TIMON
OF ATHENS

Stratford
FESTIVAL
2017 STUDY GUIDE
TIMON OF ATHENS
TIMON OF ATHENS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
DIRECTOR STEPHEN OUIMETTE

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Cover: Joseph Ziegler. Photography by Lynda Churilla.
# Table of Contents

## The Place
- The Stratford Festival Story .......................................................... 1

## The Play
- The Playwright: William Shakespeare ............................................... 3
- A Shakespearean Timeline ................................................................. 4
- Plot Synopsis ..................................................................................... 6
- Sources, Origins and Production History .......................................... 7
- Curriculum Connections .................................................................. 9
- Themes and Motifs ............................................................................ 9

## The Production
- Artistic Team and Cast ..................................................................... 10

## Lesson Plans and Activities
- The Ball Game: A Warm-up Activity ............................................... 12
- Tableau the Story .............................................................................. 16
- Tossing Lines ................................................................................... 20
- Discussion Topics ............................................................................ 27

## Resources.......................................................................................... 28
THE STRATFORD STORY

That Stratford, Ontario, is the home of the largest classical repertory theatre in North America is ultimately attributable to the dream of one man, Stratford-born journalist Tom Patterson.

In the early 1950s, seeing the economy of his home town endangered by the withdrawal of the railway industry that had sustained it for nearly 80 years, Patterson conceived the idea of a theatre festival devoted to the works of William Shakespeare. His vision won the support not only of Stratford City Council and an enthusiastic committee of citizens, but also of the legendary British actor and director Tyrone Guthrie, who agreed to become the proposed festival’s first Artistic Director. The Stratford Shakespearean Festival of Canada was incorporated as a legal entity on October 31, 1952. A giant canvas tent was ordered from a firm in Chicago, and in the parklands by Stratford’s Avon River work began on a concrete amphitheatre at the centre of which was to be a revolutionary thrust stage created to Guthrie’s specifications by internationally renowned theatrical designer Tanya Moiseiwitsch.

From the balcony of that stage, on the night of July 13, 1953, actor Alec Guinness spoke the opening lines of Richard III: “Now is the winter of our discontent/ Made glorious summer by this sun of York.” Those words marked the triumphant end to what had sometimes seemed a hopeless struggle against the odds to turn Patterson’s dream into a reality – and the beginning of an astonishing new chapter in Canadian theatre history. The other production of that inaugural six-week season, a modern-dress version of All’s Well That Ends Well, opened the following night, confirming the opinion of celebrated novelist Robertson Davies that the new Festival was an achievement “of historic importance not only in Canada, but wherever theatre is taken seriously – that is to say, in every civilized country in the world.”

Time proved the truth of Davies’ words, for the Festival’s pillared, porticoed thrust stage revolutionized the performance of classical and contemporary theatre in the latter half of the 20th century and inspired the design of more than a dozen other major venues around the world, including the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis, the Beaumont Theatre at Lincoln Centre and, in England, the Chichester Festival Theatre, the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield and the Olivier Theatre at the Royal National Theatre in London. Over the years, the Festival has made some amendments to the original design of Moiseiwitsch’s stage, without changing its essential format.

At the end of the 1956 season, the giant canvas tent that had housed the Festival’s first four seasons was dismantled for the last time to make way for a new and permanent facility to be erected around
the existing stage. Designed by architect Robert Fairfield, the new building would be one of the most distinctive in the world of the performing arts: its circular floor plan and crenellated roof paying striking tribute to the Festival’s origins under canvas.

In the years since its first season, the Stratford Festival has set benchmarks for the production not only of Shakespeare, Molière, the ancient Greeks and other great dramatists of the past, but also of such 20th-century masters as Samuel Beckett, Bertolt Brecht, Anton Chekhov, Henrik Ibsen, Eugene O’Neill and Tennessee Williams. In addition to acclaimed productions of the best in operetta and musical theatre, it has also showcased—and in many cases premièred—works by outstanding Canadian and other contemporary playwrights.

Its artists have included the finest actors, directors and designers in Canada, as well as many from abroad. Among the internationally renowned performers who have graced its stages are Alan Bates, Brian Bedford, Douglas Campbell, Len Cariou, Brent Carver, Hume Cronyn, Brian Dennehy, Colm Feore, Megan Follows, Lorne Greene, Paul Gross, Uta Hagen, Julie Harris, Martha Henry, William Hutt, James Mason, Eric McCormack, Loreena McKennitt, Richard Monette, John Neville, Nicholas Pennell, Christopher Plummer, Sarah Polley, Douglas Rain, Kate Reid, Jason Robards, Paul Scofield, William Shatner, Maggie Smith, Jessica Tandy, Peter Ustinov and Al Waxman.

