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Synopses

RICHARD II September 20, 9 p.m.

KING RICHARD (Ben Whishaw) is called upon to settle a dispute between In the aftermath of the Battle of Shrewsbury, NORTHUMBERLAND learns his cousin HENRY BOLINGBROKE (Rory Kinnear) and THOMAS MOWBRAY of the death of his son. THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE (Geoffrey Palmer) (James Purefov), RICHARD calls for a duel but then halts it just before attempts, on behalf of the increasingly frail King, to separate FALSTAFF swords clash. Both men are banished from the realm. RICHARD visits JOHN from PRINCE HAL. The rebels continue to plot insurrection. FALSTAFF OF GAUNT (Patrick Stewart), BOLINGBROKE's father, who, in the throes is sent to recruit soldiers and takes his leave of his mistress, DOLL of death, reprimands the King. After seizing GAUNT's money and lands, TEARSHEET (Maxine Peake). The rebel forces are overcome. This brings RICHARD leaves for wars against the rebels in Ireland. BOLINGBROKE returns comfort to the dying King, who is finally reconciled to his son. FALSTAFF to claim back his inheritance. Supported by his allies NORTHUMBERLAND rushes to HAL's coronation with expectations of high office, only to be (David Morrissey) and the DUKE OF YORK (David Suchet), BOLINGBROKE rebuffed by the former prince who has now become King HENRY V. takes RICHARD prisoner and lays claim to the throne.

HENRY IV, PART I September 27, 9 p.m.

The heir to the throne, PRINCE HAL (Tom Hiddleston), defies his father, KING The French AMBASSADOR (Jérémie Covillault) brings a challenge from HENRY (Jeremy Irons), by spending his time at MISTRESS QUICKLY's (Julie the FRENCH DAUPHIN. Inspired by his courtiers, including EXETER (Anton Walters) tavern in the company of the dissolute FALSTAFF (Simon Russell Lesser) and YORK (Paterson Joseph), HENRY swears that he will, with all Beale) and his companions. The King is threatened by a rebellion led by HAL's force, answer this challenge. The CHORUS (John Hurt) tells of England's rival, HOTSPUR (Joe Armstrong), HOTSPUR's father NORTHUMBERLAND preparations for war and HENRY's army sails for France. After EXETER's (Alun Armstrong) and his uncle WORCESTER (David Hayman). In the face of diplomacy is rebuffed by the FRENCH KING (Lambert Wilson), HENRY this danger to the state, PRINCE HAL joins his father to defeat the rebels at lays a heavy siege and captures Harfleur. The French now take HENRY's the BATTLE OF SHREWSBURY and kills HOTSPUR in hand-to-hand combat. claims seriously and challenge the English army to battle at Agincourt. Michelle Dockery plays HOTSPUR's wife, KATE PERCY.

Richard II directed by Rupert Goold; Henry IV, Parts 1 & 2 directed by Richard Eyre; Henry V directed by Thea Sharrock Producer: Rupert Ryle-Hodges; Executive Producers: Gareth Neame, David Horn, Pippa Harris, Sam Mendes

Rating: TV-14 V Parents are urged to exercise care in monitoring this program due to violent content.

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The first 100 teachers to respond to our survey at surveymonkey.com/s/HollowCrown2013

HENRY IV, PART II October 4, 9 p.m.

HENRY V October 11, 9 p.m.

HENRY V has settled onto the throne and has the makings of a fine King.

will receive a DVD set of The Hollow Crown series for their classroom.

HENRY and his meager forces prove victorious against all odds

Shakespeare Uncovered tells the stories behind the stories of the history plays and other classic works by William Shakespeare. Learn more by visiting pbs.org/wnet/shakespeare-uncovered.

The Plays

The Hollow Crown presents four of Shakespeare's history plays: Richard II, Henry IV, Parts 1 and 2, and Henry V. These four plays were written separately but tell a continuous story of the reigns of three kings of England.

