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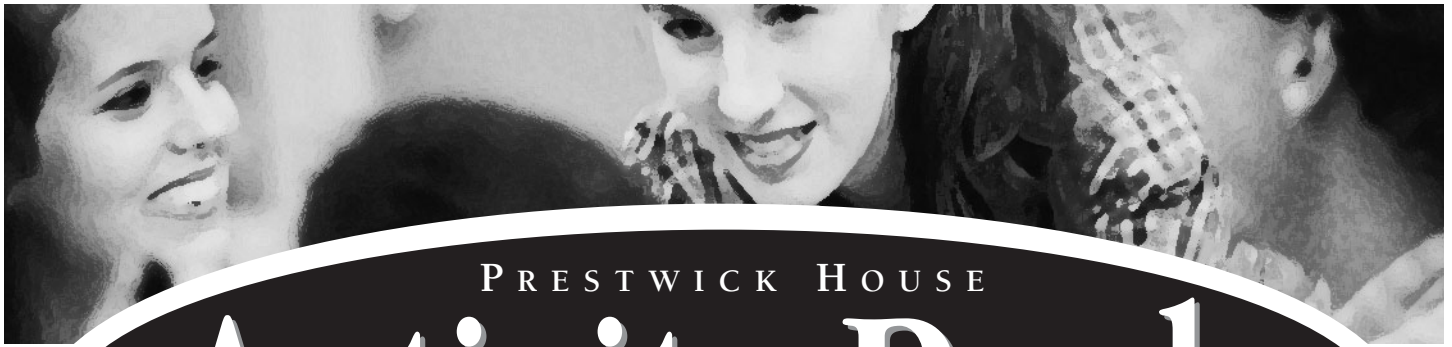
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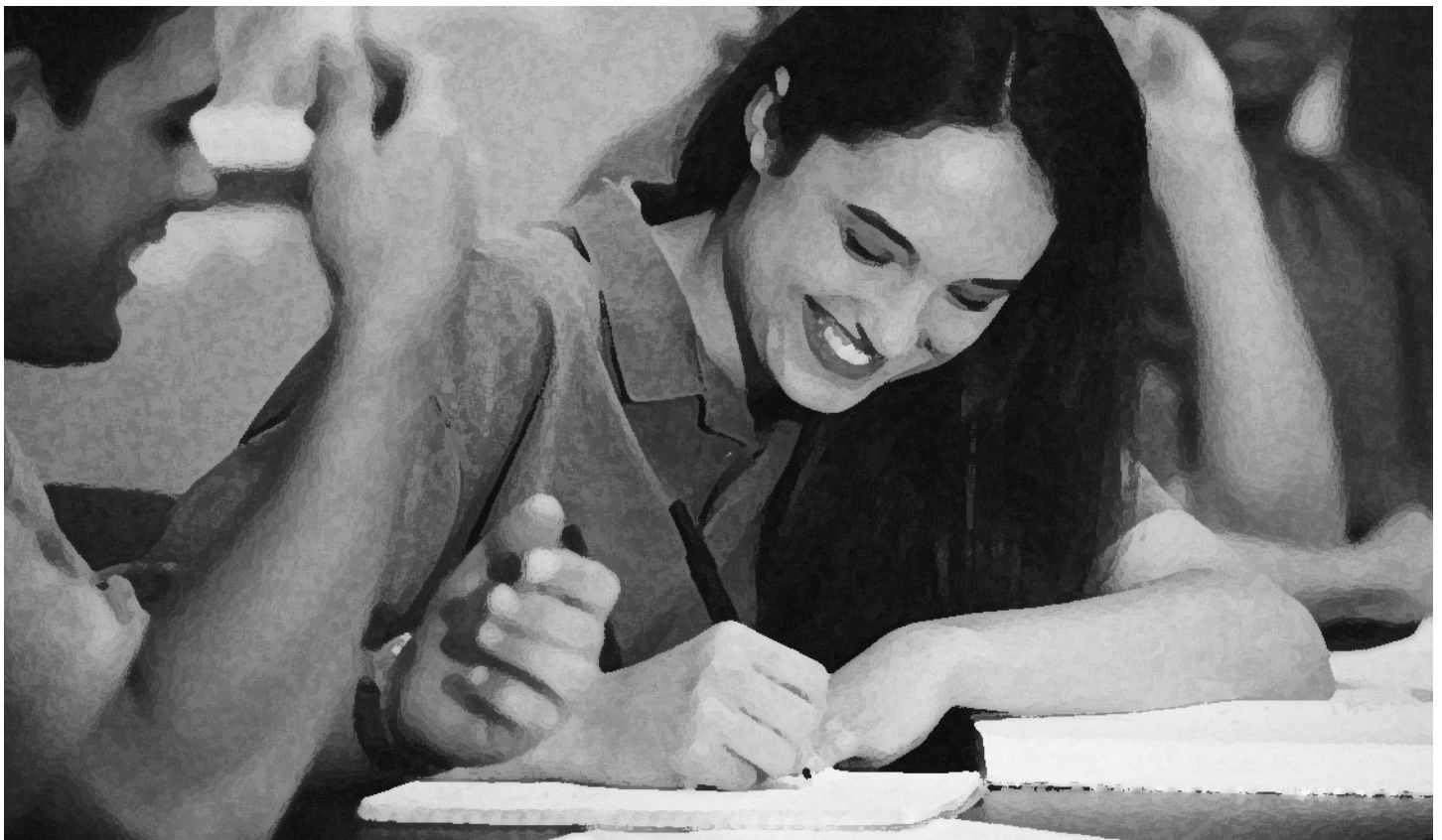


PRESTWICK HOUSE

Activity Pack

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



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Much Ado About Nothing

Table of Contents

Acting	
Acts I-V	45
Advertising	
Pre-reading.....	7
Alliteration	
Act IV	28
Allusion	
Acts I-II	18
Appendix	
Small Group Learning	A-1
Procedures for Small Group Work.....	A-3
Small Group Evaluation Sheet.....	A-4
Student Roles in Group Discussions	A-5
Newspaper	A-6
Directions for Interviews.....	A-8
Dramatization of Scenes in the Novel.....	A-9
Terms and Definitions	A-10
Characterization	
Act I.....	8
Act II	16
Acts I-V	37
Acts I-V	42
Wrap up	57
Creative Writing	
Acts I-V	36
Wrap Up	62
Crossword Puzzle	
Wrap Up	60
Drawing	
Act IV	27
Act V	33
Acts I-V	36
Emotions	
Act I.....	13
Essay	
Wrap Up	66
Game Playing	
Wrap Up	54
History	
Pre-reading.....	2

Interpreting Shakespeare	
Act V	31
Interviewing	
Act IV	24
Irony	
Wrap Up	63
Journal Writing	
Act II	16
Letter Writing	
Act IV	26
Metaphor	
Acts I-III	22
Act IV	29
Motif	
Act I.....	10
Newspaper Reporting	
Act II	17
Outlining	
Act II	15
Personification	
Act I.....	12
Plot	
Acts I-V	40
Wrap Up	47
Wrap Up	50
Quiz	
Wrap Up	64
Quotations	
Wrap Up	65
Research	
Pre-reading.....	1
Pre-reading.....	5
Setting	
Pre-reading.....	2
Sequels	
Wrap Up	53
Simile	
Act III	20
Theme	
Acts I-V	34
Understanding Shakespeare's Language	
Acts I-V	38
Word Search	
Pre-reading.....	4
Writing Headlines	
Wrap up	56

Writing to Shakespeare	
Wrap Up	46
Writing Query Letters	
Wrap Up	58

Much Ado About Nothing

Activity Pack Teacher's Edition

Note: All references come from the Dover Thrift Edition of *Much Ado About Nothing*, copyright 1994.

Activity Pack written by Amber Reed

Pre-reading

Research

Objective: Researching the author

Activity

William Shakespeare was a prolific dramatist, but despite being well-known, he lived a relatively private life. Using the library or the Internet, collect information on the life of Shakespeare. Use the information to write a four-paragraph biography of Shakespeare.

The biography should include the following information:

1. Significant dates in Shakespeare's life
2. Facts about Shakespeare's personal life
3. Facts about Shakespeare's professional life
4. Descriptions of Shakespeare's environment (the times, places, etc.)
5. Examples of Shakespeare's most significant works

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2. Facts about Shakespeare's personal life
3. Facts about Shakespeare's professional life
4. Descriptions of Shakespeare's environment (the times, places, etc.)
5. Examples of Shakespeare's most significant works

Pre-reading

Setting History

Objective: Researching the historical setting of the play

Activity

Much Ado About Nothing is set in Messina, a city on the northeast tip of Sicily.

Using the library, the Internet, or both, research the history of the setting. Your research should include information about Messina, the island of Sicily, and Italy. Focus on the time period in which the play occurs, and include any significant facts about the world at that time.

Use this research to complete the **Setting Chart** on the next page.

Pre-reading

Setting History

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Use this research to complete the **Setting Chart** on the next page.

Setting Chart
Messina, Sicily – 1300-1600 C.E.

Topic	Description
<p>Area</p> <p>Location</p> <p>Population</p> <p>Bordering Nations</p> <p>Geographic Description</p>	<p>Messina, Sicily</p>
<p>Government</p> <p>Names of Rulers</p> <p>Political System</p> <p>Economic System</p> <p>Succession of Rulers</p>	
<p>Cultural Facts</p> <p>Major Religions</p> <p>Significant Names</p> <p>Historical Events</p> <p>Inventions</p> <p>Art and Literature</p> <p>Fashion Details</p> <p>Sports</p>	

Note to teacher: For an extended activity, students could consolidate information acquired and write a three-page research paper.

Setting Chart
Messina, Sicily – 1300-1600 C.E.

Topic	Description
Area Location Population Bordering Nations Geographic Description	Messina, Sicily
Government Names of Rulers Political System Economic System Succession of Rulers	
Cultural Facts Major Religions Significant Names Historical Events Inventions Art and Literature Fashion Details Sports	

Pre-reading

Word Search

Objective: Finding words within words

Activity

In *Much Ado About Nothing*, many of the character names are still common today, while others are quite rare; however, all of the names contain many hidden words.

Find the hidden words in the character names from *Much Ado About Nothing*. Create at least five new words from each name on the list. Each new word that you make must be at least three letters in length.

Example: The word *Claudio* contains the letters to spell the words *lid*, *cold*, *dual*, *loud*, *audio*, etc.

Balthasar –

Leonato –

Ursula –

Benedick –

Conrade –

Borachio –

Dogberry –

Verges –

Beatrice –

Antonio –

Pre-reading

Word Search

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Balthasar –

Leonato –

Ursula –

Benedick –

Conrade –

Borachio –

Dogberry –

Verges –

Beatrice –

Antonio –

Pre-reading

Research

Objective: Researching the author's time period

Activity

Shakespeare shared an era with many significant people and events.

Complete each of the entries on the **World of Shakespeare** chart. For people, record their times of birth and death, their nationalities, their fields of study, and their historical accomplishments. For events, include the date of the event, where it occurred, why it occurred, and why it is significant. The first two examples have been completed for you.

The World of Shakespeare

Person/Event	Origin/ Place	Field of Study/ Source of Event	Accomplishment/ Significance
Giordano Bruno (1548-1600)	Italy	Philosophy	Rejected geocentric universe model; introduced pantheism
Gunpowder Plot (1605)	England	Political: Catholic dissenters attempted to blow up Parliament	First recorded terrorist bombing attempt
Ivan IV (the "Terrible") (1530-1584)	<i>Russia</i>	<i>Government</i>	<i>Defeated Mongols; opened Siberia; centralized Russian administration</i>
Francis Drake (c.1540-1596)	<i>England</i>	<i>Exploration</i>	<i>Captained first English crew to circumnavigate the globe</i>
King James Bible Published (1611)	<i>England</i>	<i>Literature</i>	<i>Final accepted English translation of Bible; most printed book in history</i>

Pre-reading

Research

Objective: Researching the author's time period

Activity

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Ivan IV (the "Terrible") (1530-1584)			
Francis Drake (c.1540-1596)			
King James Bible Published (1611)			

The World of Shakespeare Continued:

Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593)	England	Drama/Poetry	Writer: “Doctor Faustus” and “Tamburlaine”
Galilei Galileo (1564-1642)	Italy	Science/Astronomy	Found craters on moon, moons of Jupiter, and proof of heliocentric solar system
Iroquois League (circa 1580-1600)	America	Government	Six native American nations form a confederation
Spanish Armada Defeated (1588)	England	Politics/War	Spanish fleet, thought to be invincible, was defeated by England
Elizabeth I (1533-1603)	England	Government/Politics	Queen of England; gained supremacy over church; defeated Spanish Armada
John Smith (1580-1631)	England/ America	Exploration/ Colonization	Led colonization of Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607
Johannes Kepler (1571-1630)	Germany	Science/Astronomy	Discovered elliptical planetary orbits; first & second laws of planetary motion
Huguenot Wars (1562-1598)	France	War between Catholics and Protestants	Huguenots (Protestants) gain religious and political freedom
Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)	England	Philosophy/Literature	Author: “Leviathan” Philosophy of bleak human existence
Walter Raleigh (1554-1618)	England	Exploration/Literature	Named Virginia; Author: “History of the World”

The World of Shakespeare Continued:

Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593)			
Galilei Galileo (1564-1642)			
Iroquois League (circa 1580-1600)			
Spanish Armada Defeated (1588)			
Elizabeth I (1533-1603)			
John Smith (1580-1631)			
Johannes Kepler (1571-1630)			
Huguenot Wars (1562-1598)			
Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)			
Walter Raleigh (1554-1618)			

Pre-reading

Advertising

Objective: Creating a playbill

Activity

In Shakespeare's time, playwrights did not have the luxury of television advertisements or Internet pop-up windows to market their productions. They were limited to two means of advertising: word of mouth and playbills. Printing technology was still quite primitive, so the playbills, or flyers, were restricted to text and perhaps one simple drawing—if any. A playbill might have included the title of the production, the name of the playwright, the time and location of the performance, the names of the major characters and actors, and a brief description of the plot.

Divide the class into small groups. Each group should design a modern playbill for the premier of *Much Ado About Nothing*. It must fit on one page, and it must be alluring enough to convince people to see the play.

Use any available resources to make the playbills. They can be completely hand drawn, computer generated, or any combination of the two. Drawings should be relevant to the play, and they should be dramatic enough to capture the interest of a passerby. Text on the playbill should also be eye-catching, but it must also be easy to read.

Complete one flyer per group

Pre-reading

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Complete one flyer per group

Act I

Characterization

Objective: Recognizing character traits

Activity

While good drama certainly classifies as literature, readers must remember that playwrights intend plays to be watched—not read. The text of a drama, such as *Much Ado About Nothing*, contains few indicators of the physical appearance or behavior of the characters. Without the help of physical descriptions, readers must seek other clues to best imagine the way that characters look and behave. These clues might materialize in the script as characters interact, converse, or make observations of each other.

Evaluate the characters in Act I using the **Character Chart**. In the appropriate spaces, briefly describe each character and determine whether you think he or she is or will be a major character. When you finish the chart, select the two most similar characters on the chart and write a one-paragraph comparison of them. Next, select the two least similar characters and write another paragraph, but this time contrasting them.

The first character has been completed for you.

Act I

Characterization

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Activity

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The first character has been completed for you.