Drawing audiences of more than 400,000 each year, the Festival season now runs from April to November, with productions being presented in four unique theatres. It offers an extensive program of educational and enrichment activities for students, teachers and other patrons, and operates its own in-house school of professional artist development: The Birmingham Conservatory for Classical Theatre.

Stratford Festival performances take place in four distinct stages:

Festival Theatre

Avon Theatre

Tom Patterson Theatre

Studio Theatre

For interactive classroom activities related to the Stratford Festival, go to the CBC Digital Archives: http://bit.ly/Yy7eK6
Born in Stratford-upon-Avon, a small Warwickshire town, in 1564, William Shakespeare was the eldest son of John Shakespeare, a glover, and Mary Arden, the daughter of a wealthy farmer. The exact date of his birth is unknown, but baptismal records point to it being the same as that of his death, April 23. He probably attended what is now the Edward VI Grammar School, where he would have studied Latin literature, and at 18, he married a farmer’s daughter, Anne Hathaway, with whom he had three children: Susanna, born in 1583, and, two years later, the twins Hamnet (who died in childhood) and Judith.

Nothing further is known of his life until 1592, when his earliest known play, the first part of Henry VI, became a hit in London, where Shakespeare was now working as an actor. Soon afterwards, an outbreak of the plague forced the temporary closure of the theatres, and Shakespeare turned for a while to writing poetry. By 1594, however, he was back in the theatre, acting with the Lord Chamberlain’s Men. He quickly established himself as one of London’s most successful dramatists, with an income that enabled him, in 1597, to buy a mansion back in Stratford. In 1599 he became a shareholder in London’s newly built Globe Theatre.

In 1603, Shakespeare’s company was awarded a royal patent, becoming known as the King’s Men. Possibly as early as 1610, the playwright retired to his home in Stratford-upon-Avon, living there – and continuing to invest in real estate – until his death on April 23, 1616. He is buried in the town’s Holy Trinity Church.

In the first collected edition of his works in 1623, fellow dramatist Ben Jonson called him a man “not of an age, but for all time”. Not only did Shakespeare write some of the most popular plays of all time, but he was a very prolific writer, writing 38 (canonically accepted) works in 23 years. His work covered many subjects and styles, including comedies, tragedies, histories and romances, all bearing his hallmark expansive plots, extraordinary language and humanist themes. Shakespeare enjoyed great popularity in his lifetime, and 400 years later, he is still the most produced playwright in the world.
ABOUT Timon of Athens

A SHAKESPEAREAN TIMELINE

1558   Elizabeth I crowned.
1564   William Shakespeare born.
1572   Actors not under the protection of a patron declared rogues and vagabonds.
1578   James VI (later James I of England) takes over government of Scotland.
1579   Publication of North’s English translation of Plutarch’s Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans.
1580   Francis Drake returns in triumph form his voyage around the world; travelling players perform at Stratford.
1582   Shakespeare marries Anne Hathaway; Susanna is born six months later and the twins Hamnet and Judith in 1585.
1587   “The Rose” theatre opens in London. Mary Queen of Scots is executed.
1588   Spanish Armada defeated.
1589   Shakespeare finds work as an actor in London; he lives apart from his wife for 21 years.
1590-1591   The Two Gentlemen of Verona, The Taming of the Shrew.
1591   2 Henry VI, 3 Henry VI.
1592 Thousands die of plague in London; theatres closed. *1 Henry VI, Titus Andronicus, Richard III.*

1593 *The Comedy of Errors.*

1594 Shakespeare becomes a shareholder of his theatre company, The Lord Chamberlain’s Men.

1594 *Love’s Labour’s Lost.*

1595 *Richard II, Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night’s Dream.*

1596 Shakespeare’s son, Hamnet, dies.

1596-1597 *King John, The Merchant of Venice, 1 Henry IV.*

1597-1598 *The Merry Wives of Windsor, 2 Henry IV, Much Ado About Nothing.*


1598-1599 *Henry V, Julius Caesar.*

1599-1600 *As You Like It.*

1600-1601 *Hamlet, Twelfth Night.*

1601 Shakespeare’s patron arrested for treason following the Essex rebellion; he is later pardoned.

1602 *Troilus and Cressida.*

1603 Queen Elizabeth dies and is succeeded by James I; Shakespeare’s theatre company becomes the King’s Men.

1603 *Measure for Measure, Othello.*

1604 Work begins on the King James bible.

1604-1605 *All’s Well That Ends Well, Timon of Athens, King Lear (Q)*

1606 *Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra.*

1607 *Pericles, Prince of Tyre.*

1608 *Coriolanus.*

1609 *The Winter’s Tale.*

1610 *King Lear (F), Cymbeline.*

1610 Shakespeare retires to Stratford-upon-Avon.

1611 *The Tempest.*

1611 King James version of the bible published.

1613 *Henry VIII (All is True), The Two Noble Kinsmen.*

1613 “The Globe” theatre burns down.