The first play starts in 1398, as King Richard arbitrates a dispute between his cousin Henry Bolingbroke and the Duke of Norfolk, which he resolves by banishing both men from England-Norfolk for life and Bolingbroke for six years. When Bolingbroke's father dies, Richard seizes his lands. It's the latest outrage from a selfish king who wastes money on luxuries, his favorite friends, and an expensive war in Ireland.

Bolingbroke returns from banishment with an army to take back his inheritance and quickly wins supporters. He takes Richard prisoner and, rather than stopping at his own lands and privileges, seizes the crown. When one of Bolingbroke's followers assassinates Richard, the new king claims that he never ordered the execution and banishes the man who killed Richard.

Years pass, and at the start of Henry IV, Part 1, the guilt-stricken king plans a pilgrimage to the Holy Land to wash Richard's blood from his hands. He is prevented by the threat for rebellion from one of the lords who had supported his rise to the throne, the Earl of Northumberland, along with his son Henry Percy (also known as "Hotspur") and the Welsh chieftain Owen Glendower. Henry IV laments that his son Prince Hal doesn't show the fire and leadership that Hotspur displays, and instead spends his time in taverns with Falstaff, a drunken braggart and thief. Eventually, the warring factions clash at the battle of Shrewsbury, and Prince Hal proves his mettle by killing Hotspur in single

Although Henry and his forces win the battle of Shrewsbury, several rebel leaders continue the fight at the start of Henry IV. Part 2. After the Earl of Northumberland abandons the rebels, they meet with Hal's brother, Prince John, to present their grievances. John grants their demands, but after they disband their armies, the prince arrests the rebels for treason, ending the uprising. Henry IV dies soon after, and Hal is proclaimed King Henry V. As he had long promised, when he takes the throne, Henry V ends his friendship with Falstaff.

In Henry V, we see Hal on the throne. At the start of the play, Henry is convinced of England's right to the French throne. The Dauphin of France responds to Henry's claims with insults, and Henry plans an attack. Before departing, he learns of an assassination plot by three lords working with France and has the traitors executed. With his small force, he arrives in France and captures the city

Henry's forces proceed on to face the French at Agincourt. The English are exhausted and outnumbered, and the night before the battle, the King goes among his men to try to bolster their spirits and gives a stirring speech before the fight. After a bloody battle, the English are surprised to learn they have taken the day. Henry takes the French throne, and makes the daughter of the former king his queen.

Composition Dates

Richard II –1595 Henry IV, Part 2-1598

Henry IV, Part 1-1596-97 Henry V-1599

Main characters

King Richard II: The poetic but selfish and immature king of England, Richard proves a weak ruler who does not understand how to lead a nation, and is overthrown by Henry Bolingbroke. (Richard II)

Henry Bolingbroke, Duke of Hereford, later King Henry IV: Henry is the cousin of King Richard who raises a force to usurp the throne. He proves an effective leader, but is haunted by his guilt over Richard's death. (Richard II. Henry IV. Parts 1 and 2. In The Hollow Crown, Henry is played by Rory Kinnear in Richard II and Jeremy Irons in Henry IV, Parts 1 and 2.)

Prince Henry (Hal, Harry), later King Henry V: The unruly son of Henry IV, Prince Henry initially disappoints his father by consorting with rogues, but eventually proves his worth by putting down rebel forces and reconquering France. (Henry IV, Parts 1 and 2, Henry V)

Henry Percy (Hotspur, Percy): Hotspur is the nickname of the fiery son of the Duke of Northumberland, who joins his father to rebel against Henry IV. (Richard II, Henry IV, Part 1)

Falstaff: A braggart, a liar, and a thief, this fat, old knight serves as companion and surrogate father to Hal until the prince redeems himself on the battlefield. (Henry IV, Parts 1 and 2)

Key themes

Fathers and sons: In *Henry IV, Part I*, Shakespeare explores different pairings of fathers and sons, including King Henry IV/Hal, Falstaff/Hal, Northumberland/ Hotspur, and King Henry IV/Hotspur. What do fathers expect from the sons? What do sons owe their fathers?

