
Thirty Neville-Shakespeare Comparisons

A ranked, quotation-led report from the complete letter-by-letter review

RESEARCH SCOPE

168 document judgments

151 distinct phrase labels

30 selected leads

Prepared 1 August 2026

Canonical Neville corpus v15 • Folger Shakespeare Library editions

Thirty leads rise above the original comparison set

Bottom line. The most persuasive leads preserve not just vocabulary but a relation, speech act, or institution. Diplomatic formulae remain important when they recur in stable positions and social functions.

The original document-by-document review produced 168 judgments and 151 distinct phrase labels. The thirty comparisons below are the ones most worth reopening. They were selected for some combination of verbal specificity, recurrence within Neville, scarcity in the 1590–1615 play corpus, similarity of syntax and sense, and significance as diplomatic or epistolary formulae.

Three findings organize the report

1. **The strongest parallels preserve a structure.** They describe covert dissuasion, extracted conditions, unauthorized action, retrospective reporting, or exculpatory denial.
2. **Diplomatic formulae are evidence of register.** Receipt, petition, attendance, self-authorization, royal pleasure, considered disclosure, and leave-taking recur in stable positions and functions in Neville. Shakespeare repeatedly places the same forms in correspondence, court audiences, embassies, hearings, and service relations.
3. **The ranking is exploratory, not attributive.** Of the 151 selected labels, 76 were confined to Shakespeare within the 239-play comparison window, but none remained statistically significant after correction for multiple comparisons. The phrases were selected after looking at Shakespeare, so the statistics rank leads; they do not prove common authorship.

Neville quotations are reproduced from the canonical normalized research transcription. They are quotation-level research controls, not claims of fresh manuscript collation. Before publication, exact readings should be checked against the relevant manuscript or printed witness. A public printed control for much of the correspondence is Ralph Winwood's *Memorials of Affairs of State*. Shakespeare quotations and lineation follow the Folger Shakespeare Library editions; works are identified by title, act, and scene without repetitive links.

Each ranked entry gives **up to five Neville occurrences and up to five Shakespeare occurrences**, followed by an entry-level corpus-frequency line reporting both raw occurrences and distinct documents or works. Where a total exceeds five, the entry points to Appendix A for the remaining evidence; every selected Shakespeare total is five or fewer and is therefore printed in full.

Frequency means the number of matched passages, followed by the number of distinct documents or works containing them. Shakespeare totals combine the comparison database's thirty-seven plays with *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, the sonnets, and the narrative poems; permitted inflectional variants are stated in the heading or in a count-rule note.

The complete ranking at a glance

“Sh./other plays” reports the number of Shakespeare and non-Shakespeare plays containing the selected pattern in the 239-play, 1590–1615 comparison window. A dash means that the comparison comes from a poem or from an ordered relation not represented by an exact contiguous play-database count.

Rank	Comparison	Primary value	Neville docs	Sh./other plays
1	underhand ... dissuade ... from peace	ordered covert-action frame	1	1 / 0
2	sure(ly) he is much afflicted	compact verbal and sense match	1	1 / 0
3	kind offer(s) of the King	political transaction phrase	1	1 / 0
4	no promise of satisfaction	negotiation formula	1	1 / 0
5	without any/the form of justice	legal-political frame	1	1 / 0
6	what had/hath passed between	recurrent reporting frame	4	3 / 0
7	whereof the world takes notice/note	public-reputation construction	1	1 / 0
8	to draw conditions of	treaty-making action phrase	1	1 / 0
9	without the privity of the [King]	secrecy and authority	1	1 / 0
10	with as much speed as	dispatch urgency	3	1 / 0
11	the Queen my mistress	delegated sovereign identity	10	1 / 0
12	court of parliament	institutional- political phrase	3	1 / 0
13	I never spake with	exculpatory testimony	2	2 / 0
14	seal ... with ... blood	embodied oath relation	1	ordered match

Rank	Comparison	Primary value	Neville docs	Sh./other plays
15	for mine/my own part, I must needs	stance and compulsion	1	1 / 0
16	so many good words	verbal favor and profession	1	1 / 0
17	six thousand horse	exact military quantity	1	1 / 0
18	all the world besides	exclusive allegiance	1	1 / 12
19	laws and customs	paired constitutional nouns	1	<i>Lucrece</i> / —
20	make good use of	instrumental verbal phrase	3	1 / 1
21	it pleased his Majesty to	royal-action formula	1	1 / 2
22	confess(es) receipt of	documentary accounting	1	1 / 0
23	have received your letter(s)	epistolary receipt	4	2 / 0
24	wait upon your honor/lordship	titled attendance	4	4 / 2
25	I thought good to	considered disclosure	13	1 / 0
26	I humbly take my leave	positionally stable closing	40	2 / 6
27	it would/will please you to	modal petition	7	3 / 2
28	in my poor opinion	self-lowering counsel	8	1 / 0
29	I have made bold	deferential self-authorization	10	1 / 1
30	if it please your honor	titled conditional petition	3	1 / 2

I • The ten strongest verbal parallels

01 • underhand ... dissuade ... from peace

NEVILLE • 24 September 1599, to Robert Cecil

the King did **underhand dissuade** them **from peace**, upon assurance of a standing supply from him

SHAKESPEARE • *Oliver, As You Like It*, 1.1

have by **underhand** means labored to **dissuade** him **from it**; but he is resolute.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **1 occurrence in 1 document**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Count rule. This is the ordered **underhand ... dissuade ... from** relation: Neville's object is **peace**, while Shakespeare's is **it**.

Why it matters. This is the strongest ordered relation in the review. Both passages combine covert agency, attempted dissuasion, and withdrawal from a proposed course. The objects differ—peace negotiations versus a wrestling match—but the logic of concealed intervention is unusually close.

Control. **Underhand** and **dissuade** each circulate independently. The evidentiary force lies in their ordered combination and shared covert-action sense, not in either word alone.

02 • sure(ly) he is much afflicted

NEVILLE • 12 March 1600, to Robert Cecil

surely he is much afflicted with it, and is in danger to sustain some misery

SHAKESPEARE • *Suffolk, Henry VIII*, 2.2

How sad he looks! **Sure he is much afflicted**.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **1 occurrence in 1 document**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. The phrase is compact, nearly exact, and used in the same affective sense: an observer infers severe distress in a third person. **Sure/surely** is a minor adverbial variation rather than a change of construction.

Control. *Henry VIII* is late and collaborative. This comparison may illuminate circulation or register, but it cannot straightforwardly connect a 1600 letter to Shakespeare alone.

03 • kind offer(s) of the King

NEVILLE • 29 June 1599, to Robert Cecil

claim and embrace those **kind offers of the King's** towards her

SHAKESPEARE • Worcester, *Henry IV, Part 1*, 5.2

O no, my nephew must not know, Sir Richard,
The liberal and **kind offer of the King**.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **1 occurrence in 1 document**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. The match joins an evaluative adjective, a transaction noun, and a sovereign source. Both passages concern a king's conciliatory political proposal and the strategic decision whether to accept or disclose it.

Control. Singular/plural and possessive/prepositional variation are slight, but the phrase belongs to political negotiation and may occur in chronicles, council papers, and diplomatic correspondence.

04 • no promise of satisfaction

NEVILLE • 9 May 1600, to Robert Cecil

in the end, I could draw **no promise of satisfaction** from him, although the King thought my request reasonable

SHAKESPEARE • Falstaff, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, 2.2

Have you received **no promise of satisfaction**
at her hands?

Corpus frequency. Neville: **1 occurrence in 1 document**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. The exact negative noun phrase occurs in two unsuccessful suits. Neville cannot obtain redress in negotiation; Falstaff asks whether Ford's supposed suit has received encouragement. The surrounding verbs—**draw** and **received**—both construe satisfaction as something granted by another party.

