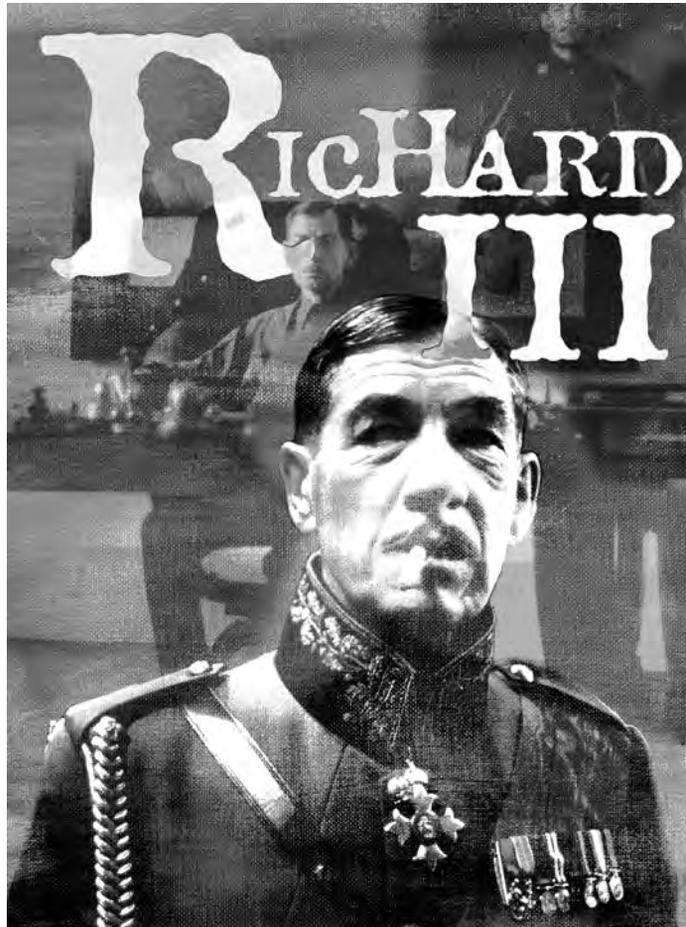


Richard III

EMC Scene by Scene Study Guide



English
& Media
Centre

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Updates

Supplementary resources and activities focusing on the scenes set by QCA for the Year 9 SATs tests will be provided for all purchasing institutions from mid-January each year until at least 2010 at <http://www.englishandmedia.co.uk/Richard3rd.html>

This page also includes a colour pdf of the screengrabs used in the activity on pages 7-9.

A note on the text

All quotations are taken from the Longman School Shakespeare.

Using film versions

All three film versions referred to below are readily available on DVD and VHS video at a reasonable cost. Scenes given in brackets refer to scenes from the DVD menu.

Richard III: Laurence Olivier (1955)

The classic 'men in tights' version with the inimitable Olivier who won a BAFTA for the role. A more expensive 'special edition' version of the DVD is taken from a digitally-restored print of *Richard III* and includes *The Trial of Richard III* (1984) – a 3½ hour show in which a jury decide whether Richard is guilty of the murder of the princes using historical evidence and expert witnesses.

Why you might want to use this film:

- Makes the most of the pomp and ceremony of court life to bring home the contrast between appearance and reality.
- Brings out the intrigue with lots of whispering in doorways and point of view shots as if characters are being spied on (for example Hastings is shown with his mistress).
- Particularly interesting to compare with the McKellen version, for example the opening soliloquies are delivered in very different styles.
- Olivier addresses the camera directly in the asides, drawing in the audience, much as a stage actor would.

Cautionary notes:

Scenes are cut together and the order of events sometimes changed. If viewing the key scenes, make sure students are secure in their knowledge of the order of events before viewing. However, this can lead to some interesting discussion about why and how things have been changed.

Richard III: Ian McKellen version

1995 production staged in an alternative fascist England in the 1930s.

Why you might want to use this film:

- Students may find this film version more accessible because of the up-dated setting and the modern delivery of the lines.
- The updated setting works well – for example Richard delivering his speech accepting the crown to a fascist-style rally. This could lead to an interesting discussion about other possible times and places which would suit the play.
- McKellen's Richard is both evil and magnetic and there is a genuinely sinister atmosphere.