CHARACTER CHART

Act I

Character	Role/Title	Description of Personality	Concerns, Goals	Major Character?
Leonato	Governor of Messina	Apologetic, hospitable	Giving away his daughter to Don Pedro	Yes
Benedick	<i>Lord of Padua</i>	<i>Witty, sarcastic</i>	<i>Responding to Beatrice's remarks</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Beatrice	<i>Leonato's niece</i>	<i>Witty, sarcastic, cynical</i>	<i>Ridiculing Benedick</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Don Pedro	<i>Prince of Aragon</i>	<i>Friendly, charismatic</i>	<i>Winning Hero and then giving her to Claudio</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Don John	<i>Don Pedro's half-brother</i>	<i>Resentful, selfish</i>	<i>Creating trouble for Don Pedro and Claudio</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Claudio	<i>Lord of Florence</i>	<i>Friendly</i>	<i>Winning Hero's heart and marrying her</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Conrade	<i>Follower of Don John</i>	<i>Loyal to Don John;</i>	<i>Trying to ease Don John's misery; helping Don John devise a plan</i>	<i>No</i>
Borachio	<i>Follower of Don John</i>	<i>Loyal to Don John; cunning</i>	<i>Gathering information for Don John; helping Don John devise a plan</i>	<i>No</i>

CHARACTER CHART

Act I

Character	Role/Title	Description of Personality	Concerns, Goals	Major Character?
Leonato	Governor of Messina	Apologetic, hospitable	Giving away his daughter to Don Pedro	Yes
Benedick				
Beatrice				
Don Pedro				
Don John				
Claudio				
Conrade				
Borachio				

Act I

Motif

Objective: Identifying motifs that contribute to theme

Activity

Much Ado About Nothing contains a few motifs, but the most common one is that of appearance versus reality. Throughout the play, things do not always appear as they really are.

To identify material that supports a particular motif, you must contemplate the significance of every action, incident, and dialogue in the play. Sometimes it is easier to identify a motif after reaching the end of the play, when the reader has been exposed to the entire text and can draw connections or identify patterns.

Familiarize yourself with the appearance-versus-reality motif on the **Motif Chart**. As you progress through the play, identify at least seven incidents, actions, or dialogues that support the motif. Provide a location and a brief description of each event, and include any quotations that help to explain the event.

One example is provided for you on the **Motif Chart**.

Act I

Motif

Objective: Identifying motifs that contribute to theme

Activity

Much Ado About Nothing contains a few motifs, but the most common one is that of appearance versus reality. Throughout the play, things do not always appear as they really are.

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One example is provided for you on the **Motif Chart**.

Appearance Versus Reality Motif Chart

Indicators: Deception, Disguise, Dishonesty, Misperception, etc.

Act.Scene	Description of Event
1.3	Don John hates Don Pedro, but Don Pedro thinks that Don John is a friend. "You have of late stood out against your/brother, and he hath ta'en you newly into his grace; were it is/impossible you should take true root but by the fair weather that/you make yourself: it is needful that you frame the season for your/own harvest."
2.1	<i>Don Pedro tries to woo Hero while pretending to be Claudio.</i>
2.1	<i>Don John causes Claudio to believe that Don Pedro is trying to woo Hero for himself. "Signior, you are very near my brother in his love: he/is enamoured on Hero."</i>
2.3	<i>Claudio, Don Pedro, and Leonato fool Benedick into believing that Beatrice is in love with him. "She doth well: if she should make tender of her love, 'tis/very possible he'll scorn it; for the man, as you know all, hath a/contemptible spirit."</i>
3.1	<i>Hero and Ursula fool Beatrice into believing that Benedick is in love with her. "No; rather I will go to Benedick,/And counsel him to fight against his passion./And, truly, I'll devise some honest slanders/To stain my cousin with."</i>
3.2 – 3.3	<i>Claudio and Don Pedro think that they see Hero meeting with a stranger on the night before the wedding.</i>
3.3	<i>Dogberry is supposed to be the constable, but he instructs the watchman to ignore offenders. He carries out the opposite of what his duties warrant. Sec. Watch: "How if a' will not stand?" Dogberry: "Why, then, take no note of him, but let him go"</i>
4.1	<i>Leonato—a father—is ready to condemn his own daughter on the word of someone else. "Why, doth not every earthly thing/Cry shame upon her? could she here deny/The story that is printed in her blood?/Do not live, Hero; do not ope thine eyes."</i>
4.1	<i>Hero's family creates the appearance that she is dead. "Let her awhile be secretly kept in,/And publish it that she is dead indeed;/Maintain a mourning ostentation."</i>
5.4	<i>Leonato offers Claudio the chance to marry a niece instead of Hero, and Claudio does not decline the offer. At the second wedding, he asks, "Which is the lady I must seize upon?" This willingness to marry any stranger suggests that his motives for marrying Hero could be founded on something other than love.</i>

Appearance Versus Reality Motif Chart

Indicators: Deception, Disguise, Dishonesty, Misperception, etc.

Act.Scene	Description of Event
1.3	Don John hates Don Pedro, but Don Pedro thinks that Don John is a friend. “You have of late stood out against your/brother, and he hath ta’en you newly into his grace; were it is/impossible you should take true root but by the fair weather that/you make yourself: it is needful that you frame the season for your/own harvest.”

Act I

Personification

Objective: Identifying personification

Activity:

Shakespeare plays contain frequent uses of personification. As you read Act I, watch for instances in which human qualities are given to animals, objects, or ideas. Find at least six examples of personification, and include the location of each example. Two examples are provided for you.

When you finish, write three of your own personified phrases.

Personification	Location
“every word stabs”	Act II, Scene 1
“time goes on crutches till love have all his rites”	Act II, Scene 1
1. <i>“joy could not show itself modest/enough without a badge of bitterness”</i>	<i>Act I, Scene 1</i>
2. <i>“four of his/five wits went halting off”</i>	<i>Act I, Scene 1</i>
3. <i>“sorrow abides”</i>	<i>Act I, Scene 1</i>
4. <i>“happiness takes his leave”</i>	<i>Act I, Scene 1</i>
5. <i>“disdain should die while she hath such meet food/ to feed it”</i>	<i>Act I, Scene 1</i>
6. <i>“your discourse is/sometime guarded with fragments,/ and the guards are but slightly/basted on neither”</i>	<i>Act I, Scene 1</i>
7. <i>“That know love’s grief by his complexion”</i>	<i>Act I, Scene 1</i>
8. <i>“all hearts in love use their own tongues”</i>	<i>Act I, Scene 1</i>

Your Personification

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Act I

Personification

Objective: Identifying personification

Activity:

Shakespeare plays contain frequent uses of personification. As you read Act I, watch for instances in which human qualities are given to animals, objects, or ideas. Find at least six examples of personification, and include the location of each example. Two examples are provided for you.

When you finish, write three of your own personified phrases.

Personification	Location
“every word stabs”	Act II, Scene 1
“time goes on crutches till love have all his rites”	Act II, Scene 1
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	

Your Personification

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Act I

Emotions

Objective: Finding quotes that portray emotions

Activity

Much Ado About Nothing is an emotional play. The main characters experience emotional extremes, from grief to happiness. These emotional extremes help to create uncertainty, anticipation, and ultimately, surprise for the audience.

The **Emotion Chart** on the next page contains a list of emotions depicted in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Find a source for each emotion, identify the corresponding characters, and quote them on the chart. If the quote does not adequately portray the emotion, explain the context of the emotion.

Complete the chart as you progress through the play.

Note to teacher: There will be multiple instances of certain emotions.

Act I

Emotions

Objective: Finding quotes that portray emotions

Activity

Much Ado About Nothing is an emotional play. The main characters experience emotional extremes, from grief to happiness. These emotional extremes help to create uncertainty, anticipation, and ultimately, surprise for the audience.

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Complete the chart as you progress through the play.

Emotion Chart

Emotion	Source (character)	Act.Scene	Quote or Context
Infatuation	<i>Claudio</i>	<i>1.1</i>	<i>“In mine eye she is the sweetest lady that ever I looked on.”</i>
Resentment	<i>Don John</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>“That young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow:/if I can cross him in any way, I bless myself every way.”</i>
Joy	<i>Claudio</i>	<i>2.1</i>	<i>“Silence is the perfectest herald of joy: I were but little happy,/if I could say how much.”</i>
Jealousy	<i>Claudio</i>	<i>2.1</i>	<i>“And trust no agent; for beauty is a witch,/Against whose charms faith melteth into blood./This is an accident of hourly proof,/Which I mistrusted not. Farewell, therefore, Hero!”</i>
Fear	<i>Hero</i>	<i>4.1</i>	<i>“O my father,/Prove you that any man with me conversed/At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight/Maintain’d the change of words with any creature,/Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death!”</i>
Anger	<i>Beatrice</i>	<i>4.1</i>	<i>“O that I were a man! What,/bear her in hand until they come to take hands;/and then, with/public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour,—O/God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place.”</i>
Sadness	<i>Leonato</i>	<i>4.1</i>	<i>“Being that I flow in grief,/The smallest twine may lead me.”</i>
Regret	<i>Borachio</i>	<i>5.1</i>	<i>“my villany they have upon record; which I had/rather seal with my death than repeat over to my shame. The lady is/dead upon mine and my master’s false accusation; and, briefly, I/desire nothing but the reward of a villain.”</i>

Emotion Chart

Emotion	Source (character)	Act.Scene	Quote or Context
Infatuation			
Resentment			
Joy			
Jealousy			
Fear			
Anger			
Sadness			
Regret			

Act II

Outlining

Objective: Writing an outline

Activity

Imagine that you are the marketing director for a popular city theater. To increase revenue, you have decided to offer framed photographs of scenes from plays. Audience members will have the opportunity to purchase the photos at the theater gift shop. The photographs for *Much Ado About Nothing* have been selected, but each scene requires a description.

Beginning with Act II, outline each act by scenes. On your outline, create an appropriate title for each act, and write a brief synopsis of each scene. The descriptions should reveal the significance of the specific scenes. Act I is completed for you.

Note to teacher: These pages should be retained and completed as students progress through the play.

Example:

I. Act I:

Scene I: Soldiers return from the war

1. Beatrice and Benedick have a battle of wits
2. Benedick swears to never marry
3. Claudio falls for Hero
4. Don Pedro plans to win Hero for Claudio

Scene II: Don Pedro's plan revealed

1. Antonio tells Leonato about Don Pedro's plans
2. Leonato plans to inform Hero

Scene III: Don John sees opportunity

1. Don John sulks
2. Borachio reports Don Pedro's plan
3. Don John begins plotting

II. Act II:

Continue the outline as you complete each act.

Act II

Outlining

Objective: Writing an outline

Activity

Imagine that you are the marketing director for a popular city theater. To increase revenue, you have decided to offer framed photographs of scenes from plays. Audience members will have the opportunity to purchase the photos at the theater gift shop. The photographs for *Much Ado About Nothing* have been selected, but each scene requires a description.

Beginning with Act II, outline each act by scenes. On your outline, create an appropriate title for each act, and write a brief synopsis of each scene. The descriptions should reveal the significance of the specific scenes. Act I is completed for you.

Example:

I. Act I:

Scene I: Soldiers return from the war

1. Beatrice and Benedick have a battle of wits
2. Benedick swears to never marry
3. Claudio falls for Hero
4. Don Pedro plans to win Hero for Claudio

Scene II: Don Pedro's plan revealed

1. Antonio tells Leonato about Don Pedro's plans
2. Leonato plans to inform Hero

Scene III: Don John sees opportunity

1. Don John sulks
2. Borachio reports Don Pedro's plan
3. Don John begins plotting

II. Act II:

Continue the outline as you complete each act.

Act II

Journal Writing Characterization

Objective: Writing character journals

Activity:

Many of Shakespeare's plays, while fictional, are based on actual historical people, events, or literature. Historians believe that Shakespeare's inspiration for *Much Ado About Nothing* originated with an Italian story and an epic poem, both of which were written a century before Shakespeare's play.

Choose a character from *Much Ado About Nothing* that interests you the most. Once you have identified a character, work on developing that character's image in your head. Using evidence from the script of the play, imagine how the character would think and act beyond the context of the play. You will use this image of the character to write his or her personal journal.

The journal will contain your character's thoughts and experiences for the duration of the play. Entries must be written in the first person, as though the character is writing them. Write a single half-page entry for each act of *Much Ado About Nothing*. If your character does not appear in a particular act, still write a journal entry for that act by assuming that your character is aware of the events of the play.

As you read through the play, pay close attention to the thoughts, actions, and words of your character so that your journal is accurate and believable. The entries should reflect the character's behavior, speech patterns, and personality. Use your imagination to fill any gaps, and feel free to create any necessary filler, such as personal thoughts or memories that suit the character. Try to keep the dialect similar to Shakespeare's Elizabethan English (avoid modern expressions).

Begin with an entry for Act I. You will write a total of five entries. One example is provided for you.

An excerpt from the personal journal of Borachio (Act I)

O, to have the skills to seize upon opportunity—'twas sinful ease. Such fools as the prince and his train plod about the home of the governor whilst asleep, ne'er to see me stealing their secrets—intelligence for my lord, Don John. With such bounty, we shall make a design upon which my lord will stake his unrest. Pedro, wooing without free hand or eye, will fall to our wit whilst his right hand withers. Young Claudio will learn that his humor doth rely upon his company. Indeed, I spy a profit in this, to be won in service. My lord should certain have a purse for this favor.

Act II

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Objective: Writing character journals

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Act II

Newspaper Reporting

Objective: Writing a news story about the play

Activity

Good news reporters must be keen observers of the events that they cover, especially when their reports have the potential to influence the general public. Misinformation has the potential to disrupt an entire nation. It can create panic, which endangers lives and property. Because of this possibility, reporters and editors must use caution to release only factual, objective reports.

You are now a reporter who has traveled through time to report on the incidents in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Choose a single newsworthy event from each act to report. Observe what you can from the characters involved in the events, and record the answers to the fundamental questions of a reporter: who, what, when, where, how, and why? Once you've acquired the answers to those questions, write articles covering the events. Be sure to include headlines with your articles.

For this activity, you are omniscient: you can report on any event in the play—even events that are not known to other characters in the play.

One example article is provided for you.

CONSPIRATORS CAPTURED

MESSINA. Local authorities arrested two individuals for allegedly conspiring against Hero, the daughter of Governor Leonato. Borachio and Conrade, associates to the visiting Don John, are currently being detained and awaiting inquisition. According to one of the arresting watchmen, one of the men is believed to be an established thief by the name of Deformed. Constable Dogberry reports that the prisoners have been belligerent and uncooperative since the arrest. Governor Leonato, currently planning Hero's wedding, was unavailable for comment. The sextant was seen entering the prison, purportedly to question the suspects. According to Dogberry, it is not known whether the conspiracy is connected to the impending wedding of Hero and Claudio.

Note to teacher: As a follow up activity, students could write the article in Elizabethan English.

Act II

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Acts I-II

Allusion

Objective: Identifying allusion in drama

Activity

Modern writing and literature contains many allusions to the works of Shakespeare. Novels have been titled with Shakespearean quotes, and media articles often employ adapted Shakespearean quotes to draw attention to particular stories.

Shakespearean allusions serve as reference points; ideally, they are common knowledge—popular references to specific thoughts, feelings, or situations that the majority of readers will understand with little or no explanation. The use of these allusions spares the author unnecessary rhetoric or description that might detract from the flow of the story.

Just as Shakespeare's works are timeless classics to the modern reader, Greek and Roman mythology was a timeless classic for readers in the Shakespearean era. *Much Ado About Nothing*, like many of Shakespeare's plays, contains multiple allusions to mythology.

In Acts I and II, identify at least six allusions to classical mythology. Quote the allusions on the **Allusion Chart**. Include the location of each allusion, the character who uses it, and then explain its significance to the context.

If you are able to identify the allusions, but you do not understand their use, use the library or Internet to research the subject of the allusions; for example, if you find an allusion to Cupid, the Roman god of love, then you should direct your research to the characteristics of Cupid.

One example is provided for you.

Acts I-II

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One example is provided for you.

