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Advanced Placement in  
English Literature and Composition

Teaching Unit  
Individual Learning Packet

*The Taming of the Shrew*

by William Shakespeare

Written by Rebecca Grudzina

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# *The Taming of the Shrew*

## Objectives

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:

1. Discuss the structure of the play and its impact on comic effect.
2. Analyze the sources of comedy in the play.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of certain dramatic techniques in contributing to the comic effect: situational irony, dramatic irony, verbal irony, foil and stock characters, and hyperbole.
4. Analyze the use of verse and prose on characterization, effect, and meaning.
5. Respond to free-response questions similar to those that will appear on the Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition exam.
6. Respond to multiple-choice questions similar to those that will appear on the Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition exam.

## Introductory Lecture

### Introduction

Scholars are unable to date *The Taming of the Shrew* exactly, but it is almost certainly one of Shakespeare's earliest comedies—most likely written in the late 1580s or early 1590s, about 8–10 years before *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598), to which it is often compared. Both plays are famous for their amusingly combative protagonists engaged in a never-ending battle of wits.

A probable source for *Shrew* is an Italian farce, *Gli Suppositi* (*The Suppositions*), by Ludovico Ariosto. This play had been translated into English by George Gascoigne as *The Supposes*. Another play, *A Pleasant and Conceited History Called the Taming of the Shrew*, is believed by some to be another source, but other scholars believe it is really nothing more than a corrupt version of Shakespeare's play.

### Type of Play

*The Taming of the Shrew* is a comedy that satirizes courtship and marriage, often through farce, relying on exaggeration, horseplay, and unrealistic or improbable situations to provoke laughter. In a farce, plot takes precedence over character. A farce is a type of comedy that entertains its audience by means of unlikely and exaggerated situations; disguises and mistaken identity; verbal humor, often very obvious and bordering on the vulgar; and a fast-paced plot that often ends in an elaborate chase scene. Farce is also characterized by physical humor, the deliberate use of absurdity or nonsense, and broadly stylized performances.

Characteristics of farce include lighthearted and slapstick humor, disguises and deception, and a happy ending in which most of the characters come out satisfied. Like Shakespeare's other comedies, *The Taming of the Shrew* focuses on courtship and marriage, but—unlike most of his comedies—it devotes a great deal of attention to married life after the wedding. The other comedies—romantic and festival comedies—conclude with the wedding ceremony itself.

Because plot is of primary importance in a farce, many of the characters in these broad comedies are *stock* or *conventional* characters. Among the most popular comic stock characters of the day were “shrews” or “scolds”—and henpecked husbands. In some of the literature, it is difficult to distinguish between behavior that is being parodied and that is presented as an ideal to emulate. We see this ambiguity in *The Taming of the Shrew*, which both celebrates Katharine's quick wit and fiery temper and revels in Petruchio's “taming” of her.

What Shakespeare contributes to the genre is that—while other henpecked husbands finally gain control of their wives through corporal punishment (whipping and caning) or public punishments like the stocks, pillory, or dunking—Petruchio praises, pampers, and coddles Katharine in order to deny her an opportunity to complain.

## Plot Structure

Comedies are socially and politically radical plays so that, if there is a theme to be found in the madcap and unlikely plot events, that theme is likely to advocate social change. The action of the typical comedy begins with the establishment of a *status quo* that is somehow flawed—Baptista has two daughters, one of whom is such a shrew that he refuses to allow the other to marry until the first is wed.

A stranger enters—Petruchio—who will challenge this *status quo*—Hortensio convinces his friend to marry Katharine so that Bianca will be free to marry. The arrival of the stranger is the *inciting incident*.

Whatever plots and intrigues unfold—involving deceptions, disguises, errors in identification—constitute the complications, that build to the climax (rising action). The moment at which the nature of the resolution is revealed is the climax.

Finally, the resolution is the establishment of a new and improved *status quo*. There is an overall sense of reconciliation and optimism, and the action of the play, especially a romantic comedy, ends with one or more wedding ceremonies.

## The Language of the Play

Much of the humor of a farce like *The Taming of the Shrew* hinges on puns (many of which include hints of vulgarity or sexual innuendo):

### BAPTISTA

If either of you both love Katharine,  
Because I know you well and love you well,  
Leave shall you have to court her at your pleasure.

· · ·

### GREMIO

[Aside] To cart her rather: she's too rough for me. (I, i)

### KATHARINE

I pray you, sir, is it your will  
To make a stale of me amongst these mates?

· · ·

### HORTENSIO

Mates, maid! how mean you that? no mates for you, (I, i)

PETRUCHIO

Why, what's a moveable?

KATHARINE

A join'd-stool.

PETRUCHIO

Thou hast hit it: come, sit on me.

KATHARINE

Asses are made to bear, and so are you.

PETRUCHIO

Women are made to bear, and so are you. (II, i)

PETRUCHIO

Come, come, you wasp; i' faith, you are too angry.

KATHARINE

If I be waspish, best beware my sting.

PETRUCHIO

My remedy is then, to pluck it out.

KATHARINE

Ay, if the fool could find it where it lies,

PETRUCHIO

Who knows not where a wasp does wear his sting? In his tail.

KATHARINE

In his tongue.

PETRUCHIO

Whose tongue?

KATHARINE

Yours, if you talk of tails: and so farewell.

PETRUCHIO

What, with my tongue in your tail? nay, come again,

Good Kate; I am a gentleman. (II, i)

KATHARINE

I'll have no bigger: this doth fit the time,

And gentlewomen wear such caps as these

PETRUCHIO

When you are gentle, you shall have one too.

And not till then. (IV, iii)

The humorous language of the play also includes epigrams:

There's small choice in rotten apples. (I, i)

A little pot and soon hot. (IV, i)

A woman mov'd is like a fountain troubled,  
Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty. (V, ii)

## Verse Versus Prose

The vast majority of Shakespeare's plays are written in *blank verse*—unrhymed lines of iambic pentameter. There is, however, more prose in *The Taming of the Shrew* than is typical, even for a comedy.

Generally, Elizabethan playwrights used the simple language of prose to indicate a simple character or simple subject matter. Servants might speak in prose when speaking to one another. A noble person disguised as a peasant might speak in prose as a part of his or her disguise. For example, in the Induction, Sly speaks in prose. As soon as he is convinced of his “true” status as a lord, however, he begins speaking in verse.

In *Shrew*, however, there are times when the switch to prose seems to be for no other reason than to allow the audience to focus on the double entendres, the puns, and the sexual innuendo. Ever the entertainer, Shakespeare does not want to lose a good laugh in the elevated diction, metaphors, similes, and imagery of blank verse.

This play is also an example of early Shakespeare, and the heavy reliance on prose might simply illustrate to a modern reader the young playwright still perfecting his craft.

## Practice Free-Response Questions

### Practice Free-Response Question 1

One common characteristic of Shakespeare's plays is his use of language to help establish tone, mood, and character. In a well-organized essay, analyze Shakespeare's use of verse and prose in *The Taming of the Shrew*.

### Practice Free-Response Question 2

A farce is a comedy based on an improbable situation and involving disguises, mistaken identities, word play, and a fast-paced plot. In a well-written essay, discuss the extent to which *The Taming of the Shrew* is a farce.

Do not merely summarize the plot.

### Practice Free-Response Question 3

The following passage is Petruchio and Katharine's first meeting from Act II of William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. In a well-organized essay, analyze the progression of their conversation and establish how Shakespeare foreshadows Petruchio's success and the couple's falling in love.

Avoid plot summary.

*Enter KATHARINE*

**PETRUCHIO**

Good morrow, Kate; for that's your name, I hear.

**KATHARINE**

Well have you heard, but something hard of hearing:  
They call me Katharine that do talk of me.

**PETRUCHIO**

You lie, in faith; for you are call'd plain Kate,  
And bonny Kate and sometimes Kate the curst;  
But Kate, the prettiest Kate in Christendom  
Kate of Kate Hall, my super-dainty Kate,  
For dainties are all Kates, and therefore, Kate,  
Take this of me, Kate of my consolation;  
Hearing thy mildness praised in every town,  
Thy virtues spoke of, and thy beauty sounded,  
Yet not so deeply as to thee belongs,  
Myself am moved to woo thee for my wife.



**KATHARINE**

Moved! in good time: let him that moved you hither  
Remove you hence: I knew you at the first  
You were a moveable.

**PETRUCHIO**

Why, what's a moveable?

**KATHARINE**

A join'd-stool.

**PETRUCHIO**

Thou hast hit it: come, sit on me.

**KATHARINE**

Asses are made to bear, and so are you.

**PETRUCHIO**

Women are made to bear, and so are you.

**KATHARINE**

No such jade as you, if me you mean.

**PETRUCHIO**

Alas! good Kate, I will not burden thee;  
For, knowing thee to be but young and light—

**KATHARINE**

Too light for such a swain as you to catch;  
And yet as heavy as my weight should be.

**PETRUCHIO**

Should be! should—buzz!

**KATHARINE**

Well ta'en, and like a buzzard.

**PETRUCHIO**

O slow-wing'd turtle! shall a buzzard take thee?

**KATHARINE**

Ay, for a turtle, as he takes a buzzard.

**PETRUCHIO**

Come, come, you wasp; i' faith, you are too angry.

**KATHARINE**

If I be waspish, best beware my sting.

**PETRUCHIO**

My remedy is then, to pluck it out.

**KATHARINE**

Ay, if the fool could find it where it lies,

**PETRUCHIO**

Who knows not where a wasp does wear his sting? In his tail.

**KATHARINE**

In his tongue.

**PETRUCHIO**

Whose tongue?

**KATHARINE**

Yours, if you talk of tails: and so farewell.

**PETRUCHIO**

What, with my tongue in your tail? nay, come again,  
Good Kate; I am a gentleman.

**KATHARINE**

That I'll try.

*She strikes him*

**PETRUCHIO**

I swear I'll cuff you, if you strike again.

**KATHARINE**

So may you lose your arms:  
If you strike me, you are no gentleman;  
And if no gentleman, why then no arms.

**PETRUCHIO**

A herald, Kate? O, put me in thy books!

**KATHARINE**

What is your crest? a coxcomb?

**PETRUCHIO**

A combless cock, so Kate will be my hen.

**KATHARINE**

No cock of mine; you crow too like a craven.

**PETRUCHIO**

Nay, come, Kate, come; you must not look so sour.

**KATHARINE**

It is my fashion, when I see a crab.

**PETRUCHIO**

Why, here's no crab; and therefore look not sour.

**KATHARINE**

There is, there is.

**PETRUCHIO**

Then show it me.

**KATHARINE**

Had I a glass, I would.

**PETRUCHIO**

What, you mean my face?