Control. The diplomatic and erotic situations differ. The phrase may be legal or transactional currency, which makes broader prose controls especially important.

05 • without any/the form of justice

NEVILLE • 28 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 1 of 2

... no color or foundation, but that it was done altogether **without any form of justice**, of their own authority, without any commission or letters of ...

NEVILLE • 28 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 2 of 2

... be fust reintegrated in that which was taken from them **without any form of justice**, and afterwards the right of the other prize might be ...

SHAKESPEARE • Cornwall, *King Lear*, 3.7

Though well we may not pass upon his life
Without the form of justice, yet our power
 Shall do a court'sy to our wrath.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **2 occurrences in 1 document**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. Both passages oppose lawful procedure to naked authority. Neville condemns an act undertaken without commission; Cornwall knowingly substitutes power and wrath for judicial form. The phrase therefore aligns in wording, legal concept, and argumentative contrast.

Control. This is likely legal-political register rather than an exclusive verbal signature. Its value is the unusually exact dramatization of a procedural complaint.

06 • what had/hath passed between

NEVILLE • 28 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... have, I was with monsieur Villeroy, and repeated unto him **what had passed between** the King and me, and desired I might receive some ...

NEVILLE • 24 September 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... with him, that her Majesty had imparted unto their Ambassador, **what had passed between** her and him that came out of the low-countries about ...

NEVILLE • 17 February 1600 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 1 of 2

... I had since his coming, and can very sufficiently relate **what passed between** the King and us in them.
For the place required ...

NEVILLE • 17 February 1600 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 2 of 2

... before to monsieur de Villeroy, and Mr. Edmonds particularly related **what had passed between** my lords of the council and his Ambassador at a ...

NEVILLE • 28 August 1600 • to Ralph Winwood

... at Paris: I pray you observe well his reception, and **what passeth between** the King and him. We are here full of the ...

SHAKESPEARE • Duke, *Measure for Measure*, 3.1

Son, I have overheard
what hath passed between you and your
sister.

SHAKESPEARE • Beatrice, *Much Ado About Nothing*, 5.2

yet, ere I go, let me go with that I came, which is,
with knowing **what hath passed between** you and
Claudio.

SHAKESPEARE • Falstaff, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, 3.5

Now, Master Brook, you come to know
what hath passed between me and Ford's wife.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **5 occurrences in 4 documents**. Shakespeare: **3 occurrences in 3 works**.

Count rule. The Neville total treats **what passed between** and **what passeth between** as inflectional members of the displayed **what had/hath passed between** reporting frame.

Why it matters. This is one of the best cumulative leads: the normalized family occurs in four Neville records and three Shakespeare plays, but in no non-Shakespeare play in the 1590–1615 comparison window. It introduces a retrospective account of dealings between named parties in both corpora.

Control. **Had** and **hath** differ, and the phrase may be ordinary reporting language outside drama. Its recurrence makes a held-out correspondence test more valuable than another isolated concordance search.

07 • whereof the world takes notice/note

NEVILLE • *Advice to the King*, 1613

his great wants (**whereof the world takes notice** both at home and abroad)

SHAKESPEARE • Countess, *All's Well That Ends Well*, 1.3

My love hath in 't a bond
Whereof the world takes note.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **1 occurrence in 1 document**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. **Notice/note** is a close lexical variation within the same syntactic frame. In each case a private condition is represented as exposed to collective observation and reputation. The construction does more than say that something is known: it makes “the world” the observing subject.

Control. The objects differ—royal financial need and a bond of love—and the Neville document postdates the play. This is a verbal lead about public-reputation language, not a chronological source claim.

08 • to draw conditions of

NEVILLE • 15 June 1599, to Robert Cecil

while this depends therefore will be the fittest time **to draw conditions of** advantage from them

SHAKESPEARE • King Henry, *Henry VI, Part 1*, 5.1

And therefore are we certainly resolved
To draw conditions of a friendly peace,
Which by my Lord of Winchester we mean
Shall be transported presently to France.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **1 occurrence in 1 document**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. The shared action is technically diplomatic: to formulate or extract the terms of an agreement. Both contexts concern peace-making with France, and both continue **conditions of** with a noun defining the desired kind of settlement.

Control. The complements pull in different directions—Neville seeks advantage; Henry announces friendly peace. Treaty and council prose must be searched before assigning the phrase narrower significance.

09 • without the privity of the [King]

NEVILLE • 14 January 1600, to Robert Cecil

it is not done **without the privity of the Scots King**

SHAKESPEARE • Buckingham, *Henry VIII*, 1.1

Upon this French going-out, took he upon him,
Without the privity o' th' King, t' appoint
 Who should attend on him?

Corpus frequency. Neville: **1 occurrence in 1 document**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. The rare legal-administrative noun appears in the same formula and concerns whether action occurred with a sovereign's authorized knowledge. Neville infers Scottish royal complicity; Buckingham alleges that Wolsey acted without Henry's knowledge.

Control. The polarity is reversed: Neville says the act cannot have occurred without privity, while Buckingham says it did. The close frame is nevertheless more informative than the polarity difference.

10 • with as much speed as

NEVILLE • 3 March 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... my instructions before they be signed. I will peruse them **with as much speed as** I may, & be bold to use that further liberty, which ...

NEVILLE • 13 November 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... to the overture or nay, which I desire to be **with as much speed as** conveniently you may. I send you herewith a copy of ...

NEVILLE • 20 February 1600 • to Robert Cecil

... February 1599, o. S. I send this Messenger expressly, and **with as much speed as** I can, to let your honor understand, that yesterday there ...

SHAKESPEARE • Hamlet, *Hamlet*, 4.6

Let the King have the letters
 I have sent, and repair thou to me **with as much speed**
as thou wouldst fly death.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **3 occurrences in 3 documents**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. The exact comparative urgency frame occurs in three Neville records and one Shakespeare play, with no non-Shakespeare play hit in the window. Both are attached to the rapid handling of writings or messages.

Control. The formula is semantically predictable and may be common in correspondence. Its value comes from recurrence, dispatch context, and the unusually vivid dramatic expansion *as thou wouldst fly death*.

II • Institutional, testimonial, and rhetorical parallels

11 • the Queen my mistress

NEVILLE • 15 May 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... part of her majesties good health, I told him, that **the Queen my Mistress** being very willing to continue the good amity, that had ...

NEVILLE • 19 May 1599 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 1 of 2

... protestation of the great wrong and ingratitude done therein to **the Queen my Mistress**. I told him, that if the King were not able ...

NEVILLE • 19 May 1599 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 2 of 2

... his Master's place and honor, and so would I upon **the Queen's my Mistress**; which might easily produce effects that would not be pleasing ...

NEVILLE • 26 May 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... but for a time, but that the other respect of **the Queen my Mistress** was like to continue, and therefore prayed to know what ...

NEVILLE • 15 June 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... me with it, or any thing els that might concern **the Queen my Mistress**; acknowledging the King's great obligation to her, and the common ...

Further Neville examples. See Appendix A for the remaining 8 occurrences.

SHAKESPEARE • Egyptian messenger, *Antony and Cleopatra*, 5.1

A poor Egyptian yet, **the Queen my mistress**,
Confined in all she has, her monument,
Of thy intents desires instruction.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **13 occurrences in 10 documents**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Count rule. The Neville total includes one possessive surface variant, **the Queen's my mistress**.

Why it matters. Neville uses the expression in ten records; in Shakespeare it occurs once in the play window and not in another playwright's play. In both passages an agent speaks before a foreign or potentially hostile power as the delegated voice of a queen.

Control. This is a conventional allegiance formula. Its importance lies in recurrence, role, and dramatic transpo-

sition, not in lexical rarity by itself.

12 • court of parliament

NEVILLE • 19 May 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... under the great seal of France, and verified in his **court of parliament**, and chambre des contes, and that there was none of ...