Allusion Chart

Acts I-II

Allusion	Act.Scene Character	Explanation
“He set up his bills here in Messina and challenged Cupid at the/flight; and my uncle’s fool, reading the challenge, subscribed for/Cupid, and challenged him at the bird-bolt”	1.1 Beatrice	Beatrice uses the allusion to Cupid while making fun of Benedick’s vanity. She claims that Benedick challenged Cupid—an archer—to an archery match.
<i>“But speak you this with a sad/brow? or do you play the flouting Jack, to tell us Cupid is a good/hare-finder, and Vulcan a rare carpenter?”</i>	1.1 Benedick	<i>While trying to determine whether Claudio is kidding, Benedick asks whether Claudio is speaking untruths. Cupid, who is blindfolded, would not be good at finding hares, and Vulcan is a blacksmith, not a carpenter.</i>
<i>“prove that ever I lose more blood with love that I will get/again with drinking, pick out my eyes with a ballad-maker’s pen,/and hang me up at the door of a brothel-house for the sign of blind/Cupid.”</i>	1.1 Benedick	<i>If Benedick falls victim to love, he wants to be blinded, like Cupid, and hung on the door of a brothel as a symbol of love.</i>
<i>“Nay, if Cupid have not spent all his quiver in Venice, thou/wilt quake for this shortly.”</i>	1.1 Don Pedro	<i>Don Pedro asserts that Benedick will soon fall victim to Cupid, if Cupid hasn’t used up all his arrows in Venice.</i>
<i>“My visor is Philemon’s roof; within the house is Jove.”</i>	2.1 Don Pedro	<i>Don Pedro says that his mask is nothing compared to the face beneath his mask, like Jove when he was disguised as a peasant at the house of Philemon.</i>
<i>“she would have made Hercules have turned spit, yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire too”</i>	2.1 Benedick	<i>Benedick, emphasizing Beatrice’s demeaning behavior, says that she would assign even Hercules to do menial tasks, like turning a spit over a fire.</i>
<i>“you shall find her the infernal Ate in good apparel”</i>	2.1 Benedick	<i>Benedick claims that Beatrice is actually the goddess of madness, mischief, and guilt in disguise.</i>

Allusion Chart

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Act III

Simile

Objective: Recognizing a simile

Activity

Like most of Shakespeare's drama, *Much Ado About Nothing* is laden with simile. Some instances are easily interpretable, but others are challenging because some Elizabethan phrases are uncommon in modern English.

Using the **Simile Chart**, identify five instances of simile in Act III. Use the provided space to write an interpretation of each simile. In your interpretations, try to include modern similes with equivalent meanings.

Two examples of simile from the play are provided for you.

Act III

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Simile Chart Act III

Simile	Scene Character	Interpretation
“Ho! now you strike like the blind man”	(Example) Scene 1 (Act II) Benedick	Benedick describes Claudio as a blind man because Claudio is ineffectively—blindly—dealing with the problems that he faces. This simile resembles the modern “like a shot in the dark.”
“he will hang upon him like a disease”	(Example) Scene 1 (Act I) Beatrice	Beatrice labels Benedick a disease because she claims that he attaches himself to his friends and affects them negatively, as an illness would.
<i>“honeysuckles, ripen’d by the sun,/forbid the sun to enter; like favourites,/Made proud by princes, that advance their pride/Against that power that bred it”</i>	Scene 1 Hero	<i>Hero compares these entangling, climbing, over growing flowers to ambitious royals who use their family benefits or position to overthrow their own family members.</i>
<i>“Beatrice, like a lapwing, runs/Close by the ground”</i>	Scene 1 Hero	<i>Beatrice is sneaking around the garden, so Hero compares her to a bird that travels on the ground and out of view.</i>
<i>“let Benedick, like cover’d fire,/Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly”</i>	Scene 1 Hero	<i>Hero describes Benedick’s passion for Beatrice as a fire that, without fulfillment, will be smothered out.</i>
<i>“that would be as great a soil...as to show a child his new coat and forbid him to wear it”</i>	Scene 2 Don Pedro	<i>Don Pedro is describing the disappointment that Claudio would incur if he left Hero behind while accompanying the prince to Aragon. Hero is the “new coat” that Claudio would not get to enjoy.</i>
<i>“he hath a heart as sound as a bell”</i>	Scene 2 Don Pedro	<i>Don Pedro suggests that Benedick’s frame of mind is as consistent and dependable as the unchanging tone of a bell.</i>

Simile Chart
Act III

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Acts I – III

Metaphor

Objective: Recognizing and interpreting metaphors

Activity

Like most Shakespeare plays, *Much Ado About Nothing* contains several instances of metaphor.

The **METAPHOR CHART** lists seven examples of metaphor in the first three acts of *Much Ado About Nothing*. For each example, identify the character that uses the metaphor, and then explain the metaphor.

The first metaphor is completed for you.

Acts I – III

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METAPHOR CHART

Acts I – III

Metaphor	Act -Scene Character	Explanation of Metaphor
“Can the world buy such a jewel?”	1.1 Claudio	Enamoured with Hero, Claudio calls her a jewel. This implies that, to Claudio, Hero is rare, valuable, and pretty.
“I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in his grace”	1.3 Don John	<i>In describing his relationship with Don Pedro, Don John says that he would rather be a nuisance than a help to his brother.</i>
“this may prove food to my displeasure”	1.3 Don John	<i>After hearing about Don Pedro’s plan to woo Hero for Claudio, Don John decides that it will be vulnerable to manipulation and thus cause problems for Claudio.</i>
“beauty is a witch,/Against whose charms faith melteth into blood”	2.1 Claudio	<i>Beauty, as that of a woman, can cause men to forget about their allegiance, duty, or loyalty.</i>
“his/words are a very fantastical banquet,—just so many strange dishes.”	2.3 Benedick	<i>Describing the smitten Claudio, Benedict says that Claudio, who once spoke very plainly, now speaks flamboyantly.</i>
“I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you, which/these hobby-horses must not hear.”	3.2 Benedick	<i>Benedict calls Don Pedro and Claudio “hobby-horses,” which suggests that they are buffoons.</i>
“Hero and Margaret have by this played their/parts with Beatrice; and then the two bears will not bite one/another when they meet.”	3.2 Claudio	<i>Claudio is referring to the scheme to make Benedict and Beatrice fall in love. He calls them bears because they constantly quarrel with each other.</i>

METAPHOR CHART

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Act IV

Interviewing

Objective: Interviewing main characters

Activity

You are now a television talk show host with a successful prime-time show. You are popular for your interviews with people involved in controversial events that are not conspicuous enough to hold the attention of the general media. Your interviewing skills often result in the exposure of new details, which in turn draws the public eye back to the participants.

The public is still curious about the controversy surrounding the halted marriage of Hero and Claudio. You will be producing four shows this week, and you plan to interview a different character from *Much Ado About Nothing* during each show.

As a class, choose four characters (other than Hero) that you think could provide any new information about the scandal surrounding the wedding. Remember, only several characters know that Hero is alive, only several characters know about the conspiracy, and everyone will be protecting their secrets.

Divide the class into four groups. From the four chosen characters, assign a single character to each group. Each group will produce a list of at least ten questions for its assigned character. Remember, it is your job to pry the most interesting or overlooked information from your guests; do not hesitate to ask controversial or even potentially insulting questions.

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Three example questions for three different characters are provided for you.

(Claudio) What did you see, specifically, on the night before the wedding?

(Don John) It is rumored that you hate your brother, so why are you with him?

(Beatrice) Why is it that Hero was incapable of her alleged crimes?

(Leonato) *Why did you believe Don Pedro and Claudio before your own daughter?*

(Don Pedro) *How can anyone take you seriously if you operate on such whims as winning the heart of a woman for someone else?*

(Dogberry) *Who are the suspicious men that you found lurking about on the eve of the wedding?*

(Margaret) *What were you doing on the night before the wedding?*

(Benedick) *Could Beatrice have perpetrated a scandal that killed Hero out of jealousy?*

(Leonato) *Who was it that your daughter allegedly had been seeing?*

(Don John) *Where were your attendants on the night before the wedding?*

Note to teacher: As a follow-up activity, students could create answers to the questions for particular characters. Students could then dramatize the show, accept questions from the audience, or interview more than one character at a time.

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Act IV

Letter Writing

Objective: Writing to characters in the play

Activity

Imagine now that you have the ability to communicate with all of the characters in *Much Ado About Nothing*, and that you can use this power at any point in the chronology of the play. What situations could you prevent? Would the characters listen to you?

Assume that you have a message service that can deliver letters to any character at any time. Choose two characters that you think require attention at any point up to the end of Act IV. Write two letters—one for each character—that will help the characters avoid or overcome their problems.

Use your knowledge of the characters (beliefs, longings, behaviors, personalities, etc.) to write letters that will persuade them to change their course of action. You may write to any characters, and you may also advise them on what to do or what not to do.

Try to keep your language similar to Shakespeare’s Elizabethan English. An example is provided for you.

Example:

Borachio:

Beware—thy greed shall maketh thee a murderer!

Thou hast the chance to quit thyself of Don John and his plot. If, perchance you refuse, thou wilt condemn Hero as she stands upon the altar. To ravage her good name is murder once, but twice will you fell the dove if its heart cannot bear the accusation.

Pray, condemn not thyself nor Hero with thy manipulation. If your conscience doth still allow the treachery, be warned that the governor shall not sleep until he hath recovered the offender. Such crime goes not without just reflex, and another knave will laugh to put the bounty for thy head in his purse.

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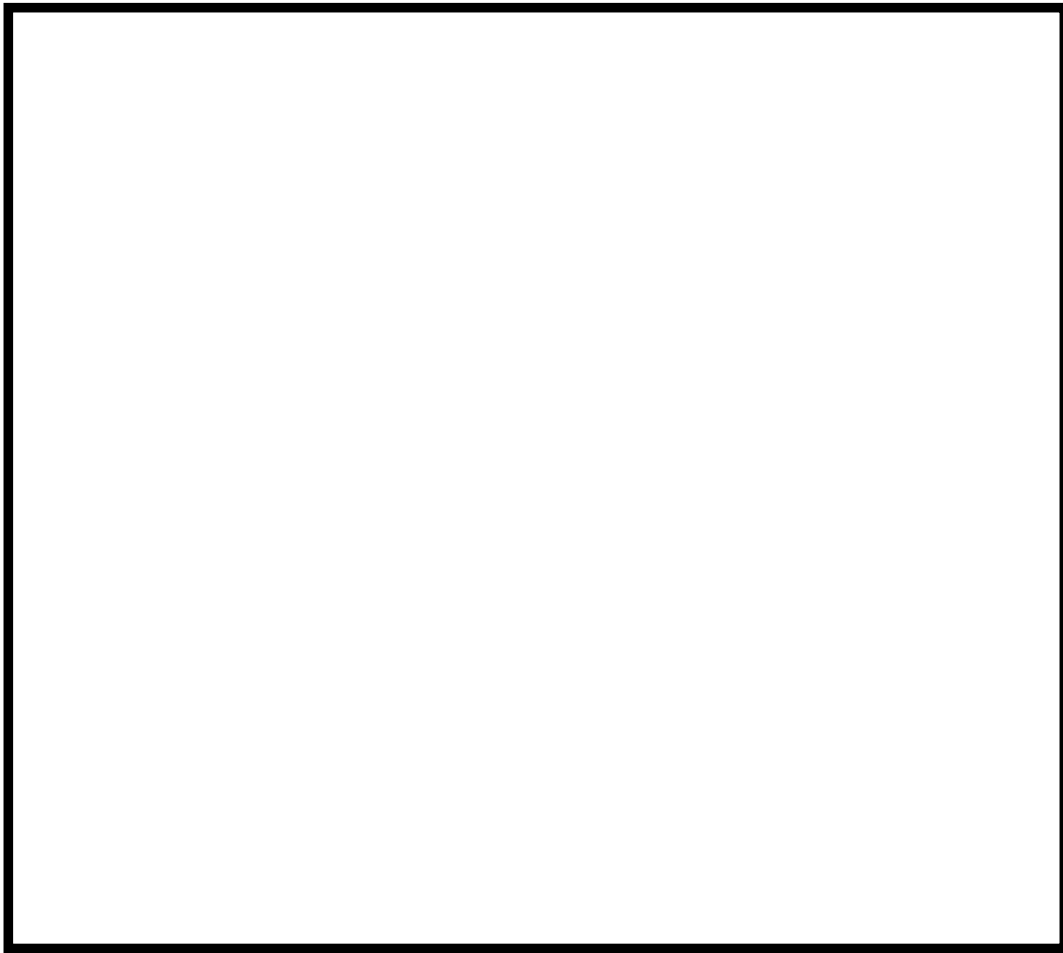
Drawing

Objective: Visualizing characters from the play

Activity:

By Act IV, you should have a mental image of the major characters. Choose the character that you can imagine the most vividly. Using simple art supplies, draw the character in the provided frame. Label the picture with the name of the character, and, if your drawing depicts the character in action, identify the corresponding act and scene of the illustration.

If you discover that you are uncertain about the dress or appearance of certain characters, use the library or Internet to research the appropriate attire for characters in the time period of *Much Ado About Nothing*.



Act IV

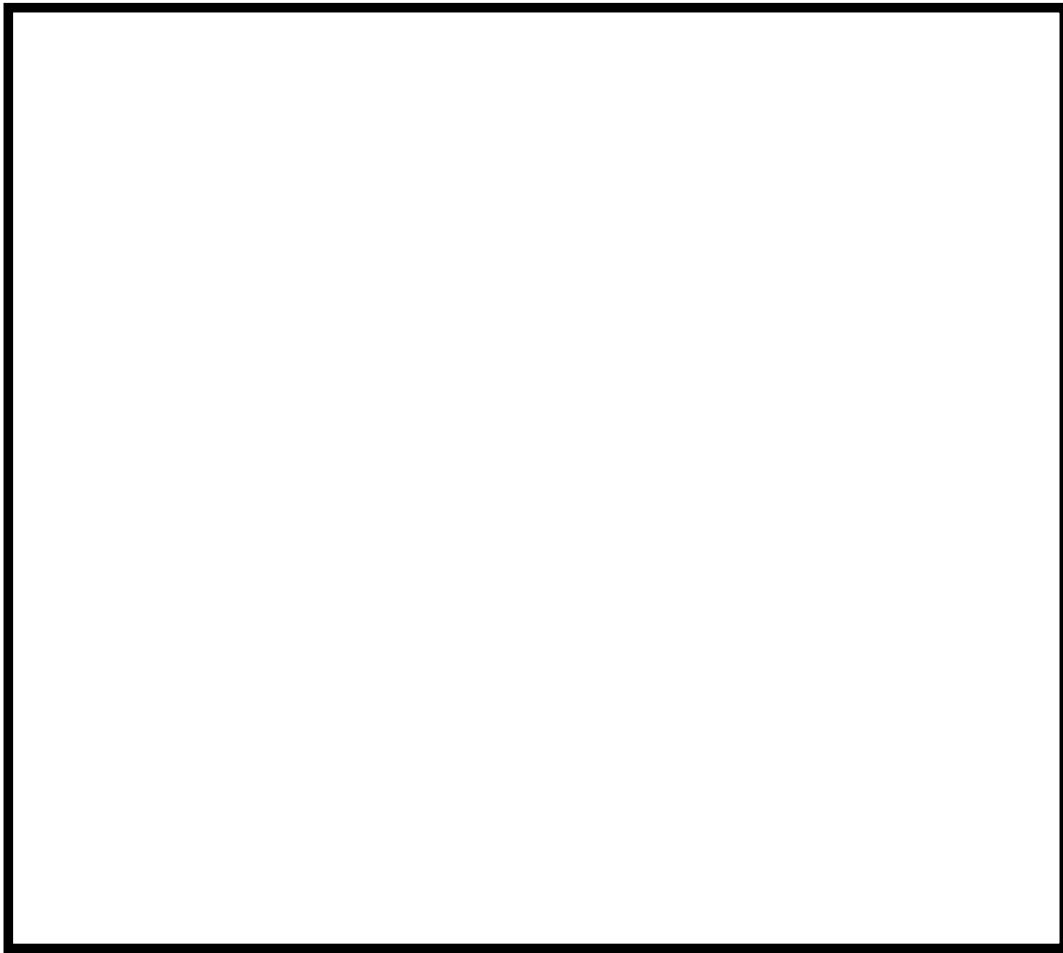
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Act IV

Alliteration

Objective: Recognizing alliteration

Activity

Writers, poets, and playwrights use alliteration for several reasons, but in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Shakespeare includes alliteration that adds emphasis to emotional scenes, notably scenes in which characters demonstrate anger or frustration.

