

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S THE PHANTOM OF MENACE® EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



By Ian Doescher

INTRODUCTION

This guide offers a brief introduction to Shakespeare and the elements that *William Shakespeare's The Phantom of Menace* has in common with his plays. First, here are some quick and easy elements you'll find in Shakespeare's plays, all of which can be found in *William Shakespeare's The Phantom of Menace*:

- Each play is in five acts. This was the usual structure of plays in Shakespeare's time, which drew on the earlier tradition of ancient Roman plays, many of which also had five acts. There can be any number of scenes within each act. When you are referring to a specific act, scene, and line from that scene, the typical convention for Shakespeare is something like II.iii.45—which means Act 2 (represented by II, the upper case roman numerals), scene 3 (represented by iii, the lower case roman numerals), line 45. I use the same references for lines in *William Shakespeare's The Phantom of Menace*.
- Minimal stage directions. Shakespeare left it to his plays' performers to determine who should what on stage. *William Shakespeare's The Phantom of Menace* follows this convention, though ultimately has more stage directions than a Shakespearean play would have, for the benefit of making the action sequences clear.
- Rhyming couplets at the end of scenes. A rhyming couplet is two adjacent lines of verse that rhyme with each other, like "I shall be dutiful till he come back, / And keep the queen protected from attack." Shakespeare often ended his scenes with a rhyming couplet as a simple way to mark a narrative shift, similar to a final cadence in music. I followed the convention in *William Shakespeare's The Phantom of Menace*.
- Language that is meant to be spoken, not just read! Shakespeare wrote his plays to be performed by actors he knew in local London theaters. They were not at first intended to be put in a book and assigned as reading, though that's how most modern students first encounter Shakespeare. If you are trying to make it through a Shakespeare play for the first time, encourage them to gather around with some friends and read the play out loud together. The words will make more sense when you hear their rhythm and cadences. As a result, students will be less caught up in the old-fashioned language and more engaged by in the quick and witty dialogue, beautiful metaphors and clever jokes.
- Characters sometimes have "asides." An aside is a line spoken so the audience can hear but the other characters on stage (supposedly) cannot. Often, an aside explains a character's motivations or inner thoughts, or a background situation the audience wouldn't otherwise know. These days an aside in theater is sometimes called breaking "the fourth wall," that is, the imaginary divide between stage and audience. Asides in Shakespeare tend to be fairly short, though not always.
- Characters also make long speeches by themselves, known as soliloquies. They are similar to asides in that they often explain why a character is acting the way s/he is, but they occur when the character is alone on stage. In general, soliloquies are longer than asides.

THE LANGUAGE

Shakespeare's old-fashioned language can be one of the hardest hurdles to jump when you're getting started. Here are some things to know about the language of Shakespeare's time.

Shakespeare wrote in iambic pentameter, which is a line of poetry with a very specific syllabic pattern. An "iamb" has two syllables—the first is unstressed (or soft) and the second is stressed (or emphasized). An iamb sounds like da-DUM, as in the following words:

Defend (de-FEND)
Consult (con-SULT)
Beyond (be-YOND)
Across (a-CROSS)
Forsooth (for-SOOTH)
Naboo (na-BOO)

"Pentameter" means there should be five iambs in a line, so iambic pentameter is a line of ten syllables: da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM. Here's a classic line, with the unstressed part of each iamb in regular text and the stressed part of each iamb in bold: "I'd **rather** be a **hammer** **than** a **nail**." So, in other words, the five iambs in this line are (1) I'd RATH- (2) er BE (3) a HAM- (4) mer THAN (5) a NAIL.

Shakespeare uses iambic pentameter for most of his characters most of the time, but it also has an element of class involved. In other words, most of Shakespeare's characters speak in iambic pentameter, but some speak in prose (normal speech) when Shakespeare wanted to set them apart as lower class. Dogberry in *Much Ado About Nothing* is a textbook example (in *William Shakespeare's The Phantom of Menace*, Watto also misuses words much like Dogberry). While none of the characters speak prose in *William Shakespeare's The Phantom of Menace*, Boba Fett does so in *William Shakespeare's The Empire Striketh Back* and *The Jedi Doth Return*.

Shakespeare also sometimes breaks the rules of iambic pentameter. The most famous Shakespearean line of all actually has eleven syllables: "To **be** or **not** to **be**, that is the **question**." That last "-ion" is known as a weak ending, and is common in Shakespeare. (In *William Shakespeare's The Phantom of Menace*, Chancellor Valorum's lines all have a weak ending, my way of marking him as a fairly weak ruler.) It's also common that Shakespeare will slip two unstressed syllables into a space where there should be just one, or he'll leave out a syllable entirely. As much as we associate Shakespeare with iambic pentameter, he broke the rule almost as much as he observed it. By comparison, *William Shakespeare's The Phantom of Menace* uses stricter iambic pentameter than Shakespeare himself used.