Cautionary notes:

Speeches have been cut and the timeline slightly altered (see cautionary note on the Olivier version). The film starts before the events of the play, with the killing of the Prince of Wales and Henry VI by Richard. Because of the updated setting students may confuse the film version with Shakespeare's version, for example in the film Anne becomes a drug addict.

Looking for Richard

This is a documentary about the play with Al Pacino on a quest to make *Richard III* accessible. This film is a mixture of discussion, vox pop, rehearsal and performance.

Why you might want to use this film:

- Key events in each act described in user-friendly language. Could be useful revision of plot. Act 1 is covered particularly well (scenes 4-13)
- Footage of Pacino and friends performing extracts is interspersed with the actors and others discussing what they think is happening, and debating issues in the play.
- Pacino is refreshingly open about struggling with the language and plot in a way that students might find reassuring (for example scenes 3 and 9).
- Cast meetings in which the actors discuss how to play the scene (for example the discussion about the opening of Act 1, Scene 3 in scene 8) would draw attention to the possibility of alternative interpretations and would be a useful introduction to any activity where students are asked to think like a director.

Cautionary notes:

Footage of visits to the Globe Theatre and Stratford-on-Avon don't illuminate much. The film stops at Richard's death.

Before reading

Quotations and film stills

On page 8 is a selection of quotations from the play *Richard III*. On page 9 there are some stills from the 1955 film adaptation of the play starring Laurence Olivier.

- In pairs, read the quotations out loud. Use different coloured pens to highlight any similar or connected words.
- Look through the film stills and talk about your impressions of the character. What type of film or play do you think they might come from (for example, comedy, family drama, mystery)?
- Choose a quotation you particularly like and either match it to one of the stills on page 9, or draw your own illustration.

Passing the crown – Richard II to Henry VII

Richard III is the last play in what has come to be known as Shakespeare's history cycle. This cycle dramatises the reigns of Richard II, Henrys IV, V and VI, Edward IV and Richard III. It tells of family conflict, war at home and abroad, contests for the kingdom and jealousies. In particular it dramatises the way in which the crown passed from one king to the next.

The cartoon strip on pages 10 and 11 summarises very simply the way in which the crown passed from Richard II to Henry VII.

- Look closely at the cartoon strip and, in pairs, write a sports-style commentary to accompany it.

Shakespeare and history – a personal view

Many people only know about Richard III through Shakespeare's play. But was Shakespeare always historically accurate? Or did he sometimes 'tweak' history to make it more exciting dramatically, or perhaps to show Queen Elizabeth I and her family in a good light? In the account on pages 12 and 13 historian John Hughes explains his own interest in the infamous king and looks at some of the changes and additions Shakespeare made to what is recorded in history.

- Read John's account on pages 12 and 13. Underline or highlight the points you find most interesting or surprising.

John describes a painting which was altered to turn Richard into a hunchback. This is included on page 12.

- In pairs, talk about why Shakespeare and the person who altered the portrait decided to show Richard as a hunchback.
- Feed back your thoughts in class discussion. Discuss why you think people have been so ready to believe Shakespeare's fiction rather than historical accounts.

Quotations and film stills (see page 7)

Thou elvish-marked, abortive, rooting hog,
Though that wast-sealed in thy nativity
The slave of nature and the son in hell



For then I'll marry Warwick's youngest daughter
What though I killed her husband and her father?



I am determined to prove a villain
And hate the idle pleasures of these days.
Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous,
By drunken prophecies, libels, and dreams



O God, which this blood mad'st, revenge his death.
O earth, which this blood drink'st, revenge his death.



For then I'll marry Warwick's youngest daughter
What though I killed her husband and her father?



Simple, plain Clarence, I do love thee so
That I will shortly send thy soul to heaven



But yet I run before my horse to market.
Clarence still breathes, Edward still lives and reigns



I think there's never a man in Christendom
Can lesser hide his love or hate, than he
For by his face straight shall you know his heart



And thus I clothe my naked villainy
With odd old ends stol'n forth of holy writ
And seem a saint when most play the devil

Quotations and film stills (see page 7)



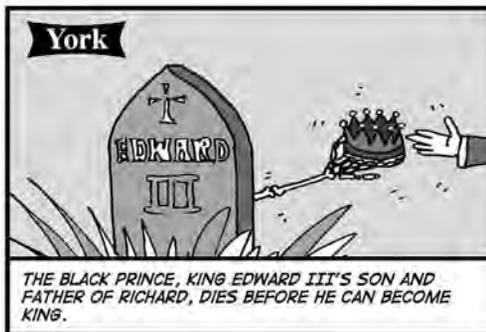
Go to <http://www.englishandmedia.co.uk/Richard3rd.html> for a downloadable pdf of the screengrabs in colour.

