



APA citation	Baxter, N. (2001). <i>Stories from Shakespeare</i> . New York, NY: Barnes & Noble Publishing, Inc.
Number of pages	80
Illustrator's name	Thorne, J.
Genre	Poetry / Adaptation
Age range	Grades 5 – 8
Brief summary	Nicola Baxter retells eight of William Shakespeare's most famous plays in her adaptation, <i>Stories from Shakespeare</i> . She familiarizes young readers with these classic literary works through her own words, enhanced by Jenny Thorne's illustrations. While her inclusion of various portions of the original text compliment her storytelling, it is often confusing. Vignettes are included on most pages, providing definitions or calling attention to some of the more well-known aspects of the works.
Brief evaluation	<b>3.5/18</b>  While I am fond of this clever approach to introducing such a famous writer to a younger audience, the stories include too much of the plot and subplot and may be nearly as confusing to adult readers as the original works of Shakespeare were when they first encountered them as high school and/or college students. This book has the potential to be a useful tool but must be included in a well-constructed lesson plan that clearly and simply tells Shakespeare's stories. Otherwise the children will rapidly lose interest.

Criteria for Evaluation	0 Does not meet curriculum standards	1 Acceptable but not a first choice	2 Satisfactory	3 Right on target!
Plot	The plot is not interesting.	The plot holds the reader's attention and engages the reader.	The plot is intriguing and enjoyable.	The plot is engaging and provides a story line that invites the reader to turn to the next page!
Issue/Theme	The issue/theme is not pertinent to and/or inappropriate for the intended age group.	The issue/theme is engaging but is not handled in an impressive manner and/or does not thoroughly address the issue/theme.	The book carefully and effectively addresses a critical issue/theme for the intended age group.	The book appropriately covers relevant matters and enables the reader to critically think about his/her position on the issue/theme.
Characters	The characters are undeveloped.	The reader gets a sense of the characters and is somewhat able to get inside their thoughts and motivation but character development could be stronger.	The characters are well-developed. The reader is able to understand their motivation and behavior.	The character development is strong. The reader is able to empathize with their situations, understand their actions and reactions, and critically think about how s/he would behave in the characters' situation.
Dialogue	The dialogue is not effective and does not flow.	The dialogue strengthens the story and character development but is, at times, misplaced and overused.	The use of dialogue is appropriate and effectively provides character attributes, motivation, and assists with story development.	The dialogue is strong and the author makes careful word choices, effectively telling the story while letting the story tell itself.
Writing Style	The writing style is poor, the story line unclear. It is difficult to follow the progression of events.	The writing style and fluency is acceptable. The reader may be confused on occasion as to sequence of events.	The writing style is enjoyable and the story flows in a natural, coherent progression.	The book is well-written, clearly relays critical information, and exemplifies exceptional mechanics of writing.
Reaction & Response	The book does not provide insight or provoke independent thought, opinions, or ideas.	The book causes the reader to think about the story, characters, and theme but may send conflicting messages that are too confusing for the intended age group.	The book effectively evokes a personal reaction to the text.	The book elicits some sort of a strong emotional reaction while provoking further contemplation of the theme and guiding the reader to independent thought.