The final—and maybe most important—thing to say about iambic pentameter is that it's one of those things students should know about, and then not be too worried about. If the whole idea of meter and stressed and unstressed syllables leaves *them* feeling stressed, just read Shakespeare's lines out loud and forget about the meter. Have them pay attention to the punctuation, and let it guide their pauses. Whatever happens, no one should feel it necessary to pause at the end of each line of Shakespeare. Unless there is a comma, a period or some other punctuation—or some other break in the meaning—each line should follow immediately after the preceding line.

Here are some lines from *William Shakespeare's The Phantom of Menace* (III.ii.17-22), followed by some things to notice:

Qui-Gon:

*Mayhap thou wouldst prefer to talk it o'er
Within the court and justice of the Hutts?
I have no doubt they would take merriment
In proffering a settlement 'twixt us. 20
I would delight to witness Jabba's face
As thou explainest thine absurd complaint.*

This speech from Qui-Gon illustrates a few different points:

- First, as noted above, the punctuation should guide how you say these lines, not the actual ends of the lines themselves. Obviously, in lines 19-20, "I have no doubt they would take merriment in proffering a settlement 'twixt us," is a single thought that happens to be split across two lines. Any line like that one that doesn't end with any punctuation should roll right into the next line.
- All eight of these lines follow the rules and rhythm of iambic pentameter, but I think one can hear it most clearly in line 21: "I would delight to witness Jabba's face..." The **would delight** to **witness Jabba's face**.
- Students may wonder what happens if a word has more than two syllables, since an iamb calls for only one stressed syllable? Does every word in the English language really only have a single syllable emphasized? Those are important questions. When it comes to multisyllabic words, you have to figure out, first, which syllable has the main emphasis. Here are three examples of three-syllable words, and each with an emphasis on a different syllable:

Merriment (emphasis on first syllable)

Explainest (emphasis on second syllable)

Tattooine (emphasis on final syllable)

This can get even trickier with four- and five-syllable words. The basic pattern in most words is that you figure out which syllable should be emphasized, and then see if another syllable has a minor emphasis. The word **Imperial** is a good example. The main emphasis is on the second syllable, **Imperial**. In iambic pentameter, it makes sense for the first iamb to be **Imper** and the next iamb to be **ial**. So "al" at the end of the word **Imperial** has a secondary stress that fits the meter nicely. To give you an idea of how these decisions are made... if you read carefully you'll notice that throughout *William Shakespeare's The Phantom of Menace* I use the word "Skywalker" variably—sometimes as if the main emphasis is on the first syllable (**Skywalker**) and sometimes as if the middle syllable gets the main emphasis (**Skywalker**). I did this because **Skywalker** is a challenging word. It's a compound word, and if you break it into two words it has two stressed syllables at the front—**Sky walker**. To put it in iambic pentameter means having to pick a syllable to stress, so I did what (I hope) Shakespeare would have done and stressed the syllable one way when it suited certain situations, and the other way for other situations.

- All those –est and –eth endings. In general, the –est (or –st) ending happens when you using the pronoun *thou*, like “dost thou” or “thou canst” in the emperor’s speech, referring to a singular *you*. The –eth ending (or “doth”) is used for *he* or *she* or a neutral (but always singular) *it*, for example: “The lightsaber that resteth by my side.”
- Words that would normally end in –ed, like the word “armed,” spelled in Shakespeare as “arm’d.” The reason these words are printed this way is that in Shakespeare’s time, the –ed was sometimes actually pronounced, so instead of pronouncing the word “armed” as “armd” (as we do now), they would have pronounced it in two syllables, “arm-med.” When such a word was to be shortened because of the meter, the word was turned into a contraction, “arm’d.” Often, in modern editions of Shakespeare—and in *William Shakespeare’s The Phantom of Menace*—if there’s a word ending in –ed that is supposed to have the –ed pronounced as a separate syllable, it will appear with an accent over the e: “armèd.”
- On thees and thous:
 - thou = you (as the subject of a sentence, like “thou explainest”, “thou wouldst”)
 - thee = you (as the object or of a sentence, like “I sense in thee much anger”)
 - thy = your (before a word starting with a consonant, like “thy weapon”)
 - thine = your (before a word starting with a vowel, like “thine absurd complaint”)
 - ye = you (as the subject of a sentence for more than one person, like “ye people”)

A final note about Shakespeare and language: when in doubt, look up words you don’t know and even write their definitions in the text next to them if it helps. Most good Shakespeare editions have footnotes that explain unusual words (like “fardels”) or a glossary of terms at the end. This will help you when even reading the text aloud doesn’t do the trick.