Passing the crown – Richard II to Henry VII (see page 7)

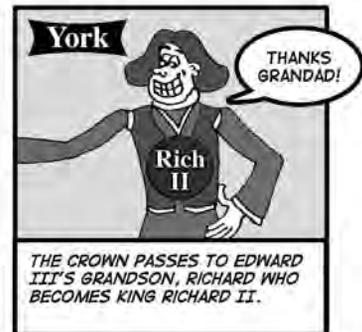
PASSING THE CROWN

AT THIS TIME PEOPLE BELIEVE THAT THE KING IS CHOSEN BY GOD. THE KING – AND HIS SUBJECTS – BELIEVE HE IS PROTECTED BY GOD AND THAT ANYONE WHO CHALLENGES THE KING IS ALSO CHALLENGING GOD. THIS BELIEF IS KNOWN AS THE DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS. THE CROWN IS USUALLY PASSED FROM FATHER TO ELDEST SON.

IN ENGLAND TWO FAMILIES ARE PARTICULARLY POWERFUL: THE HOUSE OF YORK AND THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER. THE HOUSE (OR FAMILY) OF YORK IS ON THE THRONE.



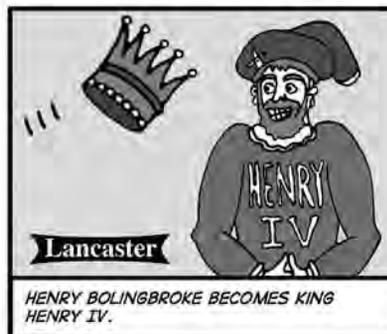
THE BLACK PRINCE, KING EDWARD III'S SON AND FATHER OF RICHARD, DIES BEFORE HE CAN BECOME KING.



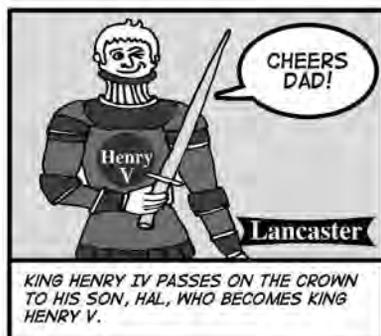
THE CROWN PASSES TO EDWARD III'S GRANDSON, RICHARD WHO BECOMES KING RICHARD II.



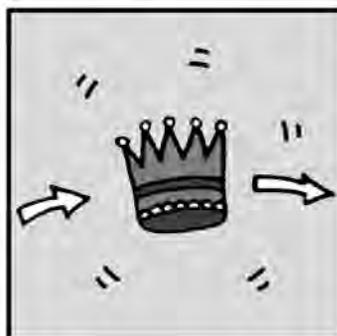
KING RICHARD II IS DEPOSED BY HENRY BOLINGBROKE.



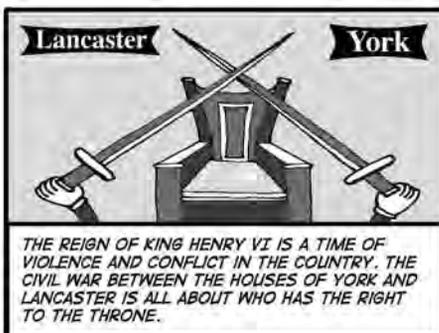
HENRY BOLINGBROKE BECOMES KING HENRY IV.



KING HENRY IV PASSES ON THE CROWN TO HIS SON, HAL, WHO BECOMES KING HENRY V.

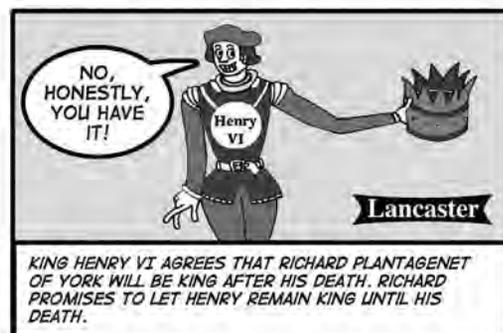


KING HENRY V PASSES ON THE CROWN TO HIS SON WHO BECOMES KING HENRY VI.