NEVILLE • 7 August 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... hath taken it exceedingly ill, and hath sent for his **court of parliament**, and willed them to do severe justice upon the fact ...

NEVILLE • 24 September 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... resolution to readmit the Jesuits, though greatly resisted by this **court of parliament**. And of this very root I suppose that great coldness ...

SHAKESPEARE • King Henry, *Henry IV, Part 2*, 5.2

Now call we our high **court of parliament**,
And let us choose such limbs of noble counsel
That the great body of our state may go
In equal rank with the best-governed nation.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **3 occurrences in 3 documents**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. The phrase occurs in three Neville records and one Shakespeare play, with no non-Shakespeare play hit in the comparison window. Both contexts concern institutional validation and state government.

Control. Neville's phrase can refer to the French *parlement*, a judicial court, while Shakespeare's refers to the English political assembly. The lexical match is exact but the institution is not identical.

13 • I never spake with

NEVILLE • 1 March 1601 • The Case of Sir Henry Neville

... but only said I would advice of it. After which, **I never spake with** them, nor heard from them; and when Mr. Cuffe came ...

NEVILLE • 2 March 1601 • to Robert Cecil

... the Queen or the state. After this visitation I protest **I never spake with** him, nor received any letter from him, nor he from ...

SHAKESPEARE • Angelo, *Measure for Measure*, 5.1

Since which time of five years
I never spake with her, saw her, **nor heard from** her,
 Upon my faith and honor.

SHAKESPEARE • Dromio of Syracuse, *The Comedy of Errors*, 2.2

I never spake with her in all my life.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **2 occurrences in 2 documents**. Shakespeare: **2 occurrences in 2 works**.

Why it matters. The match extends beyond four words into a parallel denial: after a stated point in time, the speaker says he neither spoke with nor heard from the other party. It is especially striking because both passages are exculpatory testimony under suspicion.

Control. Similar denial formulae are natural in depositions and defenses. That genre connection should be tested directly; it is also exactly what makes the comparison historically meaningful.

14 • seal ... with ... blood

NEVILLE • 7 January 1603, to Robert Cecil

this protestation (which I will maintain, & **seal with my blood**, if occasion require it)

SHAKESPEARE • Buckingham, *Henry VIII*, 2.1

Yet I am richer than my base accusers,
 That never knew what truth meant. I now **seal** it,
 And **with that blood** will make 'em one day groan for 't.

SHAKESPEARE • Duke Solinus, *The Comedy of Errors*, 1.1

Who, wanting guilders to redeem their lives,
Have **sealed** his rigorous statutes **with their bloods**,
Excludes all pity from our threat'ning looks.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **1 occurrence in 1 document**. Shakespeare: **2 ordered-relation occurrences in 2 works**.

Count rule. Shakespeare has two ordered **seal ... with ... blood** relations, in *Henry VIII* and *The Comedy of Errors*; the closer truth-protestation example is quoted above.

Why it matters. This is an ordered conceptual match rather than an exact contiguous phrase. Both speakers turn a verbal assertion of truth into an embodied guarantee: the declaration is “sealed” by blood.

Control. Blood-sealed vows have a long rhetorical history, and *Henry VIII* is collaborative. The comparison should be pursued as an oath topos with close syntax, not presented as an exclusive n-gram.

15 • **for mine/my own part, I must needs**

NEVILLE • 13 July 1599, to Robert Cecil

for mine own part, I must needs say again, that I thought it an argument of small respect

SHAKESPEARE • Lucius, *Timon of Athens*, 3.2

For my own part, I must needs confess I have received
some small kindnesses from him, as money, plate,
jewels, and suchlike trifles

Corpus frequency. Neville: **1 occurrence in 1 document**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. The sequence combines a personal stance marker with compelled utterance. In both passages the speaker distances himself from others while claiming that candor obliges him to speak.

Control. **Must needs** is common dramatic language and is more frequent in Chapman than Shakespeare in the mapped author sample. The interest lies in the longer first-person frame.

16 • so many good words

NEVILLE • 1 November 1604, to Ralph Winwood

it was accompanied with **so many good words** and professions towards you; which I hope he will perform

SHAKESPEARE • Diomedes, *Troilus and Cressida*, 4.1

Since she could speak,
She hath not given **so many good words** breath
As for her Greeks and Trojans suffered death.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **1 occurrence in 1 document**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. The exact plural evaluative phrase is rare in the dramatic corpus. Both passages treat “good words” as verbal favor bestowed on another, though Neville hopes the professions will become action while Diomedes bitterly discounts them.

Control. The pragmatic valence differs—hopeful recommendation versus hostile irony. That contrast may be more revealing about dramatic reuse than a simple same-sense match.

17 • six thousand horse

NEVILLE • 29 November 1599, to Robert Cecil

some **six thousand horse**: that of these he intends to leave a good number upon the frontiers

SHAKESPEARE • Parolles, *All's Well That Ends Well*, 4.3

“Five or **six thousand horse**,” I said—I will
say true—“or thereabouts” set down, for I’ll speak
truth.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **1 occurrence in 1 document**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. The troop quantity and military noun align exactly. More interestingly, both passages are intelligence reports whose numbers require judgment: Neville relays planned deployment; Parolles improvises and qualifies a number under interrogation.

Control. Round troop numbers recur widely in military writing. The comparison is specific but could be coincidental unless contemporary dispatches show the quantity or phrasing to be unusual.

18 • all the world besides

NEVILLE • 1 September 1601, to Robert Cecil

I owe more unto you, then to **all the world besides**, and will be ready to testify it in all occasions

SHAKESPEARE • Sonnet 112

You are so strongly in my purpose bred
That **all the world besides** methinks are dead.

SHAKESPEARE • Cassius, *Julius Caesar*, 1.3

If I know this, know **all the world besides**,
That part of tyranny that I do bear
I can shake off at pleasure.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **1 occurrence in 1 document**. Shakespeare: **2 occurrences in 2 works**.

Count rule. Shakespeare's two occurrences are in *Julius Caesar* and Sonnet 112; the sonnet supplies the closer contextual comparison quoted above.

Why it matters. Both passages magnify a privileged personal bond by excluding everyone else. Neville expresses total patronal indebtedness; the sonnet speaker makes one person's judgment eclipse the whole world.

Control. This is not rare dramatic currency: the exact pattern appears in twelve non-Shakespeare plays in the comparison window. It remains rhetorically apt, but it is weak as a discriminatory phrase.

19 • laws and customs

NEVILLE • 8 December 1604, to Ralph Winwood

the border **laws and customs** shall be likewise abolished, and justice ministered hereafter according to the ordinary laws

SHAKESPEARE • Argument to *The Rape of Lucrece*

contrary to the Roman **laws and customs**, not
requiring or staying for the people's suffrages, had possessed himself
of the kingdom

Corpus frequency. Neville: **1 occurrence in 1 document**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. The paired normative nouns occur in constitutional narratives. Neville discusses abolition of border jurisdictions after union; the *Lucrece* argument marks tyrannical accession as contrary to Roman law and custom.

Control. This is a conventional legal pairing, and the Shakespeare passage is in the poem's prose Argument rather than a play. It belongs in the report because the original comparison included poems as well as drama.

20 • make good use of

NEVILLE • 19 January 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... days that remain of my abode here. I hope to **make good use of** it for the service I am employed in, for which ...

NEVILLE • 25 January 1600 • to Robert Cecil

... were very glad to become inward with him, hoping to **make good use of** him towards the other I last mentioned. In this confidence ...

NEVILLE • 1608 • to Robert Cecil

... afford it me: and I will not doubt but to **make good use of** it. for when I have professed, as I have done ...

SHAKESPEARE • Cloten, *Cymbeline*, 3.5

Gone she is
To death or to dishonor, and my end
Can **make good use of** either.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **3 occurrences in 3 documents**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. The phrase has the same instrumental grammar: circumstances are treated as material that can be turned to purpose. It occurs in three Neville documents, one Shakespeare play, and one non-Shakespeare play in the comparison window.

