Much Ado About Nothing

The 2014 Linny Fowler WillPower Tour

STUDY GUIDE
There was a star danced, and under that was I born.

Act 2, Scene 1
Much Ado About Nothing

Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival’s production is part of Shakespeare for a New Generation, a national program of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest.

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The National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest presents Shakespeare for a New Generation. The Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival is one of 40 professional theater companies selected to participate in Shakespeare for a New Generation, bringing the finest productions of Shakespeare to middle- and high-school students across the United States. This is the twelfth year of Shakespeare for a New Generation, the largest tour of Shakespeare in the United States.
Introduction

Our performance of *Much Ado About Nothing* is designed to energize and inspire your students—instilling a greater understanding and appreciation of theater, Shakespeare, and language, both spoken and written. The post-show discussion allows students to directly connect with the actor-teachers. For schools that have contracted for the full day program, workshops provide students with activities which illuminate the vitality of Shakespeare’s words and characters in a highly engaging experience.

This study guide gives you information and activities specific to this production of *Much Ado About Nothing* which is designed to give young people a fresh view on a classic work. There is also information and resources on Shakespeare’s life language, and theater. We will bring all our skill, passion, and artistry to the task. We hope you and your students enjoy, and will be filled with, *WillPower*!

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Preparing Students to See *Much Ado About Nothing*

What can we do in class to prepare?

**Read the synopsis.**
We know time is tight in the classroom and your students may not have the opportunity to read the whole play. That’s okay, but do give them a sense of the story. The experience of seeing the play will not be spoiled by knowing the end; it will only be enhanced. Shakespeare’s plays are driven by language and character. If we know the plot ahead of time, there is no worrying about following the events and we are able to enjoy Shakespeare’s language and the journey of the play. Our synopsis is on page 6.

**Get to know the characters.**
Shakespeare liked to create a large cast of characters. The people in his plays are as detailed and diverse as the people in our world. As their names can be unusual, it is helpful to review who is who and what they do before the play begins. Just like in Shakespeare’s day, our WillPower actors play multiple roles. Take a look at page 8 to find out how we perform *Much Ado About Nothing* with only nine actors!

**Introduce the language.**
Try thinking about Shakespeare’s language as 400 years younger than the English we speak today. It is more vibrant, imaginative, and full of passion and power. This is the element that creates the wild ride of a Shakespeare play.

At first, our modern ear can be overwhelmed by the richness and complexity of the text. If you listen closely and give yourself a few minutes to adjust, the language will begin to reveal its exceptional beauty. Try the classroom activity on page 26 as a warm-up.

**Play your part.**
Remind your students that the performance happens in real time and they have a very important role to play. The actors will often be looking at and speaking directly to the audience as an acting partner and looking for a response. We invite students to participate as an engaged and supportive audience. When the audience is attentive and responsive, they share in the creation of magical theater moments. Live theatre is not the same experience as going to the movies or watching TV at home. In the same way, noises and distracting behavior will have a negative impact on the actors’ concentration and performance and affect the experience of the other spectators. Audience members should not talk to each other, unwrap candy or other food, search through a purse or backpack; they should also shut off wristwatch alarms and cellphones. Texting distracts those around you from the live event and you might miss the kiss, a bawdy joke, or an inspiring moment. Don’t check out! **Remember that actors can see and hear the audience.**
Synopsis

Act 1  “I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.”
A messenger alerts Leonato, the Governor of Messina, his daughter, Hero, and her cousin, Beatrice, that Don Pedro, Prince of Aragon, and his army are returning victorious from war. The Prince arrives with Benedick, Claudio, and Don Pedro’s half-brother, Don John. Claudio falls in love with Hero at first sight while Benedick and Beatrice begin a “merry war” of wits. Claudio tells Benedick of his love, but Benedick teases him and vows to be a lifelong bachelor. Don Pedro offers to help Claudio by wooing Hero on his behalf at the masked ball that evening. Don John’s servant, Borachio, overhears the plan and shares it with his master, who sees an opportunity to be a “plain-dealing villain.”

Act 2  “Friendship is constant in all other things save in the office and affairs of love…”
Before the party, Leonato urges Hero to be open to an offer of marriage if it comes her way, but Beatrice urges her to make her own decision and vows never to marry. The men arrive masked, and Don Pedro asks Hero to dance. Beatrice is paired with Benedick, but unaware of her dance partner’s identity, she calls Benedick a “dull fool.” Don John attempts to upset Claudio by saying that the Prince is courting Hero for himself, but this matter is quickly resolved when Don Pedro announces that he has successfully wooed Hero on Claudio’s behalf. Claudio and Hero will be married and Don Pedro decides that they should all trick Beatrice and Benedick into falling in love with each other. Unable to destroy their relationship, Don John plots to ruin Hero and Claudio’s wedding; he will use Hero’s maid, Margaret, to make it seem Hero is unfaithful. Don Pedro stages a conversation about Beatrice’s “love” for Benedick to overhear, and Benedick secretly admits his affection for her.

Act 3  “What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true?”
Beatrice overhears another staged conversation between Hero and Margaret about Benedick’s love for her, and she privately confesses her own affection for Benedick. Don John tells Pedro and Claudio that Hero is unfaithful, and “proves” it by leading them to Hero’s window, where Borachio is wooing Margaret. Dogberry, the bumbling local constable, and his follower, Verges, overhear the drunken Borachio bragging about the scheme to make Hero appear unfaithful. Dogberry and Verges arrest Borachio, but are unable to communicate the situation to Leonato.

Act 4  “I do love nothing in the world so well as you. Is not that strange?”
At the wedding, Claudio and Don Pedro publicly accuse Hero of being unfaithful. Hero protests her innocence, and the Friar suggests the family hide her away and pretend she is dead, so that the guilty parties may feel remorseful and the truth will come to light. Privately, Beatrice and Benedick confess their love for one another. Beatrice asks Benedick to prove his love by killing Claudio for shaming Hero, and Benedick reluctantly agrees. Meanwhile, Dogberry witlessly interrogates Borachio.

Act 5  “A miracle! Here’s our own hands against our hearts.”
Benedick challenges Claudio to a duel. Dogberry presents Borachio to Leonato and the plot against Hero is revealed. Leonato tells a remorseful Claudio that he can atone for his mistake by marrying Hero’s cousin in the morning. Benedick asks Leonato for Beatrice’s hand in marriage. Claudio, arriving to marry Hero’s cousin, happily discovers that the bride is Hero herself. Beatrice and Benedick realize they have been tricked into loving each other, and are forced to admit their affection to their friends and family. It is reported that Don John has been arrested and will be punished for his deceit.
Dramatis Personae
The characters in our play

Leonato’s House
Leonato – Governor of Messina, Hero’s father, Beatrice’s uncle, and the host for the play’s events.
Hero – Leonato’s only daughter, in love with Claudio and wrongfully accused of being unchaste.
Beatrice – Leonato’s niece and Hero’s cousin. She is admired for her wit and intelligence. She is comically tricked into falling in love with Benedick.
Margaret – Hero’s gentlewoman.

