Equality in the Classroom: A Norm Critical Approach to Teaching Democratic Values Using Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream, The Tempest* and *The Taming of the Shrew*

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Abstract

The curriculum for upper secondary school clearly states that every school is obliged to ensure that teaching centres on and implements democratic values in order to prevent discrimination (Skolverket, 2013). How to do this however, is up to the local school to decide. Norm-critical pedagogy shows that in order to inculcate democratic values in education, the individual teacher must design the teaching material so that it focuses on such values (Bromseth & Darj, 2010). The purpose of this study, and the aim of this essay, is to investigate how democratic values can be implemented in classroom practice using Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *The Taming of The Shrew*. English classes in the courses English 5 and English 6 were asked to read extracts from each of the plays, and then evaluate the play of choice in terms of the socio-political reality of the late Renaissance portrayed in the extracts, through the prism of today’s democratic values. The pupils were assisted in the task by having close-reading questions to answer, and later a smaller written assessment in form of a blog-entry, in order to help develop their thinking. The results of the study show that the pupils were perfectly able to evaluate and discuss values and practices such as equality, racism or sexism based on their reading. From a norm-pedagogical approach to teaching, it therefore seem that Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *The Taming of The Shrew* can be utilised as teaching material in order to help foster the development of democratic values, and discussions around the same, into the classroom.

Keywords: Norm-critical pedagogy, democratic values, teaching material, EFL teaching, Shakespeare, norm-critique
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1. Introduction

The curriculum for upper secondary school requires that each school establishes a local equality plan corresponding to democratic values and the law of discrimination (Skolverket). In addition to local treatment plans, each school is also to actively work with these local plans, and introduce them to the pupils. Furthermore, the curriculum demands that the education in each school must “pass on values to students” and “impart [...] knowledge [...] that is based on fundamental democratic values and the human rights we all share” (Skolverket 5). Skolverket thus demands that schools supplement the equal treatment plan and work with classroom-based fortification of democratic values. However, how, and when, this work is undertaken is left for the schools, and individual teachers, to decide. Rosén argues that in Swedish schools, there seems to be something of a tradition of implementing the local equality plan, and democratic values, through so called “equal treatment days” typically held once a year or, at best, one day per semester (qtd. In Bromseth & Darj 55). As such the implementation of the democratic values that Skolverket mandates is in fact happening outside of the classroom. Bromseth and Darj state that this way of working with equality, values and democracy is not only insufficient, but also inadequate (15). Separating the equality plan from the pupil’s regular classes and education makes it appear to be something separated from school and the pupil’s actual education, hence the equal treatment work ends up losing its value and authenticity. Bromseth and Darj continue by discussing the principles of norm-critical pedagogy as resort to this, and suggest it should figure at the centre for all local study plans (11-15). They state that the only way to succeed with equal treatment is to implement it into the regular classes, thereby allowing democratic values to imbue the education for every pupil. As such,
the individual teacher needs to build his/her courses around democratic values in order to implement them into the classroom. As this thesis will argue, one possible way to approach this issue is for the language teacher to create a discussion around required reading, dealing with values of the text, hereby helping to make democracy and equality present in the classroom.

The didactic part of this study is mainly built on norm-critical pedagogy, and how to practically work with democratic values and let them permeate the local rubric. Norm-critical pedagogy is a branch of queer pedagogy, which differs from the so called tolerance-pedagogy as it allows the teacher to distinguish, and thus begin the work of dismantling those norms which are perpetuated in schools, rather than upholding a climate in which these norms can flourish (Frisell Ellburg, qtd in Bromseth & Darj 285). Edemo confirms that a norm-critical approach to pedagogy will help the teacher towards inclusion, and they also seek to analyse teaching material from the same perspective (qtd in Bromseth & Darj 91). Furthermore, a norm-critical approach allows the teaching material to be analysed in terms of the values it is perpetuating, explaining why it becomes an especially suitable methodology for the present study.

In practice, this thesis investigates the suitability of the norm-critical approach through conducting a case-study of students taking English 5 and 6. As part of a literary unit, the pupils were asked to work with one of three Shakespeare plays; the pupils could choose extracts from *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Tempest*, or *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. After being given a lecture on literary history, providing a context for the plays the pupils divided themselves into smaller groups and answered close reading questions on the play of choice. After this, the pupils were asked to individually write a blog-entry based on their reading of the play, linking it to democratic values. The close-reading questions the pupils were asked to answer in groups correspond to Harmer’s ideas on reading comprehension, as well as Chamber’s thoughts on meaningful discussions on reading, both moves improving the pupil’s enthusiasm and motivation. Krashen confirms motivation as vital for pupils to be able to tackle a task; in response Lightbown and Spada states that authenticity is a crucial factor in order for pupils to be motivated and be able to grasp a text (37). Krashen’s theories around the active filter hypothesis dictated the nature of the questions, as this
notion demands that the teaching material be linked to the pupil’s everyday life, in order for it to be authentic, and therefore motivating for the pupils (37). Chambers in turn, confirms that questions of a more specialised nature can help pupils understand underlying messages, and to do a closer reading (232). Vygotskij’s theories on sociocultural learning and the proximal zone of development were also of great importance when designing the task.

Although Skolverket clearly states that democratic values should be in focus, and a part of teaching, there are no suggestions on classroom-based work or which material to use, or not use; it is up to the individual teacher to decide how to teach. Thompson and Turchi suggest a number of ways of implementing Shakespeare in the language classroom, for example allowing pupils to further analyse and investigate, e.g. language, plot and theme (2017). However, teaching Shakespeare in an EFL classroom might be slightly trickier, and a norm critical approach to Shakespeare, directly linked to the Swedish curriculum and rubric is fairly unmapped territory. Can reading Shakespeare provide the pupils with notions through which they may become functional and valuable citizens? Can Shakespeare, though questionable in terms of content, become a valuable input in the classroom as a tool for teaching pupils about equality? Bromseth would argue that it could, should the teacher help the pupils to ask the right questions (qtd. In Bromseth & Darj 42). It seems the difference between perpetuating and dissembling democratic values lies not in the content itself, but rather in how the teacher chooses to implement it. This essay aligns with this notion, and will aim towards investigating possible approaches to norm-critical pedagogy, using Shakespeare’s *The Taming of a Shrew*, *The Tempest* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, in order to discuss democratic values in the classroom.

1.1 Research Questions

This thesis will seek to answer the following question:

- How well does Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* function as classroom material around which the pupils can investigate democratic values?
It is the contention that texts that are in some way problematic from a norm-critical perspective can function as a foundation on which discussions around norms and values can be based. This is why the following subsidiary question had to be answered:

- From which perspective could *The Tempest*, *The Taming of the Shrew* or *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* be problematic?

In order to respond to this question, the plays were analysed through the prism of norm-critical questions, as discussed in section 3.3. Moreover, in order to answer the research question effectively, a practical element was required: a case-study which put these theories into practice. The research questions above were subsequently answered by evaluating how well the pupils were able to discuss democratic values in their blog entries, based on their reading.