1616 Shakespeare dies in Stratford-upon-Avon.

1623 The first folio of Shakespeare’s collected plays is published.

* some dates are approximate
ABOUT Timon of Athens

SYNOPSIS OF THE PLOT

The Athenian nobleman Timon is renowned for his lavish gifts and extravagant hospitality. His loyal steward, Flavius, and the cynical philosopher Apemantus warn him that his reckless generosity can only lead to ruin and disillusionment, but Timon, espousing an almost fanatical belief in human goodness, ignores their advice.

When his money runs out and his creditors demand payment, Timon sends confidently to his “friends” for help. When all refuse him, he throws one last party, at which he curses all the guests before retreating to the woods outside the city to nurse his newfound hatred of humanity.

His anger remains unabated even when, digging for roots to keep himself alive, he comes upon a buried cache of gold. Cursing it as an evil, he gives some to Alcibiades, a former Athenian general who is about to attack the city in revenge for his unjustified exile, and some to Flavius, his former steward. Refusing an offer of friendship from Apemantus, Timon also rejects a desperate plea from the Athenian senate for help in defending the city against Alcibiades’s army.

His last act is to compose his own epitaph, which bitterly reaffirms his misanthropy. News of Timon’s death, however, has a sobering effect on Alcibiades, who vows to enter Athens in a spirit of forgiveness rather than revenge.

Joseph Ziegler as Timon in Stratford Festival’s 2017 production of Timon of Athens

Photography by Lynda Churilla
ABOUT Timon of Athens

SOURCES AND ORIGINS

The rhetorician and satirist Lucian of Samosata (A.D. 125 to 180) wrote a dialogue titled *Timon or The Misanthrope* in which he describes a man who lavished money on his friends until all was spent; his friends then deserted him and Timon was forced to hard field labour to survive. He finds a pot of gold and his “friends” return but he drives them away.

Plutarch suggested that Timon lived during the time of the Peloponnesian War (431 to 404 B.C.).

The story of Timon appears in other works from the Greek period. According to the Greek geographer Strabo, following his defeat at Actium Mark Antony retreated to a house on a spit of land that he named Timonium because he felt that he, like Timon, had been deserted by his friends and wanted to live the rest of his life in solitude.

William Paynter’s *The Palace of Pleasure* (first published in 1566 and re-issued and expanded in 1575) contains many tales from Greek and Roman writers including one with a plot similar to that of Shakespeare’s play.

STAGE HISTORY

Although some consider *Timon of Athens* to be an unfinished play by Shakespeare, it is now more generally believed that he wrote it in collaboration with Thomas Middleton, likely between 1605 and 1608. Current research suggests that Middleton, whose play *The Changeling* is also being presented at Stratford this season, may have written as much as one-third of *Timon of Athens*.

The play was almost certainly performed during Shakespeare’s life and there are some who suggest that Shakespeare himself played the Poet.

The play was included in the First Folio of 1623 but its first known production was in 1674 in an adaptation by Thomas Shadwell titled *The History of Timon of Athens, the Man-Hater*; original music for Shadwell’s play was written by Louis Grabu and Henry Purcell wrote the additional music for a revival in 1695. Although adaptations written by a number of playwrights were commonly performed well into the 20th century, Shakespeare’s text was played in Dublin in 1761.

The first English production of *Timon* that was largely based on Shakespeare’s text was in 1851 at Sadler’s Wells.

The play is rarely performed even today. It played on Broadway in a 1993 production that was based on Stratford’s production of 1991, featuring Brian Bedford. It was not remounted until 2011 when a production under the auspices of The Public Theater’s Shakespeare Lab opened, directed by Barry Edelstein and featuring Richard Thomas.
The Chicago Shakespeare Theater staged the play in 1997, its first experiment with a modern-dress production of Shakespeare; it was presented again in 2012 with Ian McDiarmid, directed by Barbara Gaines.

Also in 2012, Britain’s National Theatre produced a modern dress version set in the City of London in a time of fraud and greed. Directed by Nicholas Hytner, it was broadcast as part of the National Theatre Live program.

