foul, and foul is fair" (William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, I, i)

"My job is not to represent Washington to you, but to represent you to Washington."
(Barack Obama)

"Not necessarily conscription, but conscription if necessary." (W.L. Mackenzie King)

"Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."
(John F. Kennedy)

3. Repetition

Definition: Emphasizing a point through different kinds of repetition.

> **Anadiplosis** ("doubling back"): The repetition of one or several words, especially a word that ends one clause placed at the beginning of the next.
>
> > "My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
> > And every tongue brings in a several tale,
> > And every tale condemns me for a villain."1 (William Shakespeare, *Richard III*, V, iii)
> >
> > "The general who became a slave. The slave who became a gladiator. The gladiator who defied an emperor." (Tagline for the movie *Gladiator*)
>
> **Anaphora:** Repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses.
>
> > "Mad world! Mad kings! Mad composition!" (William Shakespeare, *King John*, II, i)
> >
> > "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender…" (Winston Churchill)
>
> **Epanalepsis:** Repetition at the end of a clause of the word with which it began.
>
> > "Blood hath bought blood, and blows have answer'd blows." (William Shakespeare, *King John*, II, i)
> >
> > "Be all that you can be." (U.S. Army slogan)
>
> **Epistrophe**: Repetition of a word or phrase at the end of successive clauses.
>
> > "I'll have my bond!
> > Speak not against my bond!
> > I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond." (William Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice*, III, iii)
> >
> > "…A government of the people, by the people, for the people…" (Abraham Lincoln)

4. Sounds

Definition: Using the sounds of the words for emphasis.

> **Alliteration:** Repetition of the same consonant sound at the beginning of several words in a sentence or line of verse.
>
> > "When to the sessions of sweet silent thought…." (William Shakespeare, Sonnet XXX)
> >
> > "Let us go forth to lead the land we love." J. F. Kennedy
>
> **Assonance:** Repetition of a similar vowel sound in words of close proximity.
>
> > "Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks." (William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, V, iii)
> >
> > "It beats as it sweeps as it cleans." (Hoover Vaccuum advertisement)

Onomatopoeia: Use of words that sound like what they represent (e.g.: Buzz, clap, bang, howl, whiz, hiss, etc.)

> " Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!
> You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
> Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!" (William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, III, ii)

5. Syntax

Definition: Playing with word order and sentence structure for emphasis.

Climax: Arrangement of words, phrases, or clauses in an order of ascending power.

> "O wonderful, wonderful, and most wonderful, wonderful, and yet again wonderful, and after that out of all hooping!" (William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, III, ii)

> "One equal temper of heroic hearts,
> Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
> To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield." (Tennyson)

Hyperbaton: Altering word order, or separation of words that belong together.

> "Some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall." (William Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*, II, i)

> "Help you I can, yes." (Yoda)

Parenthesis: Insertion of some word or clause that interrupts the normal flow of the sentence.

> "I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth…" (William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, II, ii)

> "What I am trying to say – and I do not think this an unfair comment – is that we were a much more idealistic generation." (Kazuo Ishiguro)

6. Wordplay

Definition: Using words in unexpected and creative ways.

Pun: Use of a word that emphasizes a different meaning (often, but not always, humorous).

> "Ask for me tomorrow and you shall find me a grave man." (William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, III, i)

> "Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana." (Groucho Marx)

Malapropism: Absurd or humorous misuse of a word (which sounds like the correct word).

> "Villain! Thou wilt be condemned into everlasting *redemption* for this."
> (*Much Ado About Nothing*, IV, ii)

> See almost any speech by George W. Bush for further examples.

Some Scenes to Explore

Henry VI - Part III

This history play is centered on the struggle between the Houses of York and Lancaster for the crown of England, and the fighting, treachery and the deaths that ensue.

Act III Scene II
In this soliloquy, Richard (Duke of Gloucester) expresses his ambition to become king, even though there are many heirs in his way. His only other route to joy would be love, but he deplores his physical self and is sure that no woman can love him. Therefore, he must become ruler even if it means destroying lives.

