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## Twitter = Colloquial Language? Paraphrasing *Macbeth* Act 2, Scene 3 Using Twitter Rationale

### 1. Developing the activity:

For many secondary students, Shakespeare is a particularly difficult area of study. The seemingly foreign language tends to be the most intimidating and at times frustrating part about trying to decipher a Shakespearean play. Shakespeare, however, remains a significant part of the secondary curriculum, leading our group to want to make an activity that would engage students, while at the same time help to build their comprehension of the text. We also wanted to incorporate technology to create an activity that would be relevant to students.

After considering the many types of social media that youth engage in today, we decided to use Twitter and have students take lines from a scene in *Macbeth* and turn them into Twitter messages using contemporary English. Students would make their own Twitter accounts in the name of their character and post a modern translation of their character's lines. We think that this activity will accomplish our goal of making Shakespeare more accessible and relatable to students.

### 2. Pre-production strategies:

Our group chose *Macbeth* because it is a play that is commonly studied in the English curriculum. We chose Act II scene 3 because it is a comical scene to begin and one that several of us taught over our practicum and enjoyed. We knew we wanted to incorporate social media for its relevance to youth today, and chose Twitter because it allows the student to say some long speeches with only 140 characters. Students need to find the meaning of the passage, which they are analyzing and rewrite it to get their point across succinctly.

### 3. Distribution of tasks/roles and time management:

Our group spent time after class to discuss the project and delegate tasks to each group member. Much of the work was completed on our own time after we used class time to discuss the direction of the project and divide the workload. While some took on the role of a character and created the Twitter messages, others took the task of the written portion after the group contributed different ideas for the write up. Each group member contributed equally to the project and were able to voice their thoughts and suggestions.

### 4. Assessment:

We assessed this activity in a group setting and relied on peer support and feedback to modify it. We also matched the tweets up to the original text to make sure they faithfully reflected the texts meaning. We relied on the tweet generating software to make sure that our tweets stayed within the restrictions of the tweet format. During our initial planning time we made sure that we would employ multiple mediums by conferencing with one another and with our professor, deciding on tweets, digital media, and visual and oral performance. We assessed the collaborative nature of the assignment by dividing the tasks of translating the text and generating the tweets, making the rubric, and answering the discussion questions, equally. The presentation of the multimedia project will also be performed by all members.

ELEMENT	Exemplary 3	Proficient 2	Partially Proficient 1	Unsatisfactory 0	POINTS
<b>Content</b>	Tweets consistently represent the events of the scene, and each turn the character takes to speak.	Most tweets provide a faithful representation of the scene's events but may omit some of the characters' conversation.	The tweets omit some of the scene's events and conversation.	The tweets are missing a large amount of the scenes events and conversation.	____/3
	Text is translated from its original form to another form without losing its meaning. E.g. text talk	Some of the text is translated from its original form to another form.	There is little attempt to translate the text to another form.	Original text is simply pasted into the tweets.	____/3
<b>Creativity</b>	Tweets are creative and there is an attempt to use hashtags.	Tweets lack creativity and serve more as a summary rather than a translation. A few hashtags are used.	Tweets lack creativity and there are no hashtags used.	There is an absence of creativity in the planning of this project.	____/3

<b>Multimedia</b>	Project includes 3 or more media in this adaptation of Macbeth.	Project includes 2 or more media in this adaptation of Macbeth.	Project includes only one medium to present the adaptation of Macbeth.	Project is not created.	____/3
<b>Group Contribution</b>	The formulation and creation of the multimedia project was a collaborative effort with the work divided equally among all members.			The project is noticeably missing the collaborative effort needed to either formulate the idea or create the project.	____/2
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>					____/14

#### 5. Challenges and learning opportunities:

Our goal with this project was to present Shakespeare with a modern twist, using modern English and technology to make it more engaging and relevant to students. Through the process of translating the script, students will be able to gain a deeper understanding of the text and engage with it in a creative way.

While the use of social media in this project can serve as an effective hook for students, it may also raise issues with privacy concerns. Though the students would be making fictional accounts, a discussion on appropriate online behaviour and internet safety would be beneficial to preface this assignment. As teachers, we would also have to ensure that students have access to the technology required to use Twitter, which may include using class time to use computers. Furthermore, it may be difficult for students to convey complex ideas in the 140 character limitation on Twitter. This limitation, however, is also a learning opportunity as it pushes students to ensure that they have a deep understanding of the text in order to translate it in a succinct manner.

Shakespearean language is often the most intimidating aspect of his plays, and in order for students to transform it and rewrite it in a concise manner, they would need scaffolding and guided practice before accomplishing the task independently. We used Sparknotes' translation of Shakespeare as a starting point and as a sample for students. Students would also require sufficient time to work collaboratively to analyze and discuss the text. Working in groups is also a learning opportunity as students scaffold and support each other's learning.

## Works Cited

SparkNotes Editors. "SparkNote on Macbeth." SparkNotes.com. SparkNotes LLC. 2002. Web. 04 Jul. 2014.