**KATHARINE**

Well aim'd of such a young one.

**PETRUCHIO**

Now, by Saint George, I am too young for you.

**KATHARINE**

Yet you are wither'd.

**PETRUCHIO**

'Tis with cares.

**KATHARINE**

I care not.

**PETRUCHIO**

Nay, hear you, Kate: in sooth you scape not so.

**KATHARINE**

I chafe you, if I tarry: let me go.

**PETRUCHIO**

No, not a whit: I find you passing gentle.

'Twas told me you were rough and coy and sullen,

And now I find report a very liar;

For thou art pleasant, gamesome, passing courteous,

But slow in speech, yet sweet as spring-time flowers:

Thou canst not frown, thou canst not look askance,

Nor bite the lip, as angry wenches will,

Nor hast thou pleasure to be cross in talk,

But thou with mildness entertain'st thy wooers,

With gentle conference, soft and affable.  
Why does the world report that Kate doth limp?  
O slanderous world! Kate like the hazel-twigg  
Is straight and slender and as brown in hue  
As hazel nuts and sweeter than the kernels.  
O, let me see thee walk: thou dost not halt.

**KATHARINE**

Go, fool, and whom thou keep'st command.

**PETRUCHIO**

Did ever Dian so become a grove  
As Kate this chamber with her princely gait?  
O, be thou Dian, and let her be Kate;  
And then let Kate be chaste and Dian sportful!

**KATHARINE**

Where did you study all this goodly speech?

**PETRUCHIO**

It is extempore, from my mother-wit.

**KATHARINE**

A witty mother! witless else her son.

**PETRUCHIO**

Am I not wise?

**KATHARINE**

Yes; keep you warm.

**PETRUCHIO**

Marry, so I mean, sweet Katharine, in thy bed:  
And therefore, setting all this chat aside,  
Thus in plain terms: your father hath consented  
That you shall be my wife; your dowry 'greed on;  
And, will you, nill you, I will marry you.  
Now, Kate, I am a husband for your turn;  
For, by this light, whereby I see thy beauty,  
Thy beauty, that doth make me like thee well,  
Thou must be married to no man but me;  
For I am he am born to tame you Kate,  
And bring you from a wild Kate to a Kate  
Conformable as other household Kates.  
Here comes your father: never make denial;  
I must and will have Katharine to my wife.

#### Practice Free-Response Question 4

The following passage is Katharine's final speech from Act V of William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. In a well-organized essay analyze Katharine's language to determine the extent to which Shakespeare intended this speech to be delivered sincerely or sarcastically.

Do not merely summarize the content of the speech.

##### KATHARINE

Fie, fie! unknit that threatening unkind brow,  
And dart not scornful glances from those eyes,  
To wound thy lord, thy king, thy governor:  
It blots thy beauty as frosts do bite the meads,  
Confounds thy fame as whirlwinds shake fair buds,  
And in no sense is meet or amiable.  
A woman moved is like a fountain troubled,  
Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty;  
And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty  
Will deign to sip or touch one drop of it.  
Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,  
Thy head, thy sovereign; one that cares for thee,  
And for thy maintenance commits his body  
To painful labour both by sea and land,  
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,  
Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe;  
And craves no other tribute at thy hands  
But love, fair looks and true obedience;  
Too little payment for so great a debt.  
Such duty as the subject owes the prince  
Even such a woman oweth to her husband;  
And when she is froward, peevish, sullen, sour,  
And not obedient to his honest will,  
What is she but a foul contending rebel  
And graceless traitor to her loving lord?  
I am ashamed that women are so simple  
To offer war where they should kneel for peace;  
Or seek for rule, supremacy and sway,  
When they are bound to serve, love and obey.  
Why are our bodies soft and weak and smooth,  
Unapt to toil and trouble in the world,  
But that our soft conditions and our hearts  
Should well agree with our external parts?  
Come, come, you froward and unable worms!  
My mind hath been as big as one of yours,  
My heart as great, my reason haply more,  
To bandy word for word and frown for frown;  
But now I see our lances are but straws,  
Our strength as weak, our weakness past compare,  
That seeming to be most which we indeed least are.  
Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,  
And place your hands below your husband's foot:  
In token of which duty, if he please,  
My hand is ready; may it do him ease.

## Practice Multiple-Choice Questions

### Practice Multiple-Choice Questions 1 - 10

Read the following from Act I, scene i of *The Taming of the Shrew* and answer the questions that follow.

#### LUCENTIO

- Tranio, since for the great desire I had  
To see fair Padua, nursery of arts,  
I am arrived for fruitful Lombardy,  
The pleasant garden of great Italy;  
5 And by my father's love and leave am arm'd  
With his good will and thy good company,  
My trusty servant, well approved in all,  
Here let us breathe and haply institute  
A course of learning and ingenious studies.  
10 Pisa renown'd for grave citizens  
Gave me my being and my father first,  
A merchant of great traffic through the world,  
Vincentio come of Bentivolii.  
Vincentio's son brought up in Florence,  
15 It shall become to serve all hopes conceived,  
To deck his fortune with his virtuous deeds:  
And therefore, Tranio, for the time I study,  
Virtue and that part of philosophy  
Will I apply that treats of happiness  
20 By virtue specially to be achieved.  
Tell me thy mind; for I have Pisa left  
And am to Padua come, as he that leaves  
A shallow splash to plunge him in the deep  
And with satiety seeks to quench his thirst.

#### TRANIO

- 25 *Mi perdonato*, gentle master mine,  
I am in all affected as yourself;  
Glad that you thus continue your resolve  
To suck the sweets of sweet philosophy.  
Only, good master, while we do admire  
30 This virtue and this moral discipline,  
Let's be no stoics nor no stocks, I pray;  
Or so devote to Aristotle's cheques  
As Ovid be an outcast quite abjured:  
Balk logic with acquaintance that you have  
35 And practise rhetoric in your common talk;  
Music and poesy use to quicken you;  
The mathematics and the metaphysics,  
Fall to them as you find your stomach serves you;  
No profit grows where is no pleasure ta'en:  
40 In brief, sir, study what you most affect.

**LUCENTIO**

Gramercies, Tranio, well dost thou advise.  
If, Biondello, thou wert come ashore,  
We could at once put us in readiness,  
And take a lodging fit to entertain  
45 Such friends as time in Padua shall beget.  
But stay a while: what company is this?

**TRANIO**

Master, some show to welcome us to town.

*Enter BAPTISTA, KATHARINE, BIANCA, GREMIO, and  
HORTENSIO. LUCENTIO and TRANIO stand by*

**BAPTISTA**

Gentlemen, importune me no farther,  
For how I firmly am resolved you know;  
50 That is, not bestow my youngest daughter  
Before I have a husband for the elder:  
If either of you both love Katharine,  
Because I know you well and love you well,  
Leave shall you have to court her at your pleasure.

**GREMIO**

55 [Aside] To cart her rather: she's too rough for me.  
There, there, Hortensio, will you any wife?

**KATHARINE**

I pray you, sir, is it your will  
To make a stale of me amongst these mates?

**HORTENSIO**

Mates, maid! how mean you that? no mates for you,  
60 Unless you were of gentler, milder mould.

**KATHARINE**

I'faith, sir, you shall never need to fear:  
Iwis it is not half way to her heart;  
But if it were, doubt not her care should be  
To comb your noddle with a three-legg'd stool  
65 And paint your face and use you like a fool.

**HORTENSIO**

From all such devils, good Lord deliver us!

**GREMIO**

And me too, good Lord!

**TRANIO**

Hush, master! here's some good pastime toward:  
That wench is stark mad or wonderful froward.

**LUCENTIO**

70 But in the other's silence do I see  
Maid's mild behavior and sobriety.  
Peace, Tranio!

**TRANIO**

Well said, master; mum! and gaze your fill.

**BAPTISTA**

Gentlemen, that I may soon make good  
75 What I have said, Bianca, get you in:  
And let it not displease thee, good Bianca,  
For I will love thee ne'er the less, my girl.

**KATHARINE**

A pretty peat! it is best  
Put finger in the eye, an she knew why.

**BIANCA**

80 Sister, content you in my discontent.  
Sir, to your pleasure humbly I subscribe:  
My books and instruments shall be my company,  
On them to took and practise by myself.

**LUCENTIO**

Hark, Tranio! thou may'st hear Minerva speak.

**HORTENSIO**

85 Signior Baptista, will you be so strange?  
Sorry am I that our good will effects  
Bianca's grief.

**GREMIO**

Why will you mew her up,  
Signior Baptista, for this fiend of hell,  
90 And make her bear the penance of her tongue?

**BAPTISTA**

Gentlemen, content ye; I am resolved:  
Go in, Bianca:

*Exit BIANCA*



And for I know she taketh most delight  
In music, instruments and poetry,  
95 Schoolmasters will I keep within my house,  
Fit to instruct her youth. If you, Hortensio,  
Or Signior Gremio, you, know any such,  
Prefer them hither; for to cunning men  
I will be very kind, and liberal  
100 To mine own children in good bringing up.  
And so farewell. Katharine, you may stay;  
For I have more to commune with Bianca.

*Exit*

**KATHARINE**

Why, and I trust I may go too, may I not? What, shall I be  
appointed hours; as though, belike, I knew not what to  
105 take and what to leave, ha?

*Exit*

**GREMIO**

You may go to the devil's dam: your gifts are so good,  
here's none will hold you. Their love is not so great,  
Hortensio, but we may blow our nails together, and fast  
it fairly out: our cakes dough on both sides. Farewell: yet  
110 for the love I bear my sweet Bianca, if I can by any means  
light on a fit man to teach her that wherein she delights, I  
will wish him to her father.

**HORTENSIO**

So will I, Signior Gremio: but a word, I pray. Though the  
nature of our quarrel yet never brooked parle, know now,  
115 upon advice, it toucheth us both, that we may yet again  
have access to our fair mistress and be happy rivals in  
Bianca's love, to labour and effect one thing specially.

**GREMIO**

What's that, I pray?

**HORTENSIO**

Marry, sir, to get a husband for her sister.

**GREMIO**

120 A husband! a devil.

**HORTENSIO**

I say, a husband.

**GREMIO**

I say, a devil. Thinkest thou, Hortensio, though her father  
be very rich, any man is so very a fool to be married to  
hell?

**HORTENSIO**

125 Tush, Gremio, though it pass your patience and mine to  
endure her loud alarums, why, man, there be good fellows  
in the world, an a man could light on them, would take  
her with all faults, and money enough.

**GREMIO**

I cannot tell; but I had as lief take her dowry with  
130 this condition, to be whipped at the high cross every  
morning.

