

# **Shakespeare Rocks!**

Junior Script  
by  
Steve Titford

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**CHARACTERS IN EACH SCENE****Prologue**

Al  
Aubrey  
Ollie  
Will

**Scene One**

Anne  
Hamnet  
Judith  
Ollie  
Susanna  
Will

**Scene Two**

Chorus of Minstrels  
Fans 1-4  
Minstrels 1-4  
Ollie  
Will

**Scene Three**

Al  
Aubrey  
Burbage  
Man 1-4  
Nic  
Woman 1-4

**Scene Four**

Actors 1-4  
Al  
Anne  
Apple Sellers  
Aubrey  
Beer Sellers  
Box Office Attendants  
Builders 1-2  
Chorus of Builders  
Heckler  
Minstrels (with trumpets)  
Ollie  
Painters 1-4  
Queen  
Street  
Theatregoers  
Will

**Scene Five**

Al  
Aubrey  
Babs  
Banquo  
Beer Seller  
Bernie  
Beryl  
Beth  
Director  
Mac  
Minstrels (instrumental)  
Sorcerers 1-5

**Scene Six**

Anne  
Bernie  
Burbage  
Chorus of Fans  
Fans 1-4  
Juliet  
Lutenist  
Minstrels (instrumental)  
Nic  
Ollie  
Recorder Player  
Romeo  
Street  
Will

**Scene Seven**

Al  
Anne  
Aubrey  
Will

**Scene Eight**

Entire Cast for final song.

**LIST OF PROPERTIES****Prologue**

Will's desk.....	Scene Prop
Will's chair .....	Scene Prop
Inkpot.....	Scene Prop
Quill .....	Scene Prop
Parchment .....	Scene Prop
Will's diary .....	Aubrey
Pamphlet .....	Ollie

**Scene One**

Feather duster .....	Anne
Skull.....	Scene Prop
Pamphlet .....	Ollie
Giant 'Book of Insults' .....	Scene Prop

**Scene Two**

Instruments (including a violin, recorder, lute, trumpet & a drum) .....	Minstrels
Sunglasses .....	Minstrels
Script .....	Will
Posters .....	Fans
Pom-Poms.....	Fans

**Scene Three**

Will's diary .....	Aubrey
Cane .....	Burbage
Fake beard .....	Man 4
Gaudy high heeled shoes.....	Nic

**Scene Four**

Will's diary .....	Aubrey
Large wad of tickets.....	Box Office Attendants
Money pot.....	Box Office Attendants
Large pennies.....	Theatregoers
Trays of beer mugs.....	Beer Sellers
Baskets of apples .....	Apple Sellers
2 Trumpets .....	Minstrels
Pencils & large sketchpads .....	Painters

Unflattering sketch of Will and Queen Elizabeth 1 (See Next Page ).....Painter 4  
 2 metre long scroll (rolled up & tied)..... Street  
 Beer jug ..... Beer Seller

### Scene Five

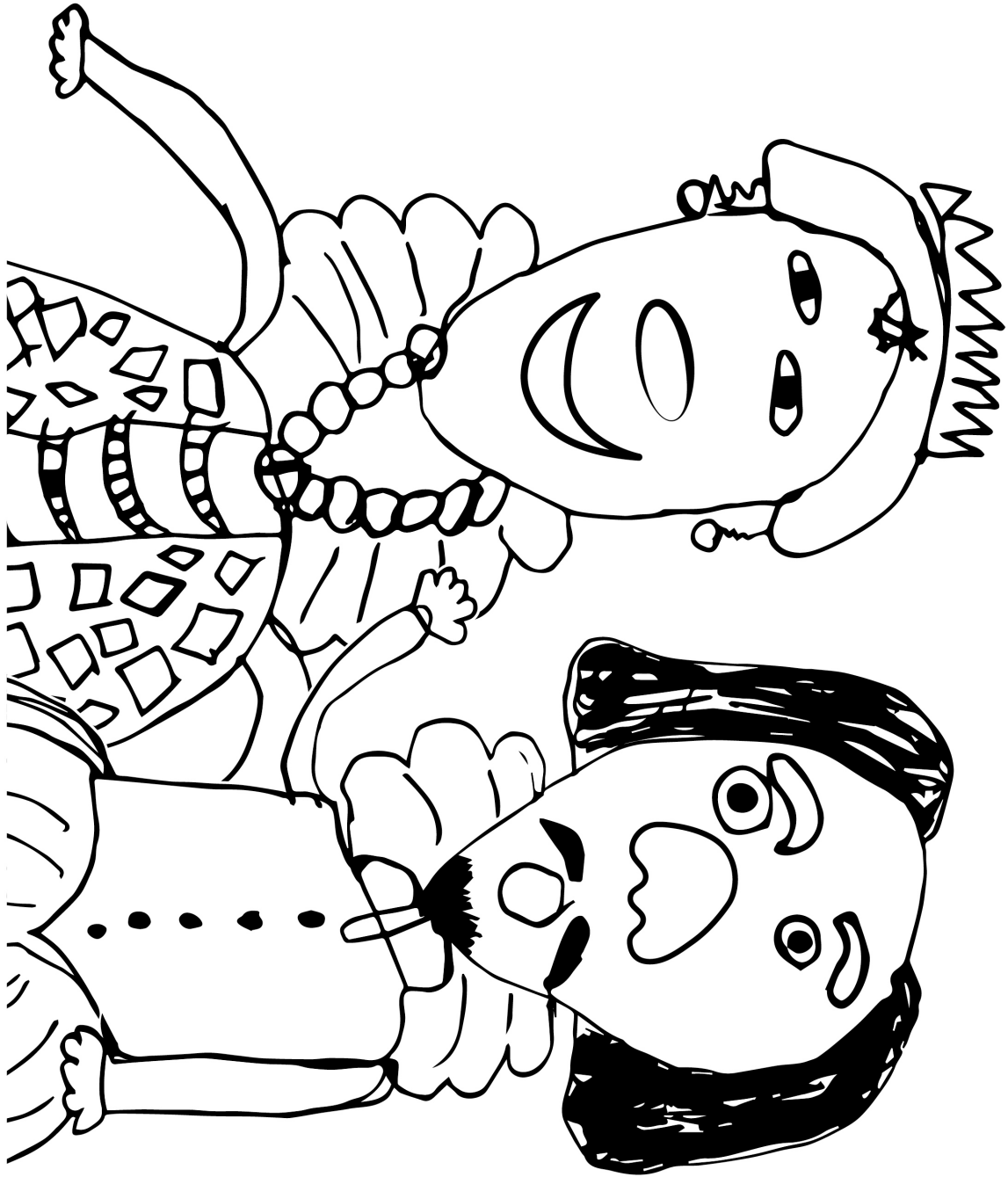
Will's diary .....Aubrey  
 Drum and beater..... Minstrel  
 Cymbal and beater ..... Minstrel  
 Drum..... Minstrel  
 Cymbal ..... Minstrel  
 Large dictionary ..... Scene Prop