**OTHER PERSPECTIVES**

A film titled *I, Timon*, made by Australian directors Bramwell and Dan Noah (with screenplay by Bramwell Noah) is scheduled for release in 2017. Bramwell Noah also appears in the film as Timon.

The play was filmed for television in 1981 as part of the BBC Television Shakespeare series. It was presented in Jacobean dress and featured Jonathan Pryce; the production was directed by Jonathan Miller.

**STRATFORD FESTIVAL PRODUCTION HISTORY**


2004:  Tom Patterson Theatre. Directed by Stephen Ouimette with sets by Lorenzo Savoini and costumes by Dana Osborne; Anton Piatigorsky was the assistant director. The production featured Peter Donaldson (Timon), Tom McCamus (Apemantus), Robert Persichini (Lucius), Sean Arbuckle (Alcibiades), Bernard Hopkins (Flavius), Andrew Muir (Poet), Laura Condlln (Phrynia) and Sarah McVie (Timandra). Bonnie Beecher was the lighting designer, Todd Charlton was the sound designer, John Stead was the fight director and Nicola Pantin was the choreographer.

For detailed information about actors, set and costume designs, etc. for previous productions, please contact the

ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT

at the Stratford Festival

www.stratfordfestival.ca/AboutUs/OurHistory/ArchivesServices

519.271.4040
ABOUT *Timon of Athens*

**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS**

1. **All grades:** Language/English (Listening to Understand, Speaking to Communicate, Reading for Meaning)
2. **All grades:** Drama, Music, Visual Art
3. **Grades 7–12:** Health and PE (Healthy Living: Bullying and Abuse)
4. **Grade 11:** Dynamics of Human Relationships (Personal Well-Being; Self-Concept, Self-Esteem and Healthy Relationships; Making Decisions)
5. **Grade 11:** Intro to Anthropology, Psychology and Sociology (Explaining Human Mental Processes and Behaviours; Explaining Social Behaviour)
6. **Grades 11–12:** Equity, Diversity and Social Justice (The Social Construction of Identity; Power Relations; Social Awareness and Individual Action)
7. **Grades 11–12:** Philosophy (Developing Philosophical Responses; Making Connections to Metaphysics, Ethics and Aesthetics)
8. **Grade 12:** Human Development Throughout the Lifespan (Risk and Resilience; Factors Affecting Social-Emotional Development)
9. **Grade 12:** Personal Life Management (Managing Financial Resources)
10. **Grade 12:** Challenge and Change in Society (Causes and Effects of Social Change; Social Deviance)

**THEMES AND MOTIFS**

- Friendship
- Principles
- Wealth and materialism
- Exile and isolation
- City vs. country
- Generosity vs. greed
- Suffering
- Dissatisfaction and misanthropy
- Misfortune and melancholy
- Dogs
- Breath
- Gold

*Joseph Ziegler as Timon in Stratford Festival's 2017 production of Timon of Athens*

*Photography by Lynda Churilla*
ABOUT *Timon of Athens*

**2017 Stratford Festival Production**

May 8 to September 22 – opens June 2

Director   Stephen Ouimette
Designer   Dana Osborne
Lighting Designer  Kimberly Purtell
Sound Designer  Thomas Ryder Payne
Fight Director  John Stead
Movement Director  Adrienne Gould

**Cast**

*Timon*  Joseph Ziegler
*Poet*  Josue Laboucane
*Painter*  Mike Nadajewski
*Jeweller*  Rodrigo Beilfuss
*Merchant*  Qasim Khan
*Flavius (Timon’s steward)*  Michael Spencer-Davis

**TIMON’S SERVANTS**

*Flaminius*  Tyrone Savage
*Servilius*  Sébastien Heins
*Lucilius*  Josh Johnston

**TIMON’S FRIENDS**

*Lucius*  Robert King
*Lucullus*  Rylan Wilkie
*Semproniuis*  Omar Alex Khan
*Ventidius*  Cyrus Lane
*Lucullus’s Friend*  Jessica B. Hill
*First Senator*  Gareth Potter
*Second Senator*  David Collins
*Third Senator*  Qasim Khan
*Fourth Senator*  Cyrus Lane
*Caphis*  Zara Jestadt
*Old Athenian*  David Collins
*Apemantus*  Ben Carlson
*Alcibiades*  Tim Campbell
*Timandra*  Jacklyn Francis
*Phrynia*  Ijeoma Emesowum
Hortensius (Lucullus’s servant)  Mike Nadajewski

CREDITORS’ SERVANTS

Philota  Jessica B. Hill
Titus  Qasim Khan
Isidore’s servant  Mikaela Davies
First Servant of Varro  Rodrigo Beilfuss
Second Servant of Varro  Cyrus Lane
Lucius’s servant  Mikaela Davies
Cupid  Ijeoma Emesowum