**HORTENSIO**

Faith, as you say, there's small choice in rotten apples. But  
come; since this bar in law makes us friends, it shall be  
so far forth friendly maintained till by helping Baptista's  
135 eldest daughter to a husband we set his youngest free  
for a husband, and then have to't afresh. Sweet Bianca!  
Happy man be his dole! He that runs fastest gets the ring.  
How say you, Signior Gremio?

**GREMIO**

I am agreed; and would I had given him the best horse in  
140 Padua to begin his wooing that would thoroughly woo her,  
wed her and bed her and rid the house of her! Come on.

*Exeunt GREMIO and HORTENSIO*

. . .

**TRANIO**

I pray, sir, tell me, is it possible  
That love should of a sudden take such hold?

**LUCENTIO**

O Tranio, till I found it to be true,  
145 I never thought it possible or likely;  
But see, while idly I stood looking on,  
I found the effect of love in idleness:  
And now in plainness do confess to thee,  
That art to me as secret and as dear  
150 As Anna to the queen of Carthage was,  
Tranio, I burn, I pine, I perish, Tranio,  
If I achieve not this young modest girl.  
Counsel me, Tranio, for I know thou canst;  
Assist me, Tranio, for I know thou wilt.

1. All of the following are true of Lucentio EXCEPT
  - (A.) he has long wanted to visit Padua.
  - (B.) he has come to Padua to study philosophy.
  - (C.) he has grown up in Pisa.
  - (D.) his father, Vincentio, is a wealthy merchant in Pisa.
  - (E.) his father, Vincentio, has given him permission to travel and study.
2. As used in this passage, the word **satiety** most likely means
  - (A.) fulfillment.
  - (B.) anxiety.
  - (C.) consummation.
  - (D.) satisfaction.
  - (E.) trepidation.
3. The opening speeches in this scene serve primarily to
  - (A.) introduce the conflict.
  - (B.) provide exposition.
  - (C.) set the scene.
  - (D.) provide comic relief.
  - (E.) portray the inciting incident.
4. The way Lucentio and Tranio speak of the entrance of Baptista and company suggests that
  - (A.) Lucentio knows Baptista's household by reputation.
  - (B.) Lucentio is already in love with Bianca.
  - (C.) the company is gaily dressed.
  - (D.) the company is rowdy even offstage.
  - (E.) the company greets the visitors warmly.
5. From the beginning of the scene, much of the comedy hinges on
  - (A.) puns and ribaldry.
  - (B.) disguises and mistaken identity.
  - (C.) deceit and misunderstanding.
  - (D.) slapstick and physical humor.
  - (E.) stock characters and situations.
6. Katharine's first line suggests what about her character?
  - (A.) She truly is shrewish.
  - (B.) She speaks in puns.
  - (C.) She and the two suitors are good friends.
  - (D.) She desires to be married before her sister.
  - (E.) She is hurt by her father's treatment of her.

7. Hortensio's first line is an example of a(n)
  - (A.) bawdy pun.
  - (B.) ambiguous retort.
  - (C.) comic cliché.
  - (D.) revelation.
  - (E.) analogy.
8. The primary purpose of the scene with Baptista *et al* is to
  - (A.) present the inciting incident.
  - (B.) introduce the main conflict.
  - (C.) establish the status quo to be challenged.
  - (D.) foreshadow the key subplot.
  - (E.) indicate the potential resolution.
9. What is suggested by Tranio's final question?
  - (A.) Lucentio is capricious and fickle.
  - (B.) True love can happen unexpectedly.
  - (C.) Love at first sight is powerful.
  - (D.) Love at first sight is not likely true love.
  - (E.) He also has fallen in love with Bianca.
10. Lucentio's final speech is in verse to emphasize the
  - (A.) sincerity of his love.
  - (B.) melodrama of his infatuation.
  - (C.) suddenness of his emotion.
  - (D.) hopelessness of his situation.
  - (E.) formality of his social position.

## Practice Multiple-Choice Questions 11 - 15

Read the following passage from Act I, scene ii of *The Taming of the Shrew* before answering the multiple-choice questions that follow.

*Enter PETRUCHIO and his man GRUMIO*

**PETRUCHIO**

Verona, for a while I take my leave,  
To see my friends in Padua, but of all  
My best beloved and approved friend,  
Hortensio; and I trow this is his house.

5 Here, sirrah Grumio; knock, I say.

**GRUMIO**

Knock, sir! whom should I knock? is there man has  
rebused your worship?

**PETRUCHIO**

Villain, I say, knock me here soundly.

**GRUMIO**

Knock you here, sir! why, sir, what am I, sir, that I should  
10 knock you here, sir?

**PETRUCHIO**

Villain, I say, knock me at this gate  
And rap me well, or I'll knock your knave's pate.

**GRUMIO**

My master is grown quarrelsome. I should knock you first,  
And then I know after who comes by the worst.

**PETRUCHIO**

15 Will it not be?  
Faith, sirrah, an you'll not knock, I'll ring it;  
I'll try how you can sol, fa, and sing it.

*He wrings him by the ears*

**GRUMIO**

Help, masters, help! my master is mad.

**PETRUCHIO**

Now, knock when I bid you, sirrah villain!

*Enter HORTENSIO*

**HORTENSIO**

- 20 How now! what's the matter? My old friend Grumio! and  
my good friend Petruchio! How do you all at Verona?

**PETRUCHIO**

Signior Hortensio, come you to part the fray?  
'*Con tutto il cuore, ben trovato,*' may I say.

**HORTENSIO**

- '*Alla nostra casa ben venuto, molto honorato signor mio*  
25 *Petruchio.*' Rise, Grumio, rise: we will compound this  
quarrel.

**GRUMIO**

- Nay, 'tis no matter, sir, what he 'leges in Latin. If this be  
not a lawful case for me to leave his service, look you,  
sir, he bid me knock him and rap him soundly, sir: well,  
30 was it fit for a servant to use his master so, being perhaps,  
for aught I see, two and thirty, a pip out? Whom would  
to God I had well knock'd at first, then had not Grumio  
come by the worst.

**PETRUCHIO**

- A senseless villain! Good Hortensio,  
35 I bade the rascal knock upon your gate  
And could not get him for my heart to do it.

**GRUMIO**

- Knock at the gate! O heavens! Spake you not these words  
plain, 'Sirrah, knock me here, rap me here, knock me  
well, and knock me soundly'? And come you now with,  
40 'knocking at the gate'?

**PETRUCHIO**

Sirrah, be gone, or talk not, I advise you.

**HORTENSIO**

- Petruchio, patience; I am Grumio's pledge:  
Why, this's a heavy chance 'twixt him and you,  
Your ancient, trusty, pleasant servant Grumio.  
45 And tell me now, sweet friend, what happy gale  
Blows you to Padua here from old Verona?

**PETRUCHIO**

Such wind as scatters young men through the world,  
To seek their fortunes farther than at home  
Where small experience grows. But in a few,  
50 Signior Hortensio, thus it stands with me:  
Antonio, my father, is deceased;  
And I have thrust myself into this maze,  
Haply to wive and thrive as best I may:  
Crowns in my purse I have and goods at home,  
55 And so am come abroad to see the world.

**HORTENSIO**

Petruchio, shall I then come roundly to thee  
And wish thee to a shrewd ill-favour'd wife?  
Thou'ldst thank me but a little for my counsel:  
And yet I'll promise thee she shall be rich  
60 And very rich: but thou'rt too much my friend,  
And I'll not wish thee to her.

**PETRUCHIO**

Signior Hortensio, 'twixt such friends as we  
Few words suffice; and therefore, if thou know  
One rich enough to be Petruchio's wife,  
65 As wealth is burden of my wooing dance,  
Be she as foul as was Florentius' love,  
As old as Sibyl and as curst and shrewd  
As Socrates' Xanthippe, or a worse,  
She moves me not, or not removes, at least,  
70 Affection's edge in me, were she as rough  
As are the swelling Adriatic seas:  
I come to wive it wealthily in Padua;  
If wealthily, then happily in Padua.

11. The comedy between Petruchio and Grumio can best be described as
- (A.) farce.
  - (B.) slapstick.
  - (C.) bawdy.
  - (D.) sarcastic.
  - (E.) scatology.
12. Grumio's role in this scene can best be described as a
- (A.) fool.
  - (B.) clown.
  - (C.) confidante.
  - (D.) foil.
  - (E.) pantaloone.
13. The line which best describes Petruchio's intent in leaving Verona is,
- (A.) "my father, is deceased."
  - (B.) "Haply to wive and thrive as best I may."
  - (C.) "Crowns in my purse I have and goods at home."
  - (D.) "am come abroad to see the world."
  - (E.) "wealth is burden of my wooing dance."
14. The tone of this scene evolves
- (A.) from welcoming to plotting.
  - (B.) from threatening to welcoming.
  - (C.) from threatening to plotting.
  - (D.) from questioning to welcoming.
  - (E.) from questioning to plotting.
15. Petruchio's description of his potential wife is characterized by an abundance of
- (A.) figurative devices.
  - (B.) metaphors.
  - (C.) irregular blank verse.
  - (D.) literary and historical allusions.
  - (E.) shifts between prose and verse.



## Practice Multiple-Choice Questions 16 - 20

Read the following passage from Act IV, scene i of *The Taming of the Shrew* before answering the multiple-choice questions that follow.

*Enter PETRUCHIO and KATHARINE*

**PETRUCHIO**

Where be these knaves? What, no man at door  
To hold my stirrup nor to take my horse!  
Where is Nathaniel, Gregory, Philip?

ALL SERVING-MEN Here, here, sir; here, sir.

**PETRUCHIO**

- 5 Here, sir! here, sir! here, sir! here, sir!  
You logger-headed and unpolish'd grooms!  
What, no attendance? no regard? no duty?  
Where is the foolish knave I sent before?

**GRUMIO**

Here, sir; as foolish as I was before.

**PETRUCHIO**

- 10 You peasant swain! you whoreson malt-horse drudge!  
Did I not bid thee meet me in the park,  
And bring along these rascal knaves with thee?

**GRUMIO**

- Nathaniel's coat, sir, was not fully made,  
And Gabriel's pumps were all unpink'd i' the heel;  
15 There was no link to colour Peter's hat,  
And Walter's dagger was not come from sheathing:  
There were none fine but Adam, Ralph, and Gregory;  
The rest were ragged, old, and beggarly;  
Yet, as they are, here are they come to meet you.

**PETRUCHIO**

- 20 Go, rascals, go, and fetch my supper in.

*Exeunt Servants*

*Singing*

*Where is the life that late I led—  
Where are those—Sit down, Kate, and welcome.—  
Soud, soud, soud, soud!*

*Re-enter Servants with supper*

- Why, when, I say? Nay, good sweet Kate, be merry.  
25 Off with my boots, you rogues! you villains, when?