Control. The phrase is semantically broad and the moral contexts diverge sharply—public service versus Cloten's opportunism. It is a useful lexical habit, not a high-specificity signature.

III • Diplomatic and epistolary formula systems

21 • **it pleased his Majesty to**

NEVILLE • 1608, to Robert Cecil

it pleased his Majesty to entertain the matter, & to command me to acquaint my Lord Treasurer with it

SHAKESPEARE • Queen Elizabeth, *Henry VI, Part 3*, 4.1

My lords, before **it pleased his Majesty**
To raise my state to title of a queen,
 Do me but right and you must all confess
 That I was not ignoble of descent.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **1 occurrence in 1 document.** Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work.**

Why it matters. The impersonal sovereign-action formula is complete: perfect verb, royal title, and infinitive continuation. Shakespeare uses it in retrospective royal self-presentation; Neville uses it to report a command.

Control. The exact label occurs in two non-Shakespeare plays as well. Its conventionality is expected, but it remains evidence that Shakespeare dramatizes a recognizable reporting formula.

22 • **confess(es) receipt of**

NEVILLE • 5 March 1601, to Ralph Winwood

this inclosed note of his own hand ... **confesses the receipt of** 63 crowns & a frank

SHAKESPEARE • Princess, *Love's Labor's Lost*, 2.1

You do the King my father too much wrong,
 And wrong the reputation of your name,
 In so unseemingly to **confess receipt**
Of that which hath so faithfully been paid.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **1 occurrence in 1 document.** Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work.**

Why it matters. The inflectional variant preserves a compact documentary frame: admission plus the accounting noun **receipt** and the preposition **of**. Both passages concern proof that money was received.

Control. This is accounting and legal language, not a literary ornament. Its importance is the unusually faithful movement of documentary syntax into dramatic dispute.

23 • have received your letter(s)

NEVILLE • 21 June 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... word or two, to let your honor understand that I **have received your letter** of the 9th of this month, the answer whereof I ...

NEVILLE • 20 March 1600 • to Robert Cecil

Right honorable, Paris 20th march 1599. O. S. I **have received your letter** by jasper of the second of march, with an advertisement ...

NEVILLE • 28 July 1600 • to Robert Cecil

... 28th July 1600. O.S. IT may please your honor; we **have received your letters** of the 20th of July: wherby her Majesty doth command ...

NEVILLE • 28 August 1600 • to Ralph Winwood

SIR, London 28th August 1600. O.S. I **have received your letters** of the 20th of this month, and am glad to ...

SHAKESPEARE • Princess, *Love's Labor's Lost*, 5.2

We **have received your letters** full of love;
Your favors, the ambassadors of love;
And in our maiden council rated them
At courtship, pleasant jest, and courtesy.

SHAKESPEARE • Mistress Quickly, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, 2.2

Marry, she **hath received your letter**,
for the which she thanks you a thousand times,
and she gives you to notify that her husband will
be absence from his house between ten and eleven.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **4 occurrences in 4 documents**. Shakespeare: **2 occurrences in 2 works**.

Why it matters. The singular/plural receipt formula occurs in four Neville records and two Shakespeare plays, but in no non-Shakespeare play in the comparison window. In Neville it characteristically appears near the opening; in Shakespeare it explicitly introduces the interpretation of letters.

Control. It is certainly an epistolary convention. The useful question is not whether it is conventional, but how its wording, number, placement, and subsequent expansion compare across real and represented letters.

24 • wait upon your honor/lordship

NEVILLE • 20 March 1600 • to Robert Cecil

... be very willing so to do, so as I may **wait upon your honor** there; which I purposed to do howsoever, if you came ...

NEVILLE • 6 August 1600 • to Robert Cecil

... together to the Court. Notwithstanding we would be glad to **wait upon your honor**. somewhere privately if you so think good, before we come ...

NEVILLE • 11 August 1600 • to Robert Cecil

... settling of my wife & family. At my return I will **wait upon your honor**. In the mean time I have sent the discourse of ...

NEVILLE • 1608 • to Robert Cecil

... self fallen into a great cold, and not able to **wait upon your Lordship**, and the quarter Sessions drawing on, which will be the ...

SHAKESPEARE • Escalus, *Measure for Measure*, 1.1

I'll **wait upon your Honor**.

SHAKESPEARE • Borachio, *Much Ado About Nothing*, 1.3

We'll **wait upon your Lordship**.

SHAKESPEARE • Gentlemen, *Othello*, 3.2

We **wait upon your Lordship**.

SHAKESPEARE • Priest, *Richard III*, 3.2

I'll **wait upon your Lordship**.

SHAKESPEARE • Hastings, *Richard III*, 3.2

I'll **wait upon your Lordship**.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **4 occurrences in 4 documents**. Shakespeare: **5 occurrences in 4 works**.

Why it matters. The formula preserves verb, preposition, possessive title, and a service relation. Neville supplies several grammatical persons and modalities; Shakespeare places the same construction in scenes of official

attendance.

Control. This is courtly convention. Its evidentiary value is cumulative and pragmatic: who says it, to whom, whether attendance is promised or performed, and where the formula sits in the exchange.

25 • **I thought good to**

NEVILLE • 19 May 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... honor with expedition. Therefore not knowing what it may import, **I thought good to** send it by this express Messenger. I have not yet ...

NEVILLE • 26 May 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... choose him, he had no reason to refuse it. This **I thought good to** advertise, as a thing not to be neglected; I fear ...

NEVILLE • 13 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... towards the end of the week. In the mean time, **I thought good to** send this dispatch, that you may see what to trust ...

NEVILLE • 28 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 1 of 2

... with her Majesty, to her disadvantage and dishonour; and therefore **I thought good to** let him know the truth of it, which I did ...

NEVILLE • 28 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 2 of 2

... have done in England, and I hope to procure it. **I thought good to** send away this bearer with thus much, because I understand ...

Further Neville examples. See Appendix A for the remaining 9 occurrences.

SHAKESPEARE • Macbeth's letter, read by Lady Macbeth, *Macbeth*, 1.5

This **have I thought good to** deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou might'st not lose the dues of rejoicing by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **14 occurrences in 13 documents**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. The phrase occurs in thirteen Neville records and one Shakespeare play, with no non-Shakespeare play hit in the window. Most importantly, Shakespeare's instance is itself a letter: in both texts the formula explains why the writer decided to transmit consequential news.

Control. This is a conventional disclosure formula. Its unusually strong genre and speech-act alignment makes it more interesting than its conventionality might suggest.

26 • I humbly take my leave

NEVILLE • 26 December 1594 • to Lord Burghley

... your good health, and long continuance in all honor & happiness, **I humbly take my leave.** this 26 of December 1594. Your Lordship's. most bounden and ...

NEVILLE • 19 January 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... please you to send or impart unto me And so **I humbly take my leave.** this Friday 19th of January 1598. Your honor's. humbly to ...

NEVILLE • 3 March 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... morning. In the mean time attending your ho: further commandment **I humbly take my leave.** from london the 3 of march 1598 Your ho: very ...

NEVILLE • 26 April 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... I will lose no opportunity. And so for this time, **I humbly take my leave.** Your honor's very humbly to be commanded HENRY NEVILLE

NEVILLE • 27 April 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... so hoping of your honor's speedy direction in these points, **I humbly take my leave.** Your honors, & c. HENRY NEVILLE

Further Neville examples. See Appendix A for the remaining 35 occurrences.

SHAKESPEARE • Cornelius, *Cymbeline*, 1.5

I humbly take my leave.

