

Below is a recap of the Horace Mann School students' reflections:

*Our group had a fantastic time visiting the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. From the minute we arrived in Stratford we were impressed with the professionalism of the education program -- everything was so smoothly run and thoughtfully composed. We enjoyed all the workshops and talkback sessions with SBT staff and RSC actors and directors -- particularly memorable was our workshop on directing with Ian Hughes and our conversations with Liz Woledge and Paul Edmondson. David Schiller, the other chaperone, and I were really impressed with both Liz and Paul as teachers -- they gauged the background and intellectual level of our students very quickly and pitched their discussion to meet the students at their level. All of the students loved meeting Scott Handy, whom we thereafter saw as "our" actor -- he was so thoughtful and open with the students. Seeing the RSC performances and talking at length with an actor really gave the students -- and adults -- in our group a new appreciation for the importance of performance in understanding and appreciating Shakespeare. His plays were meant to be performed, and to see someone who had made it his career to live intimately with Shakespeare's language was really inspiring. As one of our students said, "Our group had such an enjoyable yet enlightening experience. I felt a new connection and understanding of Shakespeare through this trip." Visiting the birthplace was also a new way to experience Shakespeare's literature, and it was exciting to us to see so many people engaging with his plays in lively and fresh ways: one of our students found the impromptu performances in the garden outside the birthplace to be the most memorable part of his trip. We are so grateful to the SBT for this opportunity, and we are excited about continuing our relationship with them. We'd like to come back next year, this time for a longer stay, to give the students a little more time for workshops and to explore the area, and to make their days in Stratford a little more leisurely.*

*We'll return and bring more students; I'm also interested in offering this program to our faculty, especially in English and History.*

**Jennifer Little and David Schiller**