SHAKESPEAREAN REFERENCES IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE’S THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

Some good news: if your students have read *William Shakespeare’s The Phantom of Menace*, they’ve already read some Shakespeare. *William Shakespeare’s The Phantom of Menace* makes direct reference to several lines in Shakespeare’s plays. Here’s a guide to where you can find Shakespearean references in a galaxy far, far away.

Henry IV, Part 2 and Henry V

William Shakespeare’s The Phantom of Menace borrows from the history plays *The Life of Henry the Fourth, Part Two* and *The Life of Henry the Fifth* (more briefly known as *Henry IV, Part 2* and *Henry V*) in terms of structure. Henry V has a grand story to tell—the English defeat the French in famed battles such as Harfleur and Agincourt, and King Henry V’s rise to power over two kingdoms. But how could such a sweeping tale be told on a small stage, in the days before movies or computer animation? Shakespeare handles this by using a Chorus at the beginning and throughout. The dramatic device of a Chorus—which goes back at least to early Greek drama—is a narrating character who is not involved in the action and is voiced either by a single person or by a group. The Chorus helps explain what is happening, particularly when the action is too grand to be depicted literally on the stage.

When I began writing *William Shakespeare's Star Wars®*, I was faced with a dilemma: how do you show the action of *Star Wars®* in a play with minimal staging opportunities? I decided early on to take a page from Shakespeare and add a Chorus to the play, to explain the visual elements that a theater audience wouldn't necessarily be able to see. In that way, my Chorus functions in the same way as Shakespeare's Chorus in *Henry V*.

For the prequel trilogy, starting with *William Shakespeare's The Phantom of Menace*, I introduced the character of Rumor, who offers the prologue of *Henry IV, Part 2*. Although the Chorus offers the prologue and epilogue to *William Shakespeare's The Phantom of Menace*, it is Rumor who appears throughout the play to talk about who she is creating confusion and mayhem to move things along.

Just for the challenge and the fun of it, the Chorus speak in sonnets at the beginning and ending of the play, and the Rumor speaks in rhyming sets of four lines called "quatrains" (with lines 1 and 3 rhyming and lines 2 and 4 rhyming). Each of Rumor's lines are also acrostics—the first letter of each of Rumor's lines, read from top to bottom, creates a unique message.

Recommended film version: Kenneth Branagh starred in and directed the 1989 film version of *Henry V*, with Derek Jacobi as the Chorus.

HENRY V

Prologue, 1-4

Prologue:

*O for a Muse of fire, that would ascend
The brightest heaven of invention!
A kingdom for a stage, princes to act,
And monarchs to behold the swelling scene!*

HENRY IV, PART 2

Prologue, 1-5

Rumor:

*Open your ears; for which of you will stop
The vent of hearing when loud Rumor speaks?
I, from the orient to the drooping west,
Making the wind my post-horse, still unfold
The acts commenced on this ball of earth*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

Prologue, 1-4

Chorus:

*Alack! What dreadful turmoil hath beset
The strong Republic and its bonds of peace.
O'er distant trade routes all do sigh and fret
As fears of grim taxation do increase.*

I.i.1-4

Rumor:

*Open your hearts; for which of you will stop
The vent of feeling when loud Rumor speaks?
Her flaming tongue with poison'd tip shall drop
Unrest from Tatooine to Naboo's peaks.*

Before the battle of Agincourt, King Henry V gives a stirring speech, in which he convinces his troops that their memories will be remembered and their tales told for centuries to come, including the famous names that will have become "household words." Fode and Breed, the commentators at the pod race, make a similar proclamation about the racers:

HENRY V

IV.iii.33

Henry V:

*Then shall our names,
Familiar in his mouth as household words...*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

III.i.26-27

Fode:

*See them now—
Familiar in our mouths as household words...*

Hamlet

The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark is Shakespeare's most famous play. The work tells the story of Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark, whose father has died and whose mother Gertrude has married his uncle Claudius (Hamlet's father's brother). In the opening scenes, the Ghost of King Hamlet returns to tell Hamlet that he was actually murdered by his brother, so that his brother could marry Hamlet's mother and take the throne. The tragedy unfolds as Hamlet tries to figure out the best way to avenge his father.

Recommended film versions: Kenneth Branagh's 1996 version is good if you want to see Hamlet played sane, Mel Gibson's 1990 version is good if you want to see Hamlet played mad (I prefer Branagh's take).

