

“The quality of mercy is not strained.” This famous quote from Shakespeare is one of Holling’s favorite. He spent time to memorize and use quotes at a right period. The quote means to always give forgiveness or second chances. In *Wednesday Wars* by Gary D. Schmidt, Holling is starting 7th grade when he has a teacher he knows hates him. Mrs. Baker makes him read Shakespeare every Wednesday and he soon learns similar circumstances relating to his life. It’s the late 1960’s and everyone has other things to worry about; Holling’s father is only concerned for his architecture business and everyone else is worried about Vietnam. At first, Holling knows Mrs. Baker was a teacher who hated him more than Doug Swietek, though over time he started realizing that it was a misconception. Mrs. Baker wanted Holling to improve in multiple subjects. This made Holling become more mature and wise as the story goes on.

The Shakespeare story of *Romeo and Juliet* relates to Holling because Meryl Lee and Holling weren’t supposed to like each other just as Romeo wasn’t supposed to like Juliet. In fact, Holling’s father hated Meryl Lee’s father/business. “Meryl Lee who?’ ‘Meryl Lee Kowalski’ ‘You better hurry’ my father said.” (Schmidt 137-138). Holling’s father doesn’t care about anything, but just his business is the most important out of anything. This matters because Holling’s father cares about his business and doesn’t want Meryl Lee’s father to take his business away because Meryl’s dad has the same business. This would affect and change Holling since Holling would still have an influence in the architecture field, which would lead him to become one. The only problem is that Holling’s “girlfriend” would ruin his business because people would have no idea if Meryl Lee Kowalski dad’s business had more quality or Holling’s. This would affect both businesses because the town’s people won’t know which business to choose (or which one is better.)

Another Shakespeare book Holling read impacted him. The important lesson Holling learns in Mrs. Baker’s Wednesday room is more meaning into the book. Mrs. Baker read *The Merchant of Venice* and explained the tragedy. Shakespeare and the books Holling read helped him improve in the school year. “We read the *Merchant of Venice* the next Wednesday too and Mrs. Baker asked me to discuss the characters” (Schmidt 48). Holling learns how the *Merchant of Venice* was a tragedy, just like his sister leaving his family without concern. In Mrs. Baker’s Wednesday room, Holling realizes that stories impact and

sometimes even match his own life. He starts to evaluate the events of Shakespeare to mature himself.

Holling transforms in this novel because he use to exaggerate in pretty much everything. "Everything suddenly increased in volume-- the howling and the roaring and the slobbering, the whistling of Doug Swieteck's brother airborne body hurting toward the goal." (Schmidt 15) This quote shows Holling describing everything literal detail, which is a tone of exaggeration. Holling is becoming less dramatic from all the tension caused by his family and just physically growing up. "Mrs. Baker looked at me. She hated my guts." (Schmidt 17) Holling has such a terrible reputation of Mrs. Baker that everything she does means that she hates him as he thinks. This relates to the thesis because Holling grows over time, at the end, he acts more seriously. Holling doesn't act like a victim, "I checked my desk for any explosives." He is more serious and doesn't exactly think Mrs. Baker as an enemy. Holling doesn't need to throw every detail in his mind, he matured with Mrs. Baker.

Holling has changed with Mrs. Baker, a teacher he thought hated his guts, over the school year Holling changed by the way he acted and felt. He matured and improved in his english skills by reading Shakespeare and turned into a new person who would save his sister's life and become a hero. From a small period of time, Holling would always complain about how Mrs. Baker had a teacher smile, rolled her eyes, and hated his guts. Soon when Holling was in Mrs. Baker's Wednesday class, he thought more differently and assumed she was OK later on. He stopped his exaggeration and finally actually helped out, like showing kindness.