Loyalty versus rebellion: How do you choose who to be loyal to? Are you ever justified in changing loyalties? Is it better to be loyal to office of the king, or to a particular king? Does a subject automatically owe loyalty to the king, or is loyalty earned? When is rebellion justified, if ever?

The nature of kingship: Can a weak king ever be justly overthrown? Can a usurper ever justify his right to rule? What is worse, a weak but rightful king, such as Richard IV, or a capable king who seizes power illegally, such as Henry IV? Is it acceptable to usurp an illegitimate king? What characteristics are needed in a strong ruler?

Honor: Is honor a value worth dying for, as Hotspur would claim? Or is it merely "a word," as Falstaff claims? Does it lead people to fight for principles, or trick them into sacrificing themselves for nothing?

Shakespeare's Sources and Inspiration

The Original *Game of Thrones*

Feuding dynasties, rebellion, murder—if the events in *The Hollow* Crown sound a little like Game of Thrones, that's no accident. Game of Thrones creator George R. R. Martin was inspired by the same events Shakespeare drew from in his history plays: the Wars of the Roses.

This decades-long conflict had its seeds in 1399 with the overthrow of Richard II by his cousin Henry Bolingbroke of Lancaster (the events chronicled in Shakespeare's Richard II). Like Richard, Bolingbroke was a descendent of the Plantagenet family of Edward III. When Bolingbroke became King Henry IV, he established the Lancaster branch of this

Two generations later, in 1455, another Plantagenet-Richard, Duke of York—contested the current king, Henry VI, on the grounds that his grandfather, Henry IV, had illegitimately seized the throne. This established an opposing faction, the Yorkists. Each faction took as its symbol a rose—white for York; red for Lancaster. That's why their feud over the right to rule England has been called the Wars of the Roses.

In the years that followed, king after king seized the throne, only to be overthrown and replaced. From Shakespeare's standpoint, it's not hard to see the decades of chaos as the outcome of that first "unnatural" act-the murder of the rightful king, Richard II.

The Wars of the Roses finally came to an end in 1485 with the defeat of Richard III by Henry Tudor, later Henry VII. Henry, Lancastrian, united the two houses by marrying Elizabeth of York, finally bringing peace to England. Two generations and four monarchs later, England was still at peace—in large part thanks to Henry VII's granddaughter: Elizabeth I.

This is important, because Elizabeth I was Shakespeare's queen. Any play he wrote had to please the monarch, or he could end up in prison. So whenever Shakespeare wrote about kingship in general and the Yorks and Lancasters in particular, you know he had the royal eye on

To Think About: How do you think Queen Elizabeth's connection to the kings in the plays of *The Hollow Crown* may have influenced Shakespeare's portraval of these historic events?

To Explore: Read more about the Wars of the Roses at http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/War_of_Roses.html.

How Shakespeare Changed History

Shakespeare used a variety of sources for his history plays, including Holinshed's Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland (1587) and Samuel Daniel's epic poem The Civil Wars Between the Two Houses of York and Lancaster (1595). But he also changed some things:

- In Holinshed's Chronicles, John of Gaunt was described as greedy and irresponsible, not the virtuous spokesperson of patriotism he is
- Shakespeare completely invented the characters of Falstaff and his tavern cronies who appear in Henry IV and Henry V.
- Hotspur (Henry Percy) was actually a generation older than Hal; in Henry IV, Part 1, Shakespeare makes them contemporaries.

- In the historical account, Hal and Hotspur did not have a one-onone encounter on the battlefield as is portrayed in Henry IV, Part 1.
- And yet, Shakespeare also drew from hints in his sources to create some memorable moments:
- Shakespeare exaggerated the English victory at Agincourt, but the outcome was still quite staggering: It's estimated that the English lost between 400 and 500, while the French lost as many as 7,000.

