

TEACHER'S GUIDE

SEPTEMBER 2010

Guide compiled by Trish Tillman

Jonathan Moscone
Artistic Director

Susie Falk
Managing Director

Trish Tillman
Director of Artistic Learning

Emily Morrison
Programs Manager

Samantha Fryer
Artistic Learning
Administration Manager

PREP YOUR STUDENTS FOR THE SHOW-

Book your pre- or post-show

Classroom Workshop!

Contact the Artistic Learning Administrator

at 510.548.3422x136

for more info.



MUCH *About* NOTHING

PRESENTING SPONSORS



San Francisco
magazine

SEASON SPONSORS



San Francisco
magazine



STUDENT DISCOVERY UNDERWRITERS



CAL SHAKES

CALIFORNIA SHAKESPEARE THEATER

IN THIS GUIDE:

1. California Shakespeare Theater Overview

- a. Cal Shakes' Mission and Funders..... 3
- b. Artistic Learning Programs at Cal Shakes 4

2. *Much Ado About Nothing* Overview



- a. A Note to Teachers 6
- b. Plot Summary 7
- c. Who's Who: The Actors 8
- d. Who's Who: The Characters..... 10
- e. Character Map 12
- f. Seeing the Play—Before and After 13
- g. Shakespeare's Language..... 14

3. **word!** *Much Ado About Nothing: Word!*

- a. Words Can Bring Us Together—Benedick and Beatrice 16
- b. Words Can Kill—Claudio and Hero 17
- c. Word Confusion—Dogberry 18
- d. What Does the Title Mean?..... 19

4. Elizabethan Culture Overview



- a. William Shakespeare: A Mysterious Life..... 21
- b. Go Girls!..... 22

5. Resources



- a. *Much Ado about Nothing* on Film..... 24
- b. Additional Resources: Books and Internet 25

6. Classroom Activity Guide



- a. Cal Shakes' Mission and Funders..... 28
- b. Social Networking Character Study: "Shakesbook" 29
- c. Comic Book..... 32
- d. Musical Interlude 34
- e. Character Backstory: What Makes a Personality?..... 36
- f. Dogberryisms 38
- g. Brush Up Your Shakespeare reference sheet..... 40
- h. Cal Shakes Critique—Elementary and Middle School 41
- i. Cal Shakes Critique—Middle and High School 42

GUIDE CREDITS

Editor: Trish Tillman

Contributors: Carrie Foster, Philippa Kelly, Mirabelle Korn, Claire Parker, Carla Lerner, Vince Rodriguez, Cathleen Sheehan, Jenna Stich, Trish Tillman, Amelia Wade

Copy Editor: Stefanie Kalem

Layout & Graphics: Ilsa Brink

CAL SHAKES' MISSION AND FUNDERS

OUR MISSION

We strive for everyone, regardless of age, circumstance, or background, to discover and express the relevance of Shakespeare and the classics in their lives by:

- making boldly imagined and deeply entertaining interpretations of Shakespeare and the classics.
- providing in-depth, far-reaching creative educational opportunities.
- bringing disparate communities together around the creation of new American plays inspired by classic literature.

OUR FUNDERS AND SPONSORS

PRESENTING SPONSORS



SEASON SPONSORS



STUDENT DISCOVERY UNDERWRITERS



California Shakespeare Theater's production of *Much Ado About Nothing* is part of *Shakespeare for a New Generation*, a national initiative sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts in cooperation with Arts Midwest.

Cal Shakes Artistic Learning programs are also supported by the Dale Family Fund, Dodge & Cox, The Thomas J. Long Foundation, The San Francisco Foundation, and numerous individual donors.

SEASON UNDERWRITERS



ARTISTIC LEARNING PROGRAMS AT CAL SHAKES

Artistic Learning represents the California Shakespeare Theater's commitment to integrate our artistic and education efforts. The vision of Artistic Learning is to become a leading Bay Area citizen, creating a culture of lifelong learners and nourishing imaginations in preparation for the work of life.

Listed below are some of our many programs for youth, available both in and out of the classroom.

IN-SCHOOL RESIDENCIES

To support student achievement and teacher professional development, Cal Shakes brings working theater artists into the schools to teach with the aim of developing students' creative minds and voices. Collaborations can be based on established school and teacher curriculum (called "arts integration") or can be rooted in theater-related disciplines such as acting, Shakespeare, or stage combat.

STUDENT DISCOVERY MATINEES (Field trips)

Our well-rounded Student Discovery Matinee program consists of multiple offerings, including this free Teacher/Student Guide, optional pre- and post-show classroom visits by teaching artists, a lively pre-performance engagement at the theater, and a Q&A session with actors immediately following the show. This multipronged approach offers a unique way for students to develop a lasting appreciation of theater and Shakespeare through dynamic presentation and the experience of a live work of art.