SHAKESPEARE • Tyrrel, *Richard III*, 4.3

I humbly take my leave.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **40 occurrences in 40 documents.** Shakespeare: **2 occurrences in 2 works.**

Why it matters. This is Neville's clearest positional formula: forty exact occurrences in forty documents, with a median relative position of 0.965—almost always at the end. Shakespeare also uses it as an exit-bearing speech act. The dramatic formula does on stage what Neville's formula does on the page.

Control. It is widespread. The exact phrase occurs in six non-Shakespeare plays, and the broader leave-taking

family is more frequent in Marlowe's small mapped sample than in Shakespeare. It is evidence of stable register, not exclusivity.

27 • **it would/will please you to**

NEVILLE • 17 February 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... your hours. house about it, that I would be glad **it would please you to** trust them in my hands for 4. or 5. days ...

NEVILLE • 28 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... and by his so speedy coming away in my company,) **it would please you to** be a means, that for some reasonable consideration to be ...

NEVILLE • 24 September 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... year too much, which was made to Sir Anthony Mildmay, **it would please you to** set down in certainty what you think good, that knowing ...

NEVILLE • 23 August 1601 • to Robert Cecil

... it unto her majesty. And for a motive heerunto; That **it would please you to** take knowledge of the great charge I was at in ...

NEVILLE • 6 January 1602 • to Robert Cecil

... ordinarily sollicitates my business, understand your pleasure in it, that **it would please you to** further & favor it unto her majesty, as opportunity shall be ...

Further Neville examples. See Appendix A for the remaining 2 occurrences.

SHAKESPEARE • Malvolio, *Twelfth Night*, 2.3

if not, an **it would**
please you to take leave of her, she is very willing to
bid you farewell.

SHAKESPEARE • Helen, *All's Well That Ends Well*, 5.1

That **it will please you**
To give this poor petition to the King
And aid me with that store of power you have
To come into his presence.

SHAKESPEARE • Queen Gertrude, *Hamlet*, 2.2

To whom he more adheres. If **it will please you**
To show us so much gentry and goodwill
 As to expend your time with us awhile
 For the supply and profit of our hope,

Corpus frequency. Neville: **7 occurrences in 7 documents**. Shakespeare: **3 occurrences in 3 works**.

Count rule. Shakespeare's three occurrences comprise one **it would please you to form** and two **it will please you to form**s.

Why it matters. The modal-politeness frame occurs in seven Neville records, three Shakespeare plays, and two non-Shakespeare plays. It packages another person's action as their pleasure rather than the speaker's command.

Control. The pragmatic force differs. Neville makes a genuine deferential request; Malvolio delivers an expulsion in the language of courtesy. That ironic inversion is itself a useful example of Shakespeare's dramatic handling of polite formulae.

28 • **in my poor opinion**

NEVILLE • 26 December 1594 • to Lord Burghley

... by the stewards themselves when they saw occasion. Neither indeed (**in my poor opinion**) can such a custom be affirmed and allowed, without manifest ...

NEVILLE • 15 June 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... himself any further with the defence of those countries. But **in my poor opinion**, Spain hath reserved too great an interest in them, and ...

NEVILLE • 24 September 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... he will not forsake them, whosoever else do. All which **in my poor opinion** doth infer thus much, that they would not have them ...

NEVILLE • 22 October 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... to accept of the rebel's submission upon any tolerable conditions; **in my poor opinion** her Majesty will find infinite advantage in it, especially for ...

NEVILLE • 13 November 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... be here so negligent, (whom it chiefly concerns) your honor **in my poor opinion** shall not need to be more careful in it. I ...

Further Neville examples. See Appendix A for the remaining 4 occurrences.

SHAKESPEARE • Pompey, *Measure for Measure*, 2.1

Truly, sir, **in my poor opinion**, they will to 't then. If your Worship will take order for the drabs and the knaves, you need not to fear the bawds.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **9 occurrences in 8 documents**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. The exact self-lowering counsel formula occurs in eight Neville records, one Shakespeare play, and no non-Shakespeare play in the comparison window. Both speakers preface advice to a superior by diminishing the authority of their own judgment.

Control. Shakespeare gives the formula to Pompey in a comic legal hearing, whereas Neville uses it in serious counsel. The social and tonal displacement may be more important than lexical identity.

29 • I have made bold**NEVILLE • 26 December 1594 • to Lord Burghley**

... then him who was but a deputy in the office, **I have made bold** to offer unto your lordship. a true relation of the ...

NEVILLE • 15 June 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... miss of the proportion and uniformity that were sit. This **I have made bold** to write unto your honor now at a time of ...

NEVILLE • 1 November 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... hope of good usage at their hands. For these reasons **I have made bold** to signify that my opinion is, her Majesty will not ...

NEVILLE • 19 November 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... liking, which is paid I hope ere this time. And **I have made bold** to detain the other 980 crowns now, and have given ...

NEVILLE • c. 1600 • to Robert Cecil

... by some of them, the principal points whereupon they differed, **I have made bold** to deliver my poor conceit upon two of them, which ...

Further Neville examples. See Appendix A for the remaining 5 occurrences.

SHAKESPEARE • Cassio, *Othello*, 3.1

The day had broke
Before we parted. **I have made bold**, Iago,
To send in to your wife. My suit to her
Is that she will to virtuous Desdemona
Procure me some access.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **10 occurrences in 10 documents**. Shakespeare: **1 occurrence in 1 work**.

Why it matters. The phrase occurs in ten Neville records. It is a self-authorizing apology: the speaker acknowledges that he has crossed a boundary while asking the superior to ratify the intrusion. Cassio's **suit** and request for access make the pragmatic alignment unusually clear.

Control. The exact phrase also occurs in one non-Shakespeare play, and the broader **make bold** family is especially frequent in Middleton's small mapped sample. It is courtly speech behavior, not a unique marker.

30 • **if it please your honor**

NEVILLE • 5 October 1599 • to Robert Cecil

... dealing in Spain with Squire for the poisoning of her. **If it please your honor** to afford me an abstract of their bad practices, set ...

NEVILLE • 6 January 1602 • to Robert Cecil

... effect. which I purpose she shall do upon sunday next, **if it please your honor**. I humbly beseech your honor therefore, without whose direction or ...

NEVILLE • 24 September 1608 • to Julius Caesar

... to his Majesty. as much as that other will give. **if it please your honor**. to do me favor in it, I shall acknowledge it ...

SHAKESPEARE · Elbow, *Measure for Measure*, 2.1

If it please your Honor, I am the poor duke's constable, and my name is Elbow.

SHAKESPEARE · Elbow, *Measure for Measure*, 2.1, second occurrence

If it please your Honor, I know not well what they are, but precise villains they are, that I am sure of, and void of all profanation in the world that good Christians ought to have.

SHAKESPEARE · Pompey, *Measure for Measure*, 2.1

Sir, if it please your Honor, this is not so.

Corpus frequency. Neville: **3 occurrences in 3 documents**. Shakespeare: **3 occurrences in 1 work**.

Why it matters. The complete conditional honorific frame introduces a petition or formal statement to a superior. It occurs in three Neville records and three times in *Measure for Measure*, making that play a concentrated dramatic site for the formula.

Control. Two non-Shakespeare plays also contain the exact pattern. Shakespeare's repeated use is partly comic characterization of Elbow's legal speech, so concentration within one play should not be confused with author-wide prevalence.

Diplomatic formulae form measurable systems

The top thirty should not be read as thirty independent coincidences. Several belong to recurrent systems whose position and function are measurable.