According to Holinshed, the French Dauphin did send tennis balls to Henry V, but in Shakespeare's play, the gift has much more significance and more directly motivates the action to come.

To Discuss: Why do you think Shakespeare changed history the way

Kingship and Succession in Shakespeare's England

he did? What effect do these changes have in his plays?

The concern about succession and usurpation in The Hollow Crown would have resonated with Shakespeare's audience. When these plays were first produced, Queen Elizabeth I was more than 60 years old. She had no children, and she hadn't named a successor. Throughout Elizabeth's reign, there were attempts to replace her with other rulers, including her primary rival for the throne, Mary, Queen of Scots. So a play about what happens when subjects overthrow their rulers had an attentive audience in Shakespeare's theater.

The resonances were so strong that when one of Elizabeth's courtiers, the Earl of Essex, planned an uprising, he paid for a special performance of *Richard II* in the hopes of stirring the people to support the overthrow of a monarch. (He failed.) Censors also saw the parallels: When the play was published during Queen Elizabeth's life, the scene in which Richard is deposed was removed.

The Divine Right of Kings

The play also reflects beliefs about kingship that were dominant at the time. Unlike a democracy, Shakespeare's audience believed in the divine right of kings. In this belief, a monarch's right to rule reflects the will of God. Elizabeth's successor, James I, outlined this idea in his manual on kingship, Basilikon Doron: A king "acknowledgeth himself ordained for his people, having received from God a burden of government, whereof he must be countable."

Because of this belief, kings were believed to have semi-magical powers, such as the "king's touch," which was believed to cure illness. It also meant that any attempt to depose a king or judge his actions wasn't just treason-it was sacrilege.

Shakespeare's monarch Elizabeth I had already struggled with this concept. She had executed Mary, Queen of Scots, when she threatened to overthrow her-but only after hesitating and delaying because of her anxiety over the irreligious act of bringing down God's anointed ruler.

To Explore: Where in these plays do you see evidence of a belief in the divine right of kings? Which characters are proponents of it? Which characters act against it? What is the effect of their actions?

Shakespeare's Theater

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There were two types of theater in Shakespeare's day: the private theater and the public theater. The private theater took place indoors, in a hall lit by candles and torches. It was very expensive, and included command performances for royalty and other nobility.

The public theater was more popular, and this is what we generally think of when we imagine Shakespeare's theater. The public theater was a large, open-air, circular structure. The walls were lined with tiers of galleries with covered seating for those who could afford to pay more. The "cheap seats," on the other hand, weren't seats at all: For a penny, you could stand in the courtyard in front of the stage. (If you bought this ticket, you were referred to as a "groundling."

The stage itself wasn't what we typically think of today. Instead, it was a platform that thrust out into a yard where the groundlings stood. It was covered by a roof painted with golden stars to represent the sky, which was held up by two columns. At the rear of the stage was a wall with two or more doors in it for entrances and exits, as well as a recessed balcony that overlooked the stage. (That's probably where Juliet stood during the balcony scene of *Romeo and Juliet*.)

With this kind of stage, sets had to be a good deal less elaborate than what we're used to in today's theater. But it's a mistake to think they had no sets or props. In fact, theatrical companies could manage pretty impressive effects. They could show characters rising from "hell"-a trapdoor in the stage-or lower characters down from the "heavens," an opening in the roof over the stage.

Still, this kind of theater couldn't provide the kind of realistic sets we expect today. Instead, the actors' lines included hints to let the audience know where and when the action was set. And since the theater had no roof, plays had to be performed during the day, so there could be no blackouts or changes in lighting. So if you wanted to indicate it was nighttime, you'd simply have characters carry torches and talk about how dark it was.

Costumes were also not expected to be realistic. Theatrical companies often got old clothes donated from their noble patrons, so no matter what period the play was set in, the actors were dressed in their version of "modern dress."

To Explore: To get a sense of what it would be like to be in the audience or on the stage of Shakespeare's theater, take a virtual tour of the modern reconstruction of the Old Globe at shakespearesglobe.com/aboutus/virtual-tour.