The Language
In a soliloquy, the question becomes: to whom is the speech addressed? Who is the speaker trying to persuade? Is Richard speaking to himself? To the audience? To the Gods?

Our theatre today often employs "the 4th wall," in which the audience members become voyeurs of the action onstage, but this was not always so. Shakespeare's characters seem to have no qualms about addressing the audience as though they were in the room. They also sometimes seem to address the whole world, or the Gods themselves.

In some productions, the actor playing Richard addresses the audience directly, using the soliloquy to work out the problem of attaining the crown.

Questions
Look at Richard's (Gloucester's) soliloquy.
1. What mode(s) of persuasion does he employ?
2. What rhetorical devices does he use?
3. What do you think he is trying to prove with this speech?
4. Who is he trying to convince?

Activities

Choose a problem (real or imaginary) and find pros and cons to each side of the argument. For instance, your mother wants you to go to sleep at 10p.m. when you want to stay up later, even though you know you'll be tired the next day, etc. Write out your reasoning. Then, try reading it aloud in 3 different ways:
1. To another person(s), with the intention of trying to work the problem out for yourself, simply using them as a sounding board
2. To another person(s), trying to convince them that your way is the right way, while still including the other side of the argument.
3. As though you are a lawyer addressing a large court room. Observe and discuss the similarities and differences.

Richard III

This history play is dominated again by Richard, depicted as the evil hunchback, the Duke of Gloucester, who becomes King Richard III through a series of terrible acts. The "Wars of the Roses" between the Houses of York and Lancaster culminate in the defeat of Richard by the Duke of Richmond, who becomes Henry VII.

Act I Scene II

In this scene, Lady Anne laments the death of her husband, King Henry VI, while cursing Richard for being the cause. She hopes that one day Richard may feel the same stinging pain of loss. But during their heated exchange, Richard starts to woo Lady Anne with compliments; Lady Anne scorns him after each attempt. When finally he admits to her that he did indeed kill her husband, but only so that he alone could love her, you see a change in Lady Anne. The scene ends with another soliloquy by Richard, where he reveals his true self.

The Language

In this scene, there is a wonderful verbal back-and-forth between Richard (Gloucester) and Lady Anne – almost a verbal tennis match in which words are hurled and then hurled back, gaining momentum as the argument grows. This is a form of repetition, but where the repetition is shared between two speakers. When Richard says, "I grant ye," Lady Anne picks it up and hurls it back at him, saying, "Dost grant me, hedgehog?" Words like 'heaven,' 'fit,' 'lie,' 'chamber,' etc. are also used in this way. Sometimes a word like "heaven" is introduced, only to be countered with the word "Hell" in the next line, as a kind of shared antithesis. It is essential for the actors to pick up on these verbal cues, not only because they are the key to the sense of the argument, but also because they create the rhythm and energy at the heart of the scene.

Question

How many words can you find in this scene that are used in the back-and-forth way described above? Look for instances of repetition, as well as shared antithesis.

Activities

In teams of two, look at the scene and highlight the words that are used in this verbal tennis match. Then, try reading it aloud, emphasizing the highlighted words. Imagine that each word is a ball that you are throwing at your scene partner. It is very likely that, with almost no rehearsal, you will already get a sense of the rhythm of the scene simply by focusing on this verbal back-and-forth. You can also try reading it aloud while emphasizing the "wrong" words, to see how that feels!

Twelfth Night

This comedy features the young Viola, dressed as the boy, Cesario, as she enters the service of the Duke of Illyria, Orsino. She proceeds to fall in love with the Duke, but the Duke is in love with Lady Olivia (who eventually falls for Cesario).

Act I Scene II
In this scene, Viola lands in Illyria after a terrible shipwreck in which she is separated from her twin brother. The Captain, who also survived, tries to console her. After learning more about the place where they have landed, Viola decides that she will disguise herself as a boy and go to work for the Duke. The Captain agrees to help her.