DANCERS  Mikaela Davies
Jessica B. Hill
Zara Jestadt

First Stranger  Jacklyn Francis
Second Stranger  Ijeoma Emesowum
Third Stranger  Mikaela Davies
First Bandit  Cyrus Lane
Second Bandit  Josh Johnston
Third Bandit  Qasim Khan

Soldiers, Servants, Prisoners, Traders, Citizens: Rodrigo Beilfuss, Mikaela Davies, Ijeoma Emesowum, Sebastien Heins, Jessica B. Hill, Zara Jestadt, Josh Johnston, Robert King, Josue Laboucane, Cyrus Lane, Mike Nadajewski, Tyrone Savage, Rylan Wilkie

Joseph Ziegler as Timon in Stratford Festival’s 2017 production of Timon of Athens
Photography by Lynda Churilla
Imaginative Ways to Approach the Text

**Timon of Athens – The Ball Game: A Warm-up Activity**

**Overview**

This is an excellent warm-up activity as it provides an easy, non-threatening opportunity to play, collaborate and communicate. It can also provide an introduction to the world of the play through individual words.

**Grade Level**

All

**Subject Area**

English, Language, Drama

**Curriculum Expectations and Learning Outcome**

Active listening strategies;

Making inferences, interpretation of texts;

Express personal responses and make connections to characters, themes, and issues in the play.

**Time Needed**

10-20 minutes

**Space**

Clear, open spaces

**Materials**

Several balls in each of two colours. Soft balls * about 8 inches in diameter work best. **PLUS** individual words from the play printed out on slips of paper and placed in an envelope/container for the students to pick from.
The Exercise

STEP 1: Students stand in a circle and start with their hands held out in front of them, which is simply a sign to say that they haven’t received the ball yet.

STEP 2: Establish the pattern by throwing the ball* to one of the students after you call out their name. The students then continue until each person has received the ball once. The last student throws the ball back to the teacher. This is the pattern. Tell the students to remember who they threw the ball to and who threw it to them. When going through the first time, remind them to put their hands down after they’ve received the ball. Repeat the pattern to reinforce it.

STEP 3: Repeat the pattern introducing additional balls to increase the challenge.

STEP 4: Reverse direction. The person you were throwing the ball to is now the person who throws to you and the person who was throwing the ball to you in now the person you throw to.

STEP 5: Reverse back to the original pattern.

STEP 6: Introduce a different coloured ball, so that the original colour goes forward and the new colour goes backwards.

STEP 7: Let participants pick word from the play to “toss” and “receive” along with the ball, repeating the original pattern.

NOTE: If you do not wish to use soft foam balls in your classroom, simply have the students point to one another instead.
Extensions

- Ask students to take their word and look it up in at least three different dictionaries comparing the various definitions.

- Ask students to use their word in at least three different sentences.

- Ask students to create a drawing, painting or found-object sculpture, inspired by the word.

- Ask students to predict what the play might be about based on the words they heard.
### Ball Game Words - *Timon of Athens*

*Cut up these words and place them in an envelope or container for the students to pick from.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Userers</th>
<th>Parasites</th>
<th>Misery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Debts</td>
<td>Honourable</td>
<td>Contempt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creditors</td>
<td>Bills</td>
<td>Gold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenge</td>
<td>Quarrelling</td>
<td>Curses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>Foes</td>
<td>Unkindness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich</td>
<td>Ruined</td>
<td>Ingrateful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrow</td>
<td>Scorns</td>
<td>Transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feast</td>
<td>Proud</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beggar</td>
<td>Melancholy</td>
<td>Epitaph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banished</td>
<td>Mad</td>
<td>Cave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts</td>
<td>Jewels</td>
<td>Whores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lend</td>
<td>Bankrupt</td>
<td>Stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flatterers</td>
<td>Hate</td>
<td>Friendship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortune</td>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Wealth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Imaginative Ways to Approach the Text**

**Timon of Athens – Tableau the Story**

**Overview**

This activity allows students to participate in the telling of the story of the play. Once students know the story, they’re free to focus on the characters and the language. This exercise can be done at the beginning of the unit, as a way of introducing the play, and may be repeated at the end, as a way of recapping the story.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Subject Area</th>
<th>Curriculum Expectations and Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Time Needed</th>
<th>Space</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7-12</td>
<td>English, Language, Drama</td>
<td>Identify the perspectives evident in the text and comment on any questions they may raise about beliefs, values, and identity; Select and use appropriate forms to suit specific purposes in drama works; Extend understanding of a complex text by making connections between the ideas in them and personal knowledge, experience, insights, other texts, and the world around them.</td>
<td>20-30 minutes</td>
<td>Clear, open spaces</td>
<td>Tableaux cards from the play.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY**

⇒ Using the attached tableaux from *Timon of Athens* copied on Avery Labels (# 5162), peel and affix the lines on a blank index cards (3” x 5” or 7.6 x 12.7 cm).
⇒ Tell students they are now going to tell the story they are studying and/or going to see.
⇒ Define “tableau” (a frozen picture that tells a story – no moving, no talking).