TEACHER'S GUIDES INCLUDING STUDENT ACTIVITIES

This teaching and student activity guide is available for each Shakespeare Main Stage production. It is available free of charge to all classrooms regardless of whether or not a class attends a Student Discovery Matinee.

AFTER-SCHOOL CLASSES and SUMMER PROGRAMS

Cal Shakes offers a variety of theater programs taught by theater professionals throughout the school year and summer.

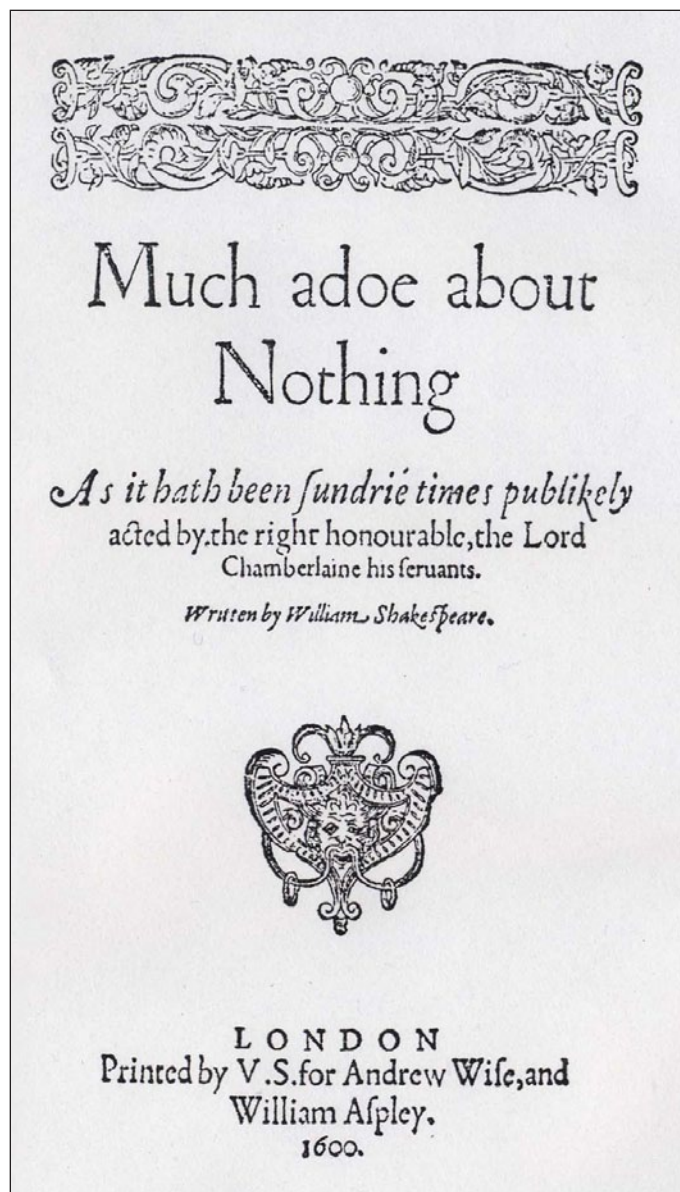
After-school programs are offered in many aspects of theater including acting, physical comedy, and improvisation.

Cal Shakes hosts Summer Shakespeare Conservatories in Lafayette, Oakland, and San Francisco, wherein students study with Cal Shakes professional actors and artists. Limited scholarships are available.

CLASSES AT THE LAFAYETTE LIBRARY AND LEARNING CENTER

As a part of the Glenn Seaborg Learning Consortium, we are pleased to offer classes for youth and adults at the new main Library in downtown Lafayette. Our classes explore Shakespeare and a wide variety of theater skills, ranging from acting to stage combat to text study—all taught by leading Bay Area theater professionals.

MUCH *Ado*
About NOTHING
OVERVIEW



A NOTE TO TEACHERS

“The first and most important lesson... is that there are no rules about how to do Shakespeare, just clues. Everything is negotiable.”

*Antony Sher and Greg Doran in Woza Shakespeare! (1996),
on training in the Royal Shakespeare Company*

Welcome! We are thrilled to have you and your students join us for this season’s Student Discovery Matinee production of *Much Ado About Nothing*.

This teachers’ guide, *Much Ado About Nothing, Word!* is intended to help you engage your students in all of the shrewd and enjoyable mastery of language that Shakespeare employs in this play. It has been proposed that language is the primary tool through which we construct our very reality, and the characters of *Much Ado* certainly use words to create the kind of world or situation they want. They lie, pretend, manipulate, and delight for personal gain, and are similarly affected by the words of others. An easy way to understand this is to see **language as action** –with as powerful and palpable effect as physical movement.

