# BODY ENCYCLOPEDIA

**Grade:**       K-12
**Goal(s):**   To increase physical awareness by expressing language through use of the whole body. To explore the deeper meanings and emotional values of a text.
**Materials:**  Shakespearean text. Every actor will need at least one word.

## INSTRUCTIONS:
1. Have the actors arrange themselves in the shape of a horseshoe.
2. Assign one word from the text to each actor. Keep the words in their proper order.
3. The actors create a physical gesture based upon his/her word in the text. Effective gestures make use of the entire body.

   Encourage creative thinking for the actor(s) who are assigned words such as "the," "a," or other similar words which seem to have no gesture. Where in the text is this word placed? Does this placement lead to a gesture? How does the word help shape the text's meaning? Can this shape be physicalized? Does the word serve as a transition? Can the actor's gesture highlight or echo the gesture that comes before or after?

   A note on the pronunciation of "a" in Shakespeare. The word "a" is pronounced "uh" not "ay." The word "the" is pronounced "thuh" if the word following it begins with a consonant. The word "the" is pronounced "thee" if the word following it begins with a vowel.

4. Once the actors have created physical gestures for their words, keeping the order of the text, point to each actor.
5. When pointed to, the actor shares his/her gesture while saying the word.
6. Eventually, the actors should be able to hear and feel the rhythm of the text at which point no leader is required.

## SUGGESTED VARIATION(S):
- Have the actors (as a whole group) create gestures for the descriptive and/or action words.
- **Raising The Bar:** For more advanced actors, assign one line of the text to small groups. The small groups create movement for their lines - the movement can be specific to each word or an overall movement for the meaning of the line. Empower the actors to decide how the text will be spoken, who will speak it, and how their gestures and/or group movement bring further meaning to the text.