### Scene Six

Scorched debris (wrap cardboard rolls/polystyrene etc. in black crepe paper) ... Scene Prop  
 Charred recorder ..... Romeo  
 Burnt lute ..... Scene Prop  
 Various instruments.....Minstrels

### Scene Seven

Will's bed ..... Scene Prop  
 Washbowl ..... Scene Prop  
 Bottle of potion..... Scene Prop  
 Blonde wig ..... Will  
 Towel ..... Will  
 Giant pencil with '2B' inscription ..... Scene Prop



## **PRODUCTION NOTES**

Welcome to ***Shakespeare Rocks!***, a modern musical comedy about the life of William Shakespeare. To help your company get the most enjoyment out of this show, it may help to consider the following production suggestions.

### **CASTING**

A small or large cast can perform the show. It allows for up to **57** speaking/solo sung roles of varying sizes and an unlimited number of chorus parts.

Several of the speaking/solo sung roles have **very few lines**. They could be easily merged to **reduce** the cast size to as few as **27** speaking/solo sung roles. Our suggestions of how to reduce the cast size, written in scene order, are as follows -

*The following roles could be merged and **do not** require a costume change:*

A single **actor/actress** could play these **5** roles:

Minstrel 1, Minstrel 3, Trumpet Player 1 (non-speaking), Drum Player (non-speaking), Lute Player

A single **actor/actress** could play these **5** roles:

Minstrel 2, Minstrel 4, Trumpet Player 2 (non-speaking); Cymbal Player (non-speaking), Recorder Player

A single **actor** could play these **3** roles:

Actor 1, Actor 3, Romeo

A single **actor/actress** could play these **3** roles:

Painter 1, Painter 3, Heckler

A single **actor/actress** could play these **2** roles:

Painter 2, Painter 4

A single **actor/actress** could play these **3** roles:

Sorcerer 1, Sorcerer 3, Sorcerer 5

A single **actor/actress** could play these **2** roles:

Sorcerer 2, Sorcerer 4

The following roles could also be merged. They require **one simple** costume change for which ample time has been allowed:

A single **actor** could play these **3** roles:

Man 1, Man 3, (Costume Change), Banquo

A single **actor** could play these **3** roles:

Man 2, Man 4, (Costume Change), Bernie

A single **actress** could play these **2** roles:

Woman 1, (Costume Change), Beth

A single **actress** could play these **2** roles:

Woman 2, (Costume Change), Director

A single **actress** could play these **3** roles:

Woman 3, Woman 4; (Costume Change); Apple Seller

A single **actor** could play these **4** roles:

Hamnet, (Costume Change), Actor 2, Actor 4, Mac

A single **actress** could play these **2** roles:

Judith, (Costume Change), Babs

A single **actress** could play these **2** roles:

Susanna, (Costume Change), Beryl

A single **actress** could play these **2** roles:

Queen, (Costume Change), Juliet

In addition:

A single **actress** could play these **3** roles with 2 **very simple** changes:

Fan 1, Fan 3, (put on a hard hat), Builder 1, (take off the hard hat), Fan 1 and 3

A single **actor/actress** could play these **3** roles with 2 **very simple** changes:

Fan 2, Fan 4, (put on a hard hat), Builder 2, (take off the hard hat), Fan 2 and 4



Aubrey and Al are essentially narrators. Although they have the longest speeches, they can read their dialogue from Will's diary – a prop that they carry in every scene.