Ask your students to look for how the characters use language as action in order to do any of the following:

Motivate	Oppress	Enliven	Trick	Shame
Transform	Belittle	Empower	Beguile	Exonerate
Marry	Communicate	Hail	Captivate	Kill

We invite you to revel in Shakespeare’s particular delight in the power of words.

Enjoy!

PLOT SUMMARY

The play opens at the home of Leonato, governor of Messina. Residents of the household include his daughter Hero, his niece Beatrice, and his brother Antonio. They prepare to welcome the army of Don Pedro, who are returning victoriously from battle. In Don Pedro's company are the soldiers Claudio and Benedick. Claudio is the hero of the recent battle.

When Beatrice and Benedick meet, they resume their long-standing relationship of witty insults and mutual derision. Claudio, meanwhile, falls in love with Hero at first sight. At a masked ball, Don Pedro woos Hero on Claudio's behalf. Despite a misunderstanding created by Don Pedro's illegitimate brother Don John, he is successful, and Hero and Claudio are engaged to be married. Don Pedro makes a plan with the other members of the party to trick Benedick and Beatrice into admitting their love for one another.

The next day, Don Pedro, Claudio, and Leonato talk about how Beatrice is lovesick over Benedick, knowing that he is eavesdropping. Struck by the revelation of her supposed love and the assertions of the men that he would be too proud to accept her affections, Benedick declares that he will love her in return. Hero and her maidservant Ursula enact the same scheme with Beatrice, and she reacts similarly.

Meanwhile, Don John has come to hate Claudio for being the new favorite; he decides to sabotage his relationship with Hero. He hatches a scheme with his servant Borachio: Borachio will make love to Hero's servant, Margaret, on Hero's balcony when Claudio and Don Pedro are sure to happen by. It goes just as Don John plans, with Claudio and Don Pedro mistaking Margaret for Hero. Enraged by Hero's supposed infidelity, Claudio publicly denounces her the next day, on the altar at their wedding. In order to protect her and unearth the truth, Hero's family hides the humiliated bride and tells everyone that she has died. Overwhelmed by the events of what should have been a happy day, Benedick and Beatrice confess their feelings for one another. Beatrice asks Benedick to kill Claudio, and he reluctantly agrees.

Meanwhile, the foolish but earnest Constable Dogberry gives the evening's assignments to the night watch. In spite of some very mixed-up instructions, Dogberry's watch manages to overhear Borachio talking about how he and Don John tricked Don Pedro and Claudio; the watch successfully apprehends the culprits.

Unaware of this new development, Leonato, Antonio, and Benedick challenge Don Pedro and Claudio to duels to avenge Hero's honor and supposed death. Don Pedro and Claudio maintain that they have acted justly. Dogberry and the watch enter with Borachio as their prisoner; Borachio confesses everything, revealing the error that Don Pedro and Claudio have made. To atone for his treatment of Hero, Claudio agrees to marry Leonato's niece (another niece—not Beatrice). At the altar it is revealed that the "niece" is in fact Hero herself. Beatrice and Benedick realize that they have been tricked and, again, try to pretend that they are not in love, but no one is fooled—the two finally confess publicly and agree to marry. A messenger tells the party that Don John has been apprehended, but they decide to delay his punishment until tomorrow, as this is meant to be a joyful occasion. The two weddings are celebrated with music and laughter.

WHO'S WHO: THE ACTORS

CAST



Ursula

One of Hero's maidservants. She helps Hero trick Beatrice into thinking Benedick is in love with her.

Verges

Dogberry's deputy. He helps Dogberry give out the assignments to the watchmen.

Catherine Castellanos*



Claudio

A soldier and nobleman who has won acclaim under Don Pedro. He loves Hero, but is easily tricked into believing that she has been unfaithful.

Nick Childress*



Conrade

A devoted servant of Don John.

Messenger

Brings news of the recent war's victors to Leonato and his family.

Michael Davison



Borachio

Don John's other servant and Margaret's lover. He helps Don John trick Don Pedro and Claudio into believing that Hero has been unfaithful.

Thomas Gorrebeeck

*Denotes member of Actors' Equity Association.

WHO'S WHO: THE ACTORS

CAST



Dan Hiatt*

Leonato

Governor of Messina, a respected nobleman, Hero's father, and Beatrice's uncle. The events of the play take place in his house.

George Seacole

Member of the watch, a group of local men who patrol Messina, attempting to keep order.



Andrew Hurteau*

Friar Francis

A clergyman who helps Hero's family fake her death after she is shamed at the wedding.



Emily Kitchens*

Hero

Leonato's daughter, considered beautiful and virtuous. She is in love with Claudio and agrees to marry him.