The Military
Don Pedro – Prince of Aragon and close friend of Benedick and Claudio.
Don John – Don Pedro’s illegitimate brother. A villain who ostracizes himself.
Borachio – a drunken follower of Don John. He plots against the marriage of Hero and Claudio.
Benedick – a comic hero with a dazzling wit who has vowed never to marry. He is “tricked” into falling in love with Beatrice.
Claudio – a young man and friend of Benedick. He quickly falls in love with Hero and becomes engaged to marry her.

The Townsfolk
Dogberry – a local constable who bring the truth to light despite his ignorance and comic blunders.
Verges – Dogberry’s sidekick and deputy constable.
Sexton – the local judge.
Friar Francis – believes Hero is innocent, hatches the plot to clear her name and performs the marriage ceremony of Claudio and Hero.
James R. Alexander (Don Pedro) is ecstatic to be making his debut with the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival. His classical credits include King Henry in *Henry IV Part I* (Long Island Shakespeare Festival) and Caliban in *The Tempest* (Asylum Theater Company). He has also participated in the Royal Shakespeare Company’s Open Stages Festival. Additional credits include Lt. Kaffee in *A Few Good Men* and Mikey in *The Normal Heart*. This one is for his lady. Follow him on Twitter @AlexanderinIMAX.

Amy Crossman (Hero/Verges) is thrilled to be joining the WillPower Tour at PSF this fall! Recent credits include *Roman Fever* at the Midtown International Theatre Festival, *King Lear* at Theater2020, *Julius Caesar* at The Hudson Warehouse, and *As You Like It* at The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey. Additionally, Amy works at the Atlantic Acting School and mentors young playwrights through the educational programs at the Manhattan Theatre Club. Training: Drew University, Upright Citizens Brigade, ESPA @ Primary Stages.

Kenny Fedorko (Don John/Friar) NYC credits include *Cymbeline* (Cloten), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Dogberry) and *BOX*, *Listen…* and *Shrewd* with Improbable Stage Company, where he is a founding and active member. Regional tours: *One Night* (Will) and *Four Hearts* (Brian) with Equalogy Inc. and *The Industrious Mr. Franklin* (Ben Franklin). Kenny is the award recipient of the Paul Newman Trophy 2013 for Best Actor (*Thom Pain*) at Kenyon College.

Paige Gober (Stage Manager) is thrilled to join PSF for WillPower! Paige is from Nashville, TN, and is a proud alumnus of Middle Tennessee State University. She has worked with the Nashville Shakespeare Festival, the Tennessee Governor’s School for the Arts, the Orlando International Fringe Theatre Festival, and Universal Orlando Resort. Earlier this year, she completed a stage management apprenticeship at the Orlando Shakespeare Theater where she was a Production Assistant on *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby Parts 1 & 2*. She has also directed *I Am My Own Wife* at Carnegie Mellon University’s Playground X: A Festival of Independent Student Work.

Laura Iris Hill (Dogberry/Margaret/Messenger) trained at BAPA in Australia and is thrilled to be returning to PSF after last year’s *Macbeth*. Other Shakespeare includes *Cymbeline* (Hudson Shakespeare), *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Macbeth* performed in Tokyo. New York theatre includes *Cupid and Psyche* (Turn to Flesh), *Cosi and Speaking in Tongues*. Laura was also a recurring guest over 2 years on long-running Aussie TV show *Neighbours*. 
Aaron Kirkpatrick (Benedick) is delighted to return to PSF after playing Lucio in Measure for Measure, 2013. Favorite previous roles include: Brick in Cat On A Hot Tin Roof, directed by Marti Maraden, Tupolski in The Pillowman, Don Pedro in Much Ado for Kentucky Shakes. Aaron holds a MFA from Indiana University. Thank you to everyone that has made this production possible. Enjoy the show!

Luke Massengill (Borachio) is overjoyed to be a part of Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival’s WillPower Tour for the first time. Luke began his professional career in Rome, Italy, where he spent four years working as an actor and writer. Luke has spent that past five years touring with the Idaho Shakespeare Festival’s Shakespearience Tour, playing the roles of Mercutio, Puck, Iago, Sir Toby and Macbeth. Luke has also worked as an instructor for The School of Theater for the past six years.

Hunter Ringsmith (Claudio/Sexton) is thrilled to be returning to PSF after appearing in Fiddler on the Roof this summer as Motel. Other Credits: Macbeth in Macbeth and Antonio u/s in Twelfth Night at Great River Shakespeare Festival; Dick/Peter Cratchit in A Christmas Carol at The Dallas Theatre Center; and Nels in I Remember Mama at Hope Summer Repertory Theatre. BFA: Southern Methodist University, where he performed in The Rimers of Eldritch, Othello, Mercury Fur, and This Beautiful City. Thanks to friends and family for their love and light!

Antoinette Robinson (Beatrice) is delighted to be working with PSF for the first time. Recent credits include; New York Classical Theater: As You Like It; Queens Company: Sir Patient Fancy; Hyde Park Theater: The Mother with the Hat; Seattle Children’s Theater: Edge of Peace; Guthrie Theater: Time Sensitive. Big love to Amanda, Andrea and her grandfather Isaac Robinson for their continuous support. MFA from the University of Texas at Austin.

David Wayne (Leonato) Coriolanus, Coriolanus- The African Warrior; Octavius, Antony & Cleopatra (Harlem Shakes). Off Bway/NY: Octavius, Antony & Cleopatra (TWAS/Poets Den Theater); Jason of Tougou, Pecong (TWAS/Nat’l Black Theater- Audelco Award nom, Supporting Actor); Lem, The Emperor Jones (Irish Rep Theater); Laertes, Hamlet (TWAS/Wksp Theatre); Prince, Moon on a Rainbow Shawl (New Federal Theater); Messenger, Medea (TWAS/Nat’l Black Theater); Damian, his play Love and Marriage and New York City (Billie Holiday Theater, UK, Canada). Reg/Internat’l: Richard Foster in Toronto prod of his play, Ecstasy; Sebastian, The Tempest (NCSF); Friday, Robinson Crusoe (OST); Roderigo, Othello (VSF). “Face” of Xoom.com. NYC Council Award for Excellence in the Arts.
William Shakespeare: Who was this guy?