Carefully read through Act IV and identify at least ten instances of alliteration. When you finish, create six of your own alliterative phrases.

Examples:

Act IV, Scene 1 “Can cunning sin cover itself withal!”

Act IV, Scene 1 “Yea, and I will weep a while longer”

	Alliteration	Scene
1.	<i>“O, what men dare do! what men may do! what men daily do,/not knowing what they do!”</i>	<i>Scene 1</i>
2.	<i>“As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown”</i>	<i>Scene 1</i>
3.	<i>“What kind of catechising call you this?”</i>	<i>Scene 1</i>
4.	<i>“But fare thee well, most foul, most fair! farewell...”</i>	<i>Scene 1</i>
5.	<i>“Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shames”</i>	<i>Scene 1</i>
6.	<i>“on the rearward of reproaches”</i>	<i>Scene 1</i>
7.	<i>“that which maiden modesty doth warrant”</i>	<i>Scene 1</i>
8.	<i>“reclusive and religious life”</i>	<i>Scene 1</i>
9.	<i>“For to strange sores strangely they strain the cure”</i>	<i>Scene 1</i>
10.	<i>“Perhaps is but prolong’d: have patience”</i>	<i>Scene 1</i>
11.	<i>“I will weep a while longer”</i>	<i>Scene 1</i>
12.	<i>“turned into tongue, and trim ones too”</i>	<i>Scene 1</i>

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3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	

Act IV

Metaphor

Objective: Recognizing and interpreting metaphors

Activity

Shakespeare's complex prose sometimes helps to disguise instances of metaphor from readers. In the text, the object of a metaphor is not always adjacent to the metaphor. Sometimes, Shakespeare excludes the linking verbs (forms of *to be*) that often signal the presence of metaphor.

The **Metaphor Chart** provides locations of metaphor in Act IV, and each instance includes a brief description of the context in which the metaphor can be found. Using the context as guidance, locate the metaphor for each example and write it on the chart. Include the name of the character that uses the metaphor.

Act IV

Metaphor

Objective: Recognizing and interpreting metaphors

Activity

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Metaphor Chart Act IV

Context of Metaphor	Act -Scene Character	Metaphor
At the church, Claudio, who has been fooled into believing that Hero is not chaste, requests that Leonato “take her back.” Claudio feels that Leonato has committed a wrong against him.	4.1 <i>Claudio</i>	<i>“Give not this rotten orange to your friend”</i>
Hero faints after Claudio refuses to marry her. Shocked by Hero’s apparent infidelity, Leonato wishes that she would die. He feels that it is the best way for her to cope with her shame.	4.1 <i>Leonato</i>	<i>“Death is the fairest cover for her shame”</i>
Beatrice is angry that none of the men have taken action to refute the slander of Hero. She wants Claudio to be punished, but she feels that men are no longer capable of taking action—they simply talk when they should fight.	4.1 <i>Beatrice</i>	<i>“men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones too”</i>

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Act V

Interpreting Shakespeare

Objective: Interpreting Shakespeare's language

Activity

Some readers enjoy *Much Ado About Nothing* more than other Shakespeare plays because it is written as prose rather than poetry. This straightforward writing makes the play easier to understand for the modern audience; however, the play still has parts that are somewhat cryptic.

Rewrite Leonato's monologue in modern English. When you finish the translation, explain the significance of the passage in one paragraph.

Leonato: I pray thee, cease thy counsel,
Which falls into mine ears as profitless
As water in a sieve: give not me counsel;
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine.
Bring me a father that so loved his child,
Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
And bid him speak of patience;
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine,
And let it answer every strain for strain,
As thus for thus, and such a grief for such,
In every lineament, branch, shape, and form.
If such a one will smile, and stroke his beard,
Bid sorrow wag, cry 'hem!' when he should groan,
Patch grief with proverbs, make misfortune drunk
With candle-wasters; bring him yet to me,
And I of him will gather patience.
But there is no such man: for, brother, men
Can counsel and speak comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel; but, tasting it,
Their counsel turns to passion, which before
Would give preceptual medicine to rage,
Fetter strong madness in a silken thread,
Charm ache with air, and agony with words:
No, no; 'tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow,
But no man's virtue nor sufficiency,
To be so moral when he shall endure
The like himself. Therefore give me no counsel:
My griefs cry louder than advertisement. (Act V, Scene 1)

Act V

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Example:

Act V, Scene 1

Leonato: Please, stop trying to comfort me.
Your words are wasted in my ears
as water is wasted in a sieve. *Do not console me,
and don't give me any news unless
it is as miserable as my own.
Bring me a father who loved his child,
whose child gave him overwhelming joy, like mine did,
and ask him to talk about patience.
Measure his despair against my own,
and make sure it equals my own misery,
feeling for feeling,
and in every woeful detail.
If that man can smile,
or if he can ward off the misery, or disguise his sobbing by
clearing his throat,
or make himself feel better with old adages,
or philosophize about his misfortune,
then bring him to me,
and I'll learn from him.
But there is no such man, because
men with no sorrow of their own can comfort the sorrowful,
only until they get a taste of the same grief.
When that happens, consolation turns into emotion—
the same consolation that would have been medicine to cure rage,
or that would have tied up madness with silk thread,
or relieved pain with its breath, or agony with words;
No, no! It's the duty of all men to comfort
those who are sorrowful,
but no one is expected
to comfort others if they themselves suffer. So leave me alone;
my grief cries louder than your advice.*

This monologue is Leonato's response to Antonio, who is trying to comfort him. Leonato laments about the scandal surrounding Hero, her death (though staged), and the botched wedding. He bids Antonio to stop trying to comfort him, because the only person who could possibly understand the depth of his misery is someone who shares the same set of circumstances.

Example:

Act V, Scene 1

Leonato: Please, stop trying to comfort me.
Your words are wasted in my ears
as water is wasted in a sieve.

Act V

Wanted Posters

Objective: Creating wanted posters

Activity

Much Ado About Nothing teeters on the line of comedy and tragedy due to a combination of deviant characters and conflicting personalities. A few minor changes in chronology or action could turn the play into a tragic story.

Identify the characters that appear to be the main source of conflict in the play. They do not have to be evil characters, necessarily, but they should exhibit some flaw that creates problems in the plot of *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Using simple art supplies or a computer drawing program, create wanted posters for two of the characters that you have chosen. Your wanted poster should include a picture of the character's face, the character's name, and a list of the character's offenses. Since you are making a wanted poster, you will also need to include a reward incentive, and it should be based on the nature of the crime and the threat of the character. Be certain to include warnings for anyone who might encounter the character.

Create two wanted posters. Each poster should fit on a single page.

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Act I-V

Theme

Objective: Recognizing and interpreting theme

Activity

Much Ado About Nothing contains several themes, but for this exercise, focus on the following three major themes.

1. The use of deception to achieve both good goals and bad goals

Explanation: In *Much Ado About Nothing*, deception is used for both positive and negative reasons; it appears to be neither completely right nor completely wrong.

2. The aspects of aristocratic society

Explanation: Some of the complications in *Much Ado About Nothing* are rooted in status, pride, honor, and propriety—elements associated with aristocracy.

3. Star-crossed lovers

The phrase “star-crossed lovers” first appeared in Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, in which it was used to describe a pair of lovers who were doomed from the start of their relationship. It is now used generally to describe any couple whose love is threatened by any influence. In *Much Ado About Nothing*, Benedick and Beatrice appear to be star-crossed because they dislike each other in the beginning of the play. Claudio and Hero begin their relationship fairly well, but Don John’s scheming places their love in jeopardy.

Familiarize yourself with the **Theme Chart**. One side of the chart contains the three themes listed above. They are labeled *A*, *B*, and *C*. The other side of the chart contains a list of events, quotations, and conditions that support the themes. Complete the **Theme Chart** by identifying the theme supported by each entry.

The first three questions are completed for you.

Act I-V

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Theme Chart

Theme		Supporting Quotes, Events, or Conditions
(A) Good Deception and Bad Deception	_A_	1. Don John tricks Claudio into thinking that Don Pedro is wooing Hero for himself.
	B	2. Benedict challenges Claudio to a duel in defense of Hero's honor.
	C	3. An evil plot prevents Claudio and Hero from marrying.
	A	4. Hero and Ursula cause Beatrice to believe that Benedick loves her.
	A	5. Don Pedro takes Don John into his good graces.
	B	6. When Claudio falls in love, "his words are a very fantastical banquet" instead of "plain and to the purpose...like a soldier."
	A	7. Leonato tells the public that Hero is dead.
(B) Aristocracy	_B_	8. Claudio submits to Don Pedro's idea to woo Hero on Claudio's behalf, though Claudio should be capable of wooing Hero himself.
	C	9. Claudio gets jealous while Don Pedro entertains Hero at the ball.
	A	10. Don Pedro woos Hero while pretending to be Claudio.
	B	11. Claudio volunteers to accompany Don Pedro to Aragon after the marriage.
	B	12. Claudio fails to confront Don Pedro even when he thinks that Don Pedro is trying to woo Hero for himself.
(C) Star-Crossed Lovers	_C_	13. Benedick and Beatrice appear to hate each other.
	B	14. Claudio avenges the insult to his honor by publicly humiliating Hero at the wedding.
	B	15. Leonato would prefer that Hero died rather than live in shame.
	A	16. Leonato sends Don Pedro and Claudio to Hero's tomb to hold a vigil.
	A	17. Beatrice and Benedick fool each other at the masquerade.
	C	18. Benedick and Beatrice grow closer as scandal threatens Hero and Claudio.

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Acts I – V

Creative Writing Drawing

Objective: Examining plot and theme

Activity

Imagine that Shakespeare has just written *Much Ado About Nothing*, and you are a graphics designer for his publisher. You need to design a jacket for the play that commands the attention of potential buyers perusing the bookstores. The jacket must also reflect the content of the play.

Divide the class into small groups. Each group will consist of two teams with the task of producing a new cover for *Much Ado About Nothing*. The illustrators in the groups will draw or compile pictures for the front cover of the book. The cover art must include depictions of the story as well as the title and the author's name. The writers in the groups will write a vague synopsis and review for the back cover that addresses the following questions:

1. Without giving the story away, what is the most interesting event in the play?
2. What are the themes of the play?
3. What does the story teach?
4. Why do you recommend this drama to other students?
5. Why is this a good drama for the classroom?

Acts I – V

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Act I-V

Characterization

Objective: Analyzing characters in the play

Activity

Psychiatrists examine patients, determine the source of problems, and implement possible solutions. The proper examination of a patient may require detailed information regarding the patient's family life and social environment. Using personal observations and facts gathered from the patient, the doctor might then make a diagnosis.

You are now a modern psychiatrist, and below is a list of your patients for today. Write down your initial analysis for each patient and the possible source of the problem. In the **TREATMENT** column, suggest a treatment. To diagnose the characters, assume that they are at their worst point in the play. Remember, one character may have multiple disorders, each of which may require a different treatment.

PATIENT	PROBLEM	CAUSE	TREATMENT
8:00 – Claudio	Easily manipulated; Pessimistic	Low self-esteem; mistrustful	Counseling; self- image exercises
9:00 – Don John	<i>Depression; criminal tendencies</i>	<i>Jealousy toward brother; feelings of rejection; won't admit faults</i>	<i>Counseling; rehabilitation</i>
10:00 – Beatrice	<i>Violent tendencies</i>	<i>Stubborn</i>	<i>Counseling</i>
11:00 – Hero	<i>Depression; anxiety</i>	<i>Feelings of rejection; wrongful accusation</i>	<i>Counseling</i>
1:00 – Borachio	<i>Habitual criminal; alcoholic</i>	<i>Greed; low self-esteem</i>	<i>Rehabilitation</i>
2:00 – Leonato	<i>Poor relationship with daughter</i>	<i>Stress from governors duties; too much willingness to accept word of prince</i>	<i>Family counseling</i>
3:00 - Margaret	<i>Easily manipulated</i>	<i>Low self-esteem</i>	<i>Counseling</i>
4:00 – Conrade	<i>Criminal tendencies; easily manipulated</i>	<i>Misled loyalty to Don John; low self-esteem</i>	<i>Counseling</i>

Act I-V

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3:00 - Margaret			
4:00 – Conrade			

Acts I – V

Understanding Shakespeare's Language

Objective: Understanding Elizabethan English

Activity

Rewrite the following script in Shakespeare's dialect so that it would make sense to characters in the play. When you translate the dialogue, remember to change the setting and modern phrases so that it makes sense to the Elizabethan crowd.

Scene: High school courtyard. Tim and Wyatt, usually friends, have been on bad terms for days because someone spread rumors that affected both of them. They are about to erupt into a physical altercation. A student and a teacher intervene.

Tim: I'm telling you, don't touch me—I'll knock your head off.

Wyatt: Oh, tough man, are you? Let's see how tough you are. [pushes Tim]

Tim: Get out of here! Don't make me do this! [pushes Wyatt away]

Wyatt: You think you're so bad! You're a worm, that's all. You couldn't punch your way out of a paper bag.

Tim: You're pushing it. You really need to stop.

Wyatt: [steps in Tim's path, blocking him] Excuse me? Oh, okay, I stopped.

Mike: Come on, Wyatt, knock it off. You're being stupid. You don't know who said that stuff, and I doubt that it was true.

Wyatt: Shut up, Mike. Mind your own business.

Tim: Get out of the way. This is the last time I'm going to warn you.

Mike: Relax, you guys! You're going to get suspended!

Wyatt: [steps closer] Oh, warn me again, I can't hear you.

Mr. Ball: [approaching] Hey you two! What's going on over there? Settle down!

Tim: Fine, let's go! [attempts to push Wyatt out of the way; they begin to fight]

Mr. Ball: [grabbing Tim] Cut it out! What's wrong with you? You know better than this! We'll see if you guys can cool off in the administrator's office.

Acts I – V

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We have begun the script for you:

Scene: The courtyard of the governor's mansion. Thurio and William have just been reprimanded by their mutual uncle, the governor, and now they argue in the courtyard over who is to blame. A citizen and a constable intervene.

Thurio: Hark ye, keep thy hands afar—I'll knock thy head off.

William: O, art thee a man? Show then thy strength.

Thurio: *Go thy ways! Press me not!*

William: *Thou dost think thee man? Thou art a canker-blossom. Thou couldst not free thyself from a sack of parchment.*

Thurio: *Thou put on; thou need'st stop.*

William: *Pray ye? O, I obey thee.*

Michael: *Let go, Michael. Thou art fool-begged. Thou knowest not the source of thy affliction. Doubtful is its truth.*

William: *Peace, Michael. Mind thy business.*

Thurio: *Give me passage. I dost warn thee not once more.*

Michael: *Fair cheer, gentlemen! You'll find thee in prison!*

William: *O, repeat thine omen, I hear not.*

Constable: *Hark you! What troubles thee? Peace!*

Thurio: *Come your ways!*

Constable: *Part, fools! Where'st thy sense? Thou hast better reason! Perhaps thy imprisonment shall bid thee quiet.*

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Acts I – V

Plot

Objective: Relating the conflicts and characters in the play to contemporary conflicts

Activity

Shakespeare's drama is often described as universal, which means that it appeals to all audiences and cultures, past and present. Shakespeare achieves this universal appeal by using age-old themes to which anyone can relate, regardless of time or place.