Domenique Lozano*

Beatrice

Leonato's niece, cousin and best friend to Hero. She is clever and loving but has a sharp tongue and swears that she will never marry. She has a long-standing battle of wits with Benedick.

Note: Role assignments subject to change.

WHO'S WHO: THE ACTORS

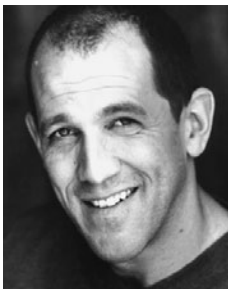
CAST



Delia MacDougall*

Margaret

One of Hero's serving women. Margaret unwittingly helps Don John in his scheme to make Hero seem unfaithful.



Andy Murray*

Benedick

An aristocrat and soldier under Don Pedro. He cheerfully maintains his prickly relationship with Beatrice and also swears he will never marry.



Nicholas Pelczar*

Don Pedro

Prince of Aragon and longtime friend of Leonato. He woos Hero on Claudio's behalf and comes up with the idea of tricking Benedick and Beatrice into confessing their love for one another.



Danny Scheie*

Don John

Don Pedro's illegitimate brother. He hates Don Pedro and Claudio, and schemes to ruin their happiness by making it seem as though Hero has been unfaithful.

Dogberry

Messina's earnest Master Constable. He blunders a lot and acts like a fool, but ultimately helps straighten everything out at the end of the play.

*Denotes member of Actors' Equity Association.