Our knowledge of William Shakespeare’s life is pieced together from limited primary sources for information: his own works, various legal and church documents, and references to him, his plays, and his genius in third-party letters. Here’s what we do know:

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon on or about April 23, 1564. Records from Holy Trinity Church tell us he was baptized there on April 26, 1564. His father was John Shakespeare, a glove-maker, and his mother was Mary Arden, a land-owning heiress. William was the third of eight children, three of whom died in childhood. His father was fairly successful and was an alderman and a high-bailiff (mayor) of Stratford.

It is assumed that he went to the free grammar school in Stratford, which was considered an excellent school. It seems certain that Shakespeare never went on to University.

The next documented event is Shakespeare’s marriage to Anne Hathaway on November 28, 1582. They had three children: a daughter, Susanna, and twins, Hamnet and Judith. Hamnet died at age 11.

We lose track of Shakespeare for the next seven years. There are rumors that he was fond of poaching and had to flee Stratford after an incident with one of the gentry there. He began to make a name for himself in London by 1592, possibly earlier, as both an actor and a playwright. Unfortunately, the plague forced the closing of the theaters in 1592. By 1594 the plague had abated, and Shakespeare was acting, writing, and performing the duties of a managing partner for the Lord Chamberlain’s Men. This was a popular company, enjoyed by the commoners as well as royalty. It was around this time that Shakespeare and company made plans for the Globe Theater. The Globe was to be across the river from London, and was built around 1599. In total, Shakespeare wrote 37 plays that have survived (or 38, depending on the point of view of the particular scholar) and numerous sonnets and poems.

April 23, 1616 is the day that marks Shakespeare’s death (the same as his birthday!) though we are uncertain of that date’s precision. We do know he was buried in Stratford, with services at the Holy Trinity Church on April 25, 1616. In his infamous will, he left his properties to his daughter Susanna, and to his wife his “second best bed.”
Shakespeare’s England

Elizabeth I was one of the most popular and longest-reigning monarchs in English history (1558-1603). Images of her curly red hair and her reputation for possessing a shrewd political mind are well-known through books, movies, and works of art. Elizabethan England was a time of great literary and artistic flowering, as well as royal turmoil and global conquest.

Elizabeth I presided over a country rocked by nearly a century of religious upheaval. The country had endured radical ideological shifts, accompanied by public persecutions, as each new monarch took the throne. Elizabeth was the daughter of Anne Boleyn and the infamous Henry VIII of England. She became Queen of England at age 25 after her half-brother and half-sister had each briefly reigned and died. Her sister Mary’s reign had been particularly brutal and violent.

Nonetheless, the age of Shakespeare was a great time in English history. The reign of Elizabeth saw England emerge as the leading naval and commercial power of the Western world with the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, and she firmly established the Church of England (begun by her father, Henry VIII, after a dispute with the Pope.)

At this time, London was the heart of England, reflecting all the vibrant qualities of the Elizabethan age. Its dramatists and poets were among leading literary artists of the day. London’s population grew 400%, swelling to nearly two hundred thousand people in the city proper and outlying region by the time a young man named Shakespeare came to town.

Food and Medicine

During the Elizabethan period, table manners were very different than they are now. Even noble people would throw bones on the floor when they were finished, and forks were a rarity at any table. Bread and meat were the two most important staples on the English diet. They also enjoyed a lot of wine and cheese but ate very few fruits and vegetables.

This poorly balanced diet was one cause of the many illnesses that swept through Elizabethan England. Sicknesses resulted from malnutrition and improper cooking habits. Also, smallpox and syphilis were common afflictions passed from person to person. But the major cause of death during Elizabethan England was the plague known as the Black Death, which flooded all of Europe. It was carried by rats living in the streets. People used herbal remedies for many ailments, but unfortunately, only the very rich were able to afford doctors or apothecaries.
Fashions of the Day

The fashions of both men and women were extravagant and complicated. Men and women alike were very hair-conscious; they spent a lot of time and money getting their hair dyed red or blonde (the most fashionable colors.) Men would trim and style their beards, and women wore their hair in combs, nets, or jeweled pins. At the time, a high forehead was considered very attractive, so women would pluck the hair from their front hairlines. Both sexes wore wigs, especially when they lost their own hair or if it turned gray.

In terms of clothing, women wore very long dresses that dragged on the ground, and their bodices were very tightly-laced and came to a point at the waist. The sleeves were puffy around the shoulders and tight around the lower arms. Very large ruffles around the neck were popular with both men and women, and were considered a status symbol for the upper classes. Men wore shorter breeches or pants with brightly colored stockings underneath to show off their calves. Large, ornate jewels were worn by both sexes, and were often so heavy that it made dancing difficult.

Entertainment & Recreation

In addition to attending public theatres, the Elizabethan people engaged in sports: soccer, swimming, fishing, bowling, wrestling, and tennis. The people of a town would also gather together on holidays for huge parties and festivals, particularly on All Hallow’s Eve (Halloween) and the Twelfth Night of Christmas.

One rather morbid pastime of Elizabethan England was watching the public punishments of criminals. In many towns, the stocks were permanent fixtures where felons would be locked into place for mockery and torment by the townspeople. Public executions were also well attended. Bear-baiting and cock fighting were other popular and gruesome sports.
Shakespeare’s Theatre

In Renaissance England, theater was an important part of everyday life. Public theaters were built in and around the city of London and were open to all. The most expensive seats were in the balconies but the cheapest admission charge was for the “groundlings,” the people who stood on the ground in front of the stage.

In 1599 the Globe opened. It was an open-air polygonal amphitheater with many levels and could seat up to 3,000 people. The stage area was a large platform that jutted out from the building and allowed for the audience to surround it on three sides. There was no curtain in front of the stage. A curtained area at the back of the stage could be opened to reveal another room, or some kind of surprise. Above this area was a balcony. This would be a place for kings to address the masses or perhaps for Juliet to talk to Romeo. Below the stage was a trap door that was used for special effects (Shakespeare was very fond of ghosts!) Behind the stage was the “tiring house,” a place where actors changed costumes and could rest between scenes.

This open-air theater was dependent on natural lighting and good weather. Costumes and props (guillotines, ladders, crowns, etc.) may have been extravagant in some cases. The set did not change from show to show. When the play was to shift location, spoken lines set the scene (“How dark is this night!”) They did use music and sound effects such as cannons and drums. Many plays also had songs.