Toward the beginning of the play, as Polonius (a counselor to King Claudius) is bidding farewell to his son Laertes, Polonius gives him some fatherly advice. To show Jar Jar Binks' unexpected wisdom, I borrowed some of Polonius' lines for Jar Jar:

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

I.III.68,78

Polonius:

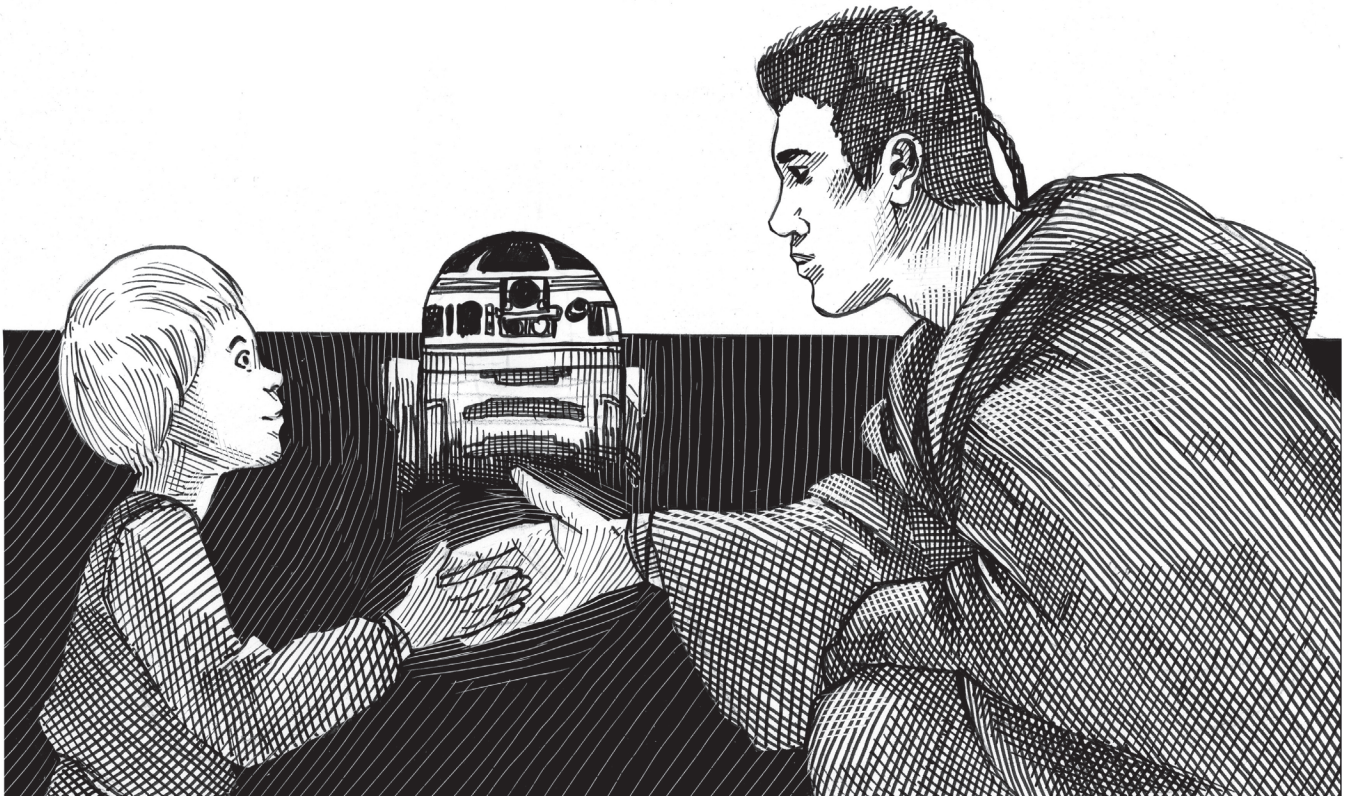
*Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice...
This above all—to thine own self be true.*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

I.III.87-88

Jar Jar:

*To thine own kind be true, so say I e'er.
Give ev'ry man thine ear, but few thy voice.*



“To be or not to be, that is the question,” is, as I indicated above, probably Shakespeare’s most famous line. It begins Hamlet’s soliloquy in Act III, in which he questions what is useful about life and why human beings don’t just kill themselves, given how hard life is. I borrowed a line from the speech for Qui-Gon:

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

III.i.85-87

Hamlet:

*And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn away
And lose the name of action.*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE’S
THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

II.iii.258-260

Qui-Gon:

*We go to Coruscant,
The central system of th’ Republic, on
An enterprise of great pith and moment.*

As time goes on, Hamlet becomes more and more frustrated with his own lack of resolve and lack of action. In Act IV, he has a speech (which, by the way, has the word “Sith” in it) in which he tries to rally himself. Anakin is spurred to action by the events on Tatooine as he prepares to begin the pod race:

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

IV.iv.32-33

Hamlet:

*How all occasions to inform against me
And spur my dull revenge!*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE’S
THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

III.i.1-2

Anakin:

*How all occasions to inform toward me
To spur my action here!*

Julius Caesar

The Tragedy of Julius Caesar tells the story of the famous Roman leader, the man who helped kill him (Brutus) and the friend who eventually co-ruled in his place (Marc Antony)

Recommended film version: you can’t beat Marlon Brando as Marc Antony in the 1953 film version of the play.