Conjuring the Theater

The prologue of *Henry V* sets the stage for the action to come. It also provides an informative commentary about theatrical practice in Shakespeare's time. What can you learn here about Shakespeare's theater? (Hint: The lines in boldface offer clues.)

O for a Muse of fire, that would ascend The brightest heaven of invention, A kingdom for a stage, princes to act And monarchs to behold the swelling scene! ... But pardon, and gentles all,

The flat unraised spirits that have dared

On this unworthy scaffold to bring forth So great an object: can this cockpit* hold The vasty fields of France? or may we cram

*site of cock-fights

Within this **wooden O** the very casques* That did affright the air at Agincourt? .. Suppose within the girdle of these walls

Are now confined two mighty monarchies ... Piece out our imperfections with your thoughts; Into a thousand parts divide one man... Think when we talk of horses, that you see them

Printing their proud hoofs i' the receiving earth; For 'tis your thoughts that now must deck* our kings, *adorn Carry them here and there; jumping o'er times, Turning the accomplishment of many years

Into an hour-glass....

Falstaff: A Theatrical Phenomenon

One of the most famous characters from Shakespeare's history plays didn't come from history at all: Falstaff, the comedic braggart, drunkard, and thief of Henry IV. "Plump Jack," as he refers to himself, is a scoundrel, but also a figure of boisterous life—a counterpoint to Prince Hal's serious, guilt-ridden father, Henry IV, and a subversive foil to the play's notions of honor and nobility.

It's been suggested that Shakespeare drew the character's name from another historical figure, Sir John Falstof, a knight who had been disgraced during England's wars with France. But for Falstaff's boisterous personality, Shakespeare seems to have looked elsewhere. Some critics see rival playwright Robert Greene as a source for Falstaff's dissolution. Others look to one of Shakespeare's friends, William Rogers, or alchemist and entrepreneur Adrian Gilbert.

Regardless of his source, Falstaff has outgrown the plays in which he originated. In fact, after the premiere of Henry IV, Queen Elizabeth demanded that Shakespeare write a new play showing Falstaff in love. He obliged with The Merry Wives of Windsor. And Shakespeare created characters similar to Falstaff in his other plays, including Sir Toby Belch in Twelfth Night and Parolles in All's Well That Ends Well.

Falstaff's popularity has endured. "Plump Jack" was the star of several operas, including Verdi's Falstaff. He's also inspired film characters, including the Sallah in the first three Indiana Jones films and Bob in My Own Private Idaho.

To Discuss: Why do you think Falstaff has been so popular?

Language Arts

Modern-day Shakespeare

What would Shakespeare's characters say if they spoke today? Here's a modern version (the right column) of one of Henry V's most famous speeches.

Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more, Attack the hole we've made in the wall again, Or close the wall up with our English dead! In peace there's nothing so becomes a man As modest stillness and humility, But when the blast of war blows in our ears, Then imitate the action of the tiger: Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood, Disguise fair nature with hard-favored rage, Then lend the eye a terrible aspect, Let pry through the portage of the head Like the brass cannon, let the brow o'erwhelm it As fearfully as doth a gallèd rock O'erhana and lutty his contounded base Now set the teeth and stretch the nostril wide, Hold hard the breath and bend up every spirit Whose blood is fet from fathers of war-proof. Fathers that, like so many Alexanders, Have in these parts from morn till even fought And sheathed their swords for lack of argument. Dishonor not your mothers. Now attest That those whom you called fathers did beget you. Be copy now to men of arosser blood. And teach them how to war. And you, good yeoman, Whose limbs were made in England, show us here The mettle of your pasture. Let us swear For there is none of you so mean and base That hath not noble luster in your eyes I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips, Straining upon the start. The game's afoot.