*Sings*

*It was the friar of orders grey,  
As he forth walked on his way:—  
Out, you rogue! you pluck my foot awry:  
Take that, and mend the plucking off the other.*

*Strikes him*

- 30 Be merry, Kate. Some water, here; what, ho!  
Where's my spaniel Troilus? Sirrah, get you hence,  
And bid my cousin Ferdinand come hither:  
One, Kate, that you must kiss, and be acquainted with.  
Where are my slippers? Shall I have some water?

*Enter one with water*

- 35 Come, Kate, and wash, and welcome heartily.  
You whoreson villain! will you let it fall?

*Strikes him*

**KATHARINE**

Patience, I pray you; 'twas a fault unwilling.

**PETRUCHIO**

- A whoreson beetle-headed, flap-ear'd knave!  
Come, Kate, sit down; I know you have a stomach.  
40 Will you give thanks, sweet Kate; or else shall I?  
What's this? mutton?

**First Servant**

Ay.

**PETRUCHIO**

Who brought it?

**PETER**

I.

**PETRUCHIO**

- 45 'Tis burnt; and so is all the meat.  
What dogs are these! Where is the rascal cook?  
How durst you, villains, bring it from the dresser,  
And serve it thus to me that love it not?  
There, take it to you, trenchers, cups, and all;

*Throws the meat, & c. about the stage*

- 50 You heedless joltheads and unmanner'd slaves!  
What, do you grumble? I'll be with you straight.

**KATHARINE**

I pray you, husband, be not so disquiet:  
The meat was well, if you were so contented.

**PETRUCHIO**

- I tell thee, Kate, 'twas burnt and dried away;  
55 And I expressly am forbid to touch it,  
For it engenders choler, planteth anger;  
And better 'twere that both of us did fast,  
Since, of ourselves, ourselves are choleric,  
Than feed it with such over-roasted flesh.  
60 Be patient; to-morrow 't shall be mended,  
And, for this night, we'll fast for company:  
Come, I will bring thee to thy bridal chamber.

*Exeunt*

*Re-enter Servants severally*

**NATHANIEL**

Peter, didst ever see the like?

**PETER**

He kills her in her own humour.

*Re-enter CURTIS*

**GRUMIO**

- 65 Where is he?

**CURTIS**

- In her chamber, making a sermon of continency to her;  
And rails, and swears, and rates, that she, poor soul,  
Knows not which way to stand, to look, to speak,  
And sits as one new-risen from a dream.  
70 Away, away! for he is coming hither.

*Exeunt*

*Re-enter PETRUCHIO*

**PETRUCHIO**

Thus have I politicly begun my reign,  
And 'tis my hope to end successfully.  
My falcon now is sharp and passing empty;  
And till she stoop she must not be full-gorged,  
75 For then she never looks upon her lure.  
Another way I have to man my haggard,  
To make her come and know her keeper's call,  
That is, to watch her, as we watch these kites  
That bate and beat and will not be obedient.  
80 She eat no meat to-day, nor none shall eat;  
Last night she slept not, nor to-night she shall not;  
As with the meat, some undeserved fault  
I'll find about the making of the bed;  
And here I'll fling the pillow, there the bolster,  
85 This way the coverlet, another way the sheets:  
Ay, and amid this hurly I intend  
That all is done in reverend care of her;  
And in conclusion she shall watch all night:  
And if she chance to nod I'll rail and brawl  
90 And with the clamour keep her still awake.  
This is a way to kill a wife with kindness;  
And thus I'll curb her mad and headstrong humour.  
He that knows better how to tame a shrew,  
Now let him speak: 'tis charity to show.

*Exit*

16. Petruchio's mood in this scene transitions from
- (A.) madcap to annoyance.
  - (B.) anger to anticipation.
  - (C.) exasperation to patience.
  - (D.) empathy to arrogance.
  - (E.) diffidence to devotion.
17. Katharine's demeanor in this scene can best be described as
- (A.) conciliatory.
  - (B.) adamant.
  - (C.) shrewish.
  - (D.) plaintive.
  - (E.) remorseful.
18. All of the following happen in this scene **EXCEPT**
- (A.) Petruchio asks Katharine to say grace before their dinner.
  - (B.) Katharine expresses her love for her husband.
  - (C.) Katharine tries to intercede on behalf of the servants.
  - (D.) Petruchio explains the cause of anger.
  - (E.) Petruchio welcomes Katharine to her new home.
19. Petruchio's calling Katharine his falcon is an example of (a/an)
- (A.) anthropomorphism.
  - (B.) symbolism.
  - (C.) allegory.
  - (D.) metaphor.
  - (E.) image.
20. As used in this passage, a **kite** is a
- (A.) cloth or paper toy.
  - (B.) term of endearment.
  - (C.) hatchling falcon.
  - (D.) mature bird.
  - (E.) bird of prey.

## Practice Multiple-Choice Questions 21 - 25

Read the following passage from Act V, scene i of *The Taming of the Shrew* before answering the multiple-choice questions that follow.

*Enter PETRUCHIO, KATHARINE, VINCENTIO, GRUMIO,  
with Attendants*

**PETRUCHIO**

Sir, here's the door, this is Lucentio's house:  
My father's bears more toward the market-place;  
Thither must I, and here I leave you, sir.

**VINCENTIO**

- You shall not choose but drink before you go:  
5 I think I shall command your welcome here,  
And, by all likelihood, some cheer is toward.

*Knocks*

**GREMIO**

They're busy within; you were best knock louder.

*Pedant looks out of the window*

**PEDANT**

What's he that knocks as he would beat down the gate?

**VINCENTIO**

Is Signior Lucentio within, sir?

**PEDANT**

- 10 He's within, sir, but not to be spoken withal.

**VINCENTIO**

What if a man bring him a hundred pound or two, to  
make merry withal?

**PEDANT**

Keep your hundred pounds to yourself: he shall need  
none, so long as I live.

**PETRUCHIO**

- 15 Nay, I told you your son was well beloved in Padua. Do  
you hear, sir? To leave frivolous circumstances, I pray  
you, tell Signior Lucentio that his father is come from  
Pisa, and is here at the door to speak with him.

**Pedant**

20 Thou liest: his father is come from Padua and here  
looking out at the window.

**VINCENTIO**

Art thou his father?

**Pedant**

Ay, sir; so his mother says, if I may believe her.

**PETRUCHIO**

[To VINCENTIO] Why, how now, gentleman! why, this is  
flat knavery, to take upon you another man's name.

**Pedant**

25 Lay hands on the villain: I believe a' means to cozen  
somebody in this city under my countenance.

*Re-enter BIONDELLO*

**BIONDELLO**

I have seen them in the church together: God send  
'em good shipping! But who is here? mine old master  
Vincentio! now we are undone and brought to nothing.

**VINCENTIO**

[Seeing BIONDELLO]

30 Come hither, crack-hemp.

**BIONDELLO**

I hope I may choose, sir.

**VINCENTIO**

Come hither, you rogue. What, have you forgot me?

**BIONDELLO**

Forgot you! no, sir: I could not forget you, for I never saw  
you before in all my life.

**VINCENTIO**

35 What, you notorious villain, didst thou never see thy  
master's father, Vincentio?

**BIONDELLO**

What, my old worshipful old master? yes, marry, sir: see  
where he looks out of the window.

VINCENTIO  
Is't so, indeed?

*Beats BIONDELLO*

BIONDELLO  
40 Help, help, help! here's a madman will murder me.

*Exit*

Pedant  
Help, son! help, Signior Baptista!

*Exit from above*

PETRUCHIO  
Prithee, Kate, let's stand aside and see the end of this controversy.

*They retire*

*Re-enter Pedant below; TRANIO, BAPTISTA, and Servants*

TRANIO  
Sir, what are you that offer to beat my servant?

VINCENTIO  
45 What am I, sir! nay, what are you, sir? O immortal gods!  
O fine villain! A silken doublet! a velvet hose! a scarlet  
cloak! and a copatain hat! O, I am undone! I am undone!  
while I play the good husband at home, my son and my  
servant spend all at the university.

TRANIO  
50 How now! what's the matter?

BAPTISTA  
What, is the man lunatic?

TRANIO  
Sir, you seem a sober ancient gentleman by your habit,  
but your words show you a madman. Why, sir, what  
'cerns it you if I wear pearl and gold? I thank my good  
55 father, I am able to maintain it.

VINCENTIO  
Thy father! O villain! he is a sailmaker in Bergamo.



**BAPTISTA**

You mistake, sir, you mistake, sir. Pray, what do you think is his name?

**VINCENTIO**

His name! as if I knew not his name: I have brought him  
60 up ever since he was three years old, and his name is  
Tranio.

**Pedant**

Away, away, mad ass! his name is Lucentio and he is mine  
only son, and heir to the lands of me, Signior Vincentio.

**VINCENTIO**

Lucentio! O, he hath murdered his master! Lay hold on  
65 him, I charge you, in the duke's name. O, my son, my  
son! Tell me, thou villain, where is my son Lucentio?

**TRANIO**

Call forth an officer.

*Enter one with an Officer*

Carry this mad knave to the gaol. Father Baptista, I  
charge you see that he be forthcoming.

**VINCENTIO**

70 Carry me to the gaol!

**GREMIO**

Stay, officer: he shall not go to prison.

**BAPTISTA**

Talk not, Signior Gremio: I say he shall go to prison.

**GREMIO**

Take heed, Signior Baptista, lest you be cony-catched in  
this business: I dare swear this is the right Vincentio.

**Pedant**

75 Swear, if thou darest.

**GREMIO**

Nay, I dare not swear it.

**TRANIO**

Then thou wert best say that I am not Lucentio.

**GREMIO**

Yes, I know thee to be Signior Lucentio.

**BAPTISTA**

Away with the dotard! to the gaol with him!

**VINCENTIO**

80 Thus strangers may be hailed and abused: O monstrous villain!

*Re-enter BIONDELLO, with LUCENTIO and BIANCA*

**BIONDELLO**

O! we are spoiled and—yonder he is: deny him, forswear him, or else we are all undone.

**LUCENTIO**

[Kneeling] Pardon, sweet father.