Act II Scene IV
In this scene, Orsino strikes up a conversation with Viola (dressed as Cesario) about love and its imperfections. Orsino will not heed Viola's suggestion that Olivia cannot love him, and the two disagree over whether women can love as deeply as men. Viola tries to use herself as an example without revealing her true identity, but in the end she agrees to go once more to woo Olivia on his behalf.

The Language
Viola is in a precarious situation. She is a woman disguised as a man (for very necessary reasons) who has fallen in love with the man she works for, the Duke. She must protect her secret identity, but simultaneously wants to spend time with Orsino. In this exchange about the nature of love, she must choose her words very carefully, and the effect is that what she says is always true, but Orsino only understands part of it. We, the audience, on the other hand, understand it on all levels. This is called "dramatic irony." Through her mastery of words, she conveys all of her longing for Orsino, without betraying her disguise.

Questions
1. Both Viola and Orsino use a great deal of imagery in this scene to express their views on love and the nature of men and women. What are the images that they invoke?
2. Can you identify which are similes and which are metaphors?

Activity
In groups of two or four, look at how men and women are viewed by Viola and Orsino, and the images they use to describe them. Come up with images of your own to describe men and women. Try to use both simile and metaphor. You might want to set it up like this:

"If women are _____, then men are _____."
"If men are like _____, then women are like _____."

Be creative! And remember that imagery is used to express an idea. So what are the ideas behind your images?

Read what you've written to the rest of the class – either as a poem, or turn it into a dialogue. Have fun with it!

The Sonnets – Sonnet 130 and Sonnet 29

Sonnet 130

This sonnet is generally considered a humorous parody of the typical love sonnet. Shakespeare states that his mistress is not a goddess and that she is not as beautiful as things found in nature: "My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun; Coral is far more red than her lips' red." Yet, in the closing couplet he says that, in fact, she is just as extraordinary ("rare") as any woman described with such exaggerated or false comparisons. It is this blunt but charming sincerity that has made Sonnet 130 one of the most famous in the sequence.

Sonnet 29

The speaker reveals in this poem that he sometimes suffers from feelings of defeat and loneliness. And there are times when he feels envious of what others have. But when he starts to think of all these negative things, he thinks of "thee" and realizes how lucky he is to be able to create.

The Language

First off, let's talk about sonnets in general.

Structure: Shakespeare's sonnets always have the same structure – they are 14 lines long, and each line has 10 beats (or 10 syllables); there are three sets of quatrains (4 lines with alternating rhymes) and ending with a couplet (two rhyming lines). It looks like this:

A	My mistress' eyes are nothing like the **sun**;
B	Coral is far more red than her lips' **red**;
A	If snow be white, why then her breasts are **dun**;
B	If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her **head**.
C	I have seen roses damasked, red and **white**,
D	But no such roses see I in her **cheeks**;
C	And in some perfumes is there more **delight**
D	Than in the breath that from my mistress **reeks**.
E	I love to hear her speak, yet well I **know**
F	That music hath a far more pleasing **sound**;
E	I grant I never saw a goddess **go**;
F	My mistress when she walks treads on the **ground**.
G	And yet, by heaven, I think my love as **rare**
G	As any she belied with false **compare**.

Usually, the first quatrain (4 lines) introduces the main thesis or metaphor;
The second quatrain expands on the main idea, or introduces a complication;
The third quatrain often introduces a twist or shift (often with a "but" or "yet");
The final couplet concludes, often with a surprising epiphany.

Subject Matter: Shakespeare's sonnets deal with many subjects: time, faith, death, fame, etc. – but mostly they deal with love, and the two sonnets in *Shakespeare Unplugged* are no exception.

How a sonnet persuades:
Like Shakespeare's plays, his sonnets involve a "speaker" who is trying to make a point – to persuade his/her listener of something. The interesting thing about sonnets is that we (the listeners) usually don't know what that something is until the very end, until the last two surprising couplets. Shakespeare sets us up for one thing and then turns everything around in those last two lines. He sets up a thesis (a statement or idea) and then presents an **antithesis** (the opposite statement or idea).