**Activity**

☑ Divide students into five groups. There should be five to eight students per group.

☑ Hand out two tableaux cards per group.

☑ Groups work independently to tableau the scene(s) on the cards for 10 minutes. The students will play the characters and if there aren’t enough characters, they may become inanimate objects (i.e. tables, chairs, rocks, trees, etc.)

☑ The teacher/instructor will travel around the room and coach. Remind the students of things like:
  - Deciding where the “front” is;
  - Levels;
  - Choosing a freeze they can maintain for a while.

☑ After 10 minutes, call the students back. Have them sit facing the playing area.

☑ Students present their tableaux in story order. The teacher/instructor reads the card while the students take the freeze.

☑ Ask the students to hold the freeze while you discuss it.
  - Ask in the “audience” to identify the characters who are named in the tableau card.
  - Discuss the relationships between the characters and the action in the scene, and how the tableau shows these things.
EXTENSION

✓ Have the students storyboard *Timon of Athens* in three panels.
  
  o They may free-draw this or use the computer (digital) or create a collage using images and photos found in various media sources.
  
  o What are the most important points in telling the story of *Timon of Athens*?
  
  o Write a caption for each panel.
  
  o **NOTE:** Shakespeare examines many universal themes such as:
    * Principles
    * Wealth and materialism
    * Exile and isolation
    * City vs. country
    * Generosity vs. greed
    * Suffering
    * Dissatisfaction and misanthropy
    * Misfortune and melancholy
    * Friendship
      
      ▪ Have students come up with images for the themes listed above as a way of gaining an understanding Shakespeare’s moral instruction of the play.

QUESTIONS

◊ Can money buy friendship?
◊ Timon borrows money in order to give generously to others. Is this foolish or a kind and worthwhile endeavor?
◊ Is Timon acting rashly when he exiles himself from all humanity?
◊ What do Timon’s misfortunes and subsequent reaction to his plight teach us?
◊ What comparisons to our own time can you make of Timon’s financial situation?
1. The Athenian nobleman, Timon, gives lavish gifts to his friends and acquaintances.

2. Timon ignores the advice from his loyal steward, Flavius, and the cynical philosopher, Apemantus, that his reckless spending and generosity will lead to ruin and disillusionment.

3. Timon’s money runs out and his creditors demand payment.

4. Timon asks his friends for money to help him out but they refuse.

5. Timon invites his “friends” to a party only to curse them and throw stones at them for their lack of generosity.

6. Disgusted with the world, Timon goes off to live in a cave, cursing all of humanity.

7. While digging for roots to eat, Timon discovers gold.

8. Timon gives the gold to Alcibiades, a general who is going to attack Athens in revenge for his unjustified exile.

9. Timon writes his epitaph bitterly condemning humankind.

10. Upon hearing of Timon’s death, Alcibiades vows to enter Athens in a spirit of forgiveness, rather than revenge.
**Imaginative Ways to Approach the Text**

**Timon of Athens – Tossing Lines**

This is a great activity to demystify Shakespearean text for the students. Each student will have the opportunity to work on a line from the play to further their understanding by tossing their lines (i.e. through playful repetition) to one another.

<table>
<thead>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7-12</td>
<td>English, Language, Drama</td>
<td>Clarity, Coherence, Diction and Devices; Making inferences, interpretation of texts; Analyse drama works to determine how they communicate ideas about issues, culture and society.</td>
<td>10-20 minutes</td>
<td>Clear, open spaces</td>
<td>Tossing line cards from the play - one per student and soft foam balls or beanbags up to 4 (optional).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Setting Up the Activity

This is a great activity to introduce at the beginning of the play to gain a better understanding of the story and the lines they will hear/read.