Or let's stuff that hole with our corpses! During peacetime, it's good for a man To be quiet and humble, But when it is wartime, Then we must act like tigers: Make our muscles taught and stir up our blood, Hide our civil attitudes behind ugly rage. So put a frightening look in your eyes And let them stick out through your eye holes Like brass cannons, and let your forehead thrust out As frighteningly as the worn cliff Hangs over its ruined beachhead Now gnash your teeth and make your nostrils flare, Hold your breath and stretch yourself to Descended from fathers tested in battle. Fathers who, like so many Alexander the Greats, have Fought where we are now from morning 'til night and have Sheathed their swords only because there are no more opponents. Don't dishonor your mothers. Now prove That those who you call fathers did conceive you. Be an example to lowlier men. And teach them how to fight. And you, good farmers, Whose limbs were made in England, show us here What quality comes from your farmland. Prove That you are worth your breeding, which I doubt not, That you are worthy of your birth, which I don't doubt, Because even the lowliest born of you Has nobility in your eyes. I see that you're like greyhounds on the leash Straining to go. The hunt is on.

Poetry and Prose

In the two parts of Henry IV and Henry V plays, Shakespeare portrays a mix of high-born nobles and everyday people. To dramatize that contrast, he used different kinds of poetic forms. For more formal speeches, spoken by noble or high-minded people, he typically used iambic pentameter. This

is a verse form in which each line contains five "feet" or units made up of two syllables. The first syllable of each foot is unstressed; the second in stressed (buh-BAH buh-BAH buh-BAH buh-BAH).

For everyday people, he used prose-speech more like everyday talk, with no rhythmic meter or verse patterns. Here are two examples from *Henry IV, Part 1*. Can you tell which is in verse and which is in prose?

The unvoked humour of your idleness: Yet herein will I imitate the sun, Who doth permit the base contagious clouds To smother up his beauty from the world, That, when he please again to be himself, Being wanted, he may be more wonder'd at, By breaking through the foul and ugly mists Of vapours that did seem to strangle him.

PRINCE HAL: I know you all, and will awhile uphold FALSTAFF: A goodly portly man, i' faith, and a corpulent; of a cheerful look, a pleasing eye and a most noble carriage; and, as I think, his age some fifty, or, by'r lady, inclining to three score; and now I remember me, his name is Falstaff: if that man should be lewdly given, he deceiveth me; for, Harry, I see virtue in his looks. If then the tree may be known by the fruit, as the fruit by the tree, then, peremptorily I speak it, there is virtue in that Falstaff: him keep with, the rest banish. And tell me now, thou naughty variet, tell me, where hast thou been this month?

Read the speeches aloud. What effect do verse and prose have here? Which passage sounds more like everyday speech? How would you describe the speakers of each based on the rhythm of the words?

Fighting Words

In the 400 years since Shakespeare wrote his plays, the language of battle and conflict has changed. Understanding what these words meant in Shakespeare's day can enhance your understanding of the plays.

amaze: dismay ancient: a soldier who carries the army's flag apace: quickly arrant: downright, absolute avaunt: be off bedlam: mad **betimes**: quickly **boisterous**: violent, fierce

bootless: unprofitable, useless **broach**: pierce, impale brook: put up with casque: helmet chambers: small cannon **choler**: anger confounded: ruined dastard: coward defend: forbid false: traitorous fillip: strike or hit gage: a glove thrown down as a challenge galls: bitterness girded: besieged, blockaded gorbellied: fat happy: fortunate host: army **high-stomach'd**: haughty **humorous**: capricious, fickle **let**: hindrance

lusty: vigorous, strong **meet**: suitable mickle: great ordinance: cannon overweening: arrogant pale: fence parley: negotiation pith: strength **puissance**: power, force quick: alive raught: reached recreant: faithless rub: obstacle **spittle**: hospital stout: valiant vile: lowly, of humble birth

warrant: assure, promise

white-liver'd: cowardly

yearn: grieve

Activities

Activities for the Films

Shakespeare on Screen

To Think About

Thea Sharrock, the director of *Henry V*, has said "Shakespeare is not written for screen and making that leap is challenging." What do you think this means? Here are some things to consider:

choose any activities that support their curricular goals.