**VINCENTIO**

85 Lives my sweet son?

*Exeunt BIONDELLO, TRANIO, and Pedant, as fast as may be*

21. Vincentio's mood at the beginning of this scene can best be described as
- (A.) exasperated.
  - (B.) conciliatory.
  - (C.) domineering.
  - (D.) vengeful.
  - (E.) celebratory.
22. Most of the humor in the scene is based on
- (A.) ribaldry.
  - (B.) situational irony.
  - (C.) verbal irony.
  - (D.) dramatic irony.
  - (E.) ambiguity.
23. All of the following are sources of comedy in this scene **EXCEPT**
- (A.) physical assault.
  - (B.) vulgar puns.
  - (C.) willful deceit.
  - (D.) mistaken identities.
  - (E.) hasty conclusions.
24. What does the evidence in the scene suggest is the nature of Lucentio and Vincentio's relationship?
- (A.) Vincentio is a harsh and authoritative father.
  - (B.) Lucentio is fearful of his father.
  - (C.) Vincentio and Lucentio are indifferent to one another.
  - (D.) Lucentio is completely dependent on his father.
  - (E.) Vincentio is a warm and loving father.
25. Structurally, what does this scene contribute to the plot?
- (A.) final inciting incident
  - (B.) climax of the subplot
  - (C.) climax of the main plot
  - (D.) resolution of the conflict
  - (E.) falling action

## Answer Key with Explanations

1. Lucentio begins his opening speech by saying, “for the great desire I had To see fair Padua...,” thus eliminating (A). Later he says he intends to study, “... that part of philosophy ... that treats of happiness/By virtue specially to be achieved,” eliminating (B). His father is identified both as Vincentio and as a merchant from Venice when Lucentio says, “Pisa ... Gave me my being and my father first,/A merchant of great traffic through the world,/Vincentio...,” eliminating (D), and the fact that he travels with his father’s permission (E) is established earlier when he says, “by my father’s love and leave am arm’d/With his good will ... well approved in all.” **Lucentio does, however, identify Florence, not Pisa, as the city in which he grew up: “Vincentio’s son [Lucentio] brought up in Florence...,” so (C) is the correct answer.**
2. Lucentio compares the learning and experience he gained in Pisa with a “shallow [s]plash,” to contrast with the “deep” of Padua in which he hopes to “plunge” himself. **The word *satiety* is paired with *quench* and can only mean that he will quench his thirst with satisfaction (D) as he leaves the shallows of Pisa for the depths of Padua.**
3. As we have not yet met Katharine or learned of the situation regarding her and Bianca’s marriages, we do not yet know the conflict (A). (B) is tempting in that Lucentio does open the scene by establishing the setting as Padua, but he does not provide any details beyond the city’s name. There is no need for comic relief (D) in a comedy. The arrival of the stranger (Lucentio) could be the inciting incident (E) of the comedy, but we do not yet have a sense of what state Lucentio’s presence will challenge. **We do, however, gain a lot of exposition (B) about Lucentio, his background, and his reasons for being in Padua.**
4. Lucentio and Tranio seem about to leave to seek lodgings when something attracts Lucentio’s attention. He asks, “what company is this?” to which Tranio, **apparently responding to the offstage noise of the approaching company (D), replies, “Master, some show to welcome us to town.”** It is clear from the action and dialogue that follow that Baptista and his daughters are strangers to Lucentio (A), and that Lucentio has not witnessed enough yet to have fallen in love (B). (C) might be tempting, but is not the best choice given the fact that the crowd attracts Lucentio’s attention *before it comes onstage*. And (E) is blatantly incorrect.
5. None of the plots involving disguises (B) has been introduced yet, nor have we had an opportunity to witness the formation of any misunderstandings (C). The slapstick (D) will be introduced primarily by Petruchio and Grumio, and we do not yet know enough about any of the characters to know who will be developed and who will be treated as a mere convention (E). **From their first lines, however, both Gremio and Hortensio pun (A) on Katharine’s dialogue and turn what she says into sexual innuendo (*court and cart, mate and mate*).**

6. Katharine's first line is a protest that her father makes a public spectacle of her attitude. **She is clearly hurt (E) by the fact that her father has so little regard for her feelings.**
7. Katharine refers to Bianca's two suitors as "mates," a slang term of familiarity that probably indicates more a lack of respect than affection for them. Hortensio replies by saying that Katharine will have "no mates," that is, no one will/would want to "mate" with her since she is such a shrew. **This is an example of a bawdy pun (A).**
8. We cannot really appreciate the inciting incident (A) until we know what the state is that is going to be challenged. (B) might be tempting—Bianca cannot be married until Katharine is—but we still do not have enough information to know whether this is the actual conflict or merely more exposition. This same reasoning also eliminates (D), since we cannot yet know what will be the main or the subplot(s). Without a clear conflict, we cannot expect to see a resolution (E) this early in the play. **We do learn, however, what the situation in Baptista's household is (C) so that we can wait to see whether it is Lucentio's arrival or someone else's that will begin to challenge it and move the plot forward.**
9. This will become one of the themes of the play: since Lucentio falls so quickly in love, knowing nothing of the woman whom he loves, can we expect this love to be real? **(D) is the correct answer.** (B) might tempt some, but is nothing more than a restatement of Tranio's question. The other choices are not suggested by the text.
10. (A) has already been questioned by Tranio's question. (C) is apparent and need not be emphasized. (D) is slightly tempting, but we still do not know how adamant Baptista will be in his decision. (E) is also mildly tempting, but would be more appropriate at the beginning of the scene when Lucentio is making his first impression on the audience. **(B) is the best choice in that Lucentio's verse contrasts the prose of Gremio and Hortensio in the preceding scene.**
11. **Grumio's inability to understand Petruchio's command and the physical humor that ensues are examples of slapstick (B).** Slapstick is an element of farce (A), but farce is a broader term. And while there is much bawdy humor (C) between Petruchio and Katharine, there is not here. Petruchio and Grumio speak to one another angrily and out of frustration, but neither is particularly sarcastic. Nor are there jokes dealing with bodily functions or body fluids (E).
12. In Shakespearean drama, the fool (A) is usually anything but foolish. **Grumio is a purely stock comic character, the butt of jokes. He is a clown (B).** Clearly he is not Petruchio's confidante (C), nor have we been introduced to a character who provides a contrast to him (D). A pantaloone (E) is another comic stock character, a special type of clown, but Grumio does not display the lechery typical of the pantaloone.

13. (A) and (C) are both true but would not motivate Petruchio's leaving home. (B) is tempting, **but (E) more clearly implies that Petruchio does want a wife (B), but he wants a wealthy wife (E).** Petruchio does also say he wants to see the world beyond his home city (D) but, still, he says he has come to Padua to "wive," and **wealth is the most important part of his desire ("the burden of [his] wooing dance").**
14. The scene opens with Petruchio's **threatening (C)** to beat Grumio if he does not knock at Hortensio's gate. It ends with Hortensio's and Petruchio's **plotting (C)** how to arrange for Petruchio to marry Katharine and for Hortensio to woo Bianca.
15. (A) is technically correct, but too broad a term. Describing his wife, Petruchio refers to "Florentius' love," "Sibyl," and "Socrates' Xanthippe," **all either historical or literary allusions (D).**
16. At the beginning of the scene, Petruchio is **angry (B)** at his servants for their poor reception. By the end, he is **anticipating (B)** success.
17. Contrary to the shrewish nature (B) and (C) we first saw, here Katharine tries to appease her husband by excusing away the servants' mistakes and defending the quality of the meat: **"The meat was well, if you were so contented."** While the actress may wish to add a note of sadness to the lines, nothing in the text demands it. **Thus, (A) is a clearly better answer.**
18. (A) is eliminated when Petruchio says, "Will you give thanks, sweet Kate; or else shall I?" At least twice Katharine intercedes for the servants: "Patience, I pray you; 'twas a fault unwilling," and "I pray you, husband, be not so disquiet:/The meat was well, if you were so contented," thus eliminating (C). (D) is eliminated when Petruchio explains why they cannot eat burnt meat: "'twas burnt and dried away;/And I expressly am forbid to touch it,/For it engenders choler, planteth anger;/And better 'twere that both of us did fast,/Since, of ourselves, ourselves are choleric,/Than feed it with such over-roasted flesh." And (E) is eliminated during Petruchio's song: "Sit down, Kate, and welcome." **Katharine, however, never expresses any emotion toward Petruchio, let alone love (B).**
19. If Petruchio were literally calling his wife a bird of prey, we could make a case for (A), but **he is clearly referring metaphorically (D) to the similarities in how he has tamed his hunting bird and how he will tame his wife.** (B) and (C) are eliminated by the fact that the falcon does not *represent* Katharine but is compared to her. There is no description to assert that the mention of the falcon is an image (E).

20. Petruchio explains to the audience:

My falcon now is sharp and passing empty;  
And till she stoop she must not be full-gorged,  
For then she never looks upon her lure.  
Another way I have to man my haggard,  
To make her come and know her keeper's call,  
That is, to watch her, as we watch these kites  
That bate and beat and will not be obedient.

**The context of the metaphor comparing the taming of Katharine to the taming of Petruchio's falcon and the sentence structure point to *kite* as another term for falcon or bird of prey (E).**

21. **At the beginning of this scene, Vincentio is expecting to be welcomed warmly by his son (E).** He tells Petruchio and Katharine, "I think I shall command your welcome here,/ And, by all likelihood, some cheer is toward."
22. There is no ribaldry (A) in this scene, nor really any situational irony (B). As soon as we met Vincentio in a previous scene, we knew this scene was going to develop. **There is, however, a good deal of dramatic irony (D). The audience knows who Vincentio is, while the Pedant does not; and the audience knows the nature of the charade and the servants' roles in it, while Vincentio does not.**
23. Vincentio beats Biondello for pretending not to know him (A). All of the characters except the Pedant (who does not know Vincentio) willfully deceive the old man (C) to perpetuate the charade. The Pedant does not know he is speaking to the real father of Lucentio (D), and when Vincentio sees Tranio dressed nobly, he erroneously concludes that Lucentio has been murdered (E). **There is, however, no vulgarity or ribaldry (B) in this scene.**
24. When Vincentio is first told that Lucentio cannot see him, Vincentio states that he has come to give his son money with which to "make merry." At the end of the scene, Lucentio is apparently confident enough of his father's love to kneel and ask for forgiveness rather than continue the charade. **Thus (E) is the only possible answer.**
25. This scene, with the rapid entrances and exits, Vincentio's growing exasperation, the audience's growing anticipation, and then the final reconciliation, is **clearly a climax (B).**

# *The Taming of the Shrew*

## Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition Teaching Unit

### Study Guide Teacher's Copy

#### INDUCTION

##### Scene I

1. What is the dramatic and structural purpose of the Induction?

*Most likely, something in the characters or action of the Induction will foreshadow an important feature of the main play.*

2. What is implied by calling this part of the play an “Induction,” and not an “Introduction,” “Preface,” or “Foreword”?

*The term “induction,” implies a “guiding in” more than merely a beginning. The two scenes of the Induction are more than merely the beginning. Perhaps we are to watch the action of the main play—technically a play-within-play—through the eyes of Sly and his “wife.”*

