

How to Become King: Pre-reading Activity for William Shakespeare's "Richard III"¹

Post-secondary English Literature

<p>OBJECTIVES</p>	<p>Following this activity, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop critical thinking skills that are necessary to read Shakespeare and understand key events in the play. ▪ Work in a group setting to develop questions and predictions about the play after participating in the scenario they are given. ▪ given a description of Richard's problem within the play, the students will problem solving techniques to find a solution for the problem with 100% accuracy
<p>MATERIALS</p>	<p>-scenario provided by the professor -notebook paper and pencil -1 computer per group to develop a presentation on 280slides.com</p>
	<div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="flex: 1;">  <p style="text-align: center; color: blue;">--Antony Sher as Richard III--</p> </div> <div style="flex: 2; padding-left: 10px;"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Divide the students into groups of 4 to 6 people. 2. Provide each group with the following scenario: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, the third son of a duke who is killed in a civil war against Henry VI, the King of England. In revenge, you join with your brothers to overthrow the King and kill his son, leaving his wife, Lady Anne, a widow. Your oldest brother, Edward, has become the new King of England. However, Edward is dying, and you want to become the King when he is gone. <p>There are some barriers to your ambition, though. King Edward has a wife, Queen Elizabeth, who has two brothers and two grown sons from a previous marriage. The King and Queen have two young sons, Edward and Richard, who are in</p> </div> </div>

¹ **PROCEDURES** Adapted from <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/curriculum-planning/teaching-methods/3804.html?page=2&detoured=1>

	<p>line before you, and a pretty, young daughter, Elizabeth. And also, there is your popular older brother George, Duke of Clarence, who might stand in your way. Clarence has two children, Margaret and Edward. Although you are intelligent and courageous in battle, you suffer from a physical deformity. You are of small stature, sinister looking, and have a crooked back that hunches you over and raises your left shoulder higher than your right. You have an aggressive attitude, a persuasive tongue, and are quick to argue or fight. You aren't interested in love or the benefits of peace. All you want is the ultimate power of kingship. How will you get it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a plan for overcoming the obstacles before you and gaining kingship. Figure into your plan: Lady Anne, Queen Elizabeth and her daughter Elizabeth, your persuasive ability, the Tower of London, some unscrupulous nobles, and a couple of common murderers. <p>3. Give the groups 20 minutes to plan how Richard III will become king. Each group will write out their prediction to be put into a presentation on 280slides.com. In their presentation, the group should talk about each character and how they think Richard will overcome each of them on his way to the throne.</p> <p>4. Have each group present their plan, making sure they talk about what will happen to each of the listed characters.</p> <p>6. Ask students why it is important to ask questions and predict events before reading the play, especially a Shakespearean play. Talk about the underlying political themes and events in the play, specifically the shift in power from the House of York to the House of Lancaster and the history of the War of the Roses as a whole. The teacher can even make a 280slides presentation on this history so that it is presented in an organized manner for the students to understand all of the information.</p>
EVALUATION	<p>Professor will evaluate the students' plans based on the predictions they give. If the students obviously invested a good amount of effort into making their predictions, students will receive the points. If the students aren't specific enough, for example, by just saying that Richard kills Clarence, they will not receive all of the points. They must describe how Richard will do away with Clarence in the play.</p>