- What are the limitations of presenting action on the stage? For example, how would you stage a battle on the stage? How would you represent it
- How does the camera in film change the relationship between the audience and the action (e.g. with close-ups, camera angles, etc.)?
- What do audience members expect from a film that they don't expect from a play in the theater? Does a film need to be more "realistic" than a

To Analyze: Reshaping Viewing Henry IV, Part 1

View the opening scenes of the Hollow Crown version of Henry IV, Part 1, and compare it to the scenes as written. What changes do you notice? What lines are cut or reordered? Why do you think the director made these changes?

To Discuss: Director's Cut

Pick a scene and discuss the filmmaker's choices in terms of staging, performance, costume, and set. Compare these choices with what's presented in Shakespeare's text. What is the impact of those choices, and what do they suggest about the director's interpretation? Some scenes to

- Richard II, Act V, scene v (Richard's death)
- Henry IV, Part 1, Act II, scene, iv (Hal and Falstaff at the tavern)
- Henry IV Part 2: Act IV, scene v (the scene in which Hal takes his father's
- Henry V, Act I, scene 1 and epilogue

Writing Prompt: The Critics Corner Write a review of this production. When you're writing, consider the

following questions:

- What did you expect to see in this production? Were there any surprises? ■ Pick out a design aspect of the production—the costumes, the lighting, the
- acting—How does this element contribute to the overall effect of the play? What was your favorite part? What parts did you not like as much?

To Discuss: The Role of the Chorus in Henry V

The Chorus is used at the start of each act in Henry V. What purpose does the Chorus serve in this play? Would you expect to see a figure like this in a modern-day play?

Now consider the use of this character in the film version of *Henry V*. How does this production employ the figure of the Chorus? Did you think it was effective? Or do you think the filmmaker could simply have cut this

Activities for Studying the Text ____

These activities can be used in the classroom in conjunction with the plays presented in *The Hollow Crown*.

Some activities can be adapted to any of the plays; others focus on a specific play. Teachers should feel free to

Discuss: Power Play Using any of the plays presented in *The Hollow Crown*, address these questions: What makes a good king? What is the right way

to use power? What is the justification of kingship? Here are some

- play-specific prompts that can be used: ■ Richard II: What is Richard II's justification for kingship? Is he a good king? What is Bolingbroke's justification? Which do you think makes the better king? Is rebellion ever justified? Under
- Henry IV, parts 1 and 2: What qualities are needed in a king?
- Henry V: Is King Henry V a good leader? A hero? What kind of king does he seem to be? Here are some scenes to consider:
- Siege of Harfleur (Act II, scene iii)
- His response to Bardolph's death (Act iii, scene iv)
- Going among troops the day before the battle of Agincourt

War-What Is it Good For? Applicable if covering Henry V

what circumstances?

To Discuss: What is Shakespeare's attitude toward war? How does it compare with modern-day views about war? How does a 21st-century reader view Henry V? Is he a justified conqueror or an oppressive invader?

Follow-up writing assignment: Pick a scene that deals with the justification of war and describe how you would direct it.

To Consider: Father and Sons

Applicable if covering Henry IV, Parts 1 and/or 2

In Henry IV, Shakespeare explores the relationship of a father and a son: King Henry and his son Prince Hal. But in what way is Falstaff a father figure as well?

Writing Prompt: Honor

Applicable if covering Henry IV, Part 1 At the battle of Shrewsbury, Falstaff gives this famous speech:

"What is honour? A word. What is in that word 'honour'? What is that 'honour'? Air. A trim reckoning! Who hath it? He that

died o' Wednesday. Doth he feel it? No. Doth he hear it? No."

But other characters, such as Hotspur, are willing to die for honor, and the desire to preserve honor drives a lot of action in the play. Consider Shakespeare's treatment of this theme. Identify the characters that talk about honor and contrast their different views. Why do you think Shakespeare would include these varying