2. Literary Analysis

In order to design teaching material for the unit, the three plays first had to be examined. When reading Shakespeare from a norm-critical perspective, some issues concerning proper literary analysis arise. Rackin argues that in order to thoroughly analyse literature, one must always take context into consideration (65). With this in mind, the teaching material concerning the plays had to put all of the three plays into their original context: the socio-political realities of the late Renaissance. However, in order to approach the texts norm-critically, they also had to be analysed in terms of norm. Section 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 therefore analyse each play in turn from a norm-critical perspective which is informed by a Foucauldian theory of discourse.

2.1 *The Tempest*

When analysing *The Tempest* from a post-colonial perspective the character of Caliban becomes of great importance. In order to first set an historical context for the text, as Rackin argues is vital, it is important to remember that *The Tempest* was first performed in the theatre in 1611, the time of the first British colonies (qtd. in
Callaghan). Depending on how the character Caliban is interpreted, the comprehension of the setting of the play may vary. Mason Vaughan and Vaughan suggest Caliban could be a representation of the Native American population, and the island would therefore be a representation of America (43-5). Historically such an idea is very much applicable to *The Tempest*, as the British Empire set up the colony of Jamestown in Virginia in 1607. Context here prompts a post-colonial reading of the play in which the white man, here Prospero, claims an already inhabited land, that of the savage natives Sycorax and Caliban, as his own. While the reading of *The Tempest* as representing the British colonialism of North America is applicable, other critics have suggested instead that the island could be a representation of Ireland, and Caliban consequently represents the colonised Irish. This idea is further suggested as the Irish native population was described as “savage” (Mason Vaughan & Vaughan 33). Those in favour of the prior interpretation however, would suggest that such statements as “this thing of darkness I acknowledge mine” (5.1.275-6) or “beast Caliban” (4.1.140), indicate that this character is either of African, or indigenous origins. Furthermore, the name Caliban may very well be a word-play on the word *cannibal*, and as this trait initially ascribed to the native populations of North American and African colonies, this name would incline such descent (Mason Vaughan & Vaughan 31; 303).

Mason Vaughan & Vaughan also pay attention to how Caliban is first introduced in the play, and how he emerges onto the stage. Caliban is placed under the stage, and emerges from what appears to be a trapdoor in the floor, suggesting that this character is associated with the element of earth and dirt. This becomes further evident when contrasting Caliban with the character of Ariel, who also is a servant of Prospero’s, but whose character differs drastically from Caliban’s. Ariel’s ability to become invisible, and also to fly, connect him to the element of air, therefore becoming the polar opposite of Caliban’s earthy nature (28). Comparing Caliban to a beast, fool or fish not only makes him inferior, but also dehumanises this character, with dehumanisation leading to othering. Spivak states that othering is the way in which colonial discourse produces its subjects (qtd in Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin 187-189). Furthermore, Spivak continues, these subjects will gain their identity through the eyes of the hegemonic superior (187-9). Considering this, Caliban as a character would gain his identity through the treatment of Prospero, Stephano and Trinculo.
Caliban is a vital character in terms of making sense of the setting of the play. Should one suppose that Caliban is a representation of the Native American – as descriptions such as “savage” and “monstrous” as well as the anagram hidden in his name might suggest – then subsequently the role of Caliban would imply that the island would most likely represent the British colonies in North America (Mason Vaughan & Vaughan 47-53). The treatment and characterisation of Caliban would according to Spivak make him a subject, and a representation of the other (qtd in Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 187-198). Furthermore, Loomba lists Caliban among Shakespeare’s others and argues that representation of the other is of great importance in perpetuating colonial identities and colonial discourse alike (“Shakespeare and Cultural Difference” 180; “Colonialism” 98). The description of Caliban in The Tempest could therefore be argued as leaving the play perpetuating colonial discourse.

2.2 A Midsummer Night’s Dream

The patriarchal theme of A Midsummer Night’s Dream may not be as prominent as in The Taming of the Shrew, where male domination and female subservience is central, but it is still clearly operative in the play. Chaudhuri notes both Egeus’ self-righteous ownership of his daughter Hermia, as well as Hermia’s own desire to subdue to a man (Chaudhuri 83). In the play, a father appears to be free to rule his daughter as he may please. As Theseus says to Hermia, “To you your father should be as your God, […] by him imprinted and within his power to leave the figure or disfigure it” (1.1.46-50). Helena is characterised in the same manner as Hermia, since her sole aim in the play is to be loved in return by Demetrius. Rita Felski argues that traditionally speaking, female characters, whose only purpose is to be wed, are often depicted as foolish, and that such characters are seldom destined to have their hopes and dreams realised (28-29). This foolishness is often also scripted in a way in which it becomes a humorous element to the narrative. Felski’s ideas are recognised in Shakespeare’s characterisation of Helena, who yearns hopelessly after Demetrius, coming across as both foolish and desperate. Helena, and female portrayals such as this, would suggestively create a humorous attribute to the play, with a strong patriarchal undertone.
However, the patriarchal theme in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* is also accompanied by more matriarchal themes (Chaudhuri 85). Chaudhuri suggests that the relationship between Hermia and Helena manifests a “self-sufficient female bonding” which could be linked to female friendship and sisterhood, or even a latent display of lesbianism (85). There is also a clue to this behind their names, as Hermia could be thought of as a variant of Hermione, and Helena could be linked to Helen of Troy, Hermione’s mother (Chaudhuri 119). The proper names here seem to be mixing, leading to what Butler calls gender trouble. The play with gender-roles, with Helena wooing Demetrius as seen in the following scene: “the story shall be changed, Apollo flies and Daphne holds the chase; […] set a scandal on my sex, we cannot fight for love as men may do, We should be wood and were not made to woo, I'll follow thee and make a heaven of hell” (2.1.230-231;240-243), and Hermia having to be restrained by both Demetrius and Lysander trying to fight Helena can also be understood as subverting the patriarchal pattern. Although breaking the associated gender stereotypes might be considered something valuable within the field of norm-critique, Butler suggests that this play on gender might not be contributing to female empowerment, but rather the other way around (Butler 2010).

Despite this possible approach to interpreting *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* the patriarchal undertones seep through and permeate the plot. One of the most blatant patriarchal embodiments in this play can be found in the opening act. Theseus says to his wife-to-be, Hippolyta “I wooed thee with my sword and won thy love doing thee injuries” (1.1.16-19). Psychoanalytically, the sword here is the manly, phallic weapon. As a weapon, it is violent, so that Theseus here can be read as discussing his desire to rape Hippolyta. Rape is an act designed to display male superiority and female submission, therefore this passage is perpetuating these roles. Chaudhuri also suggest it is traces such as these which truly embody the patriarchal nature of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (86).