WHO'S WHO: THE ACTORS

CAST



Xanadu Bruggers

Ensemble



Luisa Frasconi

Ensemble



John R. Lewis

Ensemble

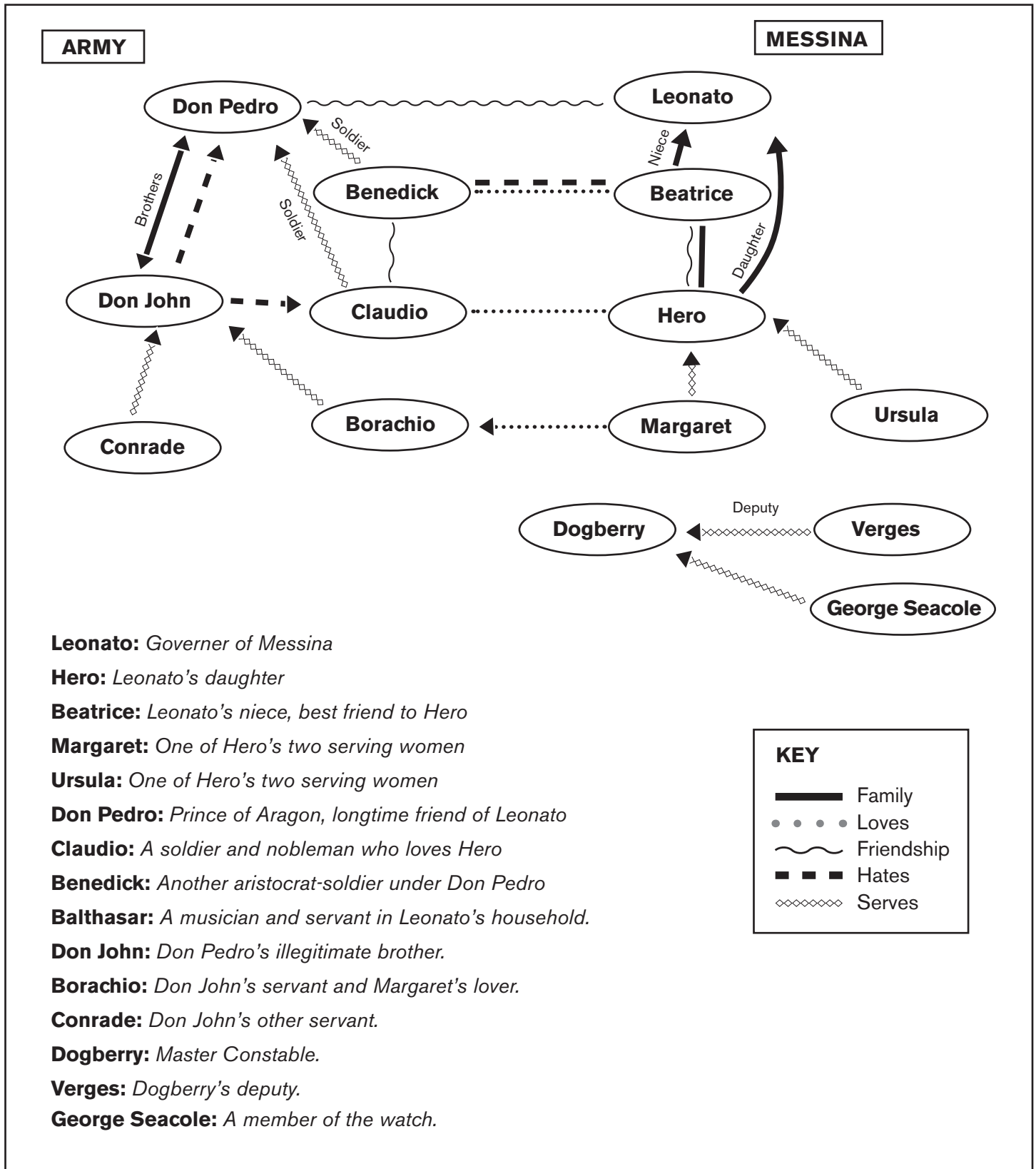


Justin Lisanckie

Ensemble

Note: Role assignments subject to change.

WHO'S WHO: THE CHARACTERS



Leonato: *Governor of Messina*

Hero: *Leonato's daughter*

Beatrice: *Leonato's niece, best friend to Hero*

Margaret: *One of Hero's two serving women*

Ursula: *One of Hero's two serving women*

Don Pedro: *Prince of Aragon, longtime friend of Leonato*

Claudio: *A soldier and nobleman who loves Hero*

Benedick: *Another aristocrat-soldier under Don Pedro*

Balthasar: *A musician and servant in Leonato's household.*

Don John: *Don Pedro's illegitimate brother.*

Borachio: *Don John's servant and Margaret's lover.*

Conrade: *Don John's other servant.*

Dogberry: *Master Constable.*

Verges: *Dogberry's deputy.*

George Seacole: *A member of the watch.*

SEEING THE PLAY: BEFORE AND AFTER

“I would my horse had the speed of your tongue”

–Benedick, Act 1, scene 1

Consider the following questions before and after the show.

BEFORE Viewing the Play

How many lies can you spot?

When does language change the course of someone's life?

Beatrice and Benedick change their minds about love several times. Why?

Really listen to Dogberry—do you understand what he's saying?

How does his language define his character?

Look for moments that you recognize in modern life: Are the characters acting like people do today? How or how not?

AFTER Viewing the Play

Who are the main characters of the play? Are they Beatrice and Benedick or Hero and Claudio? Why?

What do you think Shakespeare is saying about people?

Much Ado About Nothing is regarded as one of Shakespeare's comedies. The events surrounding Hero and Claudio's wedding, however, are rather tragic. Do you regard this play as a comedy? If so, what gives the play its comedic element?

Which of the characters do you think you are most like? Why?

Think of someone you know who talks in a very distinct way. What does their language make you think about them?

Did you recognize any parts of this story from modern movies or books, or from your own life?

See “Write Your Own Critique”, pages 41 & 42, for more ideas about what to watch for and how to write about your reactions after the show.

SHAKESPEARE'S LANGUAGE

Here are some original quotes from *Much Ado About Nothing*. Can you match them to their modern-day translations?

Friendship is constant all other things
Save in the office and affairs of love.
Claudio, Act 2, Scene 1

Silence is the perfect herald of joy. I were
but little happy if I could say how much.
Claudio, Act 2, Scene 1

When I do name him let it be thy part
To praise him more than ever man did merit.
My talk to thee must be how Benedick
Is sick in love with Beatrice

If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee
To bind our loves up in a holy band.
For others say thou dost deserve, and I
Believe it better than reportingly.
Beatrice, Act 3, Scene 3

There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior
Benedick and her: they never meet but there's a
skirmish of wit between them.
Leonato, Act 1, Scene 1

A miracle! Here's our own hands against our hearts.
Benedick, Act 5, Scene 4

For my part, I am so attired in wonder
I know not what to say.
Benedick, Act 4, Scene 1

Beatrice and Benedick seem to like fighting; whenever they get together they always try to outdo each other with jokes.

Once a good friend, always a good friend, except when love is involved.

Amazing! What we've written shows our true feelings.

I am so amazed that I'm speechless.

Silence reveals true joy. If I could say how happy I was, that would mean that I was only a little glad.

If you really love me, I can finally express my love to you and we can get married. Other people are telling me that you do love me, and I believe that you do even more than they say.

When I talk about him, it is your job to say really good things about him. My job is to talk about how much Benedick is in love with Beatrice.

See "Brush Up Your Shakespeare", page 41.

***MUCH ADO
ABOUT
NOTHING:***

word!

WORDS CAN BRING US TOGETHER

BEATRICE & BENEDICK

“A miracle! here’s our own hands against our hearts!”

Benedick, Act 5, scene 4

Beatrice and Benedick use words masterfully, in contrast to Claudio and Hero, who either use exaggeration or do not speak much, and in great contrast to Dogberry, who doesn’t even seem to know how to choose words correctly. Much like Kate and Petruchio in *The Taming of the Shrew*, these two are so well-matched verbally that everyone else in the play and the whole audience knows that they are destined to be together no matter how much they protest against it. In the following dialogue, note how each person picks up on the words (in bold) the other has used, only to craft another insult:

BEATRICE: I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick: nobody marks you.

