

Here is a curated list of **100 commonly found Shakespearean insults**, drawn from various lesson plans and public domain sources (like Shakespeare's plays). These are not modern insults but are original or lightly-adapted lines from Shakespeare's works that educators frequently use to teach Early Modern English, character voice, and wit.

As a teacher, feel free to use these as part of your Multimodal SAQ lesson plan to inject an element of fun into the debate or trial lesson. For example, as students debate, or present their arguments at trial, they could begin their address to the opposing team with an insult: "Student A, thou art an infectious, tickle-brained scut!" In rebuttal, Student B could reply with another insult from the list. And so on, one insult per exchange.

Feel free to use these independently of course, just to increase classroom engagement.

Shakespearean Insults

- "Thou hast not so much brain as ear wax!" (*Troilus & Cressida*)
- "Thou droning beef-witted lord!"
- "You speak an infinite deal of nothing." (*The Merchant of Venice*)
- "More of your conversation would infect my brain." (*Coriolanus*)
- "Thou fusty, elf-skinned minnow!"
- "Thou paunchy, reeling-ripe measel!"
- "Thou art a boil, a plague sore." (*King Lear*)
- "Thou infectious tickle-brained scut!"
- "Thou infectious common-kissing dogfish!"
- "Thou gorbellied boil-brained miscreant!"
- "Thy food is such as hath been belch'd upon by infected lungs." (*Pericles*)
- "Thou art the rankest compound of villainous smells that ever offended nostril."
- "Would thou wert clean enough to spit upon!" (*Timon of Athens*)

- "I'd beat thee but I would infect my hands." (*Timon of Athens*)
- "Out of my sight! Thou dost infect mine eyes." (*Richard III*)
- "Thou art as loathsome as a toad."
- "Thou art like a toad; ugly and venomous." (*As You Like It*)
- "Thou misbegotten toad-spotted hedge-pig!"
- "Thou crusty batch of nature!" (*Troilus and Cressida*)
- "Thou logger-headed rabbit-sucker!"
- "Thou lumpish hedge-born moldwarp!"
- "Thou art pigeon-liver'd and lack gall." (*Hamlet*)
- "Thou art a flesh-monger, a fool and a coward." (*Measure for Measure*)
- "Thou art unfit for any place but hell." (*Richard III*)
- "Thou clay-brained guts, thou knotty-pated fool!" (*Henry IV, Part 2*)
- "Thou jarring, tickle-brained foot-licker!"
- "Thou frothy, rump-fed knave!"
- "Thou beetle-headed, flap-eared knave." (*Henry IV, Part 1*)
- "Thou pribbling, ill-nurtured knave!"
- "Thou gorbellied knotty-pated codpiece!"
- "Thou spongy, hasty-witted lout!"
- "Thou fobbing, folly-fallen canker-blossom!"
- "Thou roguish, sheep-biting, flap-mouthed measle!"
- "Thou subtle, perjur'd, false, disloyal man!" (*Two Gentlemen of Verona*)
- "Thy sin's not accidental, but a trade." (*Measure for Measure*)

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- "Thy tongue out-venoms all the snakes of the Nile." (*Antony and Cleopatra*)
- "Hang cur, hang, you whoreson, insolent noisemaker!" (*The Tempest*)
- "You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!" (*Julius Caesar*)
- "Thou cream-faced loon!" (*Macbeth*)
- "Thy breath stinks with eating toasted cheese." (*Merry Wives of Windsor*)
- "Thine face is not worth sunburning." (*Henry V*)
- "You have such a February face." (*Much Ado About Nothing*)
- "I do desire we may be better strangers." (*As You Like It*)
- "Thou yeasty, fly-bitten varlet!"
- "Thou cockered ill-breeding maggot-pie!"
- "Thou art a beetle-headed, flap-eared knave." (*Henry IV, Part 1*)
- "Thou art a foul and pestilent congregation of vapors!" (*Hamlet*)
- "Thy mother's name is ominous to children." (*Richard III*)
- "Thy lips rot off!"
- "Thou puny feeder of apes!"
- "Thou art as tedious as a twice-told tale." (*King John*)
- "Thou spongy, hasty-witted miscreant!"
- "Thou whoreson obscene greasy tallow-catch!"
- "Thou art a spleeny, idle-headed hornbeast!"
- "Thy name is apoplexy!"
- "Thou whoreson dismal-dreaming lewdster!"

- "Thou rank, idle-headed death-token!"
- "Thou roguish hedge-born scullion!"
- "Thou art a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy worsted-stocking knave." (*King Lear*)
- "I do bite my thumb at thee, sir!" (*Romeo and Juliet*)
- "Thou puking, hedge-born flap-dragon!"
- "Away, you three-inch fool!"

A la Carte

Combine one word from each of the three columns below, starting with "Thou art a(n)":

Column 1

artless
 bawdy
 beslobbering
 bootless
 churlish
 cockered
 clouted
 craven
 currish
 dankish
 dissembling
 droning
 errant
 fawning
 fobbing
 froward
 frothy
 gleeking
 goatish
 gorbellied
 impertinent
 infectious
 jarring
 loggerheaded
 lumpish
 mammering
 misbegotten
 mewling
 paunchy
 pribbling

Column 2

bunch-back'd
 bat-fowling
 beef-witted
 beetle-headed
 boil-brained
 clapper-clawed
 clay-brained
 common-kissing
 crook-pated
 dismal-dreaming
 dizzy-eyed
 doghearted
 dread-bolted
 earth-vexing
 elf-skinned
 fat-kidneyed
 fen-sucked
 flap-mouthed
 fly-bitten
 folly-fallen
 fool-born
 full-gorged
 guts-griping
 half-faced
 hasty-witted
 hedge-born
 hell-hated
 idle-headed
 ill-breeding
 ill-nurtured

Column 3

knave
 baggage
 barnacle
 bladder
 boar-pig
 bugbear
 bum-bailey
 canker-blossom
 clack-dish
 clotpole
 coxcomb
 codpiece
 death-token
 dewberry
 flap-dragon
 flax-wench
 flirt-gill
 foot-licker
 fustilarian
 giglet
 gudgeon
 haggard
 harpy
 hedge-pig
 horn-beast
 hugger-mugger
 joithead
 lewdster
 lout
 maggot-pie

puking
puny
qualling
rank
reeky
roguish
ruttish
saucy
spleeny
spongy
surly
tottering
unmuzzled
vain
venomed
villainous
warped
wayward
weedy
yeasty

knotty-pated
milk-livered
motley-minded
onion-eyed
plume-plucked
pottle-deep
pox-marked
reeling-ripe
rough-hewn
rude-growing
rump-fed
shard-borne
sheep-biting
spur-galled
swag-bellied
unwash'd
tickle-brained
toad-spotted
unchin-snouted
whoreson

malt-worm
mammet
measle
minnow
miscreant
moldwarp
mumble-news
nut-hook
pigeon-egg
pignut
puttock
pumpion
ratsbane
scut
skainsmate
strumpet
varlot
vassal
whey-face
wagtail