### 2.3 The Taming of the Shrew

The most flagrant themes of *The Taming of the Shrew* would obviously be the so-called taming of a woman, linking this to submission and obedience of a wife before
her husband. In addition to submission, *The Taming of the Shrew* could, much like the othering or dehumanisation of Caliban in *The Tempest*, be evaluated in terms of dehumanisation and othering of women, here Katherina. In order to “tame” Katherina, Petruccio rests on remedies such as abusiveness towards his staff in order to demonstrate his power: “[H]ow he beat me because my horse stumbled [...]” (4.168-9). Suggestively, by demonstrating authority over his staff in such a violent manner, rather than by domestic violence aimed towards his wife, Petruccio appeals to Katherina’s empathic side, as she pleads her husband to have compassion for his staff “Patience, I pray you, ‘twas a fault unwilling” (4.1.142). As Katherina here is pleading for patience, it makes her portray the very same trait. Traditionally, the patient wife was considered virtuous, and the opposite of a shrew (Brown, qtd in Hodgdon 43). As such, it seems abuse is rendered effective in taming a woman.

Petruccio also withholds food and sleep in order to properly tame Katherina: “She ate no meat today, nor none shall eat; Last night she slept not, nor tonight she shall not” (4.1.186-7). As such, *The Taming of the Shrew* quite literally deals with dehumanisation as the taming process undertaken by Petruccio in order to make Katherina obey, and succumb, rests on the traditional act of falconry (Hodgdon 55-57). Petruccio also exclaims “To her, Kate” (5.2.34) and “A hundred marks my Kate does put her down.” (5.2.36). By referring to his wife in manners linked to falconry and hunting, Petruccio seems to turn Katherina into an animal. Hodgdon makes the comparison between the strategy of Petruccio’s and how taming a haggard was usually conducted by mainly refusing food in order to ensure obedience (Hodgdon 56). Petruccio himself compares taming his wife to that of a falcon in the following passage: “Another way I have to man my haggard, To make her come and know her keeper’s call: [...] to watch her as we watch these kites” (4.1.12-3). As was the case with Caliban, the dehumanisation of Katherina is a step towards creating a subject, and also a distance between the subject and the dominant part. Other passages in the play such as Petruccio discussing his marriage: “Thus have I politicly begun my reign” indicates dominance of Katherina and further suggesting the patriarchal undertones in this play (4.1.177).

Hodgdon states that the narrative of Shrew-taming such as this goes back to folktales from the middle-ages (45). The main purpose of these stories was to
intimidate women from being too outspoken or rebellious, as well as to force them into submission (45), and the taming of disobedient women was a common theme in late Romance comedies. Placing the play into its context, as Rackin suggests, means noting that the culture in which they were produced was patriarchal, and that the plays were meant to appeal to such an audience (65). Adopting a Foucauldian approach also allows the plays not only to be put into historical context but also into a discursive context. Katherina is being exposed throughout the play to dehumanisation, and forced subordination, until she is fully subjected to her husband, and the play finally can end well for all parties as Petruccio, for his part, gains an obedient wife, and Katherina finds happiness in succumbing to her husband. Furthermore, taming his wife, and hindering a woman from her rebellious nature seems proof of a compassionate husband: “[…] all is done in reverend care of her; […] this is a way to kill a wife with kindness, […] he that knows better how to tame a shrew, Now let him speak; ‘tis charity to show.” (4.1.193-200). As such, as Hodgdon suggests, The Taming of the Shrew is very much in line with the Renaissance comedy, dealing with troublesome women. The general goal with story lines such as these, Hodgdon continues, was not only to entertain but also to discourage women from outspokenness and rebellion. The Taming of the Shrew therefore truly perpetuates misogyny.

3. Method

Having conducted an initial literary analysis of The Tempest, The Taming of the Shrew and A Midsummer Night’s Dream informed by norm-critical theory, the study next set about crafting a literary unit on the basis of these readings, seeking to determine how well Shakespeare’s texts may function as classroom material through which pupils might investigate democratic values.

3.1 The Literary Unit

The study conducted is based on several pedagogical movements in order to increase pupil’s understanding of the texts and the underlying concepts, which are to be analysed in order for the task to fill its purpose. The case study performed is a part of a
larger literary unit (see appendix 1 and 2). The study was carried out in one English 5 class and one English 6 class. The unit was conducted the same way in each class, but with a slightly different focus in order to correspond to the following core content and criteria of each course. The unit was designed to meet core content and criteria for English 5 (see appendix 5) as well as core content and criteria for English 6. The pupils were assessed according to the local criteria listed in the figures below, and based upon the national criteria (see appendix 5):

**Students should demonstrate skills in writing:**
- Content is basic/relevant/relevant and well developed. Register & format are sometimes inappropriate/appropriate/excellent to the task & reader
- Basic/satisfactory/excellent organization of information & ideas which are sometimes incoherent, with inaccurate/satisfactory/effective use of cohesive devices
- Basic/satisfactory/excellent range of structures and vocabulary […] word choice lack precision/is used effectively
- Basic/satisfactory/excellent sentence construction. Errors/are minimal/cause (little) difficulty for the reader.
- Basic/satisfactory/excellent flow of English and hard for the reader to understand/sometimes interrupted/hardly any interruptions

**Students should demonstrate skills in reading:**
- Show basic/satisfactory/excellent understanding of the structure and content of the text.
- Students discuss in basic/some detail/constructive detail some terms some features where English is used and make simple/satisfactory/nuanced comparisons with their own experiences and knowledge
In the delivery of the unit, the teaching of the English 5 class emphasised the concept of fiction and interpretation of context as stated by Skolverket (Core content English 5, 2011), while the English 6 class were given a more thorough overview of “Themes, ideas, form and content in film, literature; authors and literary periods, Contemporary and older literature, poetry, drama and songs” (Core content English 6, 2011).

The unit first provided the pupils with an historical background before engaging in the task, in the form of a lecture dealing with literary eras and movements within English literature. Rackin argues that analysing a text without its historical context would be fruitless, and for this reason pupils were given an overview of the Renaissance as a literary era (see appendix 7) (65). The teacher then introduced the pupils to Shakespeare, and they were briefly familiarised with the plays *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *The Tempest* and *The Taming of the Shrew*. The pupils divided themselves into small groups, and were asked to choose one of the three plays to further investigate. They then had to read, and answer questions about the play of choice in their groups.

Having the pupils first work in a group with a challenging text is mainly based on Chamber’s, Vygotskij’s and Gibbon’s thoughts on sociocultural learning, and meaningful reading comprehension. Vygotskij argues that people are social learners, explaining why learning situations should be situated in groups (433); this way, the knowledge of the group becomes the knowledge of the individual and vice versa. Additionally, the teacher should always provide material within the proximal zone of development. The proximal zone of development claims that all teaching material needs to be pitched at just above the cognitive level of the pupils, making it graspable but still challenging enough not to be dull and hence off-putting. Should the learning process take place in a group, the proximal zone of development is not only located in one pupil, but to the entire group, which explains why sociocultural learning will improve learning. Gibbons states that in order for the individual student to be able to perform alone s/he must first take part in a group as a step in sociocultural learning (36). Polias created a four step pedagogical model where step one would be for the teacher to let the pupils familiarise themselves with the field, step two enables pupils to get acquainted with the genre or other texts within the field, the third step is common production, and the final step is individual production (Hedeboe & Polias 15). Gibbons
subsequently means that pupils should be allowed to approach material together, in accordance with sociocultural learning and Polias’ four steps (Gibbons 15).