BENEDICK: What, my dear Lady Disdain! are you yet living?

BEATRICE: Is it possible disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed it as Signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain, if you come in her presence.

BENEDICK: Then is courtesy a turncoat. But it is certain I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted: and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none.

BEATRICE: A dear happiness to women: they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God and my cold blood, I am of your humor for that: I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.

Shakespeare’s illustration of a perfect couple is unmistakable through the wordplay and one-upmanship.

For Students

Have you ever heard people who are so good with words that, even when they have arguments, you know they are somehow enjoying the fight? Insult fights, sometimes staged, are fun for this reason as well.

Write a six-line argument between Beatrice and Benedick using modern-day insults. Remember to keep it playful and fun—it should be clear that these characters actually like each other.

See “Resources: Books and Internet”, page 24, for a link to a Shakespearean insult page.

See “Go Girls!”, page 22, for further information on women and Elizabethan culture.

WORDS CAN KILL

CLAUDIO & HERO

Hero's entire social status depends on her reputation. Even though the play is set in Italy, it reflects English standards, and a woman in Elizabethan times had little significance in society other than that of bearing children to continue the lineage. So it is very important that she be paired with the proper man.

Unfortunately, through the brutal plan affected by Don Pedro's brother, Don John, it is made to appear that Hero is romancing another man after she has been pledged in marriage to Claudio. This kind of behavior would make her entirely unfit to be married to a nobleman; Hero is wrongfully reviled by her groom and her whole community, with even her own father, Leonato, disowning her.

But this is a comedy, and comedies must end happily. Hero has to symbolically die to live again. She is put into hiding and pronounced dead to everyone; her father, upon learning that she is innocent, asks Claudio to marry another girl. He then puts Hero in the bride's place—hidden under a veil—at the second wedding. This is the sad truth of a ruthlessly patriarchal society: that a woman must die in order for her virtue to be redeemed. (Years later, in *Othello*, Shakespeare would have the same thing happen, but with no redemption for Desdemona.)

Here's an example of Claudio's words to Hero on their wedding day, and then Leonato's:

Claudio:

There, Leonato, take her back again;
Give not this rotten orange to your friend;
She's but the sign and semblance of her
honor...
She knows the heat of a luxurious bed...
But fare thee well, most foul, most fair!

Leonato:

Wherefore! 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 open 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..... Hence from her! let her die.

Unfortunate but timely comparisons can be made to the cases of students who have had their reputation or sense of self-worth destroyed through cyber-bullying. These modern-day Heros are caught in a similar situation as Shakespeare's: knowing the truth with no one else believing it.

For Students

Have you ever had someone say something bad about you that wasn't true? How did it feel? Were you able to establish the truth?

Why do words have so much power when used against someone?

Think about celebrity gossip magazines and websites. How do the writers choose their headlines in order to get you to read their story? Do you believe the articles in these publications? Why or why not?

How can you figure out what is rumor and what is truth?

Name three television shows whose storylines revolve around gossip, misinformation, and rumor. (Here's one for free: *Gossip Girl*.)

See "Go Girls!", page 22, for further information on women and Elizabethan culture.

“You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch...”

Dogberry, Act 3, scene 3

Shakespeare plays with language like a jazz musician plays with musical notes—sometimes following rules, sometimes making up new rules, and often extending a whole series of words in various forms to make a particular point. Characters in his plays use words not just to communicate, but to create a certain mood or paint a complex picture of a person or situation. On order to express their emotions in new ways, Shakespeare’s characters use every literary device we know and inventing new ones.

Poor Dogberry! He seems to love words—his speeches are full of complex and certainly interesting phrases and turns of thought—but he doesn’t seem to really understand the words that he’s saying. He consistently substitutes one word for another, creating malapropisms that usually result in a joke. Sometimes a malapropism is made by substituting an incorrect word that sounds a lot like the word that the person really means. For example: Dogberry asks his sidekick Verges not to compare things to each other by saying, “Comparisons are odorous”. He means “odious”, which means hateful or disgusting, but he instead ends up saying that comparisons are smelly. Don’t you just hate when metaphors are lying around in the garbage stinking up the place?

Another kind of malapropism is when one substitutes a word that means the exact opposite of what is intended. For instance, when Dogberry accuses the conspirator Borachio, he says, “O villain! Thou wilt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this.” He meant to say something like “condemnation,” wanting to tell Borachio that he will be punished by God for his villainy. But he uses “redemption”, meaning “rescue or recovery”, having comic effect.

