

✕ Refers to links on www.crossref-it.info

- ❖ **Lesson focus:** To explore the themes of madness, wildness and disorder, and how they connect.
 - ❖ **Opening exercise:** Consider the saying, 'The whole world has gone mad.' What do people normally mean by this?
 - To what extent is this saying true of the world of the play?
 - What evidence supports your view?
 - ✕ ([King Lear > Themes in King Lear > Order, disintegration and chaos](#))
 - ✕ ([King Lear > Themes in King Lear > Madness](#))
 - ❖ **Textual examination:** Revisit Act 1 Scene 1, and look for evidence of King Lear's 'wild' (immoral, rash, irrational) behaviour
 - Is there an argument that the king is already mad from the very beginning of the play, and his madness just becomes more visible during the play?
 - ✕ ([King Lear > Characterisation in King Lear > Lear](#))
 - Discuss contemporary beliefs in the role of kings and how the welfare of the kingdom was connected to the welfare of the king
 - ✕ ([King Lear > Religious/philosophical context > Divine right of kings](#))
 - Consider how from this starting point of the king's wild behaviour, the whole kingdom becomes 'infected' during the play
 - Allocate **King Lear Handout e) Madness, wildness and disorder focus cards** focus cards to pairs of students
 - Students hunt for textual evidence of a wild, disordered world
 - Feed back ideas to create a wildness mind map.
 - ✕ ([King Lear > Themes in King Lear > The worldview of King Lear](#))
 - ✕ ([King Lear > Themes in King Lear > Order, disintegration and chaos](#))
 - ✕ ([King Lear > Themes in King](#)
- [Lear > Madness](#))
- ✕ ([King Lear > Imagery and motifs in King Lear > Imagery](#))
- ❖ **Discussion ideas:** Create a continuum line across the classroom with 1 being strongly agree and 10 strongly disagree. Use the following statements as a prompt for discussion and debate:
 - King Lear is mad because he cannot cope in a disordered world
 - The world of *King Lear* becomes increasingly chaotic
 - Shakespeare warns the audience of the risks of social instability
 - ✕ ([King Lear > Social/political context > Social instability](#))
 - *King Lear* is primarily about the problems associated with disruptive changes in a monarch
 - ✕ ([King Lear > Social/political context > The Stuart Monarchy](#))
 - King Lear's madness is a symbol for the instability in the world of the play and the Elizabethan world.
 - ✕ ([King Lear > Characterisation in King Lear > Lear](#))
- ❖ **Recreative task:** Consider the idea of the condition of the king representing the whole country. Would this work if the king were happy? Sick?
 - Students try storyboarding a plot for a story where the king's condition cascades and affects the whole kingdom.
- ❖ **Critical task:** 'King Lear's madness is a microcosm for the problems of society.' Evaluate this view of *King Lear*.
 - ✕ ([King Lear > Characterisation in King Lear > Lear](#))
 - ✕ ([King Lear > Themes in King Lear > Madness](#))
 - ✕ ([King Lear > Social/political context > Social instability](#))
 - ✕ ([King Lear > Social/political context > The Stuart Monarchy](#))
- ❖ **Extension task:** Compare King Lear's madness to another of Shakespeare's mad tragic figures such as Lady Macbeth, Hamlet, or Ophelia. To what extent does the king's madness serve a different purpose?