The close-reading questions are mainly based on Chamber’s theories around meaningful reading, and Harmer’s ideas on successful reading comprehension. Chambers states that reading needs to be a social activity, where pupils can share their reading experience with others in order to be able to comprehend what s/he has read, as this would help the pupil put the reading experience into words, as well as helping the pupil form an opinion and reflect on a text (2011 100-101; 177). Furthermore, Chamber cites positive peer pressure as an outcome from book discussions, and which could increase the joy of reading (2011). By providing guiding questions to help the pupils approach the text, the teacher helps the pupils focus on certain aspects of the text (219-221). Harmer puts forward pre-, during- and post-reading questions as help for pupils to find a text engaging. The teacher may provide all three sets of questions, or single one set out. This study uses reading questions meant to be answered during the reading process. Having the pupils fully examine a text before, while and/or after reading a text might help them find it intriguing and thus be more inclined to finish it (Harmer 287-293).

Feeling excited about a task would, according to Krashen’s active filter hypothesis increase motivation, thus being a great tool for a pupil to tackle a challenging task (qtd in Lightbown and Spada 37). This is indeed the task set for the pupils in this study, the challenge of reading Shakespeare, which a pupil of mine explained as being “the most challenging task in the life of a high school student” (5student#7). Krashen agrees with Vygotskij’s proximal zone of development, claiming that the level of difficulty of the teaching material should always be slightly above the level of the pupils understanding (qtd in Lightbown and Spada 37). Working within the proximal zone of development however, might not always be enough to ensure learning. The active filter hypothesis argues that should a pupil be unmotivated to work, the pupil will simply not engage in the task at hand. Lightbown & Spada develop the question of motivation through adding the category of “authenticity” (37). For them, authentic material may help the pupils in finding why the task in question is of certain importance, hence finding learning valuable (37).
Harmer also argues that allowing pupils to connect a text to themselves and their own ideas might help them engage with a text, as this would help the pupil find the text valuable and thus authentic (287-288). For this reason the pupils were asked to link the texts to the socio-political realities of today. However, it can be argued anachronistic to ask a teenager to connect a 400-year-old play to his/her own life. Surely, reading an old play with today’s values in mind might very well be anachronistic, but at the same time, from a pedagogical perspective it could increase understanding of the text. The teaching material needs to be motivational for those pupils who may not find Shakespeare’s plays exciting, and can link these plays to something s/he may recognise from his/her own life, thereby increasing their understanding as well as their motivation to read.

Furthermore, linking these plays to the modern day, may also unveil some underlying themes, which can be evaluated through disciplines such as feminism and post-colonialism, again bringing us back to a norm-critical approach to the material. Rackin has argued that analysing Shakespeare through the prism of modern day feminism is possible (64). Of course, understanding the historical context of a text is crucial for generating a more thorough understanding, as well as creating a foundation for a comprehensive analysis of the text. This assumption aligns with the notion of Foucault’s ideas of hegemony, and norm-critique alike; making context essential for the pupils to be able to analyse and investigate The Taming of the Shrew, The Tempest and A Midsummer Night’s Dream. The Foucauldian and norm-critical perspective basically helps us recognise and challenge authoritarianism as well as reflect on the ways in which the teacher figures in the classroom. Continuing this with line of thought on hegemony and power, Bromseth and Darj state that any given teaching material could either perpetuate or dismantle norms, but by not analysing texts in terms of norms will leave those norms to ultimately be silently perpetuated (14-15).

3.2 Case-Studies

Denscombe suggests case studies in situations where theories need to be put into practise in order to be thoroughly studied. By conducting a case-study the researcher will be given a general overview of underlying complex systems, and can be valuable
when constructing new and testing already established theories (2016 95; 104). Essentially, the case study will allow the researcher to thoroughly investigate a phenomenon, as well as the underlying causes of a phenomenon, in terms of processes and sociological theories (95). The case study falls short when trying to produce results, which need to be generalised, or approaching universal factors. What the case study instead provides is a focus on a process rather than purely measurable end products (104). As the main purpose of my study was to investigate how pupils can approach acquiring democratic values through norm-critical pedagogy, a method allowing me to evaluate the learning process of the pupils by enlightening the theories behind the procedure, and behind the teaching material, would be best suitable. Furthermore, the results and data from a case-study can be generalised in terms of theoretic assumptions, rather than populations, which is why the results of my study must be implied theoretically rather than seen as something general. The results of my study must therefore be linked to a theoretical framework rather than solely working alone. This theoretical framework is based on norm-critical pedagogy, and a norm-critical understanding of the texts (see sections 2.1, 2.2, 2.3)

Denscombe further states that when collecting data via a case study the researcher could have several ways of reporting this data, as this method encourages multiple methods to be applied (103). In this study each pupil has written a blog entry, which works as the main source of data collection. However, in order to make sense of these, there are also close-reading questions linked to the topics of the blog entry, which could be looked at in order to gain a more thorough overview of how well the pupils understood the extracts, and also help the teacher assess the pupil’s reading skills as this was a part of the grading. Additionally, as the case study allows the application of other methods, this method seemed the most appropriate (Denscombe 103-104). In order to provide the pupils with close-reading questions, the plays all had to be analysed, and the blog entries had to be interpreted in order to be applied as results. This demands methods and procedures of a different kind, explaining why the case study proved the most efficient way to teach the material.
3.3 Selecting the Extracts

When analysing material with a norm-critical approach, Foucault lies especially close at hand, as norm-critical pedagogy is centred on queer theory and the discursive analysis of power (Bromseth & Darj 12-14). A Foucauldian approach would allow the plays *The Taming of the Shrew, The Tempest* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* to be analysed in terms of discourse and power, as well as corresponding well to the didactical discussion set for the unit. Foucault’s discourse analysis and power-knowledge centred discussion is therefore a main focus in the literary study, and functions as a framework. In order to decide which extracts the pupils were to read in order to be able to focus on democratic values, the plays were evaluated in terms of such values; *The Taming of the Shrew* was analysed from a feminist perspective focusing mainly on subordination of women, *The Tempest* was analysed from a post-colonial perspective, and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* from a gender perspective. All blog entries collected in English 5 and 6 were used as data and analysed individually in this study.

From a feminist perspective (discussed in more detail in section 2.3), in *The Taming of the Shrew* issues such as arranged marriage, abusive relationships and subordination of women arise, as well as the contrast between the sisters Katherina and Bianca providing the ideal versus the appalling woman. The extracts 2.1.1-36; 106-28, 4.1.1-200 and 5.2.142-85, which the pupils were asked to read allowed the pupils to reflect on the following questions:

- How does this play portray desirable/undesirable women in contrast to each other?
- How does dehumanisation of women figure in this play?
- How does female subordination/male domination figure in this play?

Extract 2.1.1-36 could reveal how women are portrayed in contrast to each other, whereas the other extracts would all deal with female subordination and male domination, as well as domestic violence and dehumanisation of the other, here, women.