Another textual indication of Dogberry’s state of mind is a seeming inability to keep things in order. For example, when listing the many offenses of the lawbreakers, he says, “moreover they have spoken untruths; secondarily, they are slanders; sixth and lastly, they have belied a lady; thirdly, they have verified unjust things; and, to conclude, they are lying knaves.”

For Students: Shakespeare Was First

The word “malapropism” comes from a play by Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The Rivals*, first performed in 1775. In *The Rivals*, a character named Mrs. Malaprop makes the same kind of verbal mistakes as Dogberry. (Her name comes from the French phrase *mal à propos*, meaning not to the purpose.) But these confused and comic turns of phrase, used to such great effect by Dogberry in the 1500s, was known to Renaissance crowds as “dogberryism”.

See “Dogberryisms”, page 38, for an exercise in understanding malapropisms.

WHAT DOES THE TITLE MEAN?

Much Ado About Nothing is one of three plays that Shakespeare titled in a kind of off-hand or disparaging manner: *As You Like It*; *Twelfth Night*, or *What You Will*; and *Much Ado*. There are many theories about Shakespeare's reasons for this. Perhaps he was being slightly sarcastic toward the crowds and critics who demanded ever-more pleasing plays; perhaps he didn't value them all that much himself; or maybe he just wanted to have a little fun.

What we do know is the historical meaning of the word "nothing". In Shakespeare's time, "nothing" was pronounced "noting". The title of the play would have sounded like *Much Ado About Noting*. "Noting" meant to "take note of", as in being attracted to someone, and also "to eavesdrop or spy". This play is particularly concerned with the "noting" of various characters by one another, and with the mistakes made by those who think that they are the ones fooling others. Take the masking during the dance in Act 1. Through this masquerade, we see the irony of the scenes in which Beatrice and Benedick think they are "noting" others when they, in fact, are themselves being "noted" or tricked.

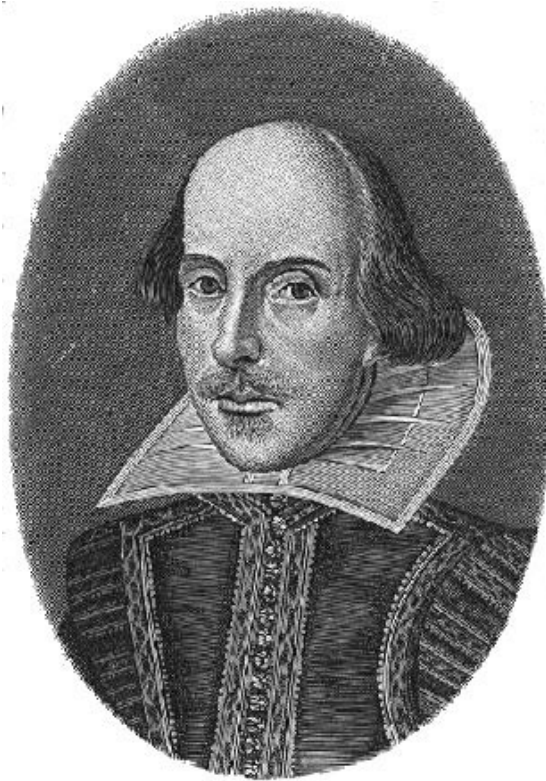
Beneath this merry layer of noting, however, is a deeper level of shaming. Don John tries to shame Claudio (as someone easily tricked); Claudio shames Hero in front of a whole congregation; Leonato links his daughter with his own sense of shamed self-devaluation ("But mine and mine I loved and mine I praised...she is fallen/ Into a pit of ink"), coming to believe that the only way to deal with Hero's public humiliation is to fake her death; and Beatrice tries to shame Benedick into acting like a "man" to avenge the wronged Hero.

For these characters, reputation—being noted—is everything.

For Students: Put Yourself in Shakespeare's Shoes

What sense do you make of the title? Imagine you had written this play about these people who care so much what others think of them: Why would you name it *Much Ado About Nothing*?

ELIZABETHAN CULTURE OVERVIEW



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: A MYSTERIOUS LIFE

William Shakespeare is considered one of the world's finest playwrights in any time period. Writing in England in the late 1500s during the reigns of Queen Elizabeth I and King James I, he established himself as a major playwright, poet, and sometime actor. He mastered the comic and tragic dramatic forms and introduced over 2,000 new vocabulary words into the English language. Shakespeare is read by nearly every American student. Some of his most well-known plays are *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Shakespeare's life, however, is a constant source of debate and question in the scholarly community. Many records of the time that might have tracked his life or given more clues to how, when, and why he wrote his plays have been lost, if they even existed at all. Here are some of the facts and questions that people have raised based on the little we do know about his life.

