

Smoking Shakespeare

Student Worksheet

Activity 3.1 / Shakespeare Learning Commons

Canadian Adaptations of
SHAKESPEARE

www.canadianshakespeares.ca

1. Introduction

Tobacco advertising was banned in Canada in 1988 when Parliament passed the *Tobacco Products Control Act*. Thus, many students may never have witnessed tobacco ads on television, in magazines, or as part of sponsorship for sporting events or the arts. Recently the Canadian tobacco industry specifically targeted young people in their ad campaigns. By examining a series of print advertisements from Canada's Stratford Festival, this activity asks you to explore how tobacco companies use the arts and William Shakespeare to market their products. Recent anti-tobacco legislation in Ontario and throughout the world had brought tobacco issues back to the forefront of health awareness. Ontario students are likely aware of *The Smoke Free Ontario Act*, which replaced the *Tobacco Control Act* and prohibited smoking in all enclosed public places and workplaces as of May 31, 2006. Similar legislation has been passed across Canada as well as in other nations.

2. Getting Started

1. Divide into small groups of four or five.
2. Examine the sample advertisement.
3. Complete student worksheet.
4. Present findings to the class.

Discussion Questions

- 1) Carefully examine the text displayed in the advertisement:
 - a) What is the name of the product being sold?
 - b) What slogan is being used to sell the product?
 - c) What other written information is provided on the ad?
 - d) Does any of this text point to Shakespeare or the theatre? How? Provide examples.
 - e) What are the words in the ad trying to tell you about smoking?

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2) Carefully examine the images displayed in the advertisement:

- a) Can you see the product in the ad? If so, how is it displayed?
- b) Are people featured in the ad? If so, are they smoking? Where are they positioned in the ad? What are they doing?
- c) What objects are featured in the ad?
- d) Are there any images that point to the theatre, or to Shakespeare? Provide examples.

3) Now think about how the text and the images work together:

- a) Who is this ad directed towards? Please consider such things as age, gender, economic status, race, and interests.
- b) How does the advertisement attempt to link smoking and Shakespeare?