3. What comic conventions does Shakespeare use from the very beginning of this play?

*Shakespeare begins the action of this play with two stock characters: the drunk and the scolding woman.*

4. What is the difference between the Lord and his huntsmen's language and Sly's?

*Sly spoke in prose. The Lord is speaking in blank verse.*

5. For what dramatic purpose does Shakespeare have the Lord and his huntsmen meddle with someone like Sly?

*This play is a comedy. To begin the action with a practical joke establishes the comic—almost madcap—tone.*

6. How do the Lord's instructions to Barthol'mew introduce the main theme of the play?

*The Lord instructs Barthol'mew how to act like a proper noble wife: to be obedient, humble, and loving. He also wants the page to be concerned over her husband's health, to have a soft voice, and to be graceful. This foreshadows the issue of a shrew and her taming.*



## Scene II

1. How does Sly's language change after he begins to believe the story the Lord and his huntsmen have concocted for him?

*Earlier, Sly was speaking in prose, indicative of his status. Now he speaks the blank verse of a nobleman.*

2. In addition to the prank being played on Sly, what comic convention is Shakespeare employing in this scene?

*Shakespeare is making use of role reversals—nobility playing the role of servants, servants playing the role of nobility.*

3. Again, how does the conversation between Barthol'mew and Sly prefigure the theme of the main part of the play?

*The issue of a wife's obedience to her husband—of the husband's being the wife's "lord"—is raised.*

4. How does Shakespeare introduce the theme of the confusion between appearance and reality in the Induction?

*Sly is a drunk tinker, who is tricked into thinking he is a Lord. At the end of the Induction, he begins to behave as if he were a Lord and not a tinker.*

## ACT I

### Scene I

1. What exposition does Shakespeare reveal in the first speech of the scene?

*From Lucentio's speech, we know that we are in Padua, Italy. We know that Tranio is Lucentio's servant. Lucentio's father is a wealthy merchant in Pisa, and Lucentio has come to Padua to study Philosophy. But he also intends to have fun while he is in Padua.*

2. What is the nature of the first exchange involving Baptista and Katharine?

*Katharine is publicly insulted by her father, and she responds by questioning his lack of compassion toward her.*

3. What pun does Shakespeare make in the conversation between Katharine and Hortensio?

*Kath. I pray you, sir, is it your will  
To make a stale of me amongst these mates?  
Hor. Mates, maid! how mean you that? no mates for you,  
Unless you were of gentler, milder mould.*

*The pun is on "mates"; it refers to comrades, husbands, and also to sex. The added pun on "stalemate" is also apparent and would have been to Shakespeare's audience.*

4. To whom do the pronouns refer in Gremio's line,:

*Why will you mew her up,  
Signior Baptista, for this fiend of hell,  
And make *her* bear the penance of *her* tongue?*

*The first her refers to Bianca. The second her refers to Katharine.*

5. Why does Katharine switch to prose when speaking to her father?

*The prose emphasizes her hurt and anger.*

6. How do Gremio and Hortensio plan to advance their cause?

*Gremio decides to try to find a suitable schoolmaster to recommend for Bianca and thus win Bianca's love. Hortensio instead declares he will find a husband for Katharine and thus free Bianca to marry.*

7. Who are the “Anna” and “the queen of Carthage” to whom Lucentio alludes?

*The Queen of Carthage was Dido, who killed herself for grief after she was abandoned by Aeneas, whom she loved. Anna was her sister, who built the funeral pyre on which Dido killed herself.*

8. What additional comic conventions does Shakespeare employ as Lucentio and Tranio concoct their plan to win Bianca for Lucentio? What already-introduced convention does he advance?

*The plot now involves disguises and assumed identities. Shakespeare also emphasizes the reversal of roles in which the noble will become a servant in a household while the servant takes on the role of the master.*

## Scene II

1. Find an example of a pun in the conversation between Petruchio and his servant Grumio at the beginning of this scene.

*The pun involves the word knock. Petruchio wants Grumio to knock at the gate of Hortensio's house, but Grumio understands it to mean to hit someone.*

2. What does this early scene reveal about Petruchio's character?

*Depending on how this scene and Petruchio and Grumio's relationship is played, Petruchio is either prone to violent anger, or he has a rambunctious sense of humor.*

3. Why is Petruchio in Padua?

*His father has recently died, so Petruchio has decided to travel. He also admits that he is looking to marry.*

4. What qualities does Petruchio want in his wife?

*Petruchio wants a wealthy wife.*

5. List and explain all of the allusions in Petruchio's speech about his future wife.

*Florentius' love = Florentius is a knight, a character in Chaucer's "Wife of Bath's Tale."  
Florentius' life depended on being able to answer the riddle, "What do women most desire?"  
In order to answer the riddle (and thus save his life), he promised to marry an ugly hag if she would tell him the answer.*

*Sibyl = a mythological prophetess who lived forever, but who continued to grow older and older.*

*Socrates' Xanthippe = Socrates' wife, who was reputedly a great shrew*

*Adriatic seas = the Adriatic is the sea between the Italian and Balkan peninsulas.*

6. Why does Hortensio bring up the idea of Petruchio's marrying Katharine?

*Petruchio has said he wants to marry a wealthy woman, and he does not care what other faults she may possess in her character.*

7. Describe the plan devised by Hortensio and Gremio to get Katharine out of the way and to woo Bianca.

*Gremio has "found" Lucentio to be a teacher for Bianca so she and Baptista will be kindly disposed to his suit. Lucentio says he will plead for Gremio when, actually, he will plead his own suit. Hortensio claims to have met someone who has agreed to be Bianca's music teacher when, actually, the "teacher" will be Hortensio in disguise who will woo Bianca while he teaches her. Meanwhile, Petruchio will woo Katharine with the goal of marrying her.*

8. How does Tranio's entrance make the situation farcical?

*Gremio fears Tranio (disguised as Lucentio) will become another suitor in the mix.*

9. Who were "Fair Leda's daughter," who had the thousand wooers, and the "Paris" to whom Tranio alludes?

*Leda's daughter is Helen of Troy, and Paris is the Prince of Troy with whom she eloped, thus beginning the Trojan war.*

10. On what jovial note does the act end?

*All of the rivals for Bianca agree to pay Petruchio's expenses while he woos Katharine. They agree to be rivals in love, but friends otherwise, and leave to drink to celebrate their agreement.*

## ACT II

### Scene I

1. How does the opening of this act contrast with the end of Act I?

*Act I ended jovially with the rivals for Bianca leaving to go drinking. Act II opens with Bianca and Katharine arguing about those same rivals. Bianca assumes that Katharine is jealous of her many suitors and says that, since she has no preference, Katharine can have her choice.*

2. What bit of psychological insight do we gain into the reason for Katharine's shrewishness?

*Katharine is once again hurt by the negative attention heaped on her by her father while Bianca is doted upon.*

3. What surprising condition does Baptista impose on Petruchio's proposal?

*He says that Petruchio must win Katharine's love, for "that is all in all."*

4. How does Petruchio say he will win Katharine's love?

*Petruchio says that he, too, is hot-tempered and passionate. He compares Katharine and himself to the merging of two raging fires that exhaust their fuel all the more quickly, or to a gust of wind that extinguishes the fire while a smaller breeze would feed it.*

5. Is Petruchio being sarcastic when he says he is now more eager than ever to speak with Katharine? Why do you think this?

*He is probably not being sarcastic because we have already seen by his behavior toward Gremio that he does have a temper himself and enjoys a good fight.*

6. Explain the source of comedy in this exchange between Petruchio and Katharine:

PETRUCHIO: Myself am moved to woo thee for my wife.

KATHARINE: Moved! in good time: let him that moved you hither

Remove you hence: I knew you at the first

You were a moveable.

PETRUCHIO: Why, what's a moveable?

KATHARINE: A join'd-stool.

PETRUCHIO: Thou hast hit it: come, sit on me.

KATHARINE: Asses are made to bear, and so are you.

PETRUCHIO: Women are made to bear, and so are you.

*The comedy hinges on a series of puns that begins when Petruchio says he was moved (emotionally) to woo Katharine. The progression runs: moved emotionally to moveable physically (like a stool) to "sit on me" (a vulgar pun) to asses (both donkeys and human buttocks) were made to be sat upon (made to bear) to women were made to bear (children).*

7. Why does Petruchio protest that he is a gentleman?

*His conversation with Katharine has quickly deteriorated to vulgar, sexual jokes and Katharine calls him to account for it.*

8. Why does Katharine hit Petruchio? What is his response?

*She says that she will test whether or not he is a gentleman. If he is a gentleman, then he will not strike her back. He says he will hit her back if she strikes him again, however.*

9. What does Petruchio tell Tranio and Gremio about the way Katharine behaves when they are alone? Why is this tactic a clever move?

*He tells them she is only a shrew in public, but is perfectly behaved when they are alone. It is smart because no one can prove him wrong.*

10. How does Petruchio begin to actually tame Katharine?

*He genuinely starts to love her and desire to marry her.*

11. What is implied by Gremio's asking, "What, have I choked you with an argosy?"

*When Gremio announces this gift, Tranio apparently responds by coughing or gasping for breath.*

12. What technicality does Baptista demand of Tranio/Lucentio's offer? How is Tranio/Lucentio's offer different from Gremio's?

*Lucentio's father must pledge that the promised possessions will be Bianca's in case Lucentio should die before his father. Gremio is promising his own possessions. Lucentio does not yet own anything in his own right; it is all still his father's.*

13. How does Baptista decide who is going to marry Bianca? In what way are these marriage negotiations unlike those between Baptista and Petruchio?

*Baptista will let the suitor who can pay the most money marry Bianca. Bianca's affection for the suitor does not seem to enter into the equation. Yet Baptista insisted that, despite the material goods Petruchio promised she would inherit, Petruchio would have to win her love. That was, according to Baptista, "all in all."*

14. List three ways Shakespeare continues the theme of appearance versus reality in Acts I and II.

*Tranio is pretending to be Lucentio, Hortensio and Lucentio are pretending to be schoolmasters, and Petruchio is pretending Katharine is well behaved in private.*

15. What further comic complication does Shakespeare suggest at the very end of the act?

*Tranio will find someone to pretend to be "his" father in order to give Baptista the security he has demanded.*

## ACT III

### Scene I

1. How do Bianca's instructors' lessons mirror their true intentions?

*Hortensio and Lucentio are rivals for Bianca's attention to their "lessons" as they are for her affection.*

2. What is the nature of Lucentio's Latin lesson?

*He pretends to be reciting Latin to his student while actually identifying himself to her and confessing his love.*

3. What other misidentification adds to the humor of this scene?

*Both Lucentio and Hortensio believe the other is really a teacher. Each is shocked that a woman of Bianca's station would be romantically interested in a lower-class servant.*

4. What is the "gamut" to which Hortensio and Bianca refer?

*A gamut is the full range of something, as in "to run the gamut from joy to misery." Here it refers to the full range of musical notes—the scale.*

5. What is a pedant?

*A pedant is a teacher.*

### Scene II

1. Compare and contrast Baptista's and Katharine's attitudes toward the fact that Petruchio has not shown up for the wedding.