Formula family	Neville occurrences / documents	Shakespeare occurrences / plays	Best interpretation
Leave-taking	73 / 72	41 / 24	broad dramatic and epistolary currency; Neville is exceptionally position-stable
Letter receipt	8 / 8	4 / 4	explicit correspondence language; Heywood also uses the family

Formula family	Neville occurrences / documents	Shakespeare occurrences / plays	Best interpretation
Titled petition	49 / 40	19 / 7	strong court/hearing register; Fletcher's rate is close to Shakespeare's
Make bold	36 / 33	9 / 8	broad deferential self-authorization; Middleton's mapped rate is higher
Attendance and service	9 / 8	8 / 7	pragmatic alignment is strong; Heywood's rate is similar
Royal pleasure	8 / 8	5 / 4	conventional sovereign reporting; Marlowe's mapped rate is higher
Thought good	15 / 14	2 / 2	especially interesting in represented letters; absent from mapped rival plays
Must needs	6 / 6	15 / 11	broad dramatic stance formula; Chapman uses it more heavily
Counsel stance	13 / 11	2 / 2	recurrent Neville self-positioning; absent from mapped rival plays

Shakespeare uses all nine families in the comparison window. No other mapped playwright does, but the rival samples are uneven: Jonson contributes eleven plays, while Marlowe, Middleton, and Webster contribute only two each. “Not observed” is therefore a corpus result, not proof that an author never used a form.

A disciplined next pass can test the strongest leads

The first ten should receive witness-level and historical-circulation checking first. The most efficient order is:

1. verify the exact Neville wording against the public print and, where available, the manuscript;
2. freeze each phrase or ordered relation before searching any new corpus;
3. search author-balanced diplomatic correspondence, depositions, council papers, chronicles, and prose, not only plays;
4. distinguish exact phrase, inflectional variant, ordered skip relation, and semantic analogy;
5. record pragmatic features—speaker, addressee, hierarchy, document position, and speech act—alongside fre-

quency;

6. test the frozen set on held-out correspondence rather than selecting new phrases after inspecting Shakespeare.

The formula-family entries should be investigated cumulatively. A leave-taking phrase is weak as a solitary coincidence but strong evidence about Neville's habitual closing behavior. Likewise, **I thought good to, I have made bold,** and **in my poor opinion** become more informative when their recurrence, placement, and addressee relations are compared as systems.

What the ranking can—and cannot—establish

- The ranking is an expert research judgment, not a fitted probability of common authorship.
- The drama statistics are selection-conditioned because all phrases came from a Neville–Shakespeare comparison.
- Eight labels had unadjusted Fisher $p < .05$; none had Benjamini–Hochberg $q < .05$. The minimum adjusted value was approximately .292.
- Genre is a major confound. A phrase rare in plays may be ordinary in letters, state papers, petitions, or legal examinations.
- Plays are used as the inferential unit, so several repetitions inside one play do not count like independent works.
- Poems and sonnets were checked separately from the 239-play database. Their inclusion broadens the literary comparison but should not be mixed silently with play-frequency denominators.
- Late and collaborative works—notably *Henry VIII* and *Timon of Athens*—require collaborator-sensitive interpretation.

Appendix A • Complete Neville concordance

The ranked entries print as many as five Neville occurrences apiece. This appendix prints **every occurrence** of every selected Top 30 pattern that occurs more than once in the canonical corpus: 122 occurrences across fifteen patterns. Repetitions within one document are listed separately. “Complete” means complete for the frozen displayed pattern and its stated variants, not for every possible semantic paraphrase.

A01 • Rank 05 – without any/the form of justice

Neville concordance: 2 occurrences in 1 document.

- 28 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 1 of 2 — “... no color or foundation, but that it was done altogether **without any form of justice**, of their own authority, without any commission or letters of ...”
- 28 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 2 of 2 — “... be fust reintegrated in that which was taken from them **without any form of justice**, and afterwards the right of the other prize might be ...”

A02 • Rank 06 – what had/hath passed between

Neville concordance: 5 occurrences in 4 documents.

- 28 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil — “... have, I was with monsieur Villeroy, and repeated unto him **what had passed between** the King and me, and desired I might receive some ...”
- 24 September 1599 • to Robert Cecil — “... with him, that her Majesty had imparted unto their Ambassador, **what had passed between** her and him that came out of the low-countries about ...”
- 17 February 1600 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 1 of 2 — “... I had since his coming, and can very sufficiently relate **what passed between** the King and us in them. For the place required ...”
- 17 February 1600 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 2 of 2 — “... before to monsieur de Villeroy, and Mr. Edmonds particularly related **what had passed between** my lords of the council and his Ambassador at a ...”
- 28 August 1600 • to Ralph Winwood — “... at Paris: I pray you observe well his reception, and **what passeth between** the King and him. We are here full of the ...”

A03 • Rank 10 – with as much speed as

Neville concordance: 3 occurrences in 3 documents.

- **3 March 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... my instructions before they be signed. I will peruse them **with as much speed as** I may, & be bold to use that further liberty, which ...”
- **13 November 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... to the overture or nay, which I desire to be **with as much speed as** conveniently you may. I send you herewith a copy of ...”
- **20 February 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “... February 1599, o. S. I send this Messenger expressly, and **with as much speed as** I can, to let your honor understand, that yesterday there ...”

A04 • Rank 11 – the Queen my mistress

Neville concordance: 13 occurrences in 10 documents.

- **15 May 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... part of her majesties good health, I told him, that **the Queen my Mistress** being very willing to continue the good amity, that had ...”
- **19 May 1599 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 1 of 2** — “... protestation of the great wrong and ingratitude done therein to **the Queen my Mistress**. I told him, that if the King were not able ...”
- **19 May 1599 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 2 of 2** — “... his Master’s place and honor, and so would I upon **the Queen’s my Mistress**; which might easily produce effects that would not be pleasing ...”
- **26 May 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... but for a time, but that the other respect of **the Queen my Mistress** was like to continue, and therefore prayed to know what ...”
- **15 June 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... me with it, or any thing els that might concern **the Queen my Mistress**; acknowledging the King’s great obligation to her, and the common ...”
- **13 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 1 of 2** — “... so cold, and to savour of so little respect towards **the Queen my Mistress**, considering her present occasions, which I had acquainted him with ...”
- **13 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 2 of 2** — “... no reason to charge him with want of respect towards **the Queen my Mistress**; though he knew himself, and every man els would confess ...”
- **28 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... to make new instance for the payment of the money, **the Queen my Mistress** had Lent the King; but I did forbear it, until ...”
- **7 August 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... had no great occasion to press him for repayment. Whereas **the Queen my Mistress**, by reason of her present war, and the continual burden ...”
- **15 November 1599 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 1 of 2** — “... the council, I might be heard for the interest of **the Queen my Mistress**, hoping I should be able to shew sufficient reasons, why ...”
- **15 November 1599 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 2 of 2** — “... King and his ministers would have a due regard of **the Queen my Mistress**, and of the amity and enterours between their realm and ...”
- **3 January 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “... other to serve them any more, against the subjects of **the Queen my Mistress**. For the second, I prayed him to remember, that it ...”
- **26 January 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “... charge and burden ours. And it must be confessed that **the Queen my Mistress** had discharged the part of a true and perfect friend ...”

A05 • Rank 12 – court of parliament

Neville concordance: 3 occurrences in 3 documents.

- **19 May 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... under the great seal of France, and verified in his **court of parliament**, and chambre des contes, and that there was none of ...”
- **7 August 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... hath taken it exceedingly ill, and hath sent for his **court of parliament**, and willed them to do severe justice upon the fact ...”
- **24 September 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... resolution to readmit the Jesuits, though greatly resisted by this **court of parliament**. And of this very root I suppose that great coldness ...”

A06 • Rank 13 – I never spake with

Neville concordance: 2 occurrences in 2 documents.

- **1 March 1601 • The Case of Sir Henry Neville** — “... but only said I would advice of it. After which, **I never spake with** them, nor heard from them; and when Mr. Cuffe came ...”
- **2 March 1601 • to Robert Cecil** — “... the Queen or the state. After this visitation I protest **I never spake with** him, nor received any letter from him, nor he from ...”

A07 • Rank 20 – make good use of

Neville concordance: 3 occurrences in 3 documents.

