



## Teacher Professional Development and Learning

This document contains the information you need before attending a CPD course with the RSC.

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## What should I expect from a day of CPD with the RSC?

A day of CPD with the RSC looks at how rehearsal room approaches and theatre-based practice can impact teaching and learning about Shakespeare. The day will include active approaches which investigate text by speaking it aloud and exploring the physicality of the language just as our actors, directors and other theatre artists do in our rehearsal rooms. No preparation or prior knowledge is required to attend one of our courses.

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## INSET Day Professional Outcomes for Teachers

An INSET day with the RSC provides opportunities for teaching communities to engage with relevant, career-long professional development by working with, and learning from, experienced RSC practitioners. Teachers attending an INSET day with the RSC will achieve professional outcomes pertaining to three key areas of development and learning: deep knowledge, critical understanding, and pedagogical proficiency.

Our CPD courses support teachers to develop the knowledge, confidence and skills to achieve...

- Deep knowledge of:
  - at least one Shakespeare play.
  - the most effective pedagogical approaches to teaching Shakespeare.
  - how children and young people develop and learn about theatre and theatrical literature.
  - education trends, debates and policy with regards to complex texts, including Shakespeare's place in school curricula.
- Critical understanding of:
  - RSC rehearsal room approaches.
  - how to design, implement and evaluate a range of learning activities.
  - current research and evidence into RSC pedagogy, including our **Time to Act** project.
  - how to provide developmentally appropriate academic and pastoral support relating to learning about Shakespeare's plays.
- Pedagogical proficiency to:
  - plan and deliver highly effective lessons and lesson sequences on Shakespeare's plays.
  - maintain a productive and creative learning environment through working as a company of theatre artists.
  - ensure that all children learn and make progress equitably.
  - critically evaluate and reflect on teaching practice.

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*"[The RSC practitioner] was absolutely fantastic – so warm and knowledgeable in her delivery. She created the perfect environment for us to have fun in a safe environment and learn so many pedagogical ideas – but also new perspectives on a play that many of us have taught for years! **My department have all commented that it's the best INSET they've had.**"*

Head of English at a secondary school in Cambridgeshire following an INSET day

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## What are 'rehearsal room approaches'?

'Rehearsal room approaches' is our catch-all term for our teaching and learning practice. It is based on the collaborative and active techniques employed by creatives in RSC rehearsal rooms. These practices are supported by evidence that working in this way has a profound impact on young people's experiences of Shakespeare, theatre and literature, including by improving learning outcomes. The key principles of our rehearsal room approaches which underpin all our work with children, young people and teachers are:

- **Play:** embodied learning and collaborative play, using imagination to engage with Shakespeare's texts.
- **Interpretation:** empowering young people to develop their own ideas and interpretations.
- **Inclusion:** fostering inclusive practices, nurturing equitable access to learn without barriers.
- **Relevance:** engaging in a conversation across time, exploring the plays' meanings today.
- **Creativity:** making fresh discoveries about the text through critical, artistic exploration and learning.

Our pedagogy and practice is underpinned by a deep connection to the artistic practice of the Company. We make strong connections between the rehearsal rooms in which our actors and directors work and the classrooms in which young people learn about Shakespeare's texts.

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## Who is this CPD for?

Our teacher professional development is for anyone who engages with Shakespeare's texts in their classrooms, from EYFS to KS5 and beyond. This includes secondary English teachers, Drama teachers, Primary teachers, SEND teachers, literacy specialists, teaching assistants as well as freelance educators and tutors. We tailor our CPD courses to suit the requirements of the teachers in the room, including by exploring adaptations to our approaches which meet the needs of different learners and stages of development.



*Photo by Sam Allard © RSC*

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## What does the research say?

As a theatre company and IRO (Independent Research Organisation), the RSC frequently conducts research into the impact of our approaches on the social, emotional and educational development of the young people we work with. Our most recent study, ***Time to Act***, has generated the following key findings relating to work with KS2 students.

Students in schools using RSC teaching approaches showed the following features in their writing:

- employed **richer, broader and more sophisticated vocabulary**.
- showed a **better grasp of linguistic structures and devices**.
- demonstrated a **broader understanding of abstract terms and descriptions**.
- produced **more expansive descriptions** of setting, place and atmosphere.
- showed **greater optimism and resilience** when imagining character outcomes.
- demonstrated **better inferencing skills**, imagining what might come next.

In addition to outcomes relating to writing, students taught by teachers using RSC teaching approaches were **more confident** in their self-concept as learners.

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## Where can I find more information?

For more information about ***Time to Act***, including the full peer-reviewed report, please visit:

[Time to Act | Royal Shakespeare Company](#)

For information about our research into the impact of our work on secondary age pupils, please visit:

[Time To Listen | Royal Shakespeare Company](#)

More information about our CPD courses can be found on our website:

[Teacher Professional Development | Royal Shakespeare Company](#)

For any specific questions please contact: [teachers.courses@rsc.org.uk](mailto:teachers.courses@rsc.org.uk)



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