- Using the attached lines from *Timon of Athens* copied on Avery Labels (# 5162), peel and affix the lines on a blank index cards (3” x 5” or 7.6 x 12.7 cm)
- Tell the students they are now going to speak a bit of Shakespeare, using lines from *Timon of Athens*.
- Have students read their cards to themselves, over and over, for a minute. Help students as necessary.
- Then have students walk around the room saying the lines first in a whisper, then move on to a regular voice, then in a louder voice altogether.
- Next have them switch directions around the room saying the lines: sarcastically: sorrowfully; angrily; mysteriously; and happily.
- When you feel the students are comfortable saying their lines have them stand in a circle.
**The Activity**

- Have the teacher/instructor start the game with one ball. *(NOTE: if you don’t want to use soft foam balls in your classroom, you may just point to the person.)* Make eye contact with a student in the circle, say your line and toss the ball (or point) to that student. The toss goes with the impulse of the line.

- The student who caught the ball (or was pointed to) then makes eye contact with someone else across the circle and delivers the line and the ball (or points) to them. This continues, ensuring everyone in the circle has had their turn.

- If students are doing any of the following below, stop, explain and ask them to try again:
  - Not connecting the ball toss (or pointing) with the line (i.e. throwing the ball before or after they speak);
  - Not delivering the line to the person across the circle;
  - Not paying attention when a line is being delivered to them;
  - Not saying the lines in a loud clear voice.

- When the game is going well with one ball, add a second ball, then a third, then a fourth.

**Extension**

◊ **Discuss what lines stood out for the students and pick one of the lines and ask 4-6 of the students to volunteer to go in the centre and create a tableau (still image) of what that line means to them. If you want, give them a count of 20 seconds so they can confer with one another briefly (although, sometimes not giving them any time to think produces an unrehearsed impulse that may surprise you and themselves in how creative they can be).**

◊ **Have the rest of the students walk around the tableau and offer their insights and understanding of what they see,**

◊ **Try this for a few lines and then discuss with the whole class their understanding of the lines and the story.**
It is a pretty mocking of the life.

Timon of Athens, Act I, scene 1

I'll pay the debt and free him.

Timon of Athens, Act I, scene 1

I will fly, like a dog, the heels o'th'ass.

Timon of Athens, Act I, scene 1

No, you shall not make we welcome.

Timon of Athens, Act I, scene 2

Rich men sin, and I eat root.

Timon of Athens, Act I, scene 2

Why, I have often wished myself poorer, that I might come nearer to you.

Timon of Athens, Act I, scene 2

What a sweep of vanity comes this way!

Timon of Athens, Act I, scene 2

Rain sacrificial whispering in his ear.

Timon of Athens, Act I, scene 1

Sir, your jewel hath suffered under praise.

Timon of Athens, Act I, scene 1

The noblest mind he carries that ever governed man.

Timon of Athens, Act I, scene 1

But yond man is ever angry.

Timon of Athens, Act I, scene 2

You had rather be at breakfast of enemies than a dinner of friends.

Timon of Athens, Act I, scene 2

Thou weep'st to make them drink.

Timon of Athens, Act I, scene 2

I should fear those that dance before me now would one day stamp on me.

Timon of Athens, Act I, scene 2
‘Tis pity bounty had not eyes behind.

Methinks false hearts should never have sound legs.

Timon of Athens, Act I, scene 2

As much foolery as I have, so much wit thou lack’st.

Come, sermon me no further.

Timon of Athens, Act II, scene 2

They froze me into silence.

I have sweat to see his honour.

Timon of Athens, Act II, scene 2

O, see the monstrousness of man when he looks out in an ungrateful shape!

His friends, like physicians, thrive, give him over.

Timon of Athens, Act III, scene 3

How fairly this lord strives to appear foul.

Now all are fled.

Timon of Athens, Act III, scene 3

Cut my heart in sums.

Tear me, take me, and the gods fall upon you!

Timon of Athens, Act III, scene 4

You only speak from your distracted soul,

He’s truly valiant that can wisely suffer the worst that man can breathe.

Timon of Athens, Act III, scene 5
How full of valour did he bear himself.  
_ Timon of Athens_, Act 3, scene 6

He forfeits his own blood that spills another.  
_ Timon of Athens_, Act 3, scene 6

I hate not to be banished.  
_ Timon of Athens_, Act 3, scene 6

Most smiling, smooth, detested parasites.  
_ Timon of Athens_, Act 3, scene 7

One day he gives us diamonds, next day stones.  
_ Timon of Athens_, Act 3, scene 7

We do turn our backs from our companion thrown into his grave.  
_ Timon of Athens_, Act 4, scene 2

He’s flung in rage from this ingrateful seat of monstrous friends.  
_ Timon of Athens_, Act 4, scene 2

This much of this will make black white, foul fair, base noble, old young, coward valiant.  
_ Timon of Athens_, Act 4, scene 3

