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William's Window

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Taylor, Andy, Mollie and Elizabeth are playing in the backyard, but they start to argue. In an attempt to distract them, Sandy begins telling them about the Shakespearean plays that she has been reading. She helps them use their imagination to "see" scenes from Shakespeare's plays, such as Macbeth, Taming of the Shrew, Henry IV, Romeo and Juliet, and A Midsummer Night's Dream. This is written specifically to introduce Shakespeare to young audiences. As such, it is immensely successful in the scene choices and character diversity which portray excitement, romance, mystery, darkness, humor, and life lessons. The audience is also encouraged to use their imaginations without being didactic. The children are well-characterized and distinct: Taylor is bossy, Andy is unimaginative, Sandy is the smart one and Mollie and Elizabeth are very romantic and excited about everything.

The main children characters fight among themselves and then make up. Their personalities are interesting as they react to each other while learning about the plays. The scenes from Shakespeare are well-known in the adult world and well-chosen for intrigue and interest to a child. The play doesn't drag. Actors are constantly coming off and on, creating an entirely new place on the stage every few minutes. Small stage skirmishes, bets, brewing cauldrons, etc. keep the interest of the audience well. The ending is the only disappointment concluding with the final scene of Taming of the Shrew, and at the last Shakespearean line, it's over. The audience receives no further information about any of the children through which we've been viewing these scenes, and it seems the story has been cut off. Overall, this is an outstanding play and worth the effort to produce.