

Handout

"A Hit, a Very Palpable Hit": Stage Combat for Student Performers

When you introduce stage combat to your classroom, but sure to:

- Analyze when and why Shakespeare used sword fighting in his plays.
- Discuss the purpose of a swordfight on stage. It is to entertain the audience. The combatants are not actually trying to injure one another, so strokes need to be overplayed and dramatic while still appearing believable.
- Stress importance of safety. A rule for stage combat is that every five seconds of fighting requires at least one hour of practice for it to be effective.