The major themes of *Much Ado About Nothing* include deception, social grace, and ill-fated lovers. These themes could easily be placed into a modern context.

Consider the storyline of *Much Ado About Nothing* and think of how and where it could occur in the present day. Consider people who share the same type of lifestyle, responsibilities, or power as the major characters in the play—especially characters who instigate the conflict in the play.

Once you have identified a situation that is a reasonably close modern parallel to *Much Ado About Nothing*, fill in the supplied chart, **The Modern *Much Ado About Nothing***, with the alternative events and characters. Several examples have been completed for you. The chart requires only short comments.

Note to teacher: Answers will vary.

Acts I – V

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THE MODERN *MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING*

Original

Much Ado About Nothing

Alternate

Much Ado About Nothing

SETTING	
Messina Sicily Leonato's house <i>Leonato's orchard</i>	Borough of Prenton State of New York Leonard's house <i>Leonard's garden</i>
CHARACTERS	
Don Pedro, Prince of Aragon <i>Leonato, Governor of Messina</i> <i>Don John, Don Pedro's half-brother</i> <i>Claudio, young lord of Florence</i> <i>Benedick, young lord of Padua</i> <i>Antonio, Leonato's brother</i> <i>Balthasar, Don Pedro's attendant</i> <i>Conrade, follower of Don John</i> <i>Borachio, follower of Don John</i> <i>Friar Francis</i>	<i>Pedro, the county zoning director</i> <i>Leonard, the mayor of Prenton</i> <i>John, Pedro's cousin and subordinate</i> <i>Clyde, Pedro's assistant</i> <i>Ben, a Prenton city worker</i> <i>Anton, Leonard's brother</i> <i>Bill, Pedro's assistant</i> <i>Conrad, a criminal who does dirty work for John</i> <i>Boris, a criminal who takes bribes for John</i> <i>Reverend Frank</i>
<i>Dogberry, a constable</i>	<i>Bob, a Prenton police officer</i>
<i>Verges, a headborough</i>	<i>Vergil, the Prenton chief of police</i>
<i>Hero, Leonato's daughter</i>	<i>Heather, Leonard's daughter</i>
<i>Beatrice, Leonato's niece</i>	<i>Beatrice, Heather's best friend</i>
<i>Margaret, Hero's attendant</i>	<i>Marge, Leonard's secretary</i>
PLOT	
Soldiers return from expedition <i>Claudio falls in love with Hero at the ball</i> <i>Don Pedro woos Hero for Claudio</i> <i>Don John manipulates Claudio</i> <i>Beatrice and Benedick have perpetual war of wits</i> <i>Don John frames Hero by tricking Claudio</i> <i>Watchmen arrest Borachio and Conrade for conspiring</i> <i>Leonato fakes Hero's death</i>	Pedro, Clyde, and Ben return from an intramural softball game <i>Clyde becomes enamored of Heather at a community dance</i> <i>Pedro emails a love letter to Heather and signs it from Clyde</i> <i>John tells Clyde that Pedro is trying to date Heather</i> <i>Beatrice and Ben are fierce competitors on the tennis court</i> <i>John spreads the rumor that Heather has been dating people other than Clyde</i> <i>Local police detain Boris and Conrad on bogus charges after hearing them discuss John's plan</i> <i>Leonard pretends Hero has been hurt in a car accident</i>

THE MODERN *MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING*

Original

Alternate

Much Ado About Nothing

Much Ado About Nothing

SETTING	
<p>Messina Sicily Leonato's house</p>	<p>Borough of Prenton State of New York Leonard's house</p>
CHARACTERS	
<p>Don Pedro, Prince of Aragon</p>	
PLOT	
<p>Soldiers return from expedition</p>	<p>Pedro, Clyde, and Ben return from an intramural softball game</p>

Acts I – V

Characterization

Objective: Creating a character map

Activity

The relationships among characters in *Much Ado About Nothing* change in each act. For each act of the play, draw a map that depicts the relationships among the major characters. Use the following key:

————→ An arrow from one character to another depicts a friendship.

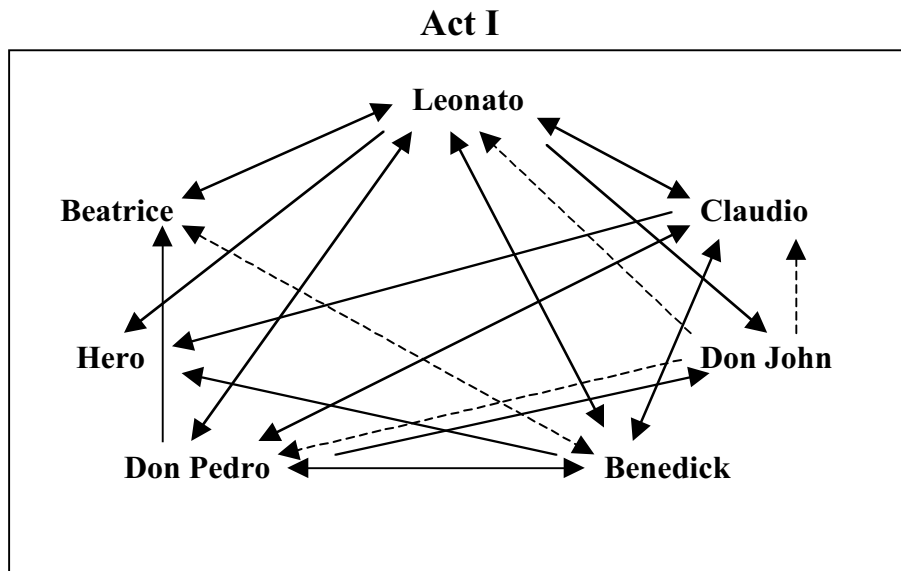
↔ A double arrow indicates mutual friendship.

-----→ A broken arrow indicates dislike.

↔----- A double broken arrow indicates mutual dislike.

[] Parenthesis around a name indicates that a character is no longer present.
(character is absent or dead)

Example:



Acts I – V

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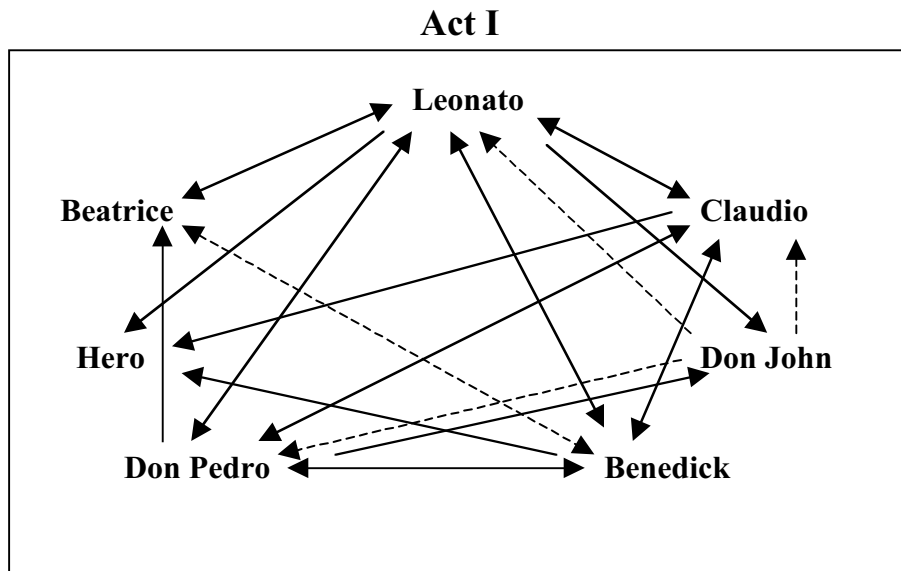
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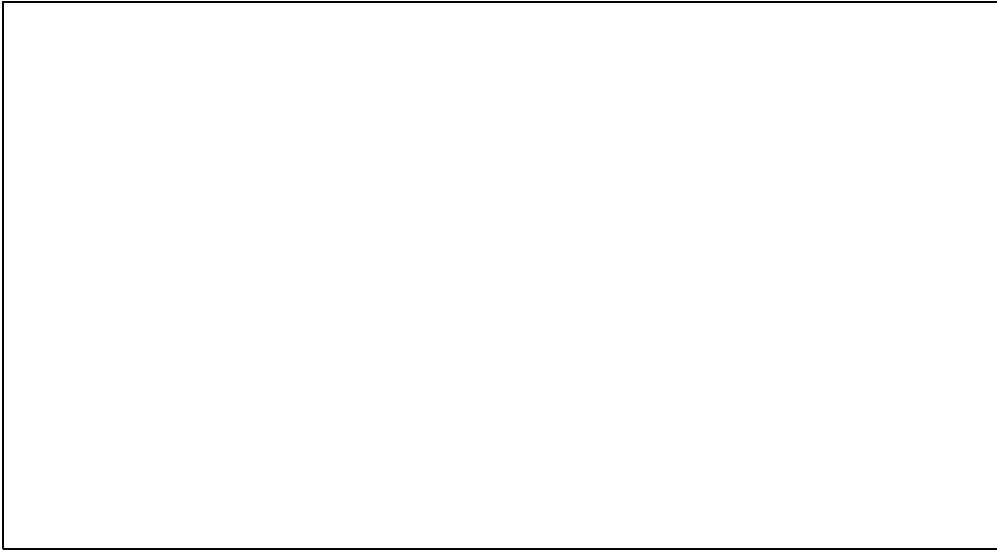
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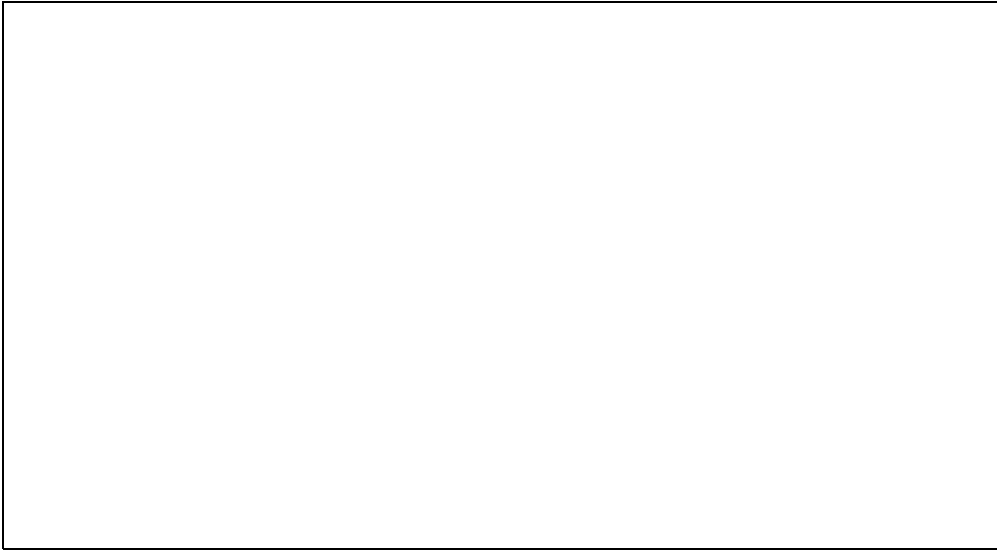
Act II



Act III



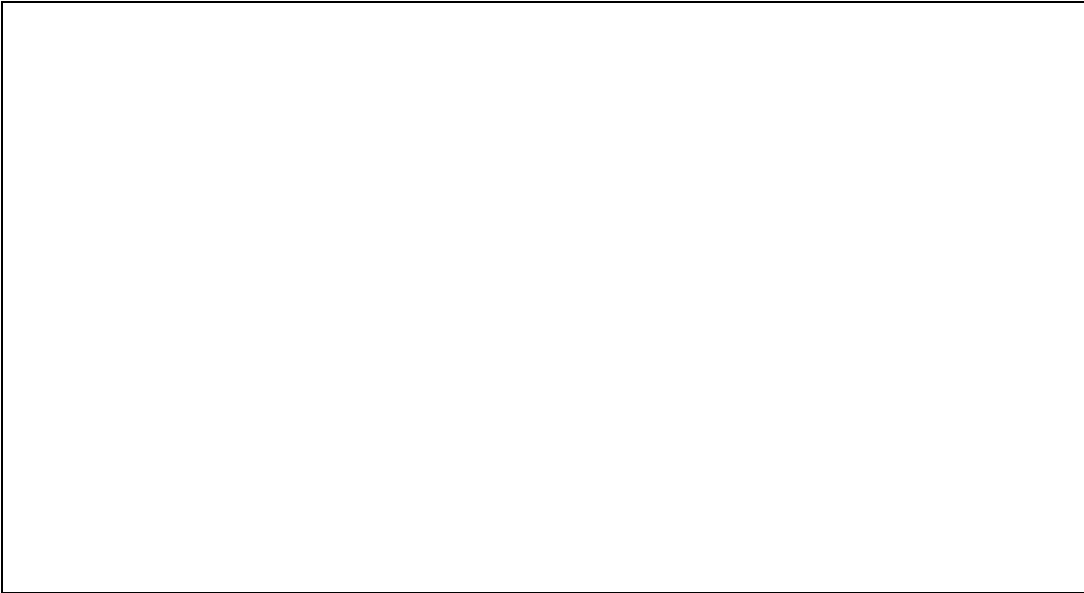
Act II



Act III



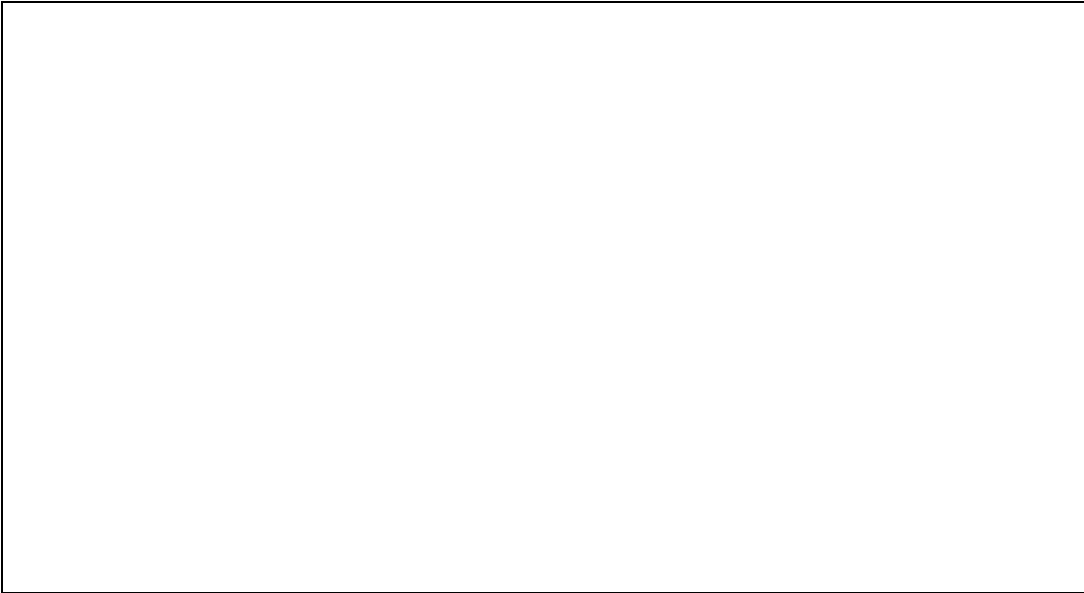
Act IV



Act V



Act IV



Act V



Acts I – V

Acting

Objective: Understanding drama through performance

Activity

Much Ado About Nothing is a play; it is designed to be watched, not read. The text omits the details that one finds in other literary genres, particularly those that describe characters and settings. Imagine the many details that a live performance of *Much Ado About Nothing* would require.

