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TEACHING SHAKESPEARE AND HIS SISTERS

An Embodied Approach

Emma Whipday
Newcastle University



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Teaching Shakespeare and His Sisters

An Embodied Approach

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ABSTRACT: What are we teaching, when we teach Shakespeare? Today, the Shakespeare classroom is often also a rehearsal room; we teach Shakespeare plays as both literary texts and cues for theatrical performance. This Element explores the possibilities of an ‘embodied’ pedagogical approach as a tool to inform literary analysis. The first section offers an overview of the embodied approach, and how it might be applied to Shakespeare plays in a playhouse context. The second applies this framework to the play-making, performance, and storytelling of early modern women – ‘Shakespeare’s sisters’ – as a form of feminist historical recovery. The third suggests how an embodied pedagogy might be possible digitally, in relation to online teaching. In so doing, this Element makes the case for an embodied pedagogy for teaching Shakespeare.

KEYWORDS: Shakespeare, embodied, performance, pedagogy, women writers

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This Element also has Online Appendices, available at www.cambridge.org/whipday. Appendices 1, 2, and 3 contain the extracts used in Section 2, with modernised spelling. Extract 3 of Appendix 3 is co-edited with Ruth Connolly. Appendix 4 contains stable links to two productions discussed in Section 2.