

2016–2017 Season

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# PLAYGUIDE

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## SHAKESPEARE AND STAR WARS

### Verily, A New Hope

by Ian Doescher

August 25–27, 2017



## The Story

Have you ever wondered what *Star Wars* would be like if William Shakespeare wrote it? This is your answer. Return once more to a galaxy far, far away with this sublime retelling of *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope* in the style of the immortal Bard of Avon. The saga of a wise (Jedi) knight, an evil (Sith) lord, and a beautiful princess held captive, *Shakespeare and Star Wars* abounds with all the adventure, valor, and villainy of Shakespeare's greatest plays.



## About the Writer: Ian Doescher



Ian Doescher is an American fiction author most recognized for his adaptations of the *Star Wars* movies into plays in the style of William Shakespeare. In his mind, the *Star Wars* movies and Shakespeare's plays are very similar. They offer larger-than-life characters, tragic figures, comedic side characters, and are even about the same length. Doescher has written Shakespearean adaptations for *Star Wars Episodes I–VI* and is currently working on *Episode VII: The Force Doth Awaken*. Apart from writing, Doescher is an ordained Presbyterian pastor, Director of Non-profit Marketing at Pivot Group LLC, a husband, and a father to two children. Doescher currently lives in Portland, Oregon.

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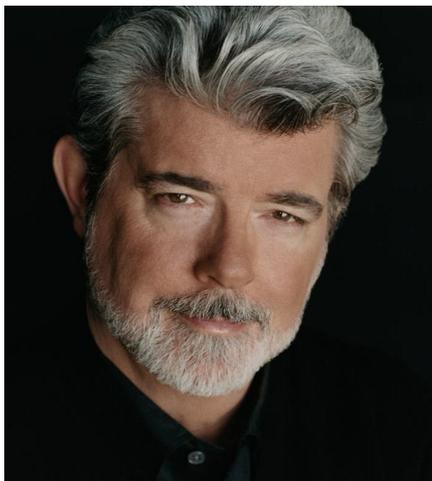
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# About the Inspiration: William Shakespeare



William Shakespeare was born in 1564 in Stratford-Upon-Avon, England. It is rumored that Shakespeare was born on the same day that he passed away on, April 23rd, but that is unknown. Not much is known about Shakespeare's early life because records are scarce. However, scholars know that Shakespeare was the son of a successful leather merchant, John Shakespeare, and Mary Arden. Shakespeare had two older sisters and three younger brothers. In 1582, Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway. The two had three children. There are no records of Shakespeare's life in the theatre until 1592. Until his death in 1616, Shakespeare's theatre career was successful as a playwright, actor, and partial troupe owner of The King's Men. His name was even used to draw people in to see performances. Shakespeare's legacy lives on in the amazing theatrical and poetic literature he created.

# About the Inspiration: George Lucas



George Lucas was born on May 14th 1944 in Modesto, California. As a child, he loved reading adventure stories like *Robinson Crusoe*, *Treasure Island*, and others. As Lucas grew up, he became interested in filmmaking and studied film at the University of Southern California. While in college, Lucas won student awards for his films and even interned at Warner Brothers studios. In 1971, Lucas created his own film company Lucasfilm Ltd., a company where he eventually created *Star Wars*. After the success of *Star Wars*, Lucas went on to produce *Star Wars Episodes V and VI*, created the character Indiana Jones and produced the Indiana Jones movies, and returned to directing for *Star Wars Episode I, II, and III*. Apart from *Star Wars*, Lucas has had several successes in the film industry. In 2015, he was named a Kennedy Center honoree, an acknowledgement of his lifetime contributions to American culture through the performing arts.