Divide the class into small groups. Each group should select a single scene from *Much Ado About Nothing* to act out for the class. The groups should first discuss the chosen scenes and settle on the details that the scene will require (voice, stage positions, tone, volume, etc.).

Members of each group will assign themselves roles. The dialogue of the scene should be divided to accommodate everyone; for example, two people will act the first half of the scene, and the others will act the second half. Groups may also choose soliloquies or monologues, but no one in the group should perform the same monologue.

While groups assign roles, they should also discuss the dramatic details of the chosen scenes. If scheduling permits, students should memorize the material to be performed. When the groups are ready, perform the scenes for the rest of the class. Conduct a brief discussion after each scene to determine whether the class feels that the scene was appropriately performed.

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Wrap-up

Writing to Shakespeare

Objective: Communicating with the author

Activity

One of the indicators of Shakespeare's talent is his ability to create both comedy—*Much Ado About Nothing*—and tragedy—*Othello*—from almost parallel plots.

Despite Shakespeare's talent and universal appeal, some modern readers insist that certain elements of Shakespeare's drama make it hard to follow or understand.

You now have the chance to address any problems or praises that you have about Shakespeare's play, *Much Ado About Nothing*.

In the space below, write a letter to Shakespeare to give him feedback on *Much Ado About Nothing*. Include references to specific acts and scenes to help describe your likes or dislikes of the play.

Include any questions that you may have regarding the play itself, the language, or the creation of the play. Be sure to offer any advice that you think would help improve the play for modern audiences.

The letter is started for you.

Dear Mr. Shakespeare,

I've just completed a reading of *Much Ado About Nothing*, and I have a few concerns about the play...

Wrap-up

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Wrap-up

Plot

Objective: Creating a graph that depicts the action of the play

Activity

Most businesses today use charts and graphs to visually represent their activity over a given period of time. You can use the same method to represent the activity, or intensity, of *Much Ado About Nothing*. Like most drama, *Much Ado About Nothing* follows a pattern in which the intensity of the action rises and then falls prior to the end of the story.

Create a graph that portrays the level of activity in *Much Ado About Nothing* to the time at which it occurs. The bottom should be divided by acts, while the side should be divided by the intensity levels of the action in the play. The result will be a line graph that illustrates the rise and fall of action throughout the play.

We have provided a list of events to place on your chart. After you place them, connect them to form a line graph. Two events have already been placed for you.

When you finish your graph, compare it to those of your classmates and discuss any outstanding similarities or differences.

Put the following events in their proper places on the chart. On the chart, use only the number of the event—not the full description.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Claudio angry with Don Pedro | 12. Don John learns of Claudio's love of Hero |
| 2. Don John lies about Hero | 13. Hero fools Beatrice |
| 3. Dogberry tries to inform Leonato | 14. Claudio first sees Hero |
| 4. Borachio and Conrade questioned | 15. Beatrice and Benedick profess love |
| 5. Claudio and Don Pedro at grave | 16. Women prepare for wedding |
| 6. Second marriage attempt | 17. Borachio arrested |
| 7. Benedick challenges Claudio | 18. Sexton realizes Borachio's crime |
| 8. Don John propositions Borachio | 19. Dogberry instructs new watch |
| 9. Leonato approves Beatrice's marriage | 20. Friar plans to fake death |
| 10. Claudio rejects Hero at wedding | 21. Don John arrested |
| 11. Benedick mislead about Beatrice | 22. Claudio given niece to wed |

Wrap-up

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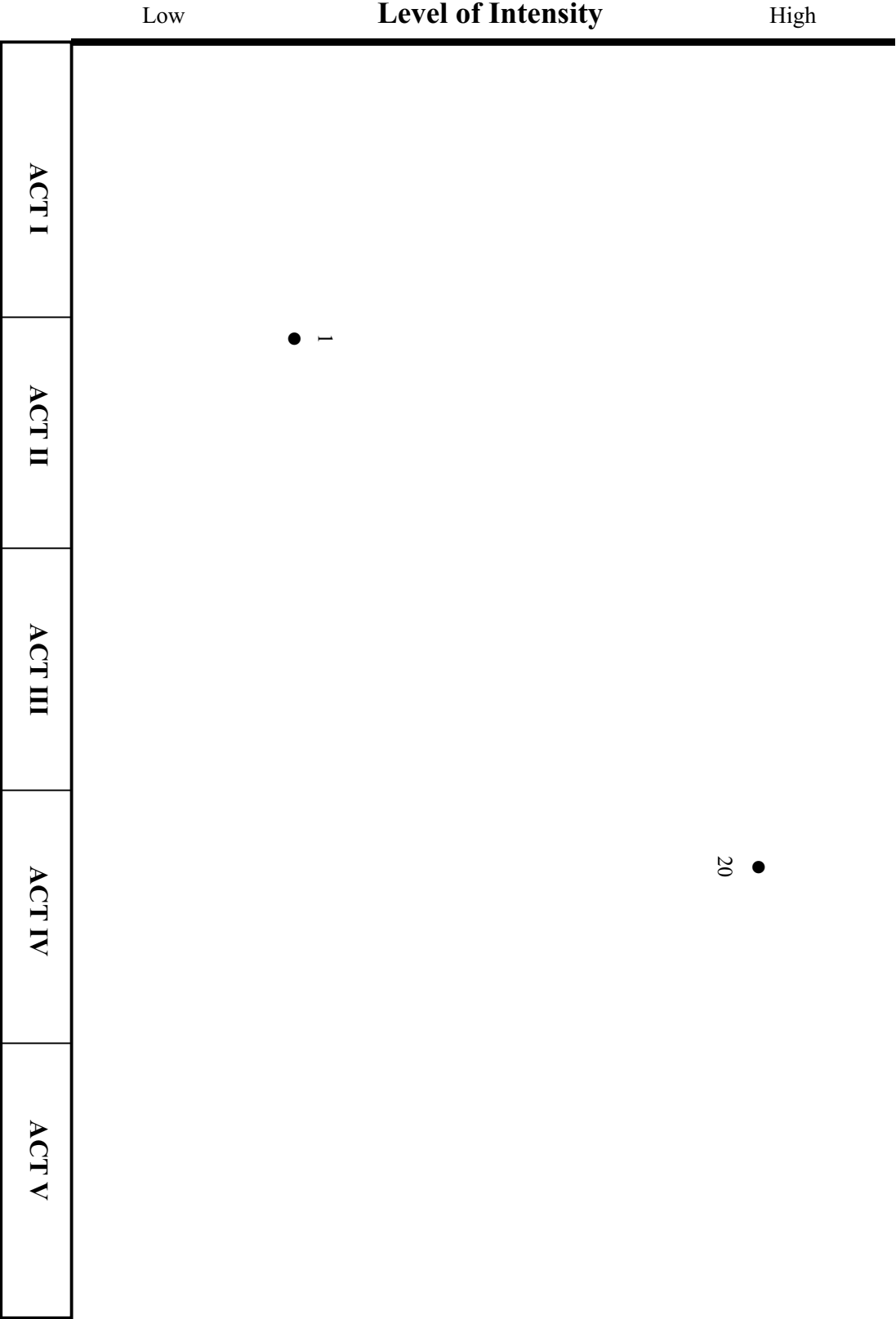
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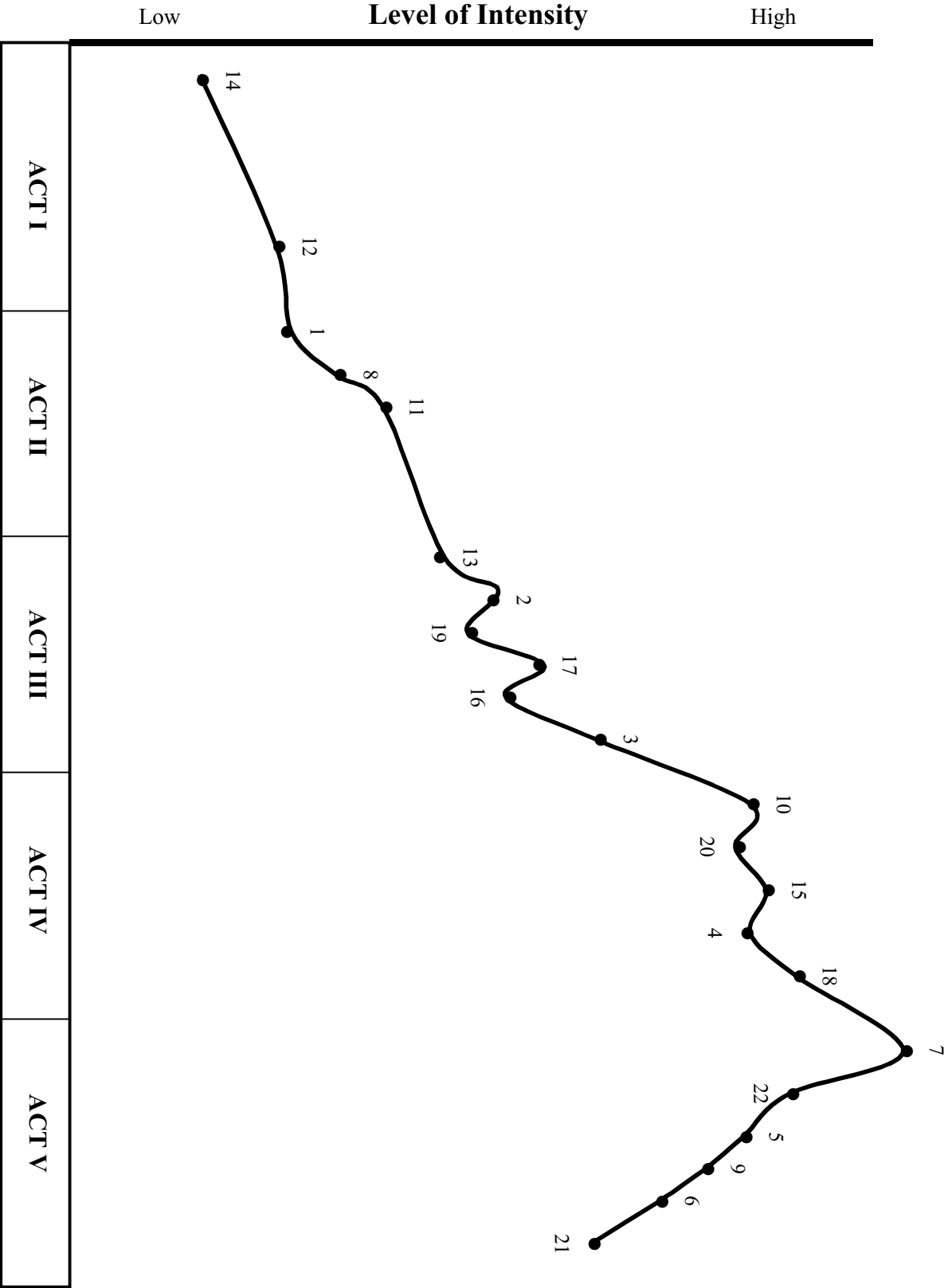
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Example:



:

	Low	Level of Intensity	High
ACT I			
ACT II			
ACT III			
ACT IV			
ACT V			

Wrap-up

Changing Plot

Objective: Adapting Shakespeare to film

Activity

Much Ado About Nothing has been put on film before, but never in the way that you will be able to do it. As a director with an enormous budget, it's your job to turn *Much Ado About Nothing* into a blockbuster.

You may set your adaptation in the past, present, or future, and the script will be in modern English. Your movie should loosely parallel the original *Much Ado About Nothing*, but you and your screenwriters will need to make a few changes to make the movie more appealing. The required changes are:

1. Create a new title.
2. Change the setting.
3. Create a new character, bad or good.
4. Remove at least one significant event from the original play.
5. Change Don John's motive for scheming against Don Pedro.

Use the following page to write a one-page synopsis of your movie. Feel free to change character names. A sample paragraph is provided for you.

Wrap-up

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Example:

The movie opens at the camp of an ancient European Germanic tribe. The chieftain, Leonato, is meeting with warriors returning from a distant battle. One of the warriors, Pedro, is the leader of a tribe allied with Leonato's tribe. Pedro and his warrior, Claudio, had been assisting Leonato's tribe in battle.

At the meeting, Claudio speaks with Leonato's daughter, Hero, and becomes infatuated with her. They plan to meet again at a feast of celebration on the following evening.

Claudio is late arriving at the feast, and in his absence, Hero begins talking to John—another allied tribal leader. John is not in good favor with any of the tribal leaders, but his allegiance is necessary to ensure security of the region. During the conversation, John offends Hero, just as Claudio arrives. Claudio challenges John, and in a fit of rage, John demands the hand of Hero in return for the continued allegiance of his tribe. Leonato refuses John's demand because he knows that John, though a tribal leader, does not have the final authority to make such decisions for his tribe. John leaves the feast and, in the company of his most loyal warriors, begins plotting against Leonato...

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Your Synopsis:

Your Synopsis:

Wrap-up

Sequels

Objective: Writing creatively

Activity

Sequels to books or films do not always stir the levels of entertainment that the original works offer. Some sequels share elements with the original works, but they neglect the themes or the characters that make the original story entertaining.

Identify characters in *Much Ado About Nothing* that should be included in a sequel. These characters should have interesting personalities or lifestyles that might lead them to new, entertaining adventures.

Once you have identified a few good character candidates, review the four examples of possible sequel ideas on the provided list. Using one or more of these examples for guidance, write a one-page summary of your sequel. Create new material as necessary, but remember to maintain the same setting, time period, and class of characters as the original *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Examples of sequel ideas:

1. Don John escapes from prison and plots against Don Pedro again.
2. A jealous character attempts to stop the marriage of Beatrice and Benedick.
3. Margaret reveals a secret hatred for Leonato's family and attempts to sabotage its prosperity.
4. Dogberry overhears a conversation and misinterprets it as a plot against Don Pedro.

Example of a possible opening paragraph for a sequel summary:

The arrest and subsequent trial of Don John brings only a month of peace to the governing family of Messina. Days before leaving for the latest skirmish in Arragon, Benedick and Claudio receive anonymous messages about their wives. The messages imply that Beatrice and Hero have been unfaithful to their husbands, and that they are planning to take advantage of their husbands' time away.

Both Claudio and Benedick are skeptical, but the anonymous writer (Margaret) gives personal details that give credibility to the messages. Benedick dismisses his message as a hoax, but Claudio, still suspicious, recruits one of the absent-minded night watchmen to observe and report the behavior of Hero in his absence...

Wrap-up

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Wrap-up

Game Playing

Objective: Inventing a method to remember the events and characters of the play

Activity

Knowing the question is just as important as knowing the answer to a question.

Using the entire play, write a set of “Jeopardy” questions that cover the categories on the board below.

Divide the class into two or four groups. Using the board below, each group should list at least sixteen answers to present to the rest of the class for questions. Include the act and scene in the answer if the material is quoted. Four answers are supplied for you.

Island Life	Brother John	Lying Around	Watch Your Head	Ado About Something
MESSINA	\$200	MARGARET	\$200	\$200
\$400	CLAUDIO	\$400	\$400	\$400
\$800	\$800	\$800	DEFORMED	\$800
\$1000	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000

Wrap-up

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Example questions:

Island Life, \$200: What is the name of the city that *Much Ado About Nothing* is set in?

Brother John, \$400: Who, in Don John's view, stole his position and all the glory?

Lying Around, \$200: Which character plays the part of Hero in Don John's evil plan?

Watch Your Head, \$800: What is the name of the diabolical thief that the watchmen think they catch on the night before Hero's wedding?

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Wrap-up

Writing Headlines

Objective: Creating effective headlines

Activity

Many newspaper readers are fickle; if an article or headline catches their attention, they will purchase the paper with little regard for their regular paper. Because of this behavior, newspapers must use concise, attention-grabbing headlines to draw interest to the paper. If a headline is more enticing than that of the competition, the paper stands a better chance of being sold.