THE REIGN OF KING HENRY VI IS A TIME OF VIOLENCE AND CONFLICT IN THE COUNTRY. THE CIVIL WAR BETWEEN THE HOUSES OF YORK AND LANCASTER IS ALL ABOUT WHO HAS THE RIGHT TO THE THRONE.

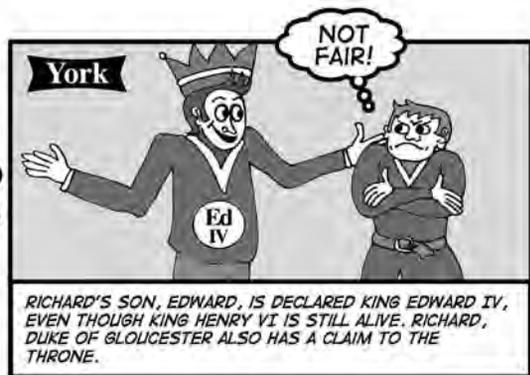
RICHARD PLANTAGENET BELONGS TO THE HOUSE OF YORK AND BELIEVES HE HAS A BETTER CLAIM TO THE THRONE THAN HENRY WHO BELONGS TO THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER.



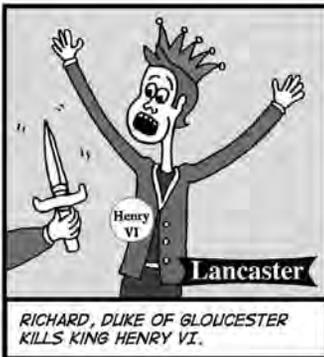
KING HENRY VI AGREES THAT RICHARD PLANTAGENET OF YORK WILL BE KING AFTER HIS DEATH. RICHARD PROMISES TO LET HENRY REMAIN KING UNTIL HIS DEATH.



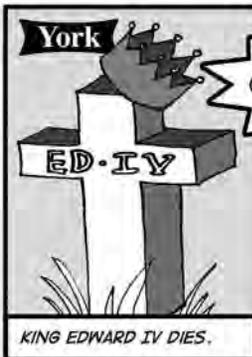
RICHARD BREAKS HIS PROMISE AND PREPARES TO FIGHT. RICHARD PLANTAGENET IS KILLED.



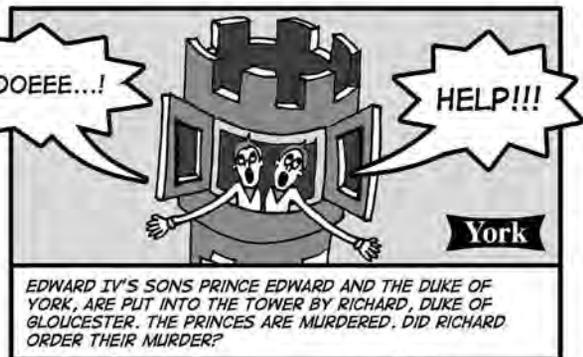
RICHARD'S SON, EDWARD, IS DECLARED KING EDWARD IV, EVEN THOUGH KING HENRY VI IS STILL ALIVE. RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER ALSO HAS A CLAIM TO THE THRONE.



RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER KILLS KING HENRY VI.



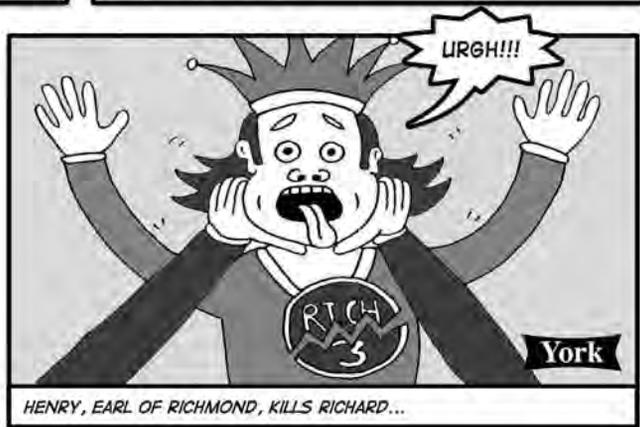
KING EDWARD IV DIES.