# BEFORE THE SHOW

## Research Project: The Globe Theater

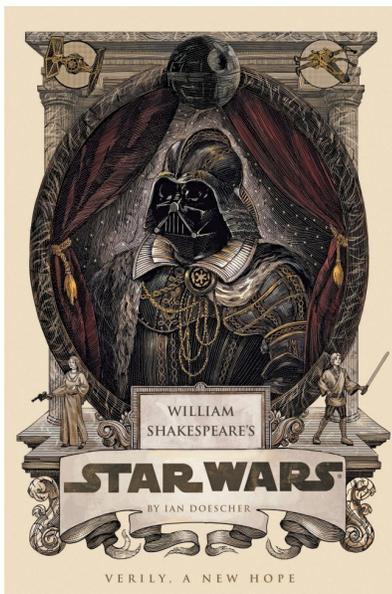
The Globe Theater is a venue in London where Shakespeare's plays were performed. The Globe is still around today, but it's not exactly the same Globe where Shakespeare performed. With the help of a parent or guardian find books about Shakespeare and the Globe Theater at your local library or find research online to learn more. Share your findings with a peer or family member!



## Star Wars and Shakespeare: A Crash Course in Comparisons

Like in a Star Wars movie, William Shakespeare's plays are full of great stories and engaging characters. In the next few sections of this playguide, you will find everything you need to know about the literary devices that Shakespeare used and how Ian Doescher, the writer of *Verily, A New Hope*, uses them in his story. Here are a few of the basics that you will find in this play:

- There are minimal stage directions. Stage directions are the physical actions that an actor performs on stage. Stage directions are usually included in the script so the actor and director have an idea of what a character is doing while speaking. Shakespeare did not write many stage directions in his plays and let the actors and directors create them. Doescher wrote this script with minimal stage directions as well.
- **Rhyming couplets end scenes.** Shakespeare often ended his scenes with a rhyming couplet. A couplet is two lines in a row that rhyme with each other.
- **Language that is meant to be spoken, not just read.** Shakespeare wrote his plays to be performed, not read silently. The words make more sense when you hear them spoken aloud. There is even a rhythm and a cadence to the words, just like in music.
- **Characters sometimes have "asides."** An "aside" is a line or speech spoken aloud so that the audience can hear it, but the other characters onstage cannot. This is how the audience knows what a character's inner thoughts, feelings, and motivations are.
- **Characters make "soliloquies."** A "soliloquy" is a long speech about a character's inner thoughts, feelings, and motivations. It is similar to an "aside," but a "soliloquy" occurs when the character giving the speech is alone on stage.



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# The Language—All About the Iamb

Shakespeare wrote in iambic pentameter, which is a line of poetry that follows a very specific syllabic pattern. An “iamb” has two syllables, the first is unstressed (or soft) and the second is stressed (or emphasized). An iamb sounds like da-DUM, as in the following words:

- Result (re-SULT)
- Enjoy (en-JOY)
- Below (be-LOW)
- Belief (be-LIEF)
- Pursue (per-SUE)
- Beru (be-RU)

“Pentameter” means there are five iambs in a line, so iambic pentameter is a line of ten syllables: da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM. Here’s a classic line, with the unstressed part of each iamb in regular text and the stressed part of each iamb in bold:

‘Td rather be a hammer than a nail.’

If you are confused about what syllable is stressed, you can put your hand on the bottom of your jaw and say a phrase aloud. Your jaw will move down more on the stressed syllables. You can also look at the picture included in this section. This picture has a few lines from Shakespeare’s *Sonnet 18* that are broken down into its stressed and unstressed syllables. An unstressed syllable is represented by the “u” shape written above the syllable and a stressed syllable is represented by a slash.

Shakespeare used iambic pentameter because it has an element of class to it. Many writers believe that iambic pentameter is the closest syllabic pattern to the way humans speak normally. Some of Shakespeare’s characters speak in normal speech, or prose, to show that they are lower

class than those speaking in iambic pentameter. Although Shakespeare loved to use iambic pentameter, he didn’t always use it. In this play, Doescher only has a handful of lines that do not follow iambic pentameter. Can you find them as you listen?

## Example of Iambic Pentameter

- From *Sonnet 18*

Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?  
 Thou art more lovely and more temperate.  
 Rough winds do shake the darling buds of may,  
 And summer’s lease hath all too short a date.



# The Language— Thee vs. Thou



Shakespeare uses the words “thee” and “thou” often instead of the word “you.” This can be a little confusing. See the table below for a guide that will aide thee.