Much Ado About Nothing contains a number of potential headlines. Imagine that you are the editor choosing headlines for your newspaper, the Cyprus Courier. Review the play and choose eight scenes that would inspire the best headlines. List the headlines and note the acts and scenes in which you find them.

Example:

PRINCE, SOLDIERS RETURN FROM BATTLE	Act I, Scene 1
CLAUDIO TO WED GOVERNOR'S DAUGHTER	Act II, Scene 1
<i>PRINCE PLAYS CUPID</i>	<i>Act II, Scene 3</i>
<i>HERO RUMORED FALLEN</i>	<i>Act III, Scene 2</i>
<i>POLICE INCOMPETENCE IN MESSINA</i>	<i>Act III, Scene 3</i>
<i>CONSPIRATORS ARRESTED</i>	<i>Act III, Scene 4</i>
<i>HERO DUMPED AT ALTAR</i>	<i>Act IV, Scene 1</i>
<i>BROKEN HEART ATTACK</i>	<i>Act IV, Scene 1</i>

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Act I, Scene 1

CLAUDIO TO WED GOVERNOR'S DAUGHTER

Act II, Scene 1

Wrap-up

Characterization

Objective: Inferring character traits based on the action of the play

Activity

Divide the class into small groups. Each group should choose four major characters. Use the following chart to identify traits of each character.

___ 1. shrewd	___ 11. impulsive	___ 21. loyal
___ 2. skeptical	___ 12. realist	___ 22. civilized
___ 3. dangerous	___ 13. imaginative	___ 23. composed
___ 4. resourceful	___ 14. content	___ 24. intelligent
___ 5. witty	___ 15. honorable	___ 25. rational
___ 6. humble	___ 16. generous	___ 26. gullible
___ 7. lonely	___ 17. brave	___ 27. funny
___ 8. angry	___ 18. simple	___ 28. stubborn
___ 9. quiet	___ 19. overbearing	___ 29. trusting
___ 10. greedy	___ 20. fair	___ 30. unpredictable

Of the traits that you identified, consider the following:

1. Which three or four of the traits do you infer from the characters' comments or actions?
A. B. C. D.
2. Which three or four of the traits do you identify because another character pointed it out?
A. B. C. D.
3. Which three or four of the traits do you learn because a character tells you?
A. B. C. D.

Of the three possible ways to learn character traits, which do you think is the most effective to help you understand the four characters?

After you have decided which traits apply strongly to each of the characters, choose one character, pick that character's top three traits, and write a paragraph for each. The paragraphs should describe both how the trait is represented in the play and how you learn of it. Be sure to include any conflicting character information, and be specific in your analysis.

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Wrap-up

Writing Query Letters

Objective: Writing a query letter

Activity:

Book and magazine publishers seldom have the time or staff to read the thousands of manuscripts submitted by writers. Many publishers instead rely on query letters submitted by authors. These are concise, one-page letters that identify the author, the story, and the intended reader market.

Query letters should interest the editor so that he or she will consider publishing the story. The letters usually summarize the story or include a sample passage, and a successful letter will result in the publisher requesting the author's manuscript.

To complete this activity, you will have to assume the role of William Shakespeare, but in the present time. Imagine that you have just finished writing *Much Ado About Nothing*, and you have found a publisher who might be interested in your play.

Complete the query letter. The letter must be brief; the body of the letter should not be more than half of one page. Remember to identify yourself, what you have written, the target audience, and a brief synopsis. Also, identify a passage from *Much Ado About Nothing* that you feel will be the best sample for the editor. You only need to identify the act and scene of the passage.

Remember, your goal is to explain *why* the publisher should publish your work.

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Query Letter:

William Shakespeare
126 North Street
Londontown, PA 15824

P. Mulligan
Senior Editor
Dylan Press
201 Pershing Avenue
Delfi, OH 31515

Dear Mr. Mulligan,

I am a published playwright whose previous works include...

The predominant themes of *Much Ado About Nothing* include...

Much Ado About Nothing will appeal to . . .

...because . . .

Please find the enclosed sample, *Much Ado About Nothing*, Act____, Scene____.

Thank you very much for your time. I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

William Shakespeare

Query Letter:

William Shakespeare
126 North Street
Londontown, PA 15824

P. Mulligan
Senior Editor
Dylan Press
201 Pershing Avenue
Delfi, OH 31515

Dear Mr. Mulligan,

I am a published playwright whose previous works include...

The predominant themes of *Much Ado About Nothing* include...

Much Ado About Nothing will appeal to . . .

...because . . .

Please find the enclosed sample, *Much Ado About Nothing*, Act____, Scene____.

Thank you very much for your time. I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

William Shakespeare

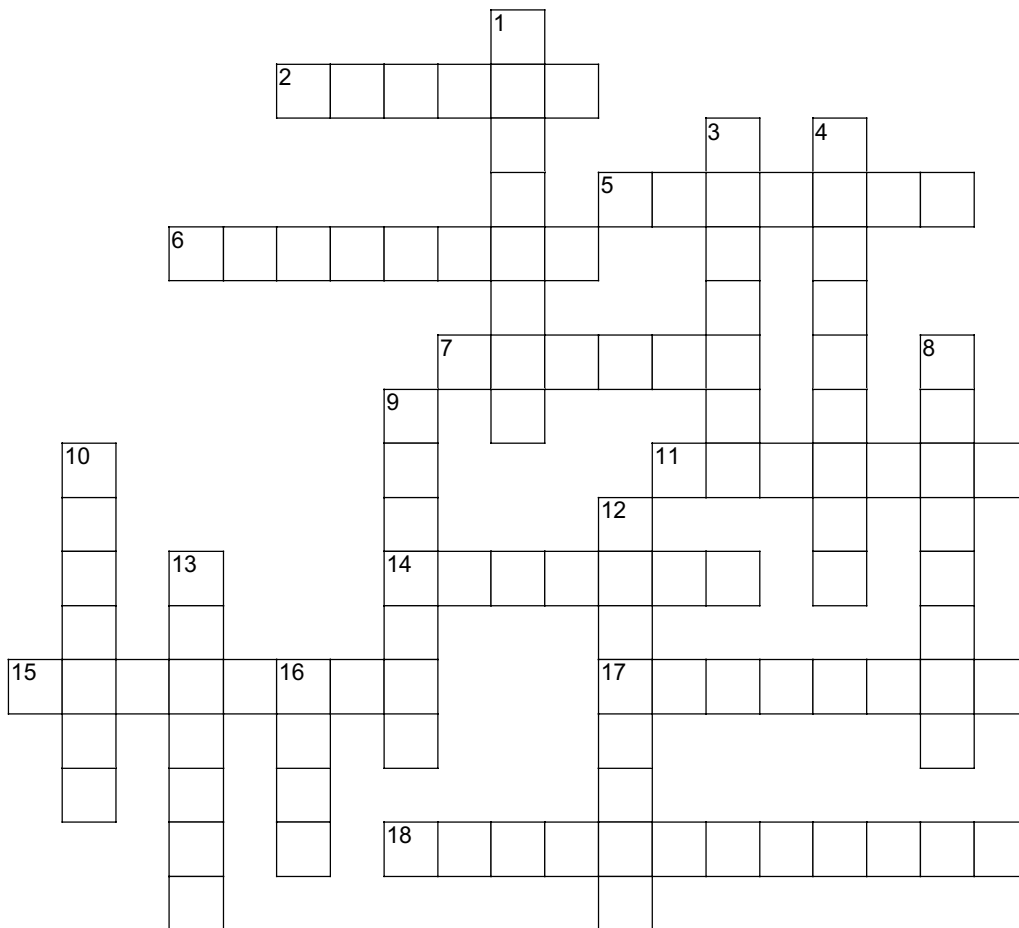
Wrap-up

Crossword Puzzle

Objective: Identifying characters and setting using clues from the story

Activity

Complete the crossword puzzle using characters and places from *Much Ado About Nothing*.



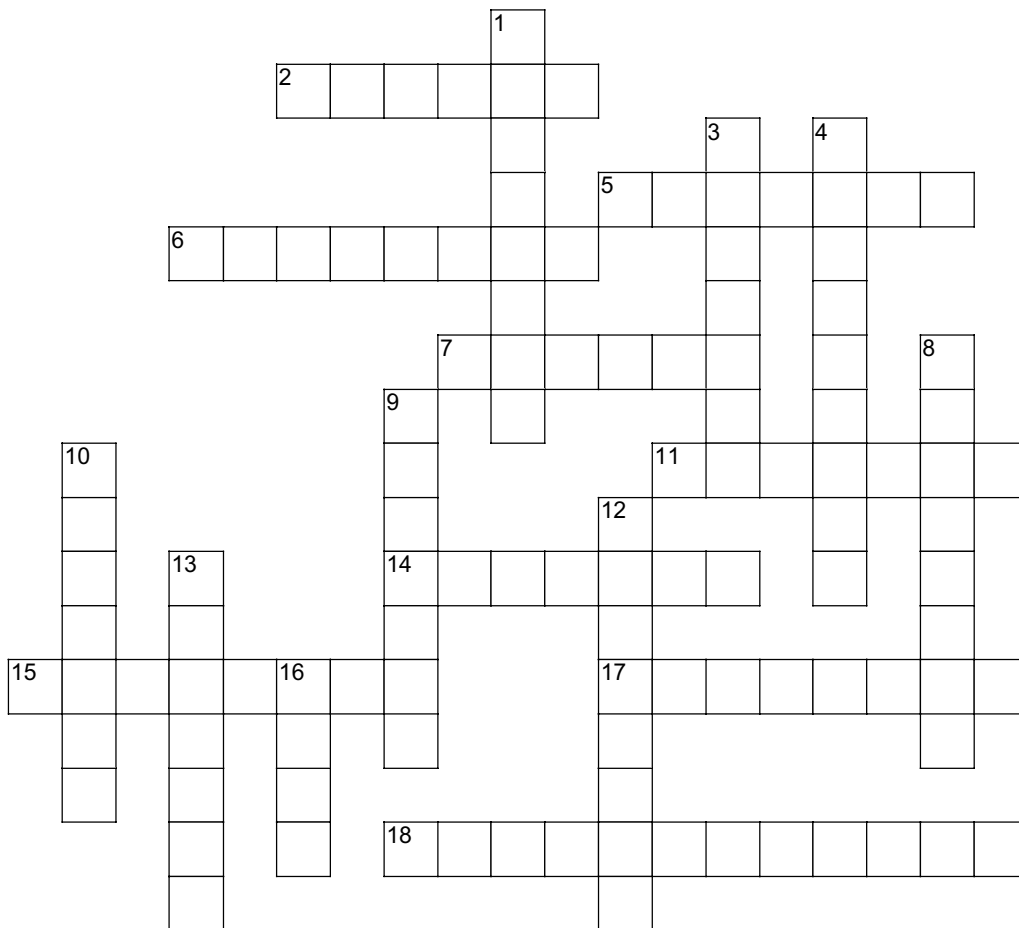
Wrap-up

Crossword Puzzle

Objective: Identifying characters and setting using clues from the story

Activity

Complete the crossword puzzle using characters and places from *Much Ado About Nothing*.



Across

2. Records the inquisition
5. Governor
6. Pretends to be Hero
7. Helps Hero to fool Beatrice
11. City of the play
14. Leonato's brother
15. Makes 1000 ducats
17. Benedick's tormentor
18. Stages Hero's death

Down

1. Claudio's boss
3. Don John's minion
4. Plays music for prince
8. Target of Beatrice's sarcasm
9. Don Pedro's principedom
10. Evil stepbrother
12. Needs a vocabulary lesson
13. Wins Hero indirectly
16. Framed by Don John

Answer Key

Across

2. *Sexton*
5. *Leonato*
6. *Margaret*
7. *Ursula*
11. *Messina*
14. *Antonio*
15. *Borachio*
17. *Beatrice*
18. *FriarFrancis*

Down

1. *DonPedro*
3. *Conrade*
4. *Balthasar*
8. *Benedick*
9. *Arragon*
10. *DonJohn*
12. *Dogberry*
13. *Claudio*
16. *Hero*

Across

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- 6. Pretends to be Hero
- 7. Helps Hero to fool Beatrice
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Wrap-up

Creative Writing

Objective: Creating a review about the play

Activity

Examine the theater (drama) and movie reviews in a newspaper or magazine. Using them as guides, write a review of *Much Ado About Nothing*. If you have had the opportunity to see a live performance of *Much Ado About Nothing*, use your observations to develop your review; however, critique the play—not the actors.

Include at least two quotes from the play that will have the most impact in your review, and remember to cite the proper act and scene. Evaluate the play according to your opinion, but be sure to support your reasoning with fact. The review should be at least three paragraphs long.

Wrap-up

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Include at least two quotes from the play that will have the most impact in your review, and remember to cite the proper act and scene. Evaluate the play according to your opinion, but be sure to support your reasoning with fact. The review should be at least three paragraphs long.

Wrap-Up

Irony

Objective: Finding irony in the play

Activity

Most major newspapers contain editorial cartoons. These cartoons are usually a humorous way of communicating opinions about people or events.

Many editorial cartoonists use irony as inspiration for their cartoons. The artists identify ironic situations in politics or economics and draw cartoons that depict the irony. While the cartoons are usually based on factual events, they appear on the opinion page because they contain caricatures (exaggerations) of real people, and it is the artist's choice as to whether the cartoon will offer a positive or a negative depiction.

You are now the political cartoonist for the Messina Times, and you have the job of creating an editorial cartoon based on an event or a character from *Much Ado About Nothing*. Use characters or events of your choice, and be sure to supply a caption, thoughts, or dialogue if necessary.



Wrap-Up

Irony

Objective: Finding irony in the play

Activity

Most major newspapers contain editorial cartoons. These cartoons are usually a humorous way of communicating opinions about people or events.

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You are now the political cartoonist for the Messina Times, and you have the job of creating an editorial cartoon based on an event or a character from *Much Ado About Nothing*. Use characters or events of your choice, and be sure to supply a caption, thoughts, or dialogue if necessary.



Wrap-up

Quiz

Objective: Testing knowledge of the play

Activity

Provide short answers for the following questions.

1. After the failed wedding, what does Beatrice convince Benedick to do?
Beatrice convinces Benedick to challenge Claudio (to a fight or duel).
2. What event causes Claudio to become depressed in Act II?
Claudio mistakenly believes that Don Pedro wants to keep Hero for himself.
3. Why are people able to disguise themselves at Leonato's celebration?
The event is a masked ball or masquerade.
4. How does Borachio originally learn about Claudio's plans for Hero?
The people at Leonato's house mistake Borachio for a perfumer, and he is able to listen to their conversation.
5. How are the night watchmen instructed to handle vagrants, thieves, and noisemakers?
Dogberry instructs the watchmen to do nothing to the offenders.
6. What city is the setting for *Much Ado About Nothing*?
The setting of the play is Messina.
7. Who officiates at the weddings in *Much Ado About Nothing*?
Friar Francis officiates at the weddings.
8. When Benedick challenges Claudio, where does Benedick claim to carry his wit?
Benedick claims to carry his wit in his scabbard, in the form of his sword.
9. Why is Dogberry unsuccessful in notifying Leonato about the conspiracy before the wedding?
Dogberry does not communicate well, and Leonato is in a hurry to complete wedding preparations.
10. What is Borachio's motivation for defaming Hero?
Don John offers Borachio one thousand ducats to frame Hero.

Wrap-up

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Wrap-up

Quotations

Objective: Relating quotations to characters in the play

Activity

Below you will find two columns. The first is a list of quotes from *Much Ado About Nothing*, and the second is a list of characters. Match up the quote with the person who said it.