I am Misanthropos, and hate mankind.  
_ Timon of Athens_, Act 4, scene 3

For thy part, I do wish thou wert a dog.  
_ Timon of Athens_, Act 4, scene 3

Thou flatter’st misery.  
_ Timon of Athens_, Act 4, scene 3

Thou are too bad to curse.  
_ Timon of Athens_, Act 4, scene 3

What viler thing upon the earth than friends.  
_ Timon of Athens_, Act 4, scene 3

Methinks thou art more honest now than wise.  
_ Timon of Athens_, Act 4, scene 3
TOSSING LINES – Timon of Athens (use Avery Labels 5162 to peel and affix on cards)

Hate all, curse all, show charity to none.  
*Timon of Athens*, Act 4, scene 3

Does the rumour hold for true that he’s so full of gold?  
*Timon of Athens*, Act 5, scene 1

Rid me these villains from your companions.  
*Timon of Athens*, Act 5, scene 1

Lend me a fool’s heart and a woman’s eyes.  
*Timon of Athens*, Act 5, scene 1

And shakes his threat’ning sword against the walls of Athens.  
*Timon of Athens*, Act 5, scene 1

And take our goodly agèd men by th’ beards.  
*Timon of Athens*, Act 5, scene 1

I will some kindness do them.  
*Timon of Athens*, Act 5, scene 1

Bring me into your city, and I will use the olive with my sword.  
*Timon of Athens*, Act 5, scene 4
DISCUSSION TOPICS FOR YOUR CLASS

For classes reading the play before seeing it:

1. What do you expect to see on stage at the Stratford Festival? Have each student make a list of predictions about what they expect. Save these predictions. After your Stratford trip, revisit them to see how they compared to the actual production.

2. Discuss: Can money buy love?

3. List the qualities of a philanthropist and a misanthropist; chart Timon's journey from a giving person to a misanthropist.

4. Make a story map or a story board outlining the main events of the play. (This may be used later in group activities.)

After your Stratford trip:

1. Why is Timon always giving away presents to his friends but receives nothing in return?

2. Is Timon’s disgust for all humankind justified in the end?

3. How are Apemantus and Timon alike and dissimilar?

4. What does the absence of women, except for courtesans and dancer, suggest about nature of the play?

5. Create a character web showing how all the characters are connected to each other. Discuss the complexity of these relationships and how they affect the progression of the play.

For more classroom activities, complete with instructions, materials and Ontario curriculum expectation links, visit stratfordfestival.ca/teachingmaterials.

You can also check out the following:
- The Forum, a series of remarkable events to enrich the play-going experience: www.stratfordfestival.ca/forum/.
- Stratford Festival’s YouTube channel for behind-the-scenes videos, photos and interviews: www.youtube.com/user/stratfordfestival
- Stratford Festival’s Flickr pages: www.flickr.com/photos/stratfest/
- Stratford Festival Twitter: twitter.com/stratfest
- Stratford Festival Facebook: www.facebook.com/StratfordFestival
Resources

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY for Timon of Athens

SHAKESPEARE: HISTORY, CRITICISM and BIOGRAPHY

Campbell, Oscar James, ed. The Reader’s Encyclopedia of Shakespeare. 1966.
Tillyard, E. M. W. The Elizabethan World Picture. 1943.

TEACHING SHAKESPEARE

Stredder, James. The North Face of Shakespeare: Activities for Teaching the Plays. Cambridge, 2009

TIMON OF ATHENS


**ONLINE RESOURCES**

BookRags.com Homepage, [http://www.bookrags.com](http://www.bookrags.com)
Mr. William Shakespeare and the Internet, [shakespeare.palomar.edu](http://shakespeare.palomar.edu)
Sh:in:E Shakespeare in Europe, [www.unibas.ch/shine](http://www.unibas.ch/shine)
Encyclopaedia Britannica presents: Shakespeare and the Globe: Then and Now, [search.eb.com/Shakespeare](http://search.eb.com/Shakespeare)
Shakespeare’s Life and Times, [web.uvic.ca/shakespeare/Library/SLT/intro/introsubj.html](http://web.uvic.ca/shakespeare/Library/SLT/intro/introsubj.html)
Shakespeare Online, [www.shakespeare-online.com](http://www.shakespeare-online.com)
Movie Review Query Engine, [www.mrge.com](http://www.mrge.com)
Internet Movie Database, [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com)

*Timon of Athens* ON FILM, VIDEO AND DVD


For information on *Stratford Festival HD* series *From Page to Screen* go to [www.stratfordfestival.ca/WatchandExplore/OnDemand](http://www.stratfordfestival.ca/WatchandExplore/OnDemand)