When Caesar is killed, he speaks famous final words against his killer. I borrowed these words for Qui-Gon, as he too is killed:

THE TRAGEDY OF JULIUS CAESAR

III.i.77

Caesar:

Et to, Brute! Then fall, Caesar.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE’S
THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

V.iii.90

Qui-Gon:

Et tu, Sith? Then fall, Qui-Gon Jinn!

Shortly after Caesar is murdered, Marc Antony rises to eulogize him, and says that if indeed Caesar was ambitious, he has now paid for that fault with his death. Qui-Gon wonders if his ambition may lead to a similar end:

THE TRAGEDY OF JULIUS CAESAR

III.ii.77-80

Antony:

*The noble Brutus
Hath told you Caesar was ambitious:
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

IV.v.71-73

Qui-Gon:

*Have I been blinded by ambition's light?
If it is so, it is a grievous fault,
And grievously I may yet answer it.*

Toward the end of the play, Brutus is visited by the ghost of Caesar. They have an exchange I've always found funny, if only because it's a bit redundant—Brutus and Caesar were really, really clear that they'll see each other again at Philippi. I couldn't resist adding a similar exchange between Qui-Gon and one of the battle droids (and note that Qui-Gon calls the droid a "brute"—my nod to Brutus):

THE TRAGEDY OF JULIUS CAESAR

IV.iii.282.286

Brutus:

Why comest thou?

Caesar:

To tell thee thou shalt see me at Philippi.

Brutus:

Well; then I shall see thee again?

Caesar:

Ay, at Philippi.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

I.V.82-85

Qui-Gon:

*I tell thee I must take these people here
To Coruscant.*

Droid 3:

—Well, where shalt thou take them?

Qui-Gon:

To Coruscant, thou brute.

Droid 3:

*—Why, you shall take
Them, then to Coruscant.*

Antony and Cleopatra

The Tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra is the story of what happened to Marc Antony later in life, as he began an ill-fated love affair with Cleopatra, the queen of Egypt.

Recommended film version: the 1972 version starring Charlton Heston and Hildegard Neil is a bit campy, but worth the watch.

There are so many good last lines in Shakespeare as people lay dying. I borrowed Antony's final words for Qui-Gon as he dies:

THE TRAGEDY OF
ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

IV.xv.58-89

Antony:

*Now my spirit is going;
I can no more.*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

V.iii.133

Qui-Gon:

Train him! My spirit goes; I can no more.

King Lear

The Tragedy of King Lear is the story of an old king who tries to divide his kingdom among his three daughters. In the opening scene, his first two daughters Goneril and Regan—who turn out to be rotten—give him the ego-stroking he craves before he grants them their inheritance. But his good, youngest daughter, Cordelia, refuses to lavish praise on Lear just to receive her part of the kingdom. Lear, in his rage, sends her into exile and splits his kingdom into two parts for Goneril and Regan instead of three. Thus begins the tragedy, which ends with Lear's madness and death (not to mention the death of all of his daughters and a handful of other people

Recommended film version: Laurence Olivier played King Lear in the 1983 BBC version. The cast and crew were in tears as they watched Olivier perform Lear's death scene, because Olivier himself was old and unwell..

Edmund is one of the villains of King Lear, a bastard (sorry, that's what Shakespeare calls him!) who seeks to hurt the King and take power. Darth Maul muses over his villainy with Edmund's words:

THE TRAGEDY OF KING LEAR

I.ii.2-6

Edmund:

*My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen
moonshines
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? Wherefore base?*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

II.iv.27-31

Darth Maul:

*My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom, and thus let
The curiosity of galaxies
Deprive me for that I am of some twelve deeds
Lag of some honor? Why Sith? Wherefore base?*

Romeo and Juliet

The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet is the famous story of two rival families and the young woman and man from each of those families who fall deeply in love. It doesn't end well.

Recommended film versions: Baz Luhrmann's 1996 movie starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes is a fast-paced, fun modern take. Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story* is also based on *Romeo and Juliet*.