*The Tempest* was examined in terms of colonialism, othering and dehumanisation of mainly, Caliban (see section 2.1). Othering and dehumanisation in
this play becomes especially interesting in terms of democracy by looking at Caliban as a racialised character and the island as a metaphor for any of the British colonies at time, as this would raise issues directly linked to colonial discourse. The following questions were used as a focus in order to find extracts for the pupils to work with:

- How is the role of Caliban treated in relation to Ariel in terms of representation?
- How is the role of Caliban treated by Prospero/Sailors in terms of dehumanisation?
- How is the role of Caliban portrayed in terms of othering?

In order for the pupils to be able to evaluate this play in terms of the themes above, the extracts 1.2.307-376, 2.2.1-183, 3.1.92-6, 3.2.1-39 and 5.1.256-76 were chosen. These deal with how Caliban is portrayed as a role in the play, as well as how this role is being portrayed in contrast to other, and treated by these characters.

_A Midsummer Night’s Dream_ was evaluated from a feminist perspective (see section 2.2) focusing on rape culture and gender-roles. In order to highlight rape, and gender roles, which could be found as central themes in the play. The extracts the pupils had to read were 1.1.12-17, 1.1.180-207, 2.1.188-244, 3.2. 41-244, chosen on the basis of the following questions:

- How does this play deal with female/male stereotypes in terms of gender roles?
- How does this play portray female relationships in terms of gender roles?
- How does this play deal with rape/rape-culture?

In 1.1.12-17 Theseus and Hippolyta’s marriage is discussed, which could raise questions on rape and rape culture. The other extracts all deal with mainly the portrayal of female/male roles, and who these are in relation to each other.

The results of the study were summarised by evaluating the blog entries based on the central themes in each play, and how well the pupil managed to correspond to these as well as comparing the past with the present and discussing how these extracts may be able to reflect some democratic issues in the modern society.
3.4 Critique and Limitations

Generally, the case study as a method is limited in its way of not providing results, which could be thought of as universal, but rather linked to the case in question, which poses an issue of this study. However, by applying other methods, this can be more or less avoided, and as my study is not solely based on one case, but rather a collection of data in addition to this, the generalisation is not needed and might therefore be evaded.

Furthermore, the study the pupils set out to do could be argued to be providing results which are angled towards the hypothesis of this essay; the pupils have read the texts with close-reading questions that were composed in order to enable pupils to evaluate the text in terms of values, leaving some room for own interpretations of course, but still might provide somewhat angled reading as they are asked to approach values. On this basis one can argue that the results cannot be used as sole foundation for this study, as the results may be unreliable. On the other hand, Chambers states that in order to make reading meaningful, the teacher should arrange specified discussions and study questions for the text as this helps pupils understand and evaluate what they have read and encountered (13-14). Harmer also argues that the best way for the teacher to facilitate reading comprehension is in fact to ask questions (289). According to Bloom’s taxonomy, being able to evaluate, scores higher on a cognitive level, rather than being able to merely spot and discuss (qtd in Wiliam 33-34). The close reading questions were first meant to have pupils “discuss” around the extracts, in order to be as little leading as possible, leaving comprehension completely up to the pupils. However, as this move would ask fairly little within a cognitive domain understood by the principle of taxonomy, the questions were revised with risk of being more leading, but with the chance of providing greater learning objectives.

Rackin discusses a quite important issue concerning literary interpretation: as the literary critic is almost always bound to simply find what s/he is looking for, the feminist literary critic is thus implied to find misogynist traces in literary sources, and the post-colonial prism will enlighten colonial discourse alike (69). Jauss would find the same issue, as interpretation of a text with a certain agenda – e.g. reading Shakespeare whilst looking for values – could lead to erroneous, or at least angled interpretations, as no text was ever written to be analysed philosophically but intended
for a current audience (qtd. in Leitch 1406). It seems in the light of critics such as Rackin, that if a text would be analysed through one viewpoint only, the end result would be angled or biased interpretations. However, this notion may not be as big an issue as it might seem. Feminist criticism, Rackin argues, is a political agenda (65). It thus makes perfect sense to claim that the feminist critic of literature would approach a disclosure of political undertones of the text in question. A Foucauldian approach to literature, especially to canonised literatures such as Shakespeare, would show that we cannot properly analyse texts that inhabit such a high hegemonic position without entering its discourse. A norm-critical approach to The Taming of the Shrew, The Tempest and A Midsummer Night’s Dream would further demand of the teacher that the discussions around the texts were based on the conflicts centred on values, in order not to perpetuate misogynist or colonial discourse. Nevertheless then, context, here, is key, and much needed, despite the risk that it might incline interpretation.

4. Results

Table 1-3 below shows an overview of the number of pupils in courses English 5 and 6 that were able to write a blog entry sufficiently corresponding to the goals of the unit, and adequately dealing with the intended topic. Not being able to sufficiently respond to any of the themes in the extracts would entail poor understanding of the extracts, or an unsatisfactory correspondence to values over-all, in the blog entries. When analysing the blog entries, central ideas in each text were pointed out and then categorised according to the topics in tables 1, 2 and 3. Most of the central themes of the plays, around which the close-reading questions and the blog entries gravitated, were again found in the blog entries, save dehumanisation of Caliban in The Tempest, which no student was able to distinguish. However, other aspects of the plays arose when analysing the blog entries, as many pupils found arranged marriage to be a particularly interesting and prominent theme in The Taming of The Shrew. Other themes that arose were: domestic roles, freedom, the revolutionary aspects of democracy, slavery, modern feminism and sisterhood/female friendship. One pupil was
unable to correspond to an underlying theme dealing with values or democracy, and instead discussed friendship and love.

**A Midsummer Night’s Dream**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>English 5 (4 pupils)</th>
<th>English 6 (8 pupils)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to link events to today</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to discuss rape culture</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to distinguish and evaluate gender-roles</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other findings linked to inequality</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1*

**The Taming of The Shrew**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>English 5 (9 pupils)</th>
<th>English 6 (5 pupils)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Able to link events to today</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to discuss forced marriage</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to discuss subordination and obedience</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other findings linked to othering, democracy or dehumanisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>English 5 (6 pupils)</th>
<th>English 6 (3 pupils)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Able to link events to today</td>
<td>Yes 4</td>
<td>No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to spot colonialism</td>
<td>Yes 4</td>
<td>No 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to spot dehumanisation</td>
<td>Yes 0</td>
<td>No 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to discuss othering</td>
<td>Yes 2</td>
<td>No 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other findings linked to othering or dehumanisation or democracy</td>
<td>Yes 3</td>
<td>No 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The blog entries mostly show that pupils were able to lift the issues I wanted to emphasise in the play, such as rape-culture, perpetuation of stereotypical gender-roles, subordination, othering etc.. A few pupils in English 5 were also able to distinguish and evaluate from the plot, matters such as forced or arranged marriage in both The Taming of the Shrew and A Midsummer Night’s Dream, which was not anticipated when the close-reading questions and extracts were chosen. However, not as many pupils were able to themselves make clear connections between the plays and...
society today, though most of them in some way mention current events. No pupil was able to distinguish dehumanisation of Caliban in any of the extracts in which he is compared to an animal. Still, very few were entirely unable to discuss any of the themes intended, or otherwise, to discuss democratic values at all, or link the past to the present. Seemingly, all pupils managed to discuss democracy in relation to the plays, whether it was as a socio-political reality of the Renaissance, of today or simply just in the play.

