

# MOVING PUNCTUATION

- Grade:** K-12
- Goal(s):** To discover the emotion and inner life of a character through movement and text.
- Materials:** Shakespearean text  
A large open space for movement

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Choose a short piece of Shakespearean text. See sample below. Distribute the text to each actor.
2. Review each actor's character and how that character moves.
3. Ask the actors to recite the text while walking through the space in character. Each time they encounter any punctuation in the piece they must stop and quickly change direction before continuing to speak.
4. After the text is read, ask the actors how it felt to change direction, and how this might effect their character's emotions.

## SUGGESTED VARIATION(S):

- **For beginning actors:** Review punctuation and vocal interpretations of words followed by particular punctuation. Review the text for pronunciation and meaning.
- **For advanced actors:** Explore the text while working in pairs. Have the actors repeat the exercise with the added challenges of speaking in unison while trying to maintain physical contact with their partner.
- **Raising The Bar:**
  - Assign specific movement or gestures for each type of punctuation (a hop for a "."; a jump for a "!"; a shimmy for a "?", etc.).
  - Have one actor share his/her text and movement but without speaking the text. Follow each actor's work with guided inquiry of the audience:
    - What did you observe in the work?
    - What questions did you have about the work?
    - What is the work saying?



**SAMPLE TEXT:**

*Hamlet (Act 3, Scene 1)*

O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!  
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword,  
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,  
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,  
The observed of all observers, quite, quiet, down!  
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,  
That sucked the honey of his music vows,  
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason  
Like sweet bells jangled, out of time and harsh,  
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth  
Blasted with ecstasy. O, woe is me  
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!



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