When Romeo first meets Juliet it is (of course) love at first sight. Romeo has a short speech about Juliet before he ever speaks of her. I wanted Anakin to say something similar about Padmé, without getting too gross (after all, he's still a boy in *Phantom of Menace*):

THE TRAGEDY OF ROMEO AND JULIET

I.v.44

Romeo:

O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

II.iii.45

Anakin:

O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!

After Romeo's friend Mercutio is killed by Tybalt, Juliet's brother, Romeo swears to avenge him with fiery words. Anakin uses the same words as he prepares to fight against the Trade Federation's ships:

THE TRAGEDY OF ROMEO AND JULIET

III.i.123-124

Romeo:

*Away to heaven, respective lenity,
And fire-eyed fury be my conduct now!*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

V.i.69-70

Anakin:

*Away to heav'n, respective lenity,
And fire-ey'd fury be my conduct now.*

Much Ado About Nothing

Much Ado About Nothing tells the story of two sets of couples: Hero and Claudio, who are natural lovers, and Beatrice and Benedick, who are both sharp-tongued and have sworn off love. All ends well, but not before Beatrice and Benedick are tricked into loving each other (by overhearing their friends say that the other loves them) and Claudio and Hero are saved from a huge misunderstanding—engineered by the villain Don John—that nearly results in her death.

Recommended film version: Kenneth Branagh's 1993 *Much Ado* is still my favorite—it was one of the things that turned me on to Shakespeare in the first place. Joss Whedon's 2012 version is also required viewing.

As in William Shakespeare's *The Empire Striketh Back*, *Much Ado About Nothing* is the play I quote the most in William Shakespeare's *The Phantom of Menace*. Early in the play, Beatrice—a confirmed bachelorette—is found dismissing every type of man suggested to her by her uncles Leonato and Antonio. She predicts that one day she will be found in heaven with the bachelors. Her description of their merriment is borrowed by one of my Jedi, describing how he is feeling:

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

II.i.49

Beatrice:

*He shows me where the bachelors sit,
merry as the day is long*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

IV.V.2

Jedi 1:

Well met, my friend! Say, art thou well?

Jedi 2:

As merry as the day is long.

In the same scene, as Beatrice's uncles chide her for not wanting to see the virtues in any man, Beatrice assures them her sight is just fine. Amidala assures Senator Palpatine the same thing when he suggests she should remain in Coruscant:

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

II.i.82-83

Beatrice:

*I have a good eye, uncle;
I can see a church by daylight.*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

IV.iv.74-75

Amidala:

*I have a good eye, Senator, I can
Yet see a Jedi temple by daylight.*

One of *Much Ado About Nothing*'s most famous characters is Dogberry, a police constable who misuses big words as he tries to impress the nobility. Although I don't borrow a particular line from Dogberry, as I mentioned above Watto similarly misuses words (in these lines, Dogberry's "vigitant" should be "vigilant" and Watto's "specifically" should be "specialty"):

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

III.iii.94

Dogberry:

Adieu: be vigitant, I beseech you

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S

THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

II.iii.29-30

Watto:

*Aye, Nubian, our strong specifically.
We have full many of those parts herein.*

After Benedick, Don Pedro and Beatrice are all deceived by Don John, they think Claudio has dishonored Hero. Beatrice wishes she could fight Claudio, and curses the fact that she was born by a woman and not made for duels. Anakin has a similar feeling about being a man instead of a boy as he considers leaving Tatooine:

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

IV.i.322-323

Beatrice:

*I cannot be a man with wishing,
therefore I will die a
woman with grieving.*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S

THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

III.ii.108-109

Anakin:

*I cannot be a man by staying here,
Therefore I'll be a boy who takes his leave.*

In the same scene, Beatrice tells Benedick that if he won't challenge Claudio, he must not love her. Benedick, finally assenting, responds with these words (echoed by Sabé, Queen Amidala's decoy, as she talks to Qui-Gon):

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

IV.i.331

Benedick:

Enough, I am engaged; I will challenge him.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S

THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

I.v.75

Sabé:

Enough, I am engag'd. I'll challenge this...

Once Benedick has challenged Claudio, Beatrice asks him what happened. Benedick tells her they passed only foul words, to which Beatrice—who is upset that Benedick hasn't done more—gives the response below about foul words. Watto echoes her line when he finds out the Qui-Gon has no money:

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

V.ii.52-54

Beatrice:

*Foul words is but foul wind,
and foul wind is but
foul breath, and foul breath is noisome;
therefore I
will depart unkissed.*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S

THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

II.iii.104-106

Watto:

*No currency is but no parts, no parts
Is but no deal, no deal is noisome; thus,
I shall depart unsatisf'd from thee*

In the same scene, Benedick asks Beatrice how Hero is doing, and then how she herself is doing. A dialogue between Padmé and Anakin echoes them:

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

V.ii.88-92

Benedick:

Now tell me, how doth your cousin?