*Baptista is concerned only with the public humiliation of his family. Katharine is concerned with the personal humiliation of having been jilted, and she upbraids her father for matching her so quickly to an apparently mad man whom the father did not know.*

2. What is Katharine admitting when she says, "Would Katharine had never seen [Petruchio] though!" and leaves in tears?

*She is admitting that she has developed some affection for Petruchio and is now hurt.*



3. What banter does Shakespeare use to create some obvious humor in this scene?

*The distinction between Biondello's explaining that Petruchio is not "come" (i.e., has not arrived) but is "coming" (i.e., is on his way) is a bit of obvious word play.*

4. Why is Petruchio dressed and acting so inappropriately for his wedding day? Is he intentionally trying to humiliate Katharine and her father?

*First, there is a good deal of comic effect in his behavior and attire. Second, he is clearly questioning social conventions. It seems that he is indeed trying to humiliate Baptista, but he also seems to be attracting sympathy toward Katharine.*

5. What does Gremio mean in this exchange?

TRANIO: Signior Gremio, came you from the church?

GREMIO: As willingly as e'er I came from school.

*He is saying that, for whatever reason, he was very eager to leave the church—as eager as a schoolboy leaving school*

6. Again, what is the effect of Petruchio's outrageous behavior at his wedding ceremony?

*Gremio reports that, compared to Petruchio, Katharine—the shrew—behaved like a lamb. Gremio feels sorry for Katharine's having to deal with Petruchio rather than Petruchio for having to deal with her. Again, he is drawing sympathy to the hated shrew.*

7. What is significant about the fact that Katharine refuses to leave with Petruchio?

*Throughout the entire betrothal and hurried marriage, this is the first time she has refused to comply. She has complained, but not refused.*

8. Is Petruchio serious in claiming that Katharine is his property? What is his point?

*Legally, in Shakespeare's day, the wife was the property of the husband. Prior to her marriage, the woman was considered the father's property. But Petruchio is the first one to claim ownership of Katharine and promise her protection.*

## ACT IV

### Scene I

1. What does Grumio's account of the incident with Katharine's horse illustrate?

*First, it further illustrates Petruchio's temper when dealing with Grumio. In addition, Grumio reports that Katharine interceded on his behalf, which also illustrates that Katharine does have compassion for others, and she is perhaps learning to express it.*

2. How does Grumio's speech change from when he is addressing his fellow servants to when he is speaking to Petruchio?

*When addressing his fellow servants, Grumio was speaking in prose. Addressing Petruchio, he has switched to verse.*

3. What is ironic about this change?

*On the one hand, a switch from prose to poetry would indicate a heightening of the formality of the scene. We have a master coming home and being greeted—formally and respectfully—by his servant. Also, the master is bringing his wife home for the first time and would want his household to make a good impression. On the other hand, Grumio is speaking in verse to describe the disarray of Petruchio's household and to explain why none of the servants was able to greet the couple as they should have been greeted. All of the "reasons" Grumio offers for the breach of etiquette are ridiculous.*

4. Describe the visual humor of this scene.

*Petruchio is sitting like a Lord, bellowing orders—remove his boots, bring in water. Katharine is apparently standing off to the side, hesitant to sit beside her husband. The servants are running frantically in and out, tugging off Petruchio's boots, fetching water. Petruchio hits them at will, squirms in his seat while they try to remove his boots, etc.*

5. Again, what is the effect of Petruchio's behavior on Katharine?

*Katharine still seems to be developing compassion—or discovering a compassion she had not let herself express. When Petruchio hits his servant for spilling the water, she intercedes, explaining that it was a simple accident. When he throws their dinner on the floor, complaining that the food was ruined, she tries to pacify him by saying it would have been acceptable, if he could have overlooked a few minor flaws. Perhaps Katharine is beginning to see the effect her own ill temper has had on those around her.*

6. What excuse does Petruchio concoct for their not being able to eat the burnt meat?

*He claims that burnt meat causes cholera, which was the body humor believed to cause anger, and since they are both angry enough by nature, it would be best not to eat the meat and exacerbate their moods.*

7. What does Petruchio reveal in his closing monologue about his strategy for taming Katharine?

*He will “kill her with kindness.” He will continue to find fault with her food and bed—all because he loves her, and she deserves perfection—until she is so tired and hungry that she bends to his will.*

## Scene II

1. Why is Hortensio so displeased with Bianca?

*Bianca has obviously fallen in love with Lucentio, who Hortensio believes is a mere teacher. Hortensio can no longer love a woman who would love someone so far beneath her.*

2. Where is the humor in Tranio and Hortensio’s opening exchange about whom Bianca loves?

*Tranio swears that Bianca loves no one as much as she loves Lucentio. This is true. Hortensio, however, believes that Tranio is Lucentio and that Bianca is in love with a mere teacher.*

3. How is Tranio’s choice of a father for Lucentio humorous, and how does it further the comic motif of disguise and switched identities?

*They have chosen a poor pedant—a teacher—to masquerade as Lucentio’s father. Meanwhile the real Lucentio is masquerading as a pedant—a teacher.*

4. How does Tranio convince the Pedant to masquerade as Vincentio?

*He tricks the Pedant into believing that his life is in danger. As a “favor,” Tranio will allow the Pedant to masquerade as Vincentio.*

## Scene III

1. What narrative structure is becoming apparent in Act IV?

*The action of the play is alternating, scene by scene, between the Petruchio-Katharine plot and the Bianca-Lucentio plot.*

2. What might Katharine be suggesting when she tells Grumio that she:

*...never knew how to entreat,  
Nor never needed that [she] should entreat...*

*Katharine might be admitting that she is beginning to realize that, ill-tempered as she was, she was still fairly indulged and well-cared-for.*

3. What is the significance of the exchange between Katharine and Petruchio about the cap?

*Petruchio essentially admits that Katharine will have nothing she wants until she can act more gently (“When you are gentle, you shall have one too,/And not till then”). Katharine remarks, however, that she will not surrender her individuality or her rights as a human being (“I will be free/Even to the uttermost, as I please, in words”).*

4. Does Katharine really like the clothing that Petruchio is denying her, or is she simply arguing for argument’s sake? How do you know?

*Following the progression of Katharine’s “taming,” she has not yet really stood up to Petruchio. Since she does in this instance, it is likely that she genuinely likes the clothes. She’s no longer being argumentative; she is standing up for herself.*

5. How is the sequence of Petruchio’s denials to Katharine building to a climax?

*His first denials were mere matters of courtesy—lateness and ill-behavior at the wedding, refusal to attend the wedding feast. Then the refusals touched on physical survival—food and sleep. Finally, he is denying Katharine the desire of her heart—a visit with her father.*

## Scene IV

1. To what is Baptista referring when he tells the Pedant/Vincentio, “Your plainness and your shortness please me well”?

*He is referring to the shortness and plainness of the Pedant’s speech.*

## Scene V

1. Why does Katharine finally give in to Petruchio’s capriciousness? What is it that finally tames her?

*The stakes are raised even higher in that, before, it was simply a planned trip to visit her father that was being delayed. Now they are actually on the road, and Petruchio is threatening to turn back.*

2. What earlier evidence did we have that Katharine’s love for her father was a key to her shrewishness?

*Two times earlier Katharine reacted with hurt feelings when it seemed as if Baptista preferred Bianca to Katharine. Also, however, Baptista specified that Petruchio would have to win Katharine’s love before they could marry, while the agreement with Lucentio was purely financial.*

## ACT V

### Scene I

1. What does it mean, at the beginning of a scene, for a character to be specified as “discovered”?

*This character is already present onstage at the opening of the scene. He or she does not “enter.”*

2. How does dramatic irony create much of the comedy in this scene?

*The audience knows the full story, while the characters onstage do not. Vincentio does not understand why there is a man claiming to be him or why Biondello is claiming not to know him. The Pedant, pretending to be Vincentio, does not know he is speaking to the real Vincentio.*

3. How is this scene farcical?

*The comedy is based on a ridiculous situation created by layers of deceit, disguise, and feigned identities.*

4. What is significant about Katharine’s suggesting that she and Petruchio follow everyone to see how the Baptista-Lucentio-Bianca-Vincentio drama plays out? What is the ultimate result of her suggestion?

*This is the first time that Katharine suggests a course of action without shrewishly demanding it. She also asks it, apparently confident that Petruchio will agree. The result is ultimately that they do what she has suggested.*

5. What is suggested about a wife’s submission to her husband by the dialogue about the kiss?

*The dialogue about the kiss suggests that a wife should submit to her husband’s will, but out of affection, not out of fear or mere obligation.*

## Scene II

1. What does the Widow mean when she says, “He that is giddy thinks the world turns round”?

*Petruchio has accused Hortensio of being afraid of his new wife, the Widow. The Widow responds that Petruchio believes that only because he is himself afraid of his own wife, the Shrew.*

2. What seems to be a possible consequence of the Widow’s comment? How do the men react?

*Katharine questions the Widow’s meaning and intent, and it actually seems as if a fight might break out. Hortensio and Petruchio egg their wives on and pretend to bet on them.*

3. How has Bianca changed since her wedding?

*The once-sweet and gentle Bianca now speaks in vulgar riddles and puns.*

4. How do the men arrive at the amount they will wager on their wives’ obedience?

*Lucentio first suggests twenty crowns, to which Petruchio declares that he would wager that much on his hunting animals. He is so confident of his wife’s obedience that he would wager twenty times twenty crowns.*

5. Compare the ways each of the husbands tries to persuade his wife to attend him. Which man is the most successful? What do you think Shakespeare is saying about the proper relationship between a husband and a wife?

*Lucentio asks his wife to come, Hortensio begs his wife to come, and Petruchio commands his wife to come. Petruchio is the only one who is successful. This suggests that the proper relationship between a husband and a wife is for him to command and for her to obey.*

6. What is different about whom Petruchio sends for his wife? Why might this be significant?

*Lucentio and Hortensio both sent Biondello, but Petruchio sends Grumio. The significance might be that, as Grumio has been a part of the “taming” from the very beginning, he may know how to communicate with Katharine that she really should come to her husband.*

7. What are the possible reasons for Katharine’s “obeying” her husband?

*Of course it is possible that she is, indeed, obeying his command, that he has tamed her and she has subjected herself to him. But it is more likely that, out of genuine affection and respect, she is cooperating with him in winning a pricey wager.*

8. In the last long speech of the play, Katharine lists the qualities of a good wife. Does Katharine really believe what she is saying, or is she being sarcastic?