Word	Meaning
Thou	You (As the subject of a sentence, like “thou speakest”)
Thee	You (As the object of a sentence, like “give it to “thee”)
Thy	Your (before a word starting with a consonant, like “thy lightsaber”)
Thine	Your (before a word starting with a vowel, like “thine enemy”)
Ye	You (As the subject of a sentence for more than one person, like “ye people”)



# Devices in Detail

Other than rhyming, there are several devices that Shakespeare used in his plays that Doescher used in this play. Here are a few of the highlights:

**The Fable:** A reference to a minor story—unrelated to the plot—that sheds light on what is happening in the play. Typically, these fables end in an aphorism, a short and wise saying.

**Extended Metaphor:** A figurative comparison made over the course of an entire speech or dialogue between characters.

**Anaphora:** When several lines begin with the same word, words, or phrase.

**Premonitory Dreams:** A dream that a character has that predicts their fate.

**Songs:** Shakespeare’s plays are full of songs. Sometimes playful, sometimes mystical, sometimes sorrowful, songs can appear at unexpected moments and often break from the rhythm of iambic pentameter.

**Stichomythia:** When two characters exchange lines back and forth in rapid dialogue, usually with echoes and repeated words that the other is saying.

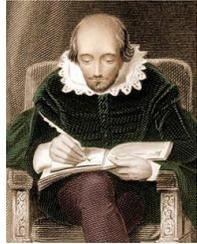
Can you find examples of these when you come see *Shakespeare and Star Wars: Verily, A New Hope*?



# JUST FOR FUN!



## Fun Facts About Shakespeare and Star Wars



- Shakespeare's works have inspired many other books, plays, and movies. One example is *The Lion King*, which is based on *Hamlet*.



- Shakespeare wrote 154 sonnets and almost 40 plays.
- Shakespeare invented many words and phrases that we still use today.
- Shakespeare worked as an actor in London as part of a troupe called The King's Men.



- Shakespeare had three children: Susanna, Hamnet, and Judith. Do any of those names sound like the names of characters from his plays?

- You might know Anne Hathaway from Disney's *The Princess Diaries*, but Shakespeare's wife was also named Anne Hathaway!

- Shakespeare is sometimes called The Bard. A bard is another word for a poet.



- *Star Wars* was inspired by many other genres fairy tales, westerns, 1930s Sci-fi, and mythology!

- George Lucas asked Harrison Ford to read lines while other actors auditioned for Han Solo. Lucas liked Ford's delivery better than those auditioning and cast him in the role.

- James Earl Jones recorded all of Darth Vader's lines from *A New Hope* in two and a half hours.



- The iconic opening crawl of *Star Wars* was created using two-foot-wide die cut yellow lettering over a six-foot-long black paper background. The camera scrolled over them. It took three hours to film.

- Less than 40 movie theatres agreed to show *Star Wars* for its opening weekend.

- George Lucas used footage from World War II airplane battles to inspire the space battles in *Star Wars*.



- The Millennium Falcon looked completely different when it was first designed. The first design still made it into *Star Wars* as the Rebel Blockade Runner fleeing the Imperial Star Destroyer in the opening scene.



Source: <http://mentalfloss.com/article/63666/50-facts-about-star-wars>

Source: <https://www.theschoolrun.com/homework-help/william-shakespeare>

# CRAFT CORNER

## Noodle Lightsaber

The lightsaber is one of the most iconic objects in *Star Wars*. Following the directions below, you can create your own lightsaber. If you create more than one, you can act out your favorite scenes from *Star Wars* with a family member or friend.

### Supplies needed:

- A pool noodle
- Silver/grey duct tape
- Electrical tape
- A knife (please let your parent or guardian use this.)



### Directions:

1. Ask a parent or guardian to cut the pool noodle in half.
2. Cover the bottom quarter of the pool noodle with silver duct tape.
3. Add electrical tape on top of the duct tape to create patterns or rings.
4. Add anything else to the handle of the lightsaber!

Source: <https://family.disney.com/craft/how-to-make-a-star-wars-inspired-lightsaber-from-pool-noodles/>