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----|--|----|---------------|
| C__ | 1. | “I thank God and my cold blood, I am/of your humour for that: I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow/than a man swear he loves me.” | A. | Borachio |
| I__ | 2. | “what we have we prize not to the worth/Whiles we enjoy it; but being lack’d and lost,/Why, then we rack the value, then we find/The virtue that possession would not show us/Whiles it was ours.” | B. | Hero |
| J__ | 3. | “I will, in the interim, undertake one of Hercules’ labours; which is, to bring/Signior Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection/the one with the other.” | C. | Beatrice |
| F__ | 4. | “all women shall pardon me. Because I will not do them/the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none;/and the fine is, for the which I may go the finer, I will live a/bachelor.” | D. | Leonato |
| H__ | 5. | “And trust no agent; for beauty is a witch,/Against whose charms faith melteth into blood./This is an accident of hourly proof,/Which I mistrusted not. Farewell, therefore, Hero!” | E. | Dogberry |
| A__ | 6. | “Sweet prince, let me go no farther to mine answer: do you hear/me, and let this count kill me. I have deceived even your very eyes.” | F. | Benedick |
| D__ | 7. | “Do not live, Hero; do not ope thine eyes:/For, did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,/Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shames,/Myself would, on the rearward of reproaches,/Strike at thy life.” | G. | Don John |
| E__ | 8. | “But, masters,/remember that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet/forget not that I am an ass.” | H. | Claudio |
| B__ | 9. | “Prove you that any man with me conversed/At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight/Maintain’d the change of words with any creature,/Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death!” | I. | Friar Francis |
| G__ | 10. | “I am sick in displeasure to him; and whatsoever comes athwart/his affection ranges evenly with mine. How canst thou cross this/marriage?” | J. | Don Pedro |

Wrap-up

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Wrap-up

Essay

Objective: Interpreting theme in the play

Activity

Provide a brief response for each essay question. Your answer should be at least one paragraph in length, but no more than a half-page.

1. In *Much Ado About Nothing*, characters use deception for both positive and negative goals. What is the play's ultimate message about people using deception?
2. Relationships between men and women vary in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Compare and contrast the relationships in the play to modern perspectives of relationships between men and women.
3. Identify the character in the play that has the most social or political authority. Describe how this character influences the actions of other characters. Include at least one specific example that supports your idea.
4. Beatrice and Benedick first hate each other, and then they wish to marry. Why does their relationship appear to be more or less genuine than that of Hero and Claudio?
5. What is the overall lesson about love that *Much Ado About Nothing* offers?

Wrap-up

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Appendix

SMALL GROUP LEARNING

Small Group Learning is defined as two to five students working together for a common goal. For it to be successful, three basic elements must be present.

1. **SOCIAL SKILLS IN GROUP WORK:** Most students, unless they are taught the appropriate skills, do not participate as effectively as they might in small group work. Like any other skill, those needed for group work must be identified, practiced, and reinforced. To this end, we have included a Social Skills Behavior Checklist which we will ask you to use to rate your group. At this time, please read the related objectives listed below.

Social-Behavioral Objectives

1. Everyone is addressed by his or her first name.
2. Everyone speaks quietly in order not to disturb other groups.
3. No one ever uses put-downs or name calling.
4. Everyone is always physically and mentally part of the group. The following are prohibited and may result in the group's grade being lowered:
 - A. Putting one's head down on the desk.
 - B. Reading or working on unrelated items.
 - C. Moving about the room or talking to members of other groups.
5. Everyone is encouraged to participate and does participate.
6. Everyone offers praise and encouragement.
7. Everyone recognizes that on some points of opinion two equally valid points of view can be supported.
8. Everyone also recognizes, however, that the worth of an idea (opinion) depends on the strength of the facts that support it.

Social-Intellectual Objectives

9. Ideas are discussed aloud.
10. Ideas are summarized.
11. Clarification is asked for and received.
12. Explanations are given until everyone understands.
13. Ideas, not people, are criticized.
14. Difficult ideas are paraphrased.
15. Multiple points of view are examined.
16. Work is organized within available time and available resources.
17. Questions are asked and answered satisfactorily.
18. Ideas are examined, elaborated on, and pulled together.
19. Reasons and rationale are asked for and provided.
20. Conclusions are challenged with new information.
21. Ideas are created in brainstorming.

2. **POSITIVE INTERDEPENDENCE:** Critical to successful *group work* is the realization on the part of the students “that we are all in this together; we either sink or swim as a group.” In terms of this unit, it may mean that everyone in the group will share the group grade on the project, whether it is an “A” or an “F.”
3. **INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTABILITY:** The bottom line of any teaching method is, of course, how well the students have mastered the objectives being taught. Therefore, you must understand that the small group process, while it is more fun than other methods, is serious business. At the conclusion of this unit, a test may be used to evaluate how well each individual has mastered the objectives. As a consequence, the student who slacks off in the group or in his homework not only lets the group down, but also hurts him or herself.

PROCEDURES FOR SMALL GROUP WORK

As well as mastery of content and concepts, grades will be based on the demonstration of the following skills.

1. **Linguistic-Intellectual Skills** – These skills are fostered when students examine ideas from multiple points of view and critically probe for strengths and weaknesses.
2. **Group Social Skills** – Before anything else can be mastered, the small group must function effectively as a learning unit, which makes the mastery of these skills the first priority.

Linguistic-Intellectual Skills to be Demonstrated

Examples of these skills in action

Explaining

It seems to me...
One way of looking at it...
How does everyone feel about...
The idea that...

Encouraging

What's your idea?
I didn't think of that.
Good idea!
That helps.
Good; go on with that thought.

Clarifying

Let's put it this way...
Perhaps if we draw a chart...
It may mean that...
How does this sound...
Where does this lead us?

Elaborating

That's right and it also may include...
Another instance of that is when...
A point we might also include...

Qualifying

I agree with your premise, but...
I see it leading somewhere else...
That is one reason, but it may also...
I agree with the examples, but I come to a different conclusion.
Does that conclusion hold up in every instance?

Questioning

Why do you say that?
What is the proof for that conclusion?
Is that a valid generalization?
How did you reach that point?

Disagreeing

It seems to me there could be a different reason.
But looking at it from his point of view...
We may be jumping to a conclusion without looking at all the facts.
Here's another way of looking at it...

SMALL GROUP EVALUATION SHEET

Social-Behavioral Skills in our group	Poor				Good
1. Everyone is addressed by his or her first name.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Everyone speaks quietly. (If one group gets loud, other groups get louder to hear each other.)	1	2	3	4	5
3. No one ever uses put-downs or name calling.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Everyone is always physically and mentally part of the group.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Everyone is encouraged to and does participate.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Everyone offers praise and encouragement.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Everyone recognizes that on some opinions, two equally valid points of view can be supported.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Everyone also recognizes, however, that the worth of an idea (opinion) depends on the strength of the facts that support it.	1	2	3	4	5
Social-Intellectual Skills in our group					
9. Ideas are examined and discussed aloud.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Ideas are summarized.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Clarification is asked for and received.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Explanations are given until everyone understands.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Ideas, not people, are criticized.	1	2	3	4	5
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17. Questions are asked and answered satisfactorily.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Ideas are examined, elaborated on, and pulled together.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Reasons and rationales are asked for and provided.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Conclusions are challenged with new information.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Ideas are created in brainstorming.	1	2	3	4	5
Total Score					

STUDENT ROLES IN GROUP DISCUSSIONS

1. **Reader:** The reader's job is to read the questions aloud and to be sure everyone knows the meaning of unfamiliar words and understands the questions.
2. **Recorder:** The recorder takes notes and is responsible for writing down the group's final answers.
3. **Timer and Voice Monitor:** The timer and voice monitor is responsible for reminding individuals when they get too loud and for keeping track of the time. Because of a concern for finishing the project on time, the monitor will be the one to get the students back on task when they stray or get bogged down on one point.
4. **Checker and Encourager:** This person's chief responsibility is to encourage all members to contribute, to compliment when appropriate, and to remind everyone of the necessity of avoiding name calling and/or put-downs.

Newspaper

News Article - This is an accurate and objective reporting of an event. News articles should include the “Five W’s”: What, When, Where, Who, and Why. A good newspaper writer usually can include all the necessary information in the first paragraph of the article. This is done so that readers can understand what the article is about simply by reading one paragraph and then deciding if they want to read further to get more detailed information.

The next paragraphs in the news article expand on the Five W’s of the first paragraph.

Example:

Last night at 10 PM, a train from Philadelphia, PA to Pittsburgh slid off the tracks near Johnstown. No injuries were reported, but the train had been carrying flammable materials. A spokesperson for the Pennsylvania Railroad, Mr. Robert Graves, said that while there was no evidence of sabotage, “that possibility is being looked into by police.” This is the second derailling on this route in two years.

The rest of the article would expand upon and give background and further information on the accident.

Editorial - This is a piece in which the writer gives opinions about an issue. A possible solution may be suggested. The requirements of the Five W’s and absolute, unbiased accuracy are not adhered to as strictly as they are in a news article.

Example:

How many train wrecks will we have before the government steps in? Will it take a fatality before trains in our state are made safer? Should explosives, poisonous materials, and hazardous wastes continue to be shipped with only minor considerations to safety? This newspaper’s opinion is a firm and resounding “No!” If the Federal Transportation Commission does not recognize its own failings and correct the problems, it will be our local politicians’ job to re-route trains carrying potentially dangerous cargoes away from our communities.

Human-Interest Story - This type differs from the previous two because it has a different overall intent. As in a news article, the intent is to inform the reader of facts, but in the human-interest story, writers add the element of appealing to the readers' sympathies. Answering the Five W's is usually adhered to, but not as strictly as in the news article. Frequent topics of human-interest stories are animals, heroic deeds, strange occurrences of fate, money, etc.

Example:

Huddled among the broken railroad cars and destroyed contents of yesterday's train derailment near us, sat someone's lost puppy. Police found it early this morning after hearing whimpering from inside one of the cars. The poor dog's leg had been severed in the accident, and it was trapped by rubble. Had another hour elapsed, it probably would have died, says a local veterinarian, who treated the mixed-breed, black-and-white dog. According to the vet, Stumpy, as the dog is now called, has received more than twenty requests for adoption since his lucky rescue was accomplished.

Headline – This is a short heading over an article, which is set in large type, and which gives an indication of the subject of the article. Headlines are short and are designed to catch the readers' interest. All important words in the headline should be capitalized. Each article in a newspaper contains a headline. The wording of headlines is very important. If they say too much, readers may skip reading the article; if they are too vague, the subject may not interest the reader. Simple words such as *a*, *and*, *the* are frequently left out of headlines.

Examples:

Train Jumps Tracks; Second in Two Years

Two Train Wrecks Are Too Many

Injured Puppy Found in Train Debris

Directions for Interviews

Planning in Small Groups

First, discuss what you, as interviewer, want to know and the reasons you want to know it. Decide what you want to use as your specific questions.

Second, anticipate what the person being interviewed will answer. Use as many quotations from the text as possible. The answers should be consistent with things the character or narrative text says.

Finally, plan the interviewer's summary remark. Try to explain how the information in the questions/answers relates to the plot in general and thematic ideas of the novel.

Dramatization of Scenes in the Novel

Drama: Drama according to Aristotle is “imitated human action” presented through dialogue meant to instruct or entertain.

Dramatic Monologue: A person speaks to a silent audience, revealing an aspect of his or her character, expressing a viewpoint.

Comments: Often, sections of literary works seem to portray intense or captivating interaction, drama, between characters. While reading, visualize how the characters move in terms of their gestures and in relation to each other. See them touching each other or backing away. Hear the tones in their voices and the inflections, volume, and emphasis they use when they speak to each other. Imaginatively experience the feelings and meanings they are communicating to each other.

We do not expect that students will be above-average performers, and we do not feel they should be judged on “acting” as a major criterion in any dramatization. Students should be expected to capture the characters they portray and exhibit the truth of whatever the activity calls for. These types of activities are not intended to be polished Hollywood performances, nor the quality one would even see on a High School stage. That takes a class in drama or a group of talented performers who have a great deal of time to prepare. Our acting activities are designed only to reveal character or plot to the audience.

Terms and Definitions

Alliteration - the repetition of sounds at the beginning of words. **Example:** More Mischief and Merriment.

Allusion - a reference to a person, place, poem, book, event, etc., which is not part of the story, that the author expects the reader will recognize. **Example:** In *The Glass Menagerie*, Tom speaks of “Chamberlain’s umbrella,” a reference to British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain.

Characterization - the methods, incidents, speech, etc., an author uses to reveal the people in the book. Characterization is depicted by what the person says, what others say, and by his or her actions.

Irony - a perception of inconsistency, sometimes humorous, in which the significance and understanding of a statement or event is changed by its context. **Example:** The firehouse burned down.

- *Dramatic Irony* - the audience or reader knows more about a character’s situation than the character does and knows that the character’s understanding is incorrect. **Example:** In *Medea*, Creon asks, “What atrocities could she commit in one day?” The reader, however, knows Medea will destroy her family and Creon’s by day’s end.
- *Structural Irony* – the use of a naïve hero, whose incorrect perceptions differ from the reader’s correct ones. **Example:** Huck Finn.
- *Verbal Irony* - a discrepancy between what is said and what is really meant; sarcasm. **Example:** A large man whose nickname is “Tiny.”

Metaphor - a comparison of two things that are basically dissimilar in which one is described in terms of the other. **Example:** The moon, a haunting lantern, shone through the clouds.

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Motif - a situation, incident, idea, or image that is repeated significantly in a literary work. **Examples:** In *Hamlet*, revenge is a frequently repeated idea. In *The Catcher in the Rye*, Holden continually comments on the phoniness of people he meets.

Personification - a figure of speech in which an object, abstract idea, or animal is given human characteristics. **Examples:** The wall did its best to keep out the invaders.

“Because I could not stop for Death,
He kindly stopped for me.”
—Emily Dickinson

Plot - the pattern of events in a literary work; what happens.

Simile - a comparison between two different things using either *like* or *as*. **Examples:** I am as hungry as a horse. The huge trees broke like twigs during the hurricane.

Theme - the central or dominant idea behind the story; the most important aspect that emerges from how the book treats its subject. Sometimes theme is easy to see, but, at other times, it may be more difficult. Theme is usually expressed indirectly, as an element the reader must figure out. It is a universal statement about humanity, rather than a simple statement dealing with plot or characters in the story. Themes are generally hinted at through different methods: a phrase or quotation that introduces the novel, a recurring element in the book, or an observation made that is reinforced through plot, dialogue, or characters. It must be emphasized that not all works of literature have themes in them. **Example:** In a story about a man who is diagnosed with cancer and, through medicine and will-power, returns to his former occupation, the theme might be: "Real courage is demonstrated through internal bravery and perseverance." In a poem about a flower that grows, blooms, and dies, the theme might be: "Youth fades, and death comes to all."

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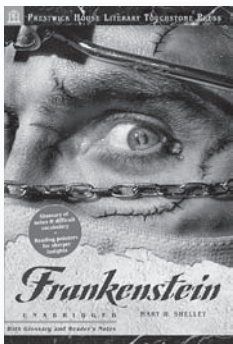
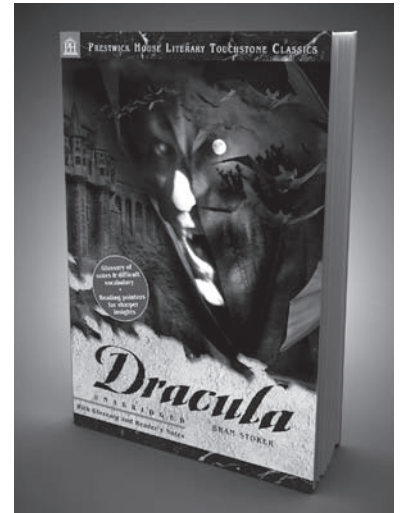
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