EDWARD IV'S SONS PRINCE EDWARD AND THE DUKE OF YORK, ARE PUT INTO THE TOWER BY RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER. THE PRINCES ARE MURDERED. DID RICHARD ORDER THEIR MURDER?



RICHARD IS CROWNED KING RICHARD III.



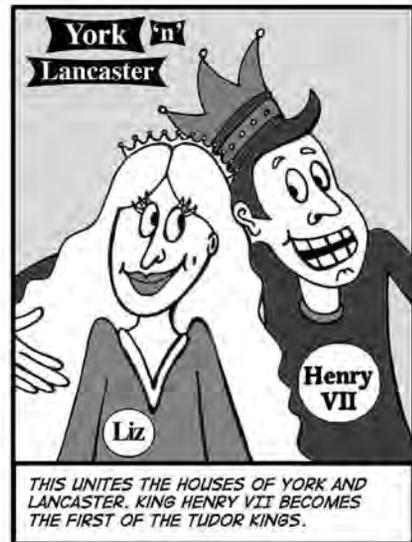
HENRY, EARL OF RICHMOND, KILLS RICHARD...



...AND IS CROWNED KING HENRY VII



HE MARRIES ELIZABETH, DAUGHTER OF KING EDWARD IV AND A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF YORK.



THIS UNITES THE HOUSES OF YORK AND LANCASTER. KING HENRY VII BECOMES THE FIRST OF THE TUDOR KINGS.

Shakespeare and history – a personal view by historian John Hughes (see page 7)

At school I played a foot-soldier in a production of Shakespeare’s play. This was my introduction to Richard III. In the play Richard had a withered arm and a hunchback. He seemed to be an evil, scheming, greedy man who would do anything to become king. He was prepared to betray his family and friends and even arranged the murder of two children – his nephews. So I was a bit puzzled, on a family holiday to Yorkshire, to see a plaque commemorating ‘Good King Richard’. How odd! I thought he was supposed to be a villain?

Later, I heard about a portrait of Richard III being examined by experts. Although the portrait showed him with a hunchback, the disability had actually been painted in much later by a different artist. This intrigued me. Why would someone do that?

I began to study the period in more detail and to try to find out how and why historical *facts* might become historical *fiction*. I discovered that many people think Shakespeare’s Richard is based on a twisted version of the facts, and I have to say I agree with them. Let’s look at some of the evidence that persuaded me.

Shakespeare’s Richard is physically weak with a hunchback and a withered arm.

The real Richard was probably not disabled. Even his enemies acknowledged that he was a strong fighter, and skilled with a sword. Accounts of him at the time, written by people who had met him, don’t mention any disabilities. People didn’t really understand disability at that time

and physical deformities could be seen as representing the evil inside a person. So if this story about Richard were made up, it would be to make people mistrust him.

Shakespeare’s Richard is born evil. He is prepared to betray even his close family to become king. The real Richard was very loyal to his brother Edward who trusted him to rule in the north of England.

Shakespeare’s Richard is a weak king. As soon as an invasion is threatened, his followers start to desert him.



© Queen Elizabeth II, 2006

The real Richard earned a reputation for justice and good government. He was extremely popular when ruling the North for his brother. This is why I saw the plaque in Yorkshire, remembering him as a good king.

Shakespeare's Richard is greedy, selfish and ambitious. The real Richard was known for being extraordinarily generous to his servants. Records show that he gave more than usual to charitable causes, to the church and to colleges.

Shakespeare's Richard is hated by ordinary citizens, who are the first to see through him. The real Richard was noted for trying to give the poor and the weak access to the law to protect them against the strong and the rich.

Shakespeare's Richard is determined to destroy the Woodvilles – Elizabeth (his brother Edward's wife) and her family. He has some of them executed and makes the rest of them fear for their lives.

The real Richard was indeed locked in a power struggle with the Woodvilles. He was coldly polite to his sister-in-law's family but kept well away from them. He did execute some of the family too. In spite of all this, Elizabeth released her daughters into his care and also sent for her son to join his brother in the Tower of London, under Richard's protection. Although the Tower was used as a prison, it was also a royal palace where nobles could be protected.

