

WILL POWER



EXPERIENCE GUIDE

EPISODE FIVE

ROMEO AND JULIET

STAGE COMBAT

When people go to a superhero movie, they are expecting epic battles! Shakespeare's audiences were the same way. People came for the stage combat, sword fighting, dueling, and vicious verbal insults. And people knew a good fight when they saw it!

During the Elizabethan era, wealthy men studied fencing and dueling as part of their upbringing. Soldiers also had to learn swordplay. The common folk would attend public swordfights (sort of like our modern-day WWE.) So, if the actors in Shakespeare's plays didn't get it right, the audience would let them know by booing, hissing or throwing things.

There were other perils involved with stage combat! Unlike today, Elizabethan actors used real weapons. There were reports of actors puncturing eyes or getting stabbed by accident.

There were very few rehearsals, so actors didn't have much time to solidify their moves. Often, they'd reuse fight moves from different plays to save time.

Another peril involved the special effects. To create the effect of bloody battle, actors would simulate blood with red vinegar. Or they would use real sheep blood in a bladder hidden under the actor's clothes that would be punctured during the fight. Gross.

Fight Choreographer is a cool job in the theater!

Their job is to teach actors safe fighting technique and plan the movements for the stage fight.

WEAPONS

Elizabethan fighters frequently used two weapons.

A **rapier** is a long, light, narrow, one-handed sword. Its name comes from the Spanish *espada ropera*, or "robe sword" because gentlemen would wear them as a fashion item under their cloaks.

Men also carried a **dagger** which could be used to block an opponent's rapier blade.



SHAKESPEAREAN INSULTS

Shakespeare's characters didn't just dual with weapons – they sparred with words! They called each other ugly, filthy names that certainly conjured some nasty images. Create your own Shakespearean insults by combing a word from the first and second columns with one from the third column!

Beslubbering
Dankish
Frothy
Gleeking
Goatish
Gorbellied
Greasy
Grizzled
Hideous
Infectious
Lumpish
Reeky
Tottering

Bat-fowling
Boil-brained
Beetle-headed
Clapper-clawed
Dismal-dreaming
Fly-bitten
Folly-fallen
Lean-witted
Lily-livered
Rude-growing
Tickle-brained
Unchin-snouted
White-livered

Barnacle
Baggage
Bladder
Bugbear
Canker-blossom
Dewberry
Flap-dragon
Giglet
Harpy
Hedge-pig
Nut-hook
Pantaloon
Ratsbane

Shout your Shakespearean insults while taking one of these fencing poses!



A. En-Garde



B. Parry & Lunge

RL.8.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

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WILL POWER TEAM:

Crystal Marie Stewart, Actor, video production, curriculum development

Christina Farrell, Curriculum development, stop motion animation

Rob Merritt, Video editing and production

Adam Knight, Riverside Theatre Producing Artistic Director

Irena Sarić, Riverside Theatre Managing Director

ACTORS:

Crystal Marie Stewart: Mercutio (Act 3.1), Juliet (Act 2.2)

Aaron Stonerook: Tybalt (Act 3.1), Romeo (Act 2.2)

Christina Sullivan: Benvolio (Act 3.1)

Ray Vanek: Romeo (Act 3.1)

Kevin Michael Moore, Fight Choreographer

Thank you to the **TCR Costume Department!**