Shared Staging: The Globe and WillPower

- **Men played all of the roles**- In Shakespeare’s day, females were not allowed on the stage (until after 1660). Now, women often step into roles originally intended for men. Shakespeare trusted the audience’s imagination, and so do we.
- **Actors played many parts**- At the Globe, an actor might have played seven parts in a single play! Our actors also double up. It is fun for them and the audience to see them play multiple roles.
- **One fixed set**- Like Shakespeare’s company, WillPower uses a few pieces of scenery, such as benches and thrones, to imply a new location, but mostly we trust the descriptive language to change the scene.
- **No lighting design**- As with the set, the lighting did not change with each scene (unless the sun went behind a cloud!)
- **No intermission**- Shakespeare often didn’t have an intermission, and neither do we.
- **Shakespeare used music**- Unfortunately, we can’t bring live musicians on tour like the ones who performed at the Globe. But we do use recorded music to create moods and help tell the story.
Shakespeare Timeline

1564  William Shakespeare and Galileo are born.

1565  Pencils are first manufactured in England.

1567  Two comedies are performed at a Spanish mission in Tequesta, Florida

1576  The first playhouse in England is run by James Burbage.

1588  Spanish Armada is battered by the English

1590  *Henry VI, Part I* becomes William Shakespeare's first play to open onstage.

1595  Shakespeare writes *Romeo and Juliet*.

1596  Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is completed.

1599  The Globe Theatre is built. Shakespeare writes *Julius Caesar* and *Much Ado About Nothing*.

1600  Shakespeare writes *Hamlet*.

1603  James VI of Scotland rises to the English throne after the death of Elizabeth I, uniting England and Scotland under one crown and takes the new name, James I.

1605  Miguel de Cervantes publishes *Don Quixote*.

1605-6  Shakespeare writes *Othello, King Lear, and Macbeth*.

1607  Jamestown, Virginia is founded.

1609  Johannes Kepler establishes that the planets move in an elliptical path around the sun; Galileo builds his first telescope.

1611  The King James Bible is published.

1614  English settler John Rolfe marries Pocahontas, the daughter of a Native American chief.

1616  William Shakespeare and Miguel de Cervantes both die.

1623  Publication of the First Folio.
Shakespeare’s Use of Language

The English language and vocabulary were expanding rapidly in Renaissance and Elizabethan England. Several factors contributed to this:

- Scientific progress
- Rediscovery and publication of classical texts
- Prized social skills to offer stirring praise or stinging insults
- Interest in foreign languages
- Publication of The King James Bible (1611) – approximately 8,000 different words.

An average person might make use of 17,000 words in a lifetime. Shakespeare used more than 34,000.

It has been said that Shakespeare invented, or was the first to commit to print, 1,700 words in writing his plays, sonnets, and long poems.

Here are some words and phrases that first appeared in print in Shakespeare’s plays:

- Alligator
- Castigate
- Manager
- full circle
- Critical
- Gnarled
- Puke
- Equivocal
- Jaded
- dead as a door-nail
- Gloomy
- Mimic
- Impede
- Auspicious
- too much of a good thing
- Leapfrog
- Dauntless
- Obscene
- RUMINATION
- Torture
- Frugal
- Eyeball
- Petition
- elbow-room
- Rancorous
- Unmitigated
- all that glisters is not gold
- Eyesore
- good riddance
- Reinforcement
- Luggage
- Pedant
- Majestic
- Worthless
- sorry sight
- Hoodwinked
- LONELY
- Zany
- Outbreak
- heart of gold
- Divest
- Mountaineer
- Laughing stock
Shakespeare’s Inspiration

With any work of art, there is always a seed of inspiration: a germinal idea that grows into a painting, a dance or a play. Sometimes, after being influenced by particular works, writers and playwrights will adopt elements of such works and fashion them into their own story.

The main plot between Claudio and Hero was inspired by many different sources. The first is a novella by Matteo Bandello from 1554. Bandello’s story takes place in Messina, the same town where Much Ado is set, and includes many similar character names, including Lionato and Don Pedro. The second is an epic poem, Orlando Furioso by Italian poet Ludovico Ariosto. The poem was written more than 100 years before Shakespeare’s play and includes an instance where a lover is misled to believe that his mistress is unfaithful. Shakespeare may not, however, have been familiar with Ariosto’s original poem, which was written in Italian, but with the English translation published in 1591. Another epic poem may also have served as a source; English poet, Edmund Spenser’s The Faerie Queene includes events that are similar to Much Ado, although the poem was only published a few years before Much Ado premiered.

The element that really sets Much Ado apart from its source material is the addition of Beatrice and Benedick. The sources Shakespeare pulled from all lacked the comedic element that these two characters bring to Much Ado, and they are considered original to Shakespeare. The characters’ witty banter may have been inspired by Baldassare Castiglione’s The Book of Courtier. This book, which was published in 1528, remains one of the most important and widely read works of all time; Shakespeare almost certainly read it, either in the original Italian or the English translation from 1561. The book was revolutionary because Castiglione suggests that women should contribute to courtly life. To illustrate his point, he wrote a series of upbeat debates between a man and a woman that may have inspired the verbal sparring between Beatrice and Benedick.

Bumbling and inept policemen were theatrical staples by Shakespeare’s time, but Dogberry is a considered a Shakespeare original. The role was written for a specific actor – William Kempe. Kempe was a famous Elizabethan actor who was known for his skills as a physical comedian. Kempe was an actor with Shakespeare’s troupe, Lord Chamberlain’s Men, from 1594 to 1599 and it is believed that other comedic roles in like Bottom in A Midsummer Night’s Dream and Peter in Romeo and Juliet were written for him as well.
Shakespeare Inspires

Artists have always been interested in reinventing Shakespeare. They are as inspired by him as he was by the artists who came before him. Since the original production of *Much Ado About Nothing* back in the 1500s, the story has been interpreted and re-imagined in numerous ways.

In the year 1662, *Much Ado About Nothing* was merged with another Shakespeare play, *Measure for Measure*, by William Davenant, and was titled *The Law Against Lovers*. Then again in 1721, it was combined with Shakespeare’s *As You Like It* and called *Love in a Forest*, and the play was even merged with one of Moliere’s comedies in 1737.

Even early on, adaptations of *Much Ado About Nothing* moved beyond the straight (non-musical) play, as can be seen with Hector Berlioz’s opera, *Béatrice et Bénédick*, which was written in 1862, and completely removed the Hero and Claudio plot.

In the advent of early film making, a 1913 silent film adaptation of the play was made. Since then, multiple film and television variations have been produced, including the most modern versions. Kenneth Branagh (*Gilderoy Lockhart* in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*) directed and starred in a film version made in 1993, also starring Emma Thompson (Professor Trelawney in the Harry Potter franchise), Denzel Washington (Coach Herman Boone in *Remember the Titans*), and Keanu Reeves (Neo in *The Matrix*), amongst other notable actors. In the spring of 2013, Joss Whedon, best known for his film *The Avengers*, filmed a low budget black-and-white adaption, which was done in his California home over the course of 12 days. Whedon’s cast included Clark Gregg (Agent Coulson in *The Avengers*), and Alexis Denisof (The Other in *The Avengers and Guardians of the Galaxy*).