*This is a very difficult question to answer, and, in performance, this speech has been played both ways. Still, there is evidence from the very beginning of the play that the root of Katharine's shrewishness was a lack of love and respect. Somehow Petruchio was able to see through that and value Katharine as a person.*

9. Among the many definitions of “speed” in the *Oxford English Dictionary* for the word *speed* are:

“To bring to an end, to finish or dispatch,” and “To dispatch, destroy, kill (a person, etc.).”

*Given these definitions, what might Petruchio be saying to Lucentio and Hortensio when he says, “We three are married, but you two are sped.”?*

*He is mostly likely warning the other two bridegrooms that, while all three of them are married, the other two are “finished.” Only Petruchio is happily married.*

10. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the “white” as an archery term for a part of the target near the center or bullseye. To whom, then, is Petruchio speaking, and what does he mean when he says, “ ’Twas I won the wager, though you hit the white”?

*Although the earlier stage direction says, “To Lucentio,” here Petruchio probably turns back toward Katharine and says that he won the bet—his wife is the most obedient—but she hit the target by responding appropriately to his command. He is giving her credit for her role in winning the wager.*

# *The Taming of the Shrew*

## Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition Teaching Unit

### Study Guide Student Copy

#### INDUCTION

##### Scene I

1. What is the dramatic and structural purpose of the Induction?
2. What is implied by calling this part of the play an “Induction,” and not an “Introduction,” “Preface,” or “Foreword”?
3. What comic conventions does Shakespeare use from the very beginning of this play?
4. What is the difference between the Lord and his huntsmen’s language and Sly’s?
5. For what dramatic purpose does Shakespeare have the Lord and his huntsmen meddle with someone like Sly?
6. How do the Lord’s instructions to Barthol’meu introduce the main theme of the play?



## Scene II

1. How does Sly's language change after he begins to believe the story the Lord and his huntsmen have concocted for him?
2. In addition to the prank being played on Sly, what comic convention is Shakespeare employing in this scene?
3. Again, how does the conversation between Barthol'mew and Sly prefigure the theme of the main part of the play?
4. How does Shakespeare introduce the theme of the confusion between appearance and reality in the Induction?

## ACT I

### Scene I

1. What exposition does Shakespeare reveal in the first speech of the scene?
2. What is the nature of the first exchange involving Baptista and Katharine?
3. What pun does Shakespeare make in the conversation between Katharine and Hortensio?
4. To whom do the pronouns refer in Gremio's line,:

Why will you mew her up,  
Signior Baptista, for this fiend of hell,  
And make *her* bear the penance of *her* tongue?

5. Why does Katharine switch to prose when speaking to her father?
6. How do Gremio and Hortensio plan to advance their cause?
7. Who are the “Anna” and “the queen of Carthage” to whom Lucentio alludes?
8. What additional comic conventions does Shakespeare employ as Lucentio and Tranio concoct their plan to win Bianca for Lucentio? What already-introduced convention does he advance?

## Scene II

1. Find an example of a pun in the conversation between Petruchio and his servant Grumio at the beginning of this scene.
2. What does this early scene reveal about Petruchio's character?
3. Why is Petruchio in Padua?
4. What qualities does Petruchio want in his wife?
5. List and explain all of the allusions in Petruchio's speech about his future wife.

6. Why does Hortensio bring up the idea of Petruchio's marrying Katharine?
7. Describe the plan devised by Hortensio and Gremio to get Katharine out of the way and to woo Bianca.
8. How does Tranio's entrance make the situation farcical?
9. Who were "Fair Leda's daughter," who had the thousand wooers, and the "Paris" to whom Tranio alludes?
10. On what jovial note does the act end?

## ACT II

### Scene I

1. How does the opening of this act contrast with the end of Act I?
2. What bit of psychological insight do we gain into the reason for Katharine's shrewishness?
3. What surprising condition does Baptista impose on Petruchio's proposal?
4. How does Petruchio say he will win Katharine's love?
5. Is Petruchio being sarcastic when he says he is now more eager than ever to speak with Katharine? Why do you think this?
6. Explain the source of comedy in this exchange between Petruchio and Katharine:  
  
PETRUCHIO: Myself am moved to woo thee for my wife.  
KATHARINE: Moved! in good time: let him that moved you hither  
Remove you hence: I knew you at the first  
You were a moveable.  
PETRUCHIO: Why, what's a moveable?  
KATHARINE: A join'd-stool.  
PETRUCHIO: Thou hast hit it: come, sit on me.  
KATHARINE: Asses are made to bear, and so are you.  
PETRUCHIO: Women are made to bear, and so are you.
7. Why does Petruchio protest that he is a gentleman?

8. Why does Katharine hit Petruchio? What is his response?
9. What does Petruchio tell Tranio and Gremio about the way Katharine behaves when they are alone? Why is this tactic a clever move?
10. How does Petruchio begin to actually tame Katharine?
11. What is implied by Gremio's asking, "What, have I choked you with an argosy?"
12. What technicality does Baptista demand of Tranio/Lucentio's offer? How is Tranio/Lucentio's offer different from Gremio's?
13. How does Baptista decide who is going to marry Bianca? In what way are these marriage negotiations unlike those between Baptista and Petruchio?
14. List three ways Shakespeare continues the theme of appearance versus reality in Acts I and II.
15. What further comic complication does Shakespeare suggest at the very end of the act?

## Scene I

- S-9



## Scene II

1. Compare and contrast Baptista's and Katharine's attitudes toward the fact that Petruchio has not shown up for the wedding.
2. What is Katharine admitting when she says, "Would Katharine had never seen [Petruchio] though!" and leaves in tears?
3. What banter does Shakespeare use to create some obvious humor in this scene?
4. Why is Petruchio dressed and acting so inappropriately for his wedding day? Is he intentionally trying to humiliate Katharine and her father?
5. What does Gremio mean in this exchange?  
  
TRANIO: Signior Gremio, came you from the church?  
GREMIO: As willingly as e'er I came from school.
6. Again, what is the effect of Petruchio's outrageous behavior at his wedding ceremony?
7. What is significant about the fact that Katharine refuses to leave with Petruchio?
8. Is Petruchio serious in claiming that Katharine is his property? What is his point?

## ACT IV

### Scene I

1. What does Grumio's account of the incident with Katharine's horse illustrate?
2. How does Grumio's speech change from when he is addressing his fellow servants to when he is speaking to Petruchio?
3. What is ironic about this change?
4. Describe the visual humor of this scene.
5. Again, what is the effect of Petruchio's behavior on Katharine?
6. What excuse does Petruchio concoct for their not being able to eat the burnt meat?
7. What does Petruchio reveal in his closing monologue about his strategy for taming Katharine?

## Scene II

1. Why is Hortensio so displeased with Bianca?
2. Where is the humor in Tranio and Hortensio's opening exchange about whom Bianca loves?
3. How is Tranio's choice of a father for Lucentio humorous, and how does it further the comic motif of disguise and switched identities?
4. How does Tranio convince the Pedant to masquerade as Vincentio?

## Scene III

1. What narrative structure is becoming apparent in Act IV?
2. What might Katharine be suggesting when she tells Grumio that she:  
...never knew how to entreat,  
Nor never needed that [she] should entreat...
3. What is the significance of the exchange between Katharine and Petruchio about the cap?
4. Does Katharine really like the clothing that Petruchio is denying her, or is she simply arguing for argument's sake? How do you know?
5. How is the sequence of Petruchio's denials to Katharine building to a climax?

## Scene IV

1. To what is Baptista referring when he tells the Pedant/Vincentio, “Your plainness and your shortness please me well”?

## Scene V

1. Why does Katharine finally give in to Petruchio’s capriciousness? What is it that finally tames her?
2. What earlier evidence did we have that Katharine’s love for her father was a key to her shrewishness?

## ACT V

### Scene I

1. What does it mean, at the beginning of a scene, for a character to be specified as “discovered”?
2. How does dramatic irony create much of the comedy in this scene?
3. How is this scene farcical?
4. What is significant about Katharine’s suggesting that she and Petruchio follow everyone to see how the Baptista-Lucentio-Bianca-Vincentio drama plays out? What is the ultimate result of her suggestion?
5. What is suggested about a wife’s submission to her husband by the dialogue about the kiss?

## Scene II

1. What does the Widow mean when she says, “He that is giddy thinks the world turns round”?
2. What seems to be a possible consequence of the Widow’s comment? How do the men react?
3. How has Bianca changed since her wedding?
4. How do the men arrive at the amount they will wager on their wives’ obedience?
5. Compare the ways each of the husbands tries to persuade his wife to attend him. Which man is the most successful? What do you think Shakespeare is saying about the proper relationship between a husband and a wife?

6. What is different about whom Petruchio sends for his wife? Why might this be significant?
7. What are the possible reasons for Katharine's "obeying" her husband?
8. In the last long speech of the play, Katharine lists the qualities of a good wife. Does Katharine really believe what she is saying, or is she being sarcastic?
9. Among the many definitions of "speed" in the *Oxford English Dictionary* for the word *speed* are:  
  
"To bring to an end, to finish or dispatch," and "To dispatch, destroy, kill (a person, etc.)."
10. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the "white" as an archery term for a part of the target near the center or bullseye. To whom, then, is Petruchio speaking, and what does he mean when he says, "'Twas I won the wager, though you hit the white"?



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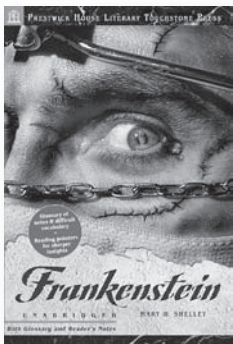
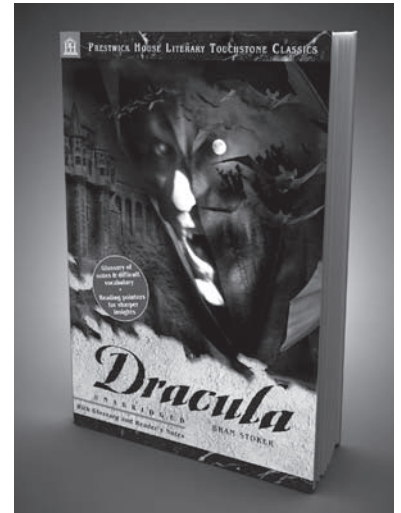
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