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## Language Activity

### Psychological Analysis and Subtitling— Interpreting Drama

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#### Introduction

In alignment with NEP 2020, the activity 'Psychological Analysis and Subtitling—Interpreting Drama' blends experiential, art-integrated, and language-based learning by guiding students to create psychologically rich analyses of Shakespearean characters based on scenes from Shakespeare's *King Lear*. This task develops critical twenty-first-century skills like active listening, emotional awareness, and interpretative thinking. It encourages learner autonomy, creativity, and reflective thinking while deepening understanding of human emotions and ethical dilemmas, in line with NEP's vision of holistic, inclusive, and skill-oriented education.

#### Theme: Acting Out, Acting Up and Refusal to Act—Psychoanalysis and Drama

Psychoanalysis, the study of how the human mind functions, divides the mind into three parts: the preconscious, conscious and the unconscious. The conscious mind contains thoughts, feelings, perceptions, etc. that we are actively aware of. The preconscious contains things we may not be aware of now but can easily call into our mind if required. The unconscious, by contrast, holds all difficult and anxiety producing feelings and desires and these are repressed or barred from consciousness because they are considered unacceptable by parents, teachers, or society. Envy, jealousy, anger towards parents and teachers as well as sexual desires are strong emotions that we do not want to admit to. However, the impulses in the unconscious are very powerful and will not be wiped out. They break out into our dreams, jokes and slips of the

tongue and express themselves through obsessive actions and through 'acting out', i.e. when people perform actions whose motivations are not clear or are misplaced. For instance, a child may be angry with his mother but will break a toy or hit a sibling instead; a woman who frequently complains of vague illnesses may be expressing an emotional need. People who act out are often unaware of the deeper reasons behind their behaviour, though others may intuitively grasp their underlying motivations. 'Acting up', on the other hand, is consciously exaggerated behaviour to draw attention to oneself, as pretending, misbehaving or being defiant like banging a door to signal anger or being over sweet to avoid punishment or gain favours. 'Refusal to act' on the other hand can be seen as taking a stand on ethical or moral grounds.

Focusing on Shakespeare's play *King Lear*, the activity explores characters' internal conflicts through a psychoanalytic lens—guilt, fear, the need for acceptance and validation. By analysing the characters in the play, students can pick out those who are acting out and why, those who are acting up and those who refuse to act. They can then craft subtitles that mirror these actions and the emotions that underlie them. Thus, students engage in "textual acting out," interpreting drama through psychological analysis, thus blending performance with introspective learning.

### **Drama Selection**

*King Lear* by Shakespeare has been chosen for its rich psychological depth, and themes of guilt, fear, greed and need for validation.

### **Aim**

To enhance listening and comprehension skills while assessing students' critical thinking through psychological character analysis.

### **Skills in Focus**

Listening, Writing, Critical Thinking, and Psychological Analysis

### **Level**

Middle to High School (Grades 8-12)

### **Time Required**

Preparation: 10 minutes

Activity Execution: 40 minutes

### Materials Needed

- Audio or video recording of *King Lear* (or selected scenes)
- Notebooks for students to write subtitles
- Evaluation rubric for psychological analysis

### Procedure Table

Stage	Time	Activity	Focus Area
Pre-Listening Discussion	10 min	Introduce <i>King Lear</i> and its themes (why does a father, and a king at that, need declarations of love? Why do 2 daughters play along while 1 refuses?) Discuss the concepts of acting out, acting up and refusal to act and how they help us to understand behaviour. Guide students to observe emotions, tone, and themes.	Background knowledge, critical thinking, active listening preparation.
Listening Task	10 min	Play a selected scene (e.g., parts of Act I Scene 1). Students focus on tone, mood, and psychological depth.	Listening comprehension, emotional analysis, interpretation.
Subtitle Creation Task	15 min	Students analyse the behaviour of any 5 characters and write 5 unique subtitles for the scene, reflecting the emotions and internal struggles of the characters, and themes.	Creative writing, psychological interpretation, textual engagement.
Discussion and Assessment	15 min	Students present and justify their subtitles. The teacher assesses their psychological insights and compares different interpretations.	Analytical thinking, self-expression, comparative discussion.

### Evaluation Rubric: Psychological Subtitle Creation

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Needs Work (1)
Psychological Insight	Deep, accurate analysis of emotions	Clear and thoughtful	Basic understanding	Limited or unclear

Theme Link	Strong connection to theme	Mostly connected	Some link	Weak or off-topic
Creativity	Very original and expressive	Mostly creative	Some originality	Lacks creativity
Language	Clear, few /no errors	Mostly correct	Some errors	Hard to follow
Listening Skill	Captures tone and meaning well	Mostly accurate	Some mismatches	Misunderstood
Presentation	Clear and confident	Clear explanation	Basic reasoning	Poor or unclear
Reflection	Insightful and thoughtful	Reflective and clear	Simple summary	Minimal or vague

### Scoring

- 25–28: Excellent
- 21–24: Good
- 15–20: Satisfactory
- Below 15: Needs Improvement

### Follow-Up Activity

- Reflection Writing: Ask students to write a short reflection piece (150-200 words) on examples of acting out and acting up they may have encountered in real life.
- Comparison: Compare the subtitles that students have submitted and discuss differences in tone and meaning.
- Extension Task: Assign another dramatic scene for students to analyse and subtitle independently.

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