Antithesis
In each of the two sonnets, the first part of the sonnet suggests one thing, and the ending presents an opposite idea. In Sonnet 130 we begin by hearing all the ways in which the speaker's love is not special, but in the last two lines we are told that she is the rarest of loves. In Sonnet 29, the speaker begins by telling us how he wishes he could change places with someone more fortunate, but by the end, he wouldn't change places with anyone. Also, within the sonnets, there are instances of antithesis: "*white*" is pitted against "*dun,*" and "*with what I most enjoy,*" against "*contented least,*" for example.

Questions
1. How else does Shakespeare use Antithesis in these two sonnets?
2. How many examples can you find?

Activity
Can you look at some other sonnets and find evidence of thesis/antithesis at work?

Try reading the sonnets aloud. Focusing on the thesis/antithesis elements can help make sense of the poetry, and can make it much easier to speak.

Try writing a sonnet of your own. Play with opposites. See if you can set up one idea and then surprise the reader/listener in the last two lines. Maybe the poem starts with "I hate you and I love you…" where might it go from there?

The Taming of the Shrew

In this play, the beautiful and gentle Bianca has many admirers, but her father insists that she will not marry until her shrewish sister, Katharina, is engaged. Bianca's suitors persuade fortune-seeker Petruchio to court her. But Katharina (Kate) is not easily wooed!

Act II Scene I
Petruchio, through a battle of wits filled with sexual puns and insults, tells Kate that, whether she wants to or not, he will take her for his wife. Petruchio happily informs everyone that he has won her heart and that the two will be married on Sunday.

The Language
This scene is an excellent example of how rhetoric and the clever use of words can be not only persuasive, but fun! Petruchio and Kate are both extremely intelligent, and although their verbal tennis match is full of insults, it is clear that (deep down) they enjoy this game. In this scene, it is essential for us to see that they have each met their match – both in terms of intelligence and personality. They use puns, double-meanings and wordplay to one-up each other, because the point in this game isn't simply to win, but to win with style. By the end of the scene, it is clear that they both love language, and that 'smart' is indeed, 'sexy.'

This kind of scene is also very fun for the actors to play!

Questions
How do Petruchio and Kate use imagery and wordplay to one-up each other?

Activity
Shakespeare's plays are full of wonderfully creative insults. Mix and match to make your own! Have a Shakespearian insult contest in class… it's easy as ABC.

Column A	Column B	Column C
Bawdy	beetle-headed	baggage
Bootless	boil-brained	barnacle
Churlish	common-kissing	bugbear
Craven	crooked-pated	canker-blossom
Dissembling	dizzy-eyed	codpiece
Droning	dog-hearted	fancy-monger
Fawning	fly-bitten	flibbertigibbet
Goatish	fool-born	foot-licker
Infectious	half-faced	harpy
Lumpish	lily-livered	lout
Mammering	motley-minded	maggot-pie
Mewling	onion-eyed	minnow
Paunchy	pox-marked	mumble-news
Puny	puppy-headed	puke-stocking
Scurvy	sheep-biting	strumpet
Vain	toad-spotted	wagtail

Measure for Measure

In this play, Angelo has been empowered by the Duke of Vienna to rule his land while he goes to investigate the moral decay of his dukedom. Angelo, known as a strict judge, decides to enforce the moral laws harshly and without exception. A young man, Claudio, is therefore sentenced to die because he impregnated his fiancée before they were married. When Claudio's sister, Isabella, a virtuous young nun, comes to plead on his behalf, Angelo comes face- to- face with his own immoral desires.

Act II Scene II
Isabella comes to see Angelo, begging for leniency for her brother. She tries to appeal to Angelo's pity and mercy, but he will not budge.

Act II Scene IV
Angelo recognizes his newfound lust for Isabella but doesn't want to admit it. When Isabella comes to plead again for her brother's life, he attempts to broach the subject in a roundabout way, but she is too innocent to catch his drift. Then he introduces a hypothetical situation in which a "supposed" person will let her brother live if she will sleep with him, but Isabella insists she would rather die. Finally, he speaks plainly and insists that he will only let her brother live if she agrees to sleep with him. She works hard to change his mind, and finally threatens to report him, but Angelo makes it clear that no one would ever believe her, saying that his "false" outweighs her "true."