5. Analysis

This essay aimed towards investigating how well Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* would work as a basis for implementing democratic values into the classroom. Judging by the results of the study, these plays function well in order to discuss democracy as pupils in each class were able to discuss some aspect of the plays in terms of democracy, as well as linking the content to aspects of today. It is therefore suggested that the unit of this study might contribute in the work of imbuing democratic values in education. It was the contention that not all material handed out by the teacher would have to be entirely unproblematic from a norm-critical perspective, as long as the teacher would allow the pupils to evaluate the material from such a perspective, as suggested by Bromseth (qtd in Bromseth and Darj 43). However, should the teacher provide material perpetuating norms and practises upholding discrimination without enabling the pupils to properly evaluate these, the education will end up upholding these norms (Edemo qtd in Bromseth and Darj 93).

The blog entries on *The Tempest* mainly debated how slavery is not an issue of the present, rendering the results slightly insufficient in terms of linking the content to today. However, some students managed to create a bigger picture from the reading and discussing *The Tempest* in terms of racist structures and colonialism. One pupil discussed this play in terms of humans longing for power and influence, as the pupil found this in the reading of Prospero and his relationship to his brother: “[...] some things just never changes, for example it is easy for us humans to strive after more
power, more money, more influence. That is what Prospero’s brother wanted and that’s why he betrayed him” (5student#1). Many pupils also discussed how racism is present in the treatment of Caliban, and also how colonisation figures in the play. However, to further link this play to present day seemed slightly challenging, and few managed to do so. An English 6 student discussed the Renaissance being a time of nationalism, much like today, and how this could lead the way for racism creating a “we are better than you” thinking” (6student#1). Furthermore, this pupil also deliberated how colonialism might look in the future, should earth be visited by an alien race, associating this with the treatment of Caliban and Prospero’s attitude towards him: “[...] in the future, when we meet an unknown intelligent alien race, will we embrace them and treat each other like equals or will we share the same ways of thinking as the people of the 1600-1700s during the colonialism did when they ‘discovered’ another people?” (6student#1). Another English 5 pupil, 5student#2, managed to understand Caliban’s desire to overthrow Prospero as Shakespeare’s encouragement to seeking democracy and revolting against unfair treatment: “[The tempest] describes revolution as [Caliban] wants to stand against his master. Which also is about getting freedom, and democracy” (5student#2). Having so many pupils finding it difficult to analyse the play in depth (see table 3) might suggest that the level of the text was too difficult for them. However, all pupils managed to link their reading to more general concepts such as racism and colonialism, which can still be a solid foundation to engage further in democratic values. Using this play as teaching material can therefore be suitable, from a norm-critical approach.

One particularly interesting observation when reading the blog entries regarding A Midsummer Night’s Dream, was that two pupils, of separate discussion groups, managed to discuss Theseus rape of Hippolyta in terms of the “#metoo” movement current on social media: “[...] a man rapes a woman without being punished for it and it’s also a way for the man to show his power over her [...] we can somehow still relate to the plays by Shakespeare [...] for example the metoo scandal [...] Harvey Weinstein sexually harassed women to show [his] power” (6student#2). The other

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1 When quoting students, I have kept their names anonymous, giving them by pupil number. The number preceding the “student” refers to their respective level: English 5 or English 6. Thus “5student#1” refers to a pupil taking English 5 whereas “6student#1” refers to a different pupil, one enrolling in English 6.
student who further investigated this line of interpretation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* states as follows:

“A Midsummer Night’s Dream part 1.1.16-17 gives us a view on how women back in the days were treated […] [women] could be sexually harassed without anyone complaining […]. Today there are women who are strong enough to share their stories with for instance #metoo, showing how serious and important this topic is” (6student”3).

Clearly, these two pupils were able to both decipher the underlying implication of rape or “sexual harassment” (6student#2; 6student#3) in the dialogue between Hippolyta and Theseus, and also link this to an existing movement, which they both have close access to, since they are active users of social media. Furthermore, pupil “6student#3” also stated that as women have faced this kind of oppression throughout history, and still is struggling with the same act of violence today, as we are looking ahead towards “a brighter future” women must remember that “we are never alone” (6student#3). This kind of use of the text, makes it a rather evident contribution to authentic teaching material, as this pupil was able to – through the socio-political reality or the Renaissance portrayed in this extract – evaluate his/her own socio-political reality.

The blog entries of pupils who had engaged in *The Taming of the Shrew* also provided some interesting readings. Having marriage being so closely linked to what appears to be more of a transaction than a proposal, Katherina is made a commodity. Perhaps this immediate dehumanisation of Katherina, along with Petruccio’s many similes to animals (see section 2.3) is the reason why pupils found it easier to detect dehumanisation in *The Taming of the Shrew* than in *The Tempest*. A number of pupils discussed financial and social factors revolving around arranged marriage: “[The Taming of the Shrew] debates the importance of economic and social status and how it affects marriage, gender inequality, as well as the convenience rather than the importance of marrying for love” (5student#6), “Elizabethan marriage among the upper class were most often arranged for money, land and power […] feeling were not important, the main thing was what you could conquer…” (6student#5).

Although the concept of arranged marriage was noted by many, the most prominent theme however was the submission of Katherina. One English 6 pupil wrote especially on how this play could convey that a woman must succumb, or “pay the price of female oppression and male brutality to be able to live a quiet life”
This pupil also discusses how the play would entail that a woman’s most precious attribute is to be pleasing to men, as the role of Bianca is depicted the more desirable of the two sisters, and by far the more enjoyable: “[Bianca] lives her life as a man-pleaser. Her father uses her desirability for his own win. By contrast Bianca’s older sister Katherina is self-possessed, independent and not afraid to show her intelligence. Men consider her outspoken and difficult, the opposite of wife-material [...]. The truth, though, is probably that men just feel threatened by her” (6student#4). Furthermore, this student argues how women who come across as empowered and outspoken today will face resistance from others, “standing up for equality, rights and free choices will result in people fighting against you” (6student#4), and link this to the anti-feminist movements of today. An English 5 pupil, like “6student#4” argues, mentioned that as women today are valued by their appearance before their ability, much like the contrast between Bianca and Katherine in the play. This student is using this element of the play to bridge past with present, stating: “women are still valued more for their looks than anything else they bring to the table. In that sense we are still Jacobean” (5student#3). Continuing with deciphering elements of domestic violence, one student explicitly wrote how the attitude towards domestic violence in this play, it is his/her main concern with the plot: “Katherina becomes a better person through domestic violence, which made her husband love her even more. The domestic violence being positive in this play is the main problem” (5student#4). Many pupils discussed domestic violence, as well as how this is linked to men’s desire to have women submit to them, both in the play and as a current societal concern.