Shakespeare's Richard orders the murder of his two young nephews, in case someone should claim the throne on their behalf.

The real Richard probably didn't murder his nephews, although historians still debate the evidence. Henry Tudor and the Duke of Buckingham were more of a threat to him so it would seem strange if he allowed them to live but murdered his own nephews, especially as he had already been crowned. The main historical evidence against him is a 'confession' by Tyrrel (who arranges the murders in the play). Some people believe that the nephews were murdered by Henry Tudor (Richmond, the next king). Some people believed this at the time too, but Tyrrel's confession conveniently blamed Richard and cleared Henry. One problem with the confession is that it was made 16 years later when Tyrrel was Henry's prisoner, so the confession could well have been forced out of him. Richard's brother, Edward IV and Earl Rivers, both testified in their wills to their confidence in Richard's goodness. It seems that he took good care of the widows and children of Rivers, Hastings and Buckingham as well as the children of his other brother, Clarence. Is this really the same man who would order the murder of his own nephews?

It is worth remembering that Shakespeare was not trying to write history. He was writing plays with moral messages, with heroes and villains. He also had to please his queen, Elizabeth I. Elizabeth was part of the Tudor family whereas Richard was from the Plantagenet family. The Tudors wanted everyone to believe that they had always had the best claim to the throne so it was helpful to convince people that the Plantagenets were evil. 'Look!' they were saying, 'You're so lucky to have us as your royal family! Those Plantagenets should never have been allowed to be kings. It wasn't our Henry who murdered those poor boys, that evil Richard killed his own nephews.'

Shakespeare went along with the Tudor version of what happened. He may have done this to stay on the right side of Queen Elizabeth I, or because the historical sources he used told the Tudor version, or just because it made better drama. I have to admit that the evil, scheming Richard in the play makes a good dramatic villain, but it's important to remember that this is fiction, not history.

© *John Hughes, 2007*

Cheering and groaning summary

The fortunes of different characters rise and fall during the play. You are going to look at this in small groups.

- Your teacher will give your group one character's fortunes to follow from this list: Richard; Anne; Buckingham; Queen Elizabeth, wife of King Edward IV; Hastings; Richmond; Prince Edward (not to be confused with King Edward IV). Make a banner with your character's name on it.
- Read through the plot summary in your group and at each 'PAUSE' decide whether things seem to be getting better for your character at this point, or worse, or staying the same. You could make a note by each PAUSE with ↑ for getting better, ↓ for getting worse and → for staying the same.
- Your teacher will then read the plot summary aloud, pausing at various points. When your teacher pauses, cheer for your character and wave the banner if their fortunes seem to be rising. If your character's fortunes seem to be falling, lower the banner sadly and groan. If the character's fortunes are neither rising nor falling, stay quiet.

Richard wants to be king when his brother, King Edward IV, dies. Edward is ill	PAUSE
but there are various people who have more right to the throne than he does, including his other brother Clarence and his young nephew, Prince Edward.	PAUSE
Richard manages to get Clarence put in prison.	PAUSE
Richard asks Anne to marry him and she agrees...	PAUSE
even though he was responsible for murdering her father-in-law and husband!	PAUSE
Elizabeth is married to King Edward IV	PAUSE
but he is sick and dying.	PAUSE
Richard hates her and her family and will do anything to make sure none of them gets to the throne.	PAUSE
Richard manages to get his brother Clarence killed in prison and blame it all on Queen Elizabeth and her family.	PAUSE

Edward IV dies, leaving Queen Elizabeth a widow with very little power.	PAUSE
However, everyone agrees that her son, Prince Edward, should be the next king.	PAUSE
Richard shares his plans with his good friend Buckingham and they agree to work together.	PAUSE
Buckingham helps Richard by making sure that the young Prince Edward is kept away from his friends and family.	PAUSE
Queen Elizabeth receives news that her son Grey and her brother Rivers have been arrested on the orders of Richard and Buckingham.	PAUSE
This will help Richard and Buckingham's plans.	PAUSE
Richard sends Prince Edward to the Tower of London, supposedly to keep him safe, but actually to keep him under his own control.	PAUSE
Richard asks his friend Catesby to test Hastings's loyalty. If Hastings isn't on Richard's side, he will be executed.	PAUSE
Richard promises to make Buckingham rich.	PAUSE
Publicly, Hastings tells everyone that he and Richard are friends.	PAUSE
The council meet to make plans for Prince Edward's coronation.	PAUSE
Privately Hastings tells Catesby he does not support Richard. Buckingham and Richard make a trap for Hastings and he is executed.	PAUSE
Buckingham makes a speech to the people to convince them that Richard is the best person to be king.	PAUSE
The people receive the news in silence and no-one cheers.	PAUSE
Buckingham successfully helps Richard to convince everyone that they should make him king instead of Prince Edward.	PAUSE
Anne hears that Richard is going to be king	PAUSE