*Much Ado About Nothing* has also appeared in other forms of media, and many of them have taken place in the year 2014. A vlog series called *Nothing Much To Do* came out in March, and it set the story in a New Zealand high school. A webseries adaptation was also released in July. It is entitled *A Bit Much*, and this series places the action in a present day summer camp. A rock opera variation of the play was also conceived, and Yale Repertory Theatre premiered the show, with music written by Billie Joe Armstrong, guitarist and vocalist for the band Green Day.
The Play in Performance

While no exact premiere date for *Much Ado About Nothing* is noted, it was known that by 1600 the play had been performed several times and had become immensely popular. Historians believe the opening of the play to have been between about 1598 and 1599. There is evidence of productions being done at the court of King James I around 1613, and King Charles I was a huge fan of the play.

*Much Ado About Nothing*’s popularity continued into the 18th century, with famous actor David Garrick playing Benedick numerous times between 1748 and 1776, the role which many perceived to be his greatest. In the 19th century, the duo of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry took on the roles of Beatrice and Benedick, proving that across decades, the story of these two bickering lovers was still captivating to audiences.

More modern productions of the play include A.J Antoon’s 1972 adaptation, which was the longest Broadway production in history. In 2011, David Tennant (The 10th Doctor in *Doctor Who*) took stage in London as Benedick, alongside his *Doctor Who* co-star, Catherine Tate, in a 1980s rendition of the play. Tennant’s performance received quite a bit of praise, and the production was recorded and is available for viewing by the public.

In a somewhat interesting casting choice, both Vanessa Redgrave (Max in *Mission: Impossible*) and James Earl Jones (voice of Darth Vader in the original *Star Wars* trilogy) took on the roles of Beatrice and Benedick in 2013, with both actors in their seventies and eighties. The production was not received well by critics, but having the roles of Beatrice and Benedick coveted by the most celebrated of actors merely proves the weight this story has held over time.

She speaks poniards, and every word stabs; if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no living near her; she would infect to the north star.

Act 2, Scene 1
Elizabethan Marriage Customs

Dating, relationships and marriage have changed a lot in the 400 years since Shakespeare was writing. Evidence of this can be found in Much Ado About Nothing and other Shakespeare plays. We have laws about marriage now, but in Shakespeare’s time, they had laws about dating and engagements, too! Along with the numerous laws, there were strict customs and expectations to adhere to, so there wasn’t much place for romance.

Weddings often served as business arrangements; families would marry off their children to strengthen their social position. Fathers were allowed to marry off their daughters when they were just seven years old, and at 12, a girl could consent to marriage until they’d reached the age of consent, which was 21. Most Elizabethan men would not marry until they reached the age of consent, which was 21. Arranged marriages were common and in many circumstances, the bride and groom would not meet until their wedding day.

During the engagement or betrothal period, the bride and groom’s families would carefully negotiate the terms of the “dowry,” a gift of money or property, which the bride’s family was expected to pay the groom. This dowry offered the wife stability if her husband predeceased her, because after they were married, the wife became his property. Betrothals could be terminated for a variety of reasons: heresy or apostasy, infidelity, serious physical disfigurement, discovery of previous marriage contracts, wickedness or drunkenness, or a long separation of the couple.

On the morning of the wedding, people would gather at the bride’s home before heading to the church. The wedding ceremony itself was solemn, but afterwards, there would be dancing, drinking and feasting; the guests would continue to celebrate even after the bride and groom had departed. The white dresses we know today did not exist in the Elizabethan era. Upper class women would wear their best gowns – or new ones if they could afford it – and sometimes a cloak, while the lower class women would wear dresses made from cotton or wool and tie flowers into their hair. Men would wear a suit that consisted of a doublet, a jerkin and a hose along with a cloak and hat.

Marriage for royals was usually a necessity. While there weren’t any laws mandating it, marriage was a political matter and one way countries made alliances. Queen Elizabeth I, however, never married – that is how she came to be called the “Virgin Queen.” She had plenty of offers, but she famously declared she was married to her country and England was her first priority. Queen Elizabeth’s refusal to marry was likely because she enjoyed her power and direct involvement in the government, and a marriage would have diminished both considerably. She used the possibility of marriage as a diplomatic tactic for decades, but ultimately ruled alone for the entirety of her reign.

Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway on November 28, 1582, when she was 26 and he was 18. Since Shakespeare was below the age of consent, he had to get his parents’ permission before he could go through with the wedding. The couple paid 40 pounds for their marriage license in Stratford-upon-Avon. They had three children together, but Shakespeare’s playwriting career kept them apart for many years. In his will, he famously left Anne just one thing – his “second-bed best.”
Malapropisms

Miscommunication is a major plot-driver in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Hero and Claudio’s marriage is almost foiled by it, a clever miscommunication causes Beatrice and Benedick to fall in love, and the local constable, Dogberry, can’t ever seem to say what he means. **Malapropisms**, or outrageous misuses of words, especially words that sound alike, abound whenever Dogberry is around. He is the clown of the play. In his effort to use the heightened language of his more educated contemporaries, Dogberry insults people when he intends to compliment them, and compliments them when he intends to insult them. Listen for mix-ups like “You are thought to be the most senseless (instead of sensible!) and fit man for the constable for the watch,” or “Villian! Thou will be condemned into everlasting redemption (instead of condemnation!) for this!” He is too confusing to be understood by Leonato, who impatiently dismisses Dogberry when he comes to warn the family about the plot against Hero.

The term malapropism was first used in reference to Richard Sheridan’s play, *The Rivals*, which had a character named Mrs. Malaprop who would speak in a mix-up vernacular. However, Shakespeare’s misuse of words in *Much Ado About Nothing* was known as “dogberryisms” to crowds of the 1500s, and therefore he can lay claim to the use of malapropisms before they became a standard literary device.

Cuckolds

The characters in *Much Ado About Nothing* place a great deal of importance on male honor and pride. For characters like Count Claudio, social standing is key, and being considered “unmanly” is the worst insult a man can receive. Throughout the play, you will hear the men mocking one another, making reference to horns or being cuckolded. A **cuckold** is a man whose wife has been unfaithful towards him, and to show his shame, he wears a pair of horns on his head. The term comes from the cuckoo bird, as some species lay their eggs in the nests of other birds, and the imagery of the horns or antlers comes from male deer (“stags”), who lose their mates when they lose a confrontation with another male.

While the term is used in the play as a good natured jest, it was a real fear for the men of that time. When Claudio believes Hero has been unfaithful, his pride is wounded, as his entire worth is wrapped up in his social honor. Marrying an unfaithful woman would have made him a cuckold, and therefore an object of ridicule to his friends and superiors.
Enjoying Shakespeare and His Genius

“A young man from a small provincial town – a man without wealth, without powerful family connections and without a university education – moved to London in the late 1580’s and in remarkably short time, became the greatest playwright not of his age but of all time. His works appeal to the learned and the unlettered, to urban sophisticates and provincial first-time theatergoers. He makes his audience laugh and cry; he turns politics into poetry; he recklessly mingles vulgar clowning and philosophical subtlety.”