Beatrice:

Very ill.

Benedick:

And how do you?

Beatrice:

Very ill too.

*WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
THE PHANTOM OF MENACE*

II.iii.104-106

Padmé:

Sweet boy, how dost thou fare?

Anakin:

—I'm very ill.

And how do you?

Padmé:

—Ahh, very ill, too, lad.

A Midsummer Night's Dream

A Midsummer Night's Dream is a fantastical comedy full of spirits and sprites, and the lovers they confuse and ultimately bring together.

Recommended film version: 1999's film version with an all-star cast including Kevin Kline, Michelle Pfeiffer, Rubert Everett, Stanley Tucci, Calista Flockhart, Christian Bale and others.

Towards the beginning of the play, one of the lovers—Lysander—comforts his love Hermia by assuring her that love was never easy. Jar Jar Binks says the same thing about justice:

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

I.i.134

Lysander:

The course of true love never did run smooth.

*WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
THE PHANTOM OF MENACE*

IV.iv.1

Jar Jar:

The course of justice never did run smooth.

The Tempest

One of my favorite of Shakespeare's plays, *The Tempest* is a fantasy in which Prospero, rightful Duke of Milan, has been exiled on an island by his wicked brother Antonio. Using magic and through the help of two spirits named Ariel and Caliban, Prospero shipwrecks a boat of his former countrymen on the island and maneuvers their experience so that he gets his post back and his daughter Miranda finds a husband.

Recommended film version: Julie Taymor's *The Tempest* from 2010 starring Helen Mirren as Prospero is fabulous.

Toward the beginning of the play, Caliban—Prospero’s more dangerous servant—explains how he learned to turn Prospero’s teaching back on him. Jar Jar Binks says something similar, but for a more noble purpose:

THE TEMPEST

I.ii.363-364

Caliban:

*You taught me language; and my profit on’t
Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you
For learning me your language!*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE’S THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

I.iii.40-42

Jar Jar:

*[Aside:] –Your kind did teach
Me human language, and my profit on’t
Is I know how to move your human heart.*

The Sonnets

In addition to plays, Shakespeare wrote 154 sonnets and a handful of other poems. A sonnet—as a poetic form—always has 14 lines (just like a limerick has 5 lines and a haiku has 3). Shakespearean sonnets are in iambic pentameter and have the following rhyme scheme: ABAB CDCD EFEF GG. (That is, lines 1 and 3 rhyme, lines 2 and 4 rhyme, and so on—lines 5 and 7, 6 and 8, 9 and 11, 10 and 12, and then the final two lines rhyme, 13 and 14.) As I said above, I took the idea of the Chorus from *Henry V* one step further and made the Chorus’ lines rhyme. I also wrote the Chorus’ opening Prologue and closing epilogue for *William Shakespeare’s The Phantom of Menace* as Shakespearean sonnets.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE’S THE PHANTOM OF MENACE

Prologue, 1-14:

Chorus:

*Alack! What dreadful turmoil hath beset
The strong Republic and its bonds of peace.
O’er distant trade routes all do sigh and fret
As fears of grim taxation do increase.
The greedy, vile Trade Federation hath
Created a blockade none may pass through.
With deadly battleships they block the path
Unto to the little planet call’d Naboo.
Whilst politicians endlessly debate,
The Chancellor Supreme plies strategy:
He sends to Jedi to negotiate—
They who keep peace within the galaxy.
In time so long ago begins our play,
In troubl’d galaxy far, far away.*



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S *THE PHANTOM OF MENACE*

V.iv.84-97

Chorus:

*With beating drums a'pounding in the air.
And standards wav'd in flight above each head,
With decorations streaming o'er the square
And marching Gungans, joy is here widespread.
Young Anakin, now dress'd as Padawan,
Doth give a knowing not unto the queen.
His Master Jedi Knight, e'en Obi-Wan,
Looks on as Jar Jar rides his kaadu Keen.
The Jedi Council watches the parade,
And Palpatine's odd visage none can probe.
Boss Nass walks forth in pomp, his help repaid
As Padmé offers him a glist'ning globe.
This glove of peace o'er all Naboo holds sway,
Whilst falls the curtain on our merry play.*

SHAKESPEAREAN DEVICES IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S *STAR WARS*®

In addition to direct references to various plays, William Shakespeare's *The Phantom of Menace* contains a handful of literary devices that are used by Shakespeare as well. Here's a sampling of them.