Pupil 5student#5 writes:

"Pieces like ‘The Taming of the Shrew’ show how no matter how strong an individual, when ruined and broken down, virtually anyone can be tamed. Although a terrible concept, these writing pieces can persuade an individual to become more socially aware [...] each individual who is inspired by a work like the Taming of the Shrew can have an effect on democracy [...]. The revelation should keep societies aware of what is going on. Our democracy depends on the strength of our people and their free will.” (5student#5)

Katherina’s submission is very hard to miss, and seemingly caused a lot of discussion around what this image perpetuates. Furthermore, it seems pupils found this element applicable to the present. Seemingly, pupils were able to discuss power and submission
as well as violence by reading *The Taming of the Shrew*. Suggestively then, this reading can provide discussion around democratic values.

By the reading of these plays it seems the pupils are able to discuss modern day movements such as feminism and values concerning equality, rendering the play as valuable classroom material from a norm-critical approach to pedagogy. The problem that could possibly arise from this is that not every pupil would be able to untangle the texts. As this study is based on how the pupils understand the text, rather than the linguistic or morphological value of it, perhaps a simplified version could be of value for the pupils. Furthermore it will not be enough to introduce this sort of unit once a scholastic year. This unit can be a valuable foundation on which the pupils can learn to themselves decipher texts and content in terms of norms and norm-critique. However, on its own without further allowing the pupils to approach democratic values this unit will be rendered as insufficient as the equal treatment days. This unit is merely the first step and needs to be followed up throughout the entire education. Bromseth means that in order for the teaching of democratic values not to become obsolete, norm-critique has to be present throughout the day (qtd. in Bromseth and Darj 42-46). Foucault states in the theory around knowledge/power, that what is distributed by the hegemony are to be considered the truth within the discourse (Börgesson and Rehn 2009). As Skolverket demands that education is current in relation to society (Skolverket, English, 2011), then the discourse of society will inevitably be present in the classroom as well. In line with this argument, Bromseth as well as Rosén suggest that what the teacher provides for the pupils will end up affecting them much like the concept of truth figures in any discourse (qtd. in Bromseth and Darj 30-32; qtd. in Bromseth and Darj 58-60). It is therefore important for the teacher who chose to engage in this unit to bear in mind that the work towards imbuing democratic values must continue afterwards, it is to be considered as one of many components in norm-critical teaching.

6. Conclusion

The purpose of this essay was to evaluate how well Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew, A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *The Tempest* worked as classroom material
to introduce democratic values into the classroom. As tables 1-3 show, some pupils stumbled on linking the values of the extracts to modern day discussions. However, this does not necessarily imply that these plays are inappropriate as classroom material in order to discuss democratic values. Most pupils were able to make the connection between what they read, and numerous problematic concepts such as rape, domestic violence, white supremacy, forced marriage, othering and things alike. Should the pupils however be provided with enough support to connect the extracts to modern day events, for example forced marriage and gender-roles, then suggestively they could have been able to make the connection. Some pupils however, managed to link the themes to values and issues of today, such as abusive relationships, and forced marriage.

Finally, as hypothesised, The Tempest, A Midsummer Night’s Dream and The Taming of the Shrew resulted in readings which helped the pupils to ponder democratic values. Many were able to discuss the socio-political realities of the Renaissance, and to link the content of the play in question to their own lives. In doing so, these plays provided a good teaching material in order to implement democratic values. Seemingly then, introducing these plays into the classroom can be valuable from a norm-critical perspective. However, the texts on their own are still to be considered problematic, as analysed in section 2., and it is safe to say that asking a pupil to say, read The Taming of the Shrew in order to find element of late Renaissance comedy, and leaving the reading at that, may be harmful. Conversely, the teacher cannot simply avoid problematic literature in order to create a democratic classroom environment. Skolverket clearly states that democratic values should be a given in the pupil’s everyday education. To summarise then, as Bromseth clearly states – in order to upheld a norm critical approach to pedagogy – the teacher as an authoritarian figure must carefully ponder the values of the teaching material as well what is perpetuated in it; but maybe more importantly: what can be disassembled by applying it (qtd. in Bromseth and Darj).
Works Cited


Appendix 1

Unit 2 - English 5

Literature and Fiction

"Mr Shakespeare you can't just make up words and expect everyone to start using them"

that's where you're wrong kiddo

Introduction
This unit will deal with the history of literature and classic literature

Task:
You are to:
1. Write a blog entry connecting Shakespeare and democratic values.
2. Write a poem/sonnet or (short) tragedy of your own

Aim:
To demonstrate a deeper understanding for how literature may convey values, as well as develop an understanding and overview for English literary history and different literary genres and fiction.

Method
Blog entry:
You are going to write a blog entry about your play. This short piece should investigate and discuss the issues concerning values (equal rights) which arises when reading the extracts from Shakespeare’s The Tempest, The Taming of the Shrew, or A Midsummer Night’s Dream. Try and answer the questions:

- Is this piece in any way problematic in relation to the values we discussed? (values
of the renaissance vs. the values of today)? Why/Why not?

- Which values do you think the play conveys? How?

Note: Blog entry should be within the word limit 500 words

**Creative Writing:**
You are going to write a “rebel” sonnet, like Shakespeare’s Sonnet 130. You should stay within the intended genre, and write in iambic pentameter.

**Due Date:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45 (blog)</td>
<td><strong>Monday</strong></td>
<td>End of class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 (creative writing)</td>
<td><strong>Tuesday</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assessment Details**

1. Send in your blog entry via urkund to your teacher. Respect the deadline.
2. Send in your creative writing via urkund to your teacher. Respect the deadline.

**Criteria achievable**

- Content and form in different kinds of fiction.
- Literature and other fiction.
- Different ways of searching for, selecting and evaluating texts.
- Written production and interaction of various kinds, also in more formal settings, where students summarise, explain, comment, give reasons for their opinions, discuss and argue.

**Unit 2** will also deal with the following from the curriculum;

“When values are presented, their source and status should always be made explicit. [...] All who work in the school should always uphold the fundamental values that are set out in the Education Act and in this curriculum, and clearly dissociate themselves from anything that conflicts with these values. [...] The school has the task of passing on values to students, imparting knowledge and preparing them to work and participate actively in society. The school should impart the more unvarying forms of knowledge that constitute the common frame of reference in society that is based on fundamental democratic values and the human rights we all share.”

**Core Content**

You will be assessed on:

W1, W2, W3, W4, W5

R1
Appendix 2

Unit 2 - English 6

Literature and Literary Eras

Introduction
This unit will deal with the history of literature and classic literature

Task:
You are to:
1. Write a blog entry connecting Shakespeare and democratic values.
2. Write a poem/sonnet or (short) tragedy of your own -

Aim:
To demonstrate a deeper understanding for how literature may convey values, as well as develop an understanding and overview for English literary history and the development of English literature.

Method
Blog entry:
You are going to write a blog entry about your extract. This short piece should investigate
and discuss the issues concerning values (equal rights; mainly feminism, racism) which arises when reading the extracts from Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. Try and answer the questions:

- Is this piece in any way problematic in relation to the values we discussed? (values of the renaissance vs. the values of today)? Why/Why not?
- Which values do you think the play conveys? How?