-Stephen Greenblatt, Contemporary Scholar

“It was Olivier’s Henry V that made me realize that Shakespeare is about real people and that his language wasn’t simply beautiful poetry.”

-Robert Brustein

“Just plunge right in (to Shakespeare). See a play, read it aloud, rent a video, listen to a tape. It’s up to you. When you look at Shakespeare close up, he’s not as intimidating as when he’s seen from afar.”

Norrie Epstein, The Friendly Shakespeare

“My advice to anyone seeing Shakespeare:

Don’t worry so much!
Just make sure your ears are clean and your eyes are sharp.
Listen and look and watch.
Look at the distance people stand from each other;
Look at the relationships being developed.

Stay with it.
Don’t negate the move that Shakespeare will make toward your gut, toward your soul –
Because he will touch you there,
If you allow yourself to be touched.”

-David Suchet, actor

“But Shakespeare's magic could not copied be;
Within that circle none durst walk but he.”

- John Dryden
Before You Read - The Dramaturg

The dramaturg is an important person in the rehearsal process that helps everyone else understand the story. They might help the playwright revise dialogue to make the plot clearer. If the play was written many years ago, the dramaturg will research historical events that influenced the playwright. The director might ask them about the unfamiliar culture of the people of the play, and actors will come to the dramaturg when they don’t understand a word or custom. Dramaturgs are great at research and know a lot about the structure of a good play.

Dramaturgy can help you read a play in class, too. Individually or in small groups, research the following topics. Present your findings to the class. As you read, discuss how each item might have influenced the playwright, the values and lifestyle of the people in the play, or how a theater company might present *Much Ado About Nothing*.

1. One of the characters in *Much Ado About Nothing* is famous for his use of malapropisms. What is a malapropism? Why would an author use a malapropism in his or her writing? Can you research or create some modern examples of malapropisms?

2. What was it like to see a play during Shakespeare’s lifetime? Research the Globe Theater. What structural features of the building would the actors have utilized during the first production of *Much Ado About Nothing*? What were the scenery and costumes like? Where did the audience sit and what kind of people attended the theater?

3. Research famous productions of *Much Ado About Nothing*. What do they have in common? What is different? What type of actors are cast as Benedick? Dogberry? What time periods are the productions set in? What does that tell you about the kind of story you are about to read? Compare the 1994 film by Kenneth Branagh with Joss Whedon’s 2013 adaptation. Also check out the 2011 production starring David Tennant.

4. The laws and customs concerning marriage in the world of *Much Ado About Nothing* are very different than the ones we follow today. Research Elizabethan marriage customs. What do the laws about marriage and engagement tell you about the values of Elizabethan society, and the characters in the play?
As You Read—Casting the Characters

Before a play goes into rehearsal, the director must pick the right actor to play each character. How does the director decide what kind of actor to cast in each role? They look for clues in the script about each character’s looks and personality in what the character does, what they say about themselves, and what other characters or the author say about them.

As you read Much Ado About Nothing, take notes about the characters using the chart below. When you have filled in the first four columns, think of a famous actor who fits the description and cast them! Discuss your casting decisions with your class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>What the character says about themselves</th>
<th>What others say about the character</th>
<th>What the character does</th>
<th>Potential Actors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beatrice</td>
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<td>Benedick</td>
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<td>Hero</td>
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<td>Claudio</td>
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<td>Don Pedro</td>
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<td>Don John</td>
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<td>Leonato</td>
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<td>Dogberry</td>
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After You Read- Marketing

A crucial part of putting on a play is attracting an audience to enjoy it! The marketing department’s job is to create posters, brochures, website content and other media to tell potential theater-goers about the play and to entice them to attend a performance.

A great poster design begins with a close look at the mood, symbols, and themes of a play. For example, the mood of *Macbeth* is fatalistic, so PSF’s poster for our 2014 production features the ruins of a building and relies on dark colors. Compare our posters for *Pride and Prejudice* and *King John*. What do the colors tell you about the mood of each play? A theme of *Measure for Measure* is doing what is right even when you are the only person doing it- so the figure in our poster is walking alone.

Define mood, symbol, and theme. Think about *Much Ado About Nothing* and the most important things an audience member should know about the play. Design a poster using the mood, symbols, and themes of the play.
After the Performance - The Critic

A critic judges the merits of an artistic endeavor. They give their opinion of what they saw and felt when they watched a play, saw a movie, or heard a song. Everyone has an opinion, and by writing a review, you have the opportunity to express yours!

As you write your review of Much Ado About Nothing, use the outline below as a guide.

I. Introduction. Start by telling the reader what play you saw, who the playwright was, and when and where you saw it. Tell them what kind of show it was (drama, comedy, melodrama, farce, etc.) and give them a brief synopsis of the play.

II. Tell your reader what you thought of the play.

   Things to consider:

   1. The Direction. The director is the person who, in the end, is responsible for what you see on stage. They pick the actors, design, costumes, and staging for the show. Do you think they did a good job? Were their choices successful in creating an enjoyable performance? What did you think of the pacing of the production- was it too fast or too slow?

   2. The Acting. Discuss the acting. Did the actors make you believe in what they were doing on stage? Did they make you laugh or cry? Which performances did you particularly enjoy?

   3. The Design. How did the design contribute to the production? What did you think of the costumes, set, and sound effects? Did they make the play more enjoyable or were they distracting?

III. Conclusion. Summarize your opinions. How did the play make you feel? How did your reactions compare with the people around you (i.e. did they laugh at a joke you didn’t like?) What did you particularly like about the production? Did it change your thoughts on theater or life? Did you learn anything new? You might conclude by considering if your appreciation of theater was developed by what you saw.

Remember to be specific as you write your review! Include as many details as you can. Your audience wasn’t at the performance with you, so it is your job to tell them what you saw and what they missed.

P.S. As a critic, it is okay to write down things that you didn’t like, too. It’s your opinion!
More Classroom Activities

Activities to do before you read the play

1. **A Creative Much Ado About Nothing Collage**
   
   Start a bulletin board for *Much Ado About Nothing*. This will be a place where you can add pictures, quotes, and poetry that remind you of the characters, plot, events, and key objects of the play. Start off by putting pictures or words that represent anything you may know or think you know about *Much Ado About Nothing* before you read it. As you progress through the play, add items to your bulletin board until it is covered with *Much Ado About Nothing* information! As you read, look for images of some of the play’s major symbols (masks for deception, etc.) As you go deeper into the play, sit down in a circle and discuss your additions to the bulletin board.