- **19 January 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... days that remain of my abode here. I hope to **make good use of** it for the service I am employed in, for which ...”
- **25 January 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “... were very glad to become inward with him, hoping to **make good use of** him towards the other I last mentioned. In this confidence ...”
- **1608 • to Robert Cecil** — “... afford it me: and I will not doubt but to **make good use of** it. for when I have professed, as I have done ...”

A08 • Rank 23 – have received your letter(s)

Neville concordance: 4 occurrences in 4 documents.

- **21 June 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... word or two, to let your honor understand that I **have received your letter** of the 9th of this month, the answer whereof I ...”
- **20 March 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “Right honorable, Paris 20th march 1599. O. S. I **have received your letter** by jasper of the second of march, with an advertisement ...”
- **28 July 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “... 28th July 1600. O.S. IT may please your honor; we **have received your letters** of the 20th of July: wherby her Majesty doth command ...”
- **28 August 1600 • to Ralph Winwood** — “SIR, London 28th August 1600. O.S. I **have received your letters** of the 20th of this month, and am glad to ...”

A09 • Rank 24 – wait upon your honor/lordship

Neville concordance: 4 occurrences in 4 documents.

- **20 March 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “... be very willing so to do, so as I may **wait upon your honor** there; which I purposed to do howsoever, if you came ...”
- **6 August 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “... together to the Court. Notwithstanding we would be glad to **wait upon your honor**, somewhere privately if you so think good, before we come ...”
- **11 August 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “... settling of my wife & family. At my return I will **wait upon your honor**. In the mean time I have sent the discourse of ...”
- **1608 • to Robert Cecil** — “... self fallen into a great cold, and not able to **wait upon your Lordship**, and the quarter Sessions drawing on, which will be the ...”

A10 • Rank 25 – I thought good to

Neville concordance: 14 occurrences in 13 documents.

- **19 May 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... honor with expedition. Therefore not knowing what it may import, **I thought good** to send it by this express Messenger. I have not yet ...”
- **26 May 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... choose him, he had no reason to refuse it. This **I thought good to** advertise, as a thing not to be neglected; I fear ...”
- **13 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... towards the end of the week. In the mean time, **I thought good to** send this dispatch, that you may see what to trust ...”
- **28 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 1 of 2** — “... with her Majesty, to her disadvantage and dishonour; and therefore **I thought good to** let him know the truth of it, which I did ...”
- **28 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 2 of 2** — “... have done in England, and I hope to procure it. **I thought good to** send away this bearer with thus much, because I understand ...”
- **1 August 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... any ships of war in the parts of this kingdom. **I thought good to** send this bearer expressly, the rather, because this advertisement out ...”
- **1 September 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... what importance they might be in these times of doubt, **I thought good to** send them away with speed, and have for that purpose ...”
- **8 September 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... Lock, and finding this bearer ready to return for England, **I thought good to** send it away by him. I spake lately with one ...”
- **26 January 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “... four months. Before I moved the King in the matter, **I thought good to** speak with a gentleman that remain here in court continually ...”
- **29 July 1600 • to Ralph Winwood** — “... chiefly meant for the business of the sea; touching which **I thought good to** write my letters to the King, and the Duke de ...”
- **1 August 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “... about nine of clock this inclosed from Mr. Winwood, which **I thought good to** send your honor. with speed, that you may see what ...”
- **2 August 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “... August 1600. O. S. BEing stayed here by contrary winds, **I thought good to** advertise your honor, that the commissioners of the Archduke are ...”
- **2 November 1600 • to Ralph Winwood** — “... is staid till we here once again from you; therefore **I thought good to** send this by the way of Rouen”
- **11 March 1602 • to Robert Cecil** — “... not sufficient to raise any such sum of money by, **I thought good to** enlarge & alter my offer to 5000li, whereof 1000li to be ...”

A11 • Rank 26 – I humbly take my leave

Neville concordance: 40 occurrences in 40 documents.

- **26 December 1594 • to Lord Burghley** — “... your good health, and long continuance in all honor & happiness, **I humbly take my leave**. this 26 of December 1594. Your Lordship’s. most bounden and ...”
- **19 January 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... please you to send or impart unto me And so **I humbly take my leave**. this Friday 19th of January 1598. Your honor’s. humbly to ...”
- **3 March 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... morning. In the mean time attending your ho: further commandment **I humbly take my leave**. from london the 3 of march 1598 Your ho: very ...”
- **26 April 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... I will lose no opportunity. And so for this time, **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s very humbly to be commanded HENRY NEVILLE”
- **27 April 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... so hoping of your honor’s speedy direction in these points, **I humbly take my leave**. Your honors, & c. HENRY NEVILLE”
- **30 May 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... other matter at this present fit for your Honors knowledge **I humbly take my leave** from Paris the 30 th may: 99 Your Honors very ...”
- **21 June 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... to know, when I shall treat with the counsel here; **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s, & c. HENRY NEVILLE”
- **14 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... counsel for the repeal, and stay of them. And so **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s most humbly to be commanded, HENRY NEVILLE”
- **28 July 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... e’re it be long to have occasion to write again, **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s, & c. HENRY NEVILLE. The chancellor is dead since ...”
- **1 August 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... for in person in the camp every day. And so **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s, & c. HENRY NEVILLE”
- **7 August 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... to the treaty of Blois. And so for this time **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s most humbly to be commanded, HENRY NEVILLE Responce ...”
- **14 August 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... September, but the Archduke goeth presently to Brussels. And so **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s, & c. HENRY NEVILLE”
- **24 September 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... stayed to be employed into Spain, within the time limited. **I humbly take my leave**, & c. Your honor’s, & c. HENRY NEVILLE”
- **26 September 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... domestic misfortune in the loss of my son lately born, **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s, & c. HENRY NEVILLE”
- **5 October 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... this interim might be suspended. And so for this time **I humbly take my leave**, & c. Your honor’s, & c. HENRY NEVILLE”
- **15 November 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... of your favor towards me, whereupon I do only depend, **I humbly take my leave**. Your honors very, & c. HENRY NEVILLE”
- **19 November 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... which are here a working. And so till farther occasion **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s most, & c. HENRY NEVILLE”
- **20 November 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... Spanish Ambassador takes the alarm likewise of it. And so **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s, & ce. HENRY NEVILLE”
- **1 December 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... not having any farther matter to impart at this time **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s very, & c. HENRY NEVILLE”
- **12 January 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “... but withal recommending him unto your good favour. And so **I humbly take my leave**. from Paris the xijth of January 1599. your honor’s. very ...”
- **26 January 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “... here enclosed a letter I received from Bayonne. And so **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s most, & c. HENRY NEVILLE”
- **27 January 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “... two majesties and their subjects be best preserved. And thus **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s very, & c. HENRY NEVILLE”
- **5 February 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “... that passed, I have troubled you with more than needed, **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s, & c. HENRY NEVILLE. Chevalier Guicciardini, Agent from the ...”
- **19 February 1600 • to Robert Cecil** — “... your Lordship and my bounden thanks for all your favors **I humbly take my leave**. from Rochester the 19 th of February 1600. Your Lordship ...”