If you are performing the show with an entire school, you may like to assign a whole year-group to a specific scene. There are many group-parts that can have a large number of non-speaking performers – such as Fans, Minstrels, Men-Dressed-As-Women, Builders, Actors and Sorcerers.

While some of the roles are specifically male or female, many others can be performed by either gender. These are all stated in the cast list.

There are only 2 roles with significant sung solo lines – Romeo and Juliet, who only appear in one scene. Burbage and Nic have 2 very easily sung lines each – the quality of their singing is not very important so long as it's funny and loud! There are also 4 Minstrels who have 2 easily rapped lines each. Again - loud, funny and in-time will suffice!

## **ACCENTS**

Burbage and Nic are the only 2 characters where specific accents are suggested. Elsewhere, it doesn't really matter which accents are used. However, making them appropriate to the characters will increase the comic effect. For example - an upper-class accent works well for Aubrey, Will and Ollie. A down-to-earth, rougher accent will enhance the characters of Al, Street and the Builders.

A small-but-important point regarding the word "Ma'am": when addressing The Queen it should be pronounced as in the English word 'Ham'.

## **DELIVERY**

**When performing comedy, it is essential that the performers deliver their lines clearly. Younger performers in particular should be encouraged to relax, 'breathe', 'leave gaps' and use 'big voices' to 'shout' their lines to the 'back of the audience'. They should also be reminded to wait for any audience laughter to quieten down before continuing their scene.**

**Within the dialogue, there is a lot of helpful punctuation and many stage directions that will help with the timing and delivery of the jokes. The louder and hammier, the better!**

## **COSTUMES**

The Elizabethan era has a lot of scope for bright colours and flamboyant costumes. However, the right look can be effectively achieved with a small budget and a bit of searching on the Internet. Frills and ruffs will add a touch of Tudor class to any outfit!

For the ladies, simple smocks are fine for many of the roles. Billowing skirts and tight bodices will look great on any 'woman' (or any man-dressed-as-a-woman!) For the men, high-cut boots and billowing breeches are recommended. Waistcoats and hats will also help.

Many of the characters are loosely based on real persons. A simple search on the Internet will give you lots of ideas for the following characters: William Shakespeare, Anne Hathaway (Shakespeare's wife, not the actress born in 1982!), Richard Burbage and Queen Elizabeth I.

More specifically, the Superstitious Sorcerers can all wear black cloaks, long black wigs and scary make-up. The Men-Dressed-As-Women should be very hairy to make it clear that they are men (within the bounds of decency, of course!)

A few anachronisms thrown in will also enhance the comic effect. For example, the Builders can all wear modern-day yellow hard hats while the rapping Minstrels can all wear sunglasses. Aubrey and Al are present-day characters and as such can wear smart contemporary clothing such as a suit or/and evening dress.

A nice touch (although not essential) is to have Will and Anne 'age' throughout the story. This can be done with a series of wigs depicting Anne going grey and Will going bald at the front.

## **SCENERY**

As scenery goes, this is as simple as it gets! One set will suffice for the entire show. Will's study is a simple table-and-chair affair with a few decorative props. It stays on one side of the set and should take up about a third of the stage. The rest of the stage resembles a 'stage' or a 'rehearsal room'. A painted backcloth with a thatched roof and Tudor beams to portray The Globe Theatre would be nice. Will's bed (used only in the penultimate scene) could easily just be a sturdy table covered with a blanket.

## **PROPS**

All the props can be easily made or obtained from fancy dress or party shops. Everything needs to be larger than life – right down to the size of the lettering on the cover of Will's diary and 'Book of Insults'.

## **MUSIC**

All the music required to stage this production, including sound effects, is found on the Backing Track CD. A vocal recording is provided as a guide and to enable the swift learning of songs. The backing tracks without vocals are ideal to use in rehearsals and performances, and the two scores give vast flexibility if you have the luxury of a live pianist.

The songs (with the exception of a few minor solos) are designed to be performed with simple actions by the entire cast. The help of separate choir is highly recommended. A good technique is to use any cast members who are not in the current scene to boost the number of singers in the choir. The choir should also be part of the show - performing the 'actions' and any spoken dialogue marked 'ALL:'.

The choir can also perform the solo lines if a suitable soloist isn't available.

### **FINALLY.....**

This show is designed to be uplifting, energetic, tongue-in-cheek and above all enjoyable to take part in! It is educational and historically accurate to a point, then artistic licence takes over for the sake of comedy!

If there is anything you are not sure about, please ask – we're here to help. Although we have offered many suggestions, feel free to use your imagination and interpret the script in your own way. As long as you have fun, your audience will too!

Please let us have your thoughts and comments.

Your contact is [sarah@musicline-ltd.com](mailto:sarah@musicline-ltd.com)

We are also on "Facebook" under "Musicline School Musicals".

If you are able to upload any photos or videos of your performance to the Internet, please send us the link so we can share your experience.

I wish you a successful production and hope that you all have a great time.

Steve Titford