Note: Blog entry should be within the word limit 500 words

**Creative Writing:**

You are going to write a “rebel” sonnet, like Shakespeare’s Sonnet 130. You should stay within the intended genre, and write in iambic pentameter.

**Due Date:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
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<td>End of class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assessment Details**

3. Send in your blog entry via urkund to your teacher. Respect the deadline.
4. Send in your creative writing via urkund to your teacher. Respect the deadline.

**Criteria achievable**

- Themes, ideas, form and content in film and literature; authors and literary periods.
- Contemporary and older literature, poetry, drama and songs.
- Written production and interaction in different situations and for different purposes where students argue, report, apply, reason, summarise, comment on, assess and give reasons for their views.

Unit 2 will also deal with the following:

“When values are presented, their source and status should always be made explicit. [...] All who work in the school should always uphold the fundamental values that are set out in the Education Act and in this curriculum, and clearly dissociate themselves from anything that conflicts with these values. [...] The school has the task of passing on values to students, imparting knowledge and preparing them to work and participate actively in society. The school should impart the more unvarying forms of knowledge that constitute the common frame of reference in society that is based on fundamental democratic values and the human rights we all share.”

**Core Content**

You will be assessed on:

W1, W2, W3, W4, W5

R1
## Appendix 3

Local rubric for English 5

**Speaking**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content is <strong>basic</strong>.</th>
<th>Content is <strong>relevant</strong> and the topic is <strong>developed</strong> in a <strong>satisfactory</strong> manner.</th>
<th>Content is <strong>relevant</strong> and the topic is <strong>well-developed</strong> in an <strong>excellent</strong> manner. Register &amp; format are <strong>excellent</strong> and appropriate to the task &amp; reader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Register &amp; format are <strong>sometimes inappropriate</strong> to the task &amp; reader</td>
<td>Register &amp; format are <strong>appropriate</strong> to the task &amp; reader</td>
<td><strong>Register &amp; format are</strong> <strong>excellent</strong> <strong>and appropriate to the task &amp; reader</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic</strong> organization of information &amp; ideas which are sometimes incoherent, with <strong>inaccurate</strong> use of cohesive devices</td>
<td><strong>Satisfactory</strong> organization of information and ideas and use of a variety of cohesive devices in a <strong>satisfactory</strong> manner</td>
<td><strong>Excellent</strong> organization of information and ideas with a range of cohesive devices which are used <strong>effectively</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic</strong> range of structures and vocabulary</td>
<td><strong>Satisfactory</strong> range of structures and vocabulary through word choice may <strong>lack precision</strong></td>
<td><strong>Excellent</strong> range of complex structures and vocabulary which is used <strong>effectively</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic</strong> sentence construction. Errors cause <strong>difficulty</strong> for the reader.</td>
<td><strong>Satisfactory</strong> sentence construction. Errors may occur when complex language is used, which cause little difficulty for the reader.</td>
<td><strong>Excellent</strong> sentence construction and use of complex language. Errors are minimal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic</strong> flow of English and hard for the reader to understand</td>
<td><strong>Satisfactory</strong> flow of English but sometimes interrupted due to some errors</td>
<td><strong>Excellent</strong> flow of English with hardly any interruptions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Show basic</strong> understanding of the overall idea of the structure &amp; content of the text</th>
<th><strong>Satisfactory</strong> understanding of the overall idea of the structure &amp; content of the text</th>
<th><strong>Excellent</strong> understanding of the overall idea of the structure &amp; content of the text</th>
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</thead>
</table>
Appendix 4

Local rubric for English 6

Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content is <strong>basic</strong>. Register &amp; format are <strong>sometimes inappropriate</strong> to the task &amp; reader</th>
<th>Content is <strong>relevant</strong> and the topic is <strong>developed in a satisfactory manner</strong>. Register &amp; format are <strong>appropriate</strong> to the task &amp; reader</th>
<th>Content is <strong>relevant</strong> and the topic is <strong>well-developed in an excellent manner</strong>. Register &amp; format are <strong>excellent and appropriate</strong> to the task &amp; reader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic</strong> organization of information &amp; ideas which are sometimes incoherent, with <strong>inaccurate</strong> use of cohesive devices</td>
<td><strong>Satisfactory</strong> organization of information and ideas and use of a variety of cohesive devices in a <strong>satisfactory manner</strong></td>
<td><strong>Excellent</strong> organization of information and ideas with a range of cohesive devices which are used <strong>effectively</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic</strong> range of structures and vocabulary</td>
<td><strong>Satisfactory</strong> range of structures and vocabulary through word choice may <strong>lack precision</strong></td>
<td><strong>Excellent</strong> range of complex structures and vocabulary which is used <strong>effectively</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic</strong> sentence construction. Errors cause <strong>difficulty</strong> for the reader.</td>
<td><strong>Satisfactory</strong> sentence construction. Errors may occur when complex language is used, which cause little difficulty for the reader.</td>
<td><strong>Excellent</strong> sentence construction and use of complex language. Errors are minimal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic</strong> flow of English and hard for the reader to understand</td>
<td><strong>Satisfactory</strong> flow of English but sometimes interrupted due to some errors</td>
<td><strong>Excellent</strong> flow of English with hardly any interruptions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reading

| Show **basic** understanding of the overall idea of the structure & content of the text | **Satisfactory** understanding of the overall idea of the structure & content of the text | **Excellent** understanding of the overall idea of the structure & content of the text |
Appendix 5

The unit was designed to meet core content in English 5:

- Content and form in different kinds of fiction.
- Literature and other fiction.
- Different ways of searching for, selecting and evaluating texts.
- Written production and interaction of various kinds, also in more formal settings, where students [...] summarise, explain, comment, [...] give reasons for their opinions, discuss and argue.

As well as the following criteria for English 5:

- Pupils can understand the main content and basic details of [...] in clearly expressed written English in various genres. Students show their understanding by in basic terms giving an account of, discussing and commenting on content and details, and with acceptable results act on the basis of the message and instructions in the content.
- In [...] written communications of various genres, students can express themselves in relatively varied ways, relatively clearly and relatively coherently. Students can express themselves with some fluency and to some extent adapted to purpose, recipient and situation.

(Skolverket, English 5, 2013)
Appendix 6

The core content that was introduced in the unit for English 6, was as follows:

- Themes, ideas, form and content in film and literature; authors and literary periods.
- Contemporary and older literature, poetry, drama and songs.
- Written production and interaction in different situations and for different purposes where students argue, report, apply, reason, summarise, comment on, assess and give reasons for their views.

The assessment was based on the following criteria;

- Students can understand the main content and basic details of [...] written English in various genres [...] Students show their understanding by in basic terms giving an account of, discussing, commenting, and drawing conclusions on content and details, and with acceptable results act on the basis of the message and instructions in the content.
- In [...] written communications of various genres, students can express themselves in a way that is relatively varied, clear, and relatively structured. Students can also express themselves with fluency and some adaptation to purpose, recipient and situation.

(Skolverket, English 6 2013)