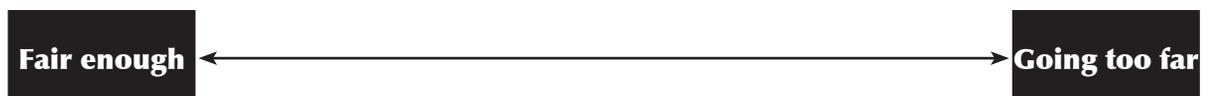
BEFORE READING

She tells everyone how miserable she is with him and that he will probably try to get rid of her soon.	PAUSE
Queen Elizabeth is also miserable. Most of her relatives have been killed by Richard or are fearful of being killed.	PAUSE
Richard is crowned king.	PAUSE
He asks Buckingham to kill Prince Edward and his brother to make sure no-one tries to take the crown away from him. Buckingham refuses.	PAUSE
Richard finds someone else to do the job and breaks his promise to make Buckingham rich.	PAUSE
Richard remembers a prophecy which said Richmond would be king one day.	PAUSE
Buckingham runs away, in fear for his life.	PAUSE
Richard tells everyone that Anne is very sick. She dies.	PAUSE
Prince Edward and his brother are murdered on Richard's orders.	PAUSE
Elizabeth curses Richard.	PAUSE
However, he says he would like to marry her daughter. He seems to convince Elizabeth to talk to her daughter about marrying him.	PAUSE
Richmond is getting an army together in France and plans to attack Richard and take the crown from him.	PAUSE
It seems that Elizabeth has already promised Richmond that her daughter will marry him, not Richard.	PAUSE
Buckingham is captured and executed.	PAUSE
Richmond arrives in Britain. Lots of nobles are gathering armies to help him to fight Richard.	PAUSE
Richmond kills Richard in battle and becomes king.	PAUSE

How far would you go? Moral dilemmas

Do you have a dream for the future such as becoming a famous scientist, a reality T.V. star, or the boss of your own record label? What would you be prepared to do to get what you want? In the play, Richard desperately wants to become king. On page 18 are some of the things he might do to get what he wants.

- Work in pairs. Draw a continuum with 'Fair enough' on one end and 'Going too far' on the other, as in the example below.



- Cut up the tactics Richard might use. In your pair, decide where to put the tactics on the continuum. The nearer you put an action to the 'Fair enough' end, the more acceptable you think the action is, whereas the closer you put an action to the 'Going too far' end the more unacceptable you think it is.
- As a class, discuss the questions that follow.
 - Which of the tactics you thought were 'going too far' would also be very effective in winning the crown?
 - Can you think of real people, from history or from the news, who have used the tactics you thought were unacceptable in order to get what they wanted?
 - What kind of person do you think might be tempted to use some of the unacceptable but very effective tactics? Brainstorm some adjectives that might describe this kind of person. Keep a note of these adjectives as you read *Richard III* to see if any of them apply to Richard.

How far would you go? Moral dilemmas (see page 17)

Get someone to kill a young child who has more right to the throne than you in order to get him out of the way.	Use your persuasive skills to convince the people you would be the best king.
Stop your rival from seeing their family and friends so that they have no-one to support them.	Put your rival in prison so that they can't get any support.
Run a smear campaign against your rival, telling their (true) dirty secrets.	Persuade close friends to help you to get power.
Turn your enemies against each other.	Kill a rival during a battle.
Have a friend killed because you suspect they no longer support you fully and, unfortunately, they know some damaging things about you.	Pretend you are in love with an enemy and convince them to love you so that they are no longer a threat.
Kill an adult who has more right to the throne than you to get them out of the way.	Dedicate all your time and effort to getting power.