2. **Get on Your Feet!**
   
   Shakespeare writes in iambic pentameter. Although those are big words they make reading Shakespeare easy and fun to read. **First you have to feel the rhythm!** Take Hero’s speech in 3.1 (“O god of love!”) and read it silently. Count the number of syllables in each line -there may be a few lines that do not follow the strict 10 syllable rule, so don’t worry! Form a circle and walk as you read the lines out loud. Let the rhythm or the lines set the pace for your circle. Don’t think too hard about this, just speak the lines and walk! Allow the rhythm of the writing to affect the speed of your steps. Guess what? You’re walking in iambic pentameter! When you get to the end of the line repeat, repeat, repeat.

3. **Unleash your Inner Shakespeare**
   
   Shakespeare was a talented expressive writer. This exercise is done all on your own. First find a location that has a lot of activity, like a school hallway, the cafeteria, or outside somewhere. Once you have chosen your secret destination, sit and write for 10-15 minutes. **Write about whatever you see, hear, smell, or feel.** Try to make your writing as descriptive as possible. To test your writing skills, see if you can use a metaphor in your writing. To see how well you described your location, see if your class can tell where your location was.

4. **Shakespearean Dictionary Game**
   
   In small groups, flip through the script and find two words that you are pretty sure no one will know. Then, using the foot notes or a lexicon (if you have one) look up the definitions. Next as a group make up two other believable definitions that your classmates might think is the answer. First read the line in which the word appears out loud. Then read the three definitions out loud, including the correct one. Then as a class, **vote on the definition that you think is correct!**
More Classroom Activities
Activities to do as you read the play

1. **In Your Own Words**
   Shakespeare didn’t just write for the wealthy and well educated, but also the lower classes. Choose a character from the play and find one of their longest speeches. Re-write the speech in your own words with a particular audience in mind. How would you change the wording if you were writing for a small child? A teenager? An adult who has never studied Shakespeare? What parts of Shakespeare’s text would you keep the same? Be creative with your revisions, but remember to preserve the meaning of the original speech in your “translation.”

2. **Two Sides of Every Story**
   Read aloud the following statements and allow students to choose whether they agree or disagree with the statement by going to different sides of the room. After each statement, ask two or three students to justify their rationale and allow other students to debate their answers. Have students use examples from their own lives and well as the text of *Much Ado About Nothing* to help support their case.
   - Men and women should marry people of similar social and economic status as themselves.
   - People choose with whom they will fall in love.
   - Lying is always wrong.
   - A person’s feelings about love and marriage never change.
   - Opposites attract.
   - Women (or men) who are assertive and bold are more likely to have successful relationships.
   - Jealousy in a romantic relationship is usually a sign the relationship has problems.
   - Children should go along with their parent’s wishes in regards to choosing a mate because parents usually know what is best for their children.

3. **Words, Words, Words**
   Shakespeare had an extremely vivid imagination, and enjoyed creating new words to use in his plays. As a tribute to Shakespeare, and to stretch the students’ imaginations, propose they write a short story including all the words he invented listed on page 15. Allow students to take turns reading their stories aloud in class.

4. **Pen Pals**
   Some relationships in the play do not receive as much attention as others. Encourage students to use their imaginations and choose one of the following letters to write:
   - From Hero to her father, Leonato, while she is hiding pretending to be dead.
   - From Margaret to Hero, asking her forgiveness and pleading innocence in the plot to ruin her.
   - From Dogberry to Leonato, asking for a letter of recommendation as he applies for a new job.
Day of the Play—Famous Lines from Much Ado About Nothing

Much Ado About Nothing contains some of the most famous lines in theater. Below is a list of some important lines from Much Ado About Nothing, lines that help to set the tone, reveal inner thoughts, and move the story forward. Assign a line to each student. Give the class time to read the line in context, think about who is delivering the line and why, and decide what it means. Then have students explore the lines on their feet, making vocal and physical choices to convey meaning. Reconvene the class into a standing circle, and allow each student to step forward on their turn and perform their line for the group.

- “A victory is twice itself when the achiever brings home full numbers.” –Leonato I, i
- “He hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age, doing, in the figure of a lamb, the feats of a lion.” –Messenger I,i
- “I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in his grace.” –Don John I, iii
- “With a good leg and a good foot, uncle, and money in enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world, if a’ could get her good-will.” –Beatrice II, i
- “Speak low, if you speak love.” –Don Pedro II, i
- “Silence is the perfectest herald of joy: I were but little happy, if I could say how much.” –Claudio II, i
- “Time goes on crutches till love have all his rites.” –Claudio II, i
- “Bait the hook well; this fish will bite.” –Claudio II, iii
- “I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me: if it had been painful, I would not have come.” –Beatrice II, iii
- “What fire is in mine ears?” –Beatrice III, i
- “I do love nothing in the world so well as you.” –Benedick III, v
- “You dare easier be friends with me than fight with mine enemy.” –Beatrice III, v
- “Shall I speak a word in your ear?” –Benedick V,i
- “What a pretty thing man is when he goes in his doublet and hose and leaves off his wit!” –Don Pedro V, i
- “Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?” –Don Pedro V, i
- “I do suffer love indeed, for I love thee against my will.” –Benedick V, i
- “I will never love that which my friend hates.” –Beatrice V, i
- “My heart is with your liking.” –Leonato V, iv
- “For here’s a paper written in his hand, a halting sonnet of his own pure brain, fashion’d to Beatrice.” –Claudio V, iv
- “A college of wit-crackers cannot flout me out of my humour.” –Benedick V, iv
After the Play—Questions for Essay and Discussion

- Select the love story that you feel is the play’s main plot. Explain why you have chosen it. Describe the main plot completely. Explain the role of the other love story.
- If you were to revise this play, what revisions would you make? What events would you add or take out? How would you change the characters? Write a summary of your revised plot, emphasizing the changes.
- Compare and contrast Beatrice and Hero. What characteristics, behaviors and/or situations do the two have in common? In what ways do they differ?
- Compare and contrast Claudio and Benedick. What characteristics, behaviors and/or situations do the two have in common? In what ways do they differ?
- What prevents Beatrice and Benedick from seeing that they love each other?
- Dogberry is one of the original archetypes for the bumbling policeman. What characters took their lead from Dogberry in literature, film and television? How are they similar? How are they different?
- Why might it be hard to believe that Hero and Claudio really love each other?
- How do gossip, conversation and overhearing function in the play?
- What does the play say about relationships between men and women?
- How does the play’s title relate to its content and themes?
- Shakespeare is known for his thoughtful, deliberate naming of characters. In *Much Ado About Nothing*, characters with meaningful names include Beatrice – whose name denotes “one who blesses” and Benedick – whose name means “one who is blessed.” Explore the possible significance of these name choices, using evidence from the text.
- Why doesn’t Hero say very much? Why does she marry Claudio after the way he treated her?
- What is the past history of Beatrice and Benedick? Hero and Claudio? Which couple’s love do you think is deeper or more serious? Which couple has a better understanding of love and relationships? How is each couple’s relationship put to the test? Which of the couples will be a successful match?
- Does Don Pedro love Beatrice?
- How did Dogberry get his post?
- How much does Margaret know of her part in the plot?
- In one sentence, say what you think the main message of the play is.
Back in the Classroom - Reflection

Name: __________________________________________

1.) What surprised you most in seeing our production of *Much Ado About Nothing*? How did it compare to your expectations?