- **27 February 1600 · to Robert Cecil** — “... bold to entreat your honors favor towards him. And so **I humbly take my leave**. From Rochester the 27 th of February 1600 Your honors ...”
- **20 March 1600 · to Robert Cecil** — “... for her honor or service. And so for this time **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s most, & c. HENRY NEVILLE”
- **24 April 1600 · to Robert Cecil** — “... letters, because I hear monsieur de villeroys’s currier is returned, **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s most, & c. HENRY NEVILLE”
- **8 May 1600 · to Robert Cecil** — “... particular of his suit unto his own relation. And therein **I humbly take my leave**, & remain ever Your honors most dutiful at commandment, Henry Neville”
- **18 May 1600 · to Robert Cecil** — “... speed; for until then we can do nothing. And so **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s most, & c. HENRY NEVILLE. An. 1600”
- **25 June 1600 · to Robert Cecil** — “... And so for this time with remembrance of my duty **I humbly take my leave**. from Boulogne the xxvth of June 1600. Yours honor’s. very ...”
- **17 July 1600 · to Robert Cecil** — “... communicate with vs what you understand of it. And so **I humbly take my leave**. from Boulogne the 17th of July 1600. Your honor’s. very ...”
- **28 July 1600 · to Robert Cecil** — “... set forward towards England to morrow. I hope her Majesty **I humbly take my leave**. Your honor’s most, & c. HENRY NEVILLE. An. 1600”
- **1 August 1600 · to Robert Cecil** — “... next wait upon you. And so in the mean time **I humbly take my leave** & rest Your honor’s. most dutiful at commandment. Henry Neville. from ...”
- **11 August 1600 · to Robert Cecil** — “... sent the discourse of the conference at Fontainebleau. And so **I humbly take my leave** & rest Your honor’s. most humble at commandment. Henry Neville. 11th ...”
- **23 August 1601 · to Robert Cecil** — “... And so renewing my prayers to you for your prosperity **I humbly take my leave** & rest Your honors most bounden and ready to do you ...”
- **20 December 1601 · to Robert Cecil** — “... hoping to receive some comfort shortly by your honorable means, **I humbly take my leave** and rest, Your honors most bounden and devoted to serve ...”
- **11 March 1602 · to Robert Cecil** — “... hand, because of the indisposition both of mine head & eyes, **I humbly take my leave**, & beseech god to dispose both her Majesty heart, & the honorable ...”
- **3 April 1602 · to Robert Cecil** — “... with my daily prayers to god for your honors preservation **I humbly take my leave**. this 3 of April 1602 Your honors most bound and ...”
- **1608 · to Robert Cecil** — “... craving pardon of this boldness, occasioned by my present indisposition, **I humbly take my leave**. from Dacre house this first of January 1607 your Lordship ...”
- **1 October 1612 · to Julius Caesar** — “... my power. And so hoping of your favourable regard therein, **I humbly take my leave**. from Hampton Court the first of October 1612 your honor’s ...”

A12 · Rank 27 – it would please you to

Neville concordance: 7 occurrences in 7 documents.

- **17 February 1599 · to Robert Cecil** — “... your hours. house about it, that I would be glad **it would please you** to trust them in my hands for 4. or 5. days ...”
- **28 July 1599 · to Robert Cecil** — “... and by his so speedy coming away in my company,) **it would please you** to be a means, that for some reasonable consideration to be ...”
- **24 September 1599 · to Robert Cecil** — “... year too much, which was made to Sir Anthony Mildmay, **it would please you** to set down in certainty what you think good, that knowing ...”
- **23 August 1601 · to Robert Cecil** — “... it unto her majesty. And for a motive heerunto; That **it would please you** to take knowledge of the great charge I was at in ...”
- **6 January 1602 · to Robert Cecil** — “... ordinarily sollicitates my business, understand your pleasure in it, that **it would please you** to further & favor it unto her majesty, as opportunity shall be ...”
- **3 February 1602 · to Robert Cecil** — “... matter is referred by her Majesty unto the Lords, that **it would please you** to continue the same favor unto the end, and to be ...”
- **11 May 1602 · to Robert Cecil** — “... unto your honor And to this end, I crave that **it would please you** to deliver me & free me: & let the performance be eternally required ...”

A13 • Rank 28 – in my poor opinion

Neville concordance: 9 occurrences in 8 documents.

- 26 December 1594 • to Lord Burghley — “... by the stewards themselves when they saw occasion. Neither indeed (**in my poor opinion**) can such a custom be affirmed and allowed, without manifest ...”
- 15 June 1599 • to Robert Cecil — “... himself any further with the defence of those countries. But **in my poor opinion**, Spain hath reserved too great an interest in them, and ...”
- 24 September 1599 • to Robert Cecil — “... he will not forsake them, whosoever else do. All which **in my poor opinion** doth infer thus much, that they would not have them ...”
- 22 October 1599 • to Robert Cecil — “... to accept of the rebel’s submission upon any tolerable conditions; **in my poor opinion** her Majesty will find infinite advantage in it, especially for ...”
- 13 November 1599 • to Robert Cecil — “... be here so negligent, (whom it chiefly concerns) your honor **in my poor opinion** shall not need to be more careful in it. I ...”
- 15 November 1599 • to Robert Cecil — “... find that it be likely to pass. It were good **in my poor opinion**, that the Ambassador there might understand, (by speeches given out ...”
- 9 April 1600 • to Robert Cecil — “... them, which is the thing they extremely fear, and whereof **in my poor opinion** they would be held in doubt, till you monsieur de ...”
- 27 April 1600 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 1 of 2 — “... prejudicial, but rather profitable to her Majesty: it is good **in my poor opinion** to make use of it, to pull on the contentment ...”
- 27 April 1600 • to Robert Cecil • occurrence 2 of 2 — “... give her Majesty the contentment she expects. The surest way, **in my poor opinion**, is to agree of a sum to be paid upon ...”

A14 • Rank 29 – I have made bold

Neville concordance: 10 occurrences in 10 documents.

- 26 December 1594 • to Lord Burghley — “... then him who was but a deputy in the office, **I have made bold** to offer unto your lordship. a true relation of the ...”
- 15 June 1599 • to Robert Cecil — “... miss of the proportion and uniformity that were sit. This **I have made bold** to write unto your honor now at a time of ...”
- 1 November 1599 • to Robert Cecil — “... hope of good usage at their hands. For these reasons **I have made bold** to signify that my opinion is, her Majesty will not ...”
- 19 November 1599 • to Robert Cecil — “... liking, which is paid I hope ere this time. And **I have made bold** to detain the other 980 crowns now, and have given ...”
- c. 1600 • to Robert Cecil — “... by some of them, the principal points whereupon they differed, **I have made bold** to deliver my poor conceit upon two of them, which ...”
- 8 May 1600 • to Robert Cecil — “... self in case to walk abroad as yet. And therefore **I have made bold** to give him some address unto your honor by my ...”
- 26 February 1601 • to Robert Cecil — “Court. Right honorable. **I have made bold**, according to your honor’s. permission, to write unto my wife ...”
- 4 August 1601 • to Robert Cecil — “... give or continue any cause of offence in any kind, **I have made bold**, to present another petition to the Lords of the Counsell ...”
- 1608 • to Robert Cecil — “... in the matter it pleased you to communicate with me, **I have made bold** to to (sic!) pray your Lordship’s clear direction, in some ...”
- 24 September 1608 • to Julius Caesar — “... Majesty. benefit, and to discharge the trust reposed in me. **I have made bold**, because I can not now attend your honor. my self ...”

A15 • Rank 30 – if it please your honor

Neville concordance: 3 occurrences in 3 documents.

- **5 October 1599 • to Robert Cecil** — “... dealing in Spain with Squire for the poisoning of her. **If it please your honor** to afford me an abstract of their bad practices, set ...”
- **6 January 1602 • to Robert Cecil** — “... effect. which I purpose she shall do upon sunday next, **if it please your honor**. I humbly beseech your honor therefore, without whose direction or ...”
- **24 September 1608 • to Julius Caesar** — “... to his Majesty. as much as that other will give. **if it please your honor**. to do me favor in it, I shall acknowledge it ...”

Edition and source note

Shakespeare quotations follow the Folger Shakespeare Library digital editions and are identified by work, act, scene, and speaker. The drama comparison is based on the Folger Early Modern English Drama corpus. The public printed control for Neville’s state papers is Ralph Winwood, *Memorials of Affairs of State in the Reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I*, volume 1 (London, 1725).