The Language
We see in this play that rhetoric isn't always used for a just cause. In the first scene, Angelo and Isabella both have very clear positions on why Claudio should or shouldn't die, but in the second scene, the argument is complicated by Angelo's lust for Isabella. In Angelo's case, he uses his language and his authority to try and take advantage of Isabella, while she uses her language and her appeal to justice, in order to save herself (and her brother).

Questions:
In the first scene, Isabella tries to persuade Angelo to spare her brother.
1. What arguments does she use?
2. What is Angelo's position?
3. Articulate their stand on the subject in your own words.

In the second scene, Angelo tries to make Isabella understand what he wants from her without having to come out and say it. What are the tactics he uses?

Activity:
Distill the scene(s) to their essential arguments and then write your own scene(s) based on those arguments. Imagine different contexts in which a scene like this might take place – a boss who attempts to seduce his employee, a police officer blackmailing a young woman pleading for her brother who has been falsely arrested, etc. Rehearse and perform your scenes for the class.

Julius Caesar

In this tragedy, Julius Caesar is a highly ambitious political leader in Rome, seeking a dictatorship. He is warned that he must "beware the Ides of March", a prophecy which comes true when the plotting Marcus Brutus and Cassius assassinate Caesar.

Act II Scene II
The strange happenings outside and a series of nightmares have frightened Caesar's wife, Calphurnia, who begs him not to go to the Capitol that day. Caesar, who ignores the contents of her dreams, tries to calm his wife; he sends a servant to order the priests to make a sacrifice to appease the gods on her behalf. The servant quickly returns and gives Caesar another omen. Caesar is still resistant. Finally, Calphurnia persuades him to stay at home.

Act III Scene II
In this scene, the friend of Caesar, Mark Antony, ascends the pulpit and begins his famous eulogy, "Friends, Romans, countrymen…" He points out Caesar's virtues, while subtly criticizing the conspirators and nullifying their charges. Before long, the citizens concur that Caesar has been wronged, and that Brutus and Cassius are traitors.

The Language:
In the first scene, Calphurnia implores Caesar not to go by telling him all the horrible things that have been happening. Her speech is heightened and rather poetic as she recounts the strange things going on outside. Her need to convince Caesar that something ominous is looming fuels her speech as she recreates the sights and sounds through language.

In the second speech, Mark Antony's need is to convince the Roman citizens that Caesar has been wrongly killed and that the men who slew him are traitors. What we don't see is, immediately prior to this speech, Brutus addressed the public and convinced them that Caesar was killed for his ambition and for the good of Rome. When Antony begins to speak, he is on dangerous ground because the Romans are on the side of Brutus and will not tolerate anyone speaking against him – which is why Antony must choose his words carefully and find subtle but powerful ways to change the minds of his audience. Brutus and Antony employ different modes of persuasion, partly based on who they are as people. Brutus loves logic, and believes that the people can be swayed with reason. But Antony is a "plain, blunt man" and chooses to stir their hearts. In this case, Antony's method prevails, and the Romans – who loved Brutus at the beginning of his speech – are out for his blood by the end of it.

Questions
Compare and contrast the two speeches.
1. Can you identify when they are appealing to Ethos, Pathos and Logos?
2. What other devices do they use?

Activity
Most great speakers use all three modes of persuasion in order to make their argument. Find a great speech (Martin Luther King's "I have a Dream" speech for instance) and see if you can identify when the speaker is using each of the three modes.

Gather a sample of advertisements – ads in magazines, tv commercials, etc. – and identify the ways in which the "speaker" (the person trying to sell their product) is using the three modes of persuasion. This may be a different way of looking at persuasion since many advertisers use images the way that writers or speakers use words. Image or language, it's all in the name of persuasion.