2.) Which character in the play do you find most interesting? Why?

3.) *Much Ado About Nothing* includes a great deal of plotting and planning. Who in *Much Ado About Nothing* sets the plans in motion? To what ends? Does anyone try to interrupt those plans?

4.) Now that you have read and/or seen the play, how do you judge it as a comedy? Mood is the feeling of a piece of literature. Is the mood of this play light and humorous or serious and weighty? Refer to the play to find quotes and scenes used to establish the dominant mood.
Character Quiz: *Much Ado About Nothing*

Name: _____________________

Write the name of the characters below next to their description.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beatrice</th>
<th>Claudio</th>
<th>Don Pedro</th>
<th>Leonato</th>
<th>Sexton</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benedick</td>
<td>Dogberry</td>
<td>Friar Francis</td>
<td>Margaret</td>
<td>Verges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borachio</td>
<td>Don John</td>
<td>Hero</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1.) Governor of Messina, Hero’s father, Beatrice’s uncle, and host for the play’s events

2.) Leonato’s only daughter, in love with Claudio, wrongfully accused of being unchaste.

3.) Leonato’s niece and Hero’s cousin. She is admired for her wit and intelligence. She is comically tricked into falling in love with Benedick.

4.) A young man and friend of Benedick who quickly falls in love with Hero and wants to marry her.

5.) Hero’s gentlewoman and an unknowing accomplice in Hero’s undoing.

6.) Prince of Aragon and close friend on Benedick and Claudio.

7.) A local constable who brings the truth to light despite his ignorance and comic blunders.

8.) Don Pedro’s illegitimate brother. A villain who ostracizes himself.

9.) A drunker follower of Don John. He plots against the marriage of Hero and Claudio.

10.) A comic hero with a dazzling wit who has vowed never to marry. He is tricked into falling in love with Beatrice.

11.) Dogberry’s sidekick and deputy constable, matched in foolishness.

12.) The local judge.

13.) Believes Hero is innocent, hatches a plot to clear her name.
About the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival

The Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival is a professional theater company and the Official Shakespeare Festival of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania now celebrating its 24th season on the campus of DeSales University. Every summer, the finest actors, directors, designers, and artisans from Broadway, off-Broadway, regional theater, television and film converge at the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival. The area’s leading professional theater company, PSF brings five full-scale productions, the WillPower tour, and Shakespeare for Kids to the stage each year.

Our Mission is to enrich, inspire, engage and entertain the widest possible audience through first-rate professional productions of classical and contemporary plays, with a core commitment to the works of Shakespeare and other master dramatists, and through an array of educational and mentorship programs.

We are on social media! Please tell your students they can like Willpower at facebook.com/PAShakespeare or follow us @PaShakespeare to learn more about upcoming events and stay connected even after your WillPower day has ended.

More Opportunities for Students and Teachers

Student Rush Tickets

As a WillPower participating school, your students are eligible to attend PSF’s professional summer productions at the dramatically reduced price of $5.00 on a rush basis (with their student I.D.) Single ticket prices for the general public are normally $25 - $50+. As a teacher, if you are interested in bringing a group to the Festival, you can take advantage of our great group discounts by calling Dael Jackson at 610-282-1100, ext 1737.

Summer Learning at DeSales University

The Summer Theater Institute (STI) at DeSales University, in association with The Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, offers professional theater training to high school and college students, and members of the community, as well as the best in drama education for grade school students.

The Summer Video Institute (SVI) at DeSales offers students an introduction to the theories and techniques of digital moviemaking. Working with state of-the-art technology, students will design, shoot, and edit films of their own creation.

The Summer Dance Intensive (SDI) at DeSales offers professional dance training to students ages 14 and up. The two-week program focuses on technical training in ballet, modern, and jazz dance.

For more information on the Division of Performing Arts: www.desales.edu
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS:
SAVE THE DATE
FOR THE 2015

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28th 2015
On the Center Valley Campus of DeSales University

The PSF Shakespeare Competition empowers participants and cultivates
skill development and artistry in language, Shakespeare, and the
art and craft of acting.

The Competition provides multiple performance opportunities for students,
direct evaluation of each performance by actors and teaching artists from New
Participants will also have the opportunity to engage in workshops and panel
discussions with professional artists. All high school-aged students in public,
private, or home school are eligible to participate.

$15,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS WILL BE AWARDED!

Visit www.pashakespeare.org/competition for details and registration information.
Meeting the Standards
Shakespeare and the Common Core

Standard Area – CC.1.3: Reading Literature: Students read and respond to works of literature – with emphasis on comprehension, making connections among ideas and between texts with focus on textual evidence.

Grade 7: CC.1.3.7.A, CC.1.3.7.B, **CC.1.3.7.G**, CC.1.3.7.K
Grades 9-10: CC.1.3.9-10.A, CC.1.3.9-10.B, **CC.1.3.9-10G**, CC.1.3.9-10H, CC.1.3.9-10K
Grades 11-12: CC.1.3.11-12A, CC.1.3.11-12.B, CC.1.3.11-12C, **CC.1.3.11-12G**, CC.1.3.11-12.K

Standard Area – CC.1.4: Writing: Students write for different purposes and audiences. Students write clear and focused text to convey a well-defined perspective and appropriate content.

Grades 6-8: CC.1.4.6-8.A, CC.1.4.6-7.C, CC.1.4.6-7.D, CC.1.4.8.D

**Bolded standards are directly related to the viewing of a play and comparing it with the original text.**

Answer Key: Character Quiz

1.) Leonato
2.) Hero
3.) Beatrice
4.) Claudio
5.) Margaret
6.) Don Pedro
7.) Dogberry
8.) Don John
9.) Borachio
10.) Benedick
11.) Verges
12.) Sexton
13.) Friar Francis
Sources for this Study Guide
And for teaching Shakespeare

BOOKS

PERIODICALS

WEBSITES
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- www.asf.net
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**Shakespeare Literature**
- www.webenglishteacher.com
- www.folger.edu/education
- www-tech.mit.edu/Shakespeare/
- www.shakespeareinamericancommunities.org
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Silence is the perfectest herald of joy: I were but little happy, if I could say how much.

Act 2, Scene 1