Anaphora

The literary device anaphora means that the same opening of a line is used repeatedly over the course of several lines. An example from Shakespeare's *The First Part of Henry the Sixth* is shown here, as well as two examples from William Shakespeare's *The Phantom of Menace*:

HENRY VI PART ONE

II.iv.11-15

Warwick:

*Between two hawks, which flies the
higher pitch,
Between two dogs, which hath the
deeper mouth,
Between two blades, which bears the
better temper,
Between two horses, which doth
bear him best,
Between two girls, which hath the
merriest eye—*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S *THE PHANTOM OF MENACE*

II.ii.12-15

Nute:

*A double blessing is a boon, indeed,
A double meaning renders one word two,
A double-edged sword may cut both ways,
A double honor is a monarch's gift*

IV.vi.185-188

Jar Jar:

*O shield, give us protection from this war,
O shield, be our defense against the wrong,
O shield, guard all our peaceful future days,
O shield, let we beleaguer'd souls have rest.*

Songs

Shakespeare's plays are full of songs. Sometimes playful, sometimes mystical, sometimes sorrowful, songs can appear at unexpected moments and often break from the rhythm of iambic pentameter. Shmi, Anakin's mother, has a song in *William Shakespeare's The Phantom of Menace*, half joy and half lament:

OTHELLO,
THE MOOR OF VENICE
IV.iii.40-56 (selections)
Desdemona:

*The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree,
Sing all a green willow;
Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,
Sing willow, willow, willow.
Her salt tears fell from her, and soft'ned
the stones,
Sing willow... willow, willow...
Sing all a green willow must by my garland.
Let nobody blame him, his scorn I approve...
I call'd my love false love; but what said
he then?
Sing willow, willow, willow.*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
THE PHANTOM OF MENACE
III.v.59-70
Shmi:

*[Sings:] Shall I make merry? O, shall I make mirth?
Thee did I love, since th' instant of thy birth,
To see thee win is unto my heart gain,
Yet still I fear, and sense some future pain.
Hark! Cracks a mother's heart.
Shall I make merry, O, shall I make mirth?
Today thou hast prov'd thy most ample worth,
Thou showest scores of strength to ev'ryone,
And by the showing, shall I lose a son?
Hark! Cracks a mother's heart.
Shall I make merry, O, shall I make mirth?
Of quiet moments have our lives a dearth,
The visitors who come are noble men,
Yet when they go, shall I know peace again?
Hark! Cracks a mother's heart.*

Premonitory Dreams

Shakespeare sometimes has a character describe a dream that s/he has had, a dream that in some way predicts the character's fate. Anakin relates such a dream to Qui-Gon as he asks Qui-Gon why he's come to Tatooine. George, Duke of Clarence—brother of Richard III—has a famous premonitory dream about his own fate. Clarence is later killed by murders hired by Richard as Richard strives to secure the throne.

RICHARD III
I.iv.58-63
Clarence:

*With that (methoughts) a legion of foul fields
Environ'd me, and howled in mine ears
Such hideous cries that with the very noise
I, trembling, wak'd, and for a season after
Could not believe but I was in hell,
Such terrible impression made my dream.*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
THE EMPIRE STRIKETH BACK
II.iii.248-251
Anakin:

*I drem'd, once long ago, that I—e'en I—
Had train'd to be a Jedi, then return'd
To Tatooine to liberate each slave.
'Twas but a dream, yet O how sweet its touch.*

Extended Wordplay

Frequently, Shakespeare drew out a word and squeezed as much life from it as possible. The best example of this in *William Shakespeare's The Phantom of Menace* is Luke's use of the word "defer" and "deference" in the exchange between Amidala and Valorum shown below. Examples of this are plentiful in Shakespeare, but my favorite is when Benedick and Beatrice are parrying with words and Benedick amidst she's totally wrung the meaning out of the word "foul":

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

V.ii.47-56

Beatrice:

*...yet ere I go, let me go with that I came,
which is, with knowing what hath
pass'd between you and Claudio.*

Benedick:

*Only foul words—and thereupon I
will kiss thee.*

Beatrice:

*Foul words is but foul wind, and foul
wind is but foul breath, and foul
breath is noisome; therefore I will
depart unkiss'd.*

Benedick:

*Thou hast frightened the word out of his
right sense, so forcible is thy wit.*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S THE EMPIRE STRIKETH BACK

V.iv.12-16

Valorum:

*The Federation's point hath been conceded.
Will you, your majesty, defer your motion
That we may soon appoint a keen commission,
Which shall investigate your accusations?*

Amidala:

*Nay, I shall not defer nor be deterr'd,
Nor shall I grant you any deference*