- It has been usually assumed that Shakespeare was born on St George's Day, April 23. But he was probably born on April 21, 22, or 23, 1564, given the 1559 prayer book's instructions to parents on the subject of baptisms.
- From 1585 to 1592 the records of Shakespeare's life are almost silent, and are commonly referred to the "lost years". Biographers have put forth many imaginative stories about what Shakespeare was doing during this period:
 - He helped his father in the family business (leathers and grains).
 - He took a job as a law clerk.
 - He worked as a schoolmaster.
 - He worked as a scrivener (a person who copies out letters, deeds, et cetera)
 - He travelled to Italy.
 - He served as a soldier or sailor for an England threatened by Spain.
 - He served a wealthy Catholic family in Lancashire, making Shakespeare likely a Catholic himself.
- There is no firm evidence of the roles Shakespeare acted or of the quality of his performances. Anecdotes ascribe to him various roles in his own plays, such as Adam in *As You Like It* and the Ghost in *Hamlet*, both smaller roles that suggest that perhaps Shakespeare was not that great an actor, needed more time for writing, or both.
- The play *Sir Thomas Moore*, never printed, survives in a manuscript written by a number of hands. It is likely, though not absolutely certain, that Hand D, as it is known, is Shakespeare's and that this is therefore the only piece of his handwriting—other than signatures—to survive.
- The biggest mystery of all is if the man known as William Shakespeare of Stratford-on-Avon, son of a glover, was really the author of all of the plays written under his name. A common argument is that a lower middle-class man such as himself would not have sufficient education or knowledge of court matters to write so insightfully and profoundly of the human condition and of kings, much less to use language so skillfully. Some people even think that Queen Elizabeth herself might have written the plays!
- "Shakespeare" is not a particularly common or easy to spell name. Over the years there have been a number of variations in the spelling, as well as some ridiculous misspellings. But bear in mind that, back in Shakespeare's day, there weren't actually such things as standard spelling rules—people spelled words as they sounded. The most common spellings of Shakespeare include Shakespere, Shackspeare, and Shakspeare.



GO GIRLS!

**“O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart
in the market-place.”**

Beatrice, Act 4, scene 1

In Shakespeare’s time, the decision to marry was in the hands of a girl’s father: A father chose his daughter’s husband, and it was considered dishonorable and disrespectful of her to communicate her desires in the process. When a woman married, all of her personal property became the property of her husband, and she had no say in how it was spent. Women were regarded as chattel (property) to be married off to improve the family fortune or make political alliances. Elizabethans thought women needed a male caretaker (remember, females could not have careers). However, Shakespeare lived during the time of the Renaissance, which was a turbulent and exciting period of history in which many old and accepted ideas were being questioned, examined, and reinterpreted. Shakespeare is known for creating female characters that are just as complex, intelligent, and powerful as the males. Beatrice is one of the prime examples of this.

In *Much Ado About Nothing*, men expect to take the lead in most areas of social decision-making. Leonato has the power to decide when, who, and how Hero marries, and Claudio has the power to reject her at his will. Beatrice has to demand Benedick to challenge Claudio to a duel since she has never been allowed the training or experience to do so herself. It is men, in other words, who own all the choices. But Beatrice makes her choices in this play, through her use of her intelligence and wit. She displays the verbal inventiveness that makes the kind of woman she is—unmarried, unparented—an acceptable reality in that society.

Just like Beatrice, Queen Elizabeth defied the expectations for women of her time. She never married because she realized early in her reign that marriage meant loss of power. Even though the general opinion of the time was that women’s minds were weak and that a female head of state was “an offense against nature”, she ruled with great political skill and cunning. Hero, on the other hand, represents a very conventional woman of wealth of her time, barely speaking a word in the play, especially when compared to the other characters. By putting two such opposite kinds of women side-by-side in the play, Shakespeare reflects the changing world of his time.

For Students: What about Margaret?

There is uproar when it is suspected that Hero has had an affair. But when it is discovered that Margaret was mistaken for Hero, all is well. No one seems to be upset over Margaret’s behavior. Why? (Hint: Look at the rigid class structure of England at the time.)



RESOURCES



MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING **ON FILM**

Much Ado About Nothing is a popular play onstage and even more popular on film. Many film versions exist that are directly named after the play; there are many more that employ vastly different interpretations or are simply inspired by the *Much Ado* story. Many of these films update the play to a modern setting. Here's a few of the most popular:

Much Ado About Nothing (1913)

Directed by Phillips Smalley
Starring Pearl White and Chester Barnett
A silent short film based on the classic.

Much Ado About Nothing (1940)

Directed by Connie Rasinski
An animated short loosely based upon the Shakespeare's plot.

Much Ado About Nothing (1962)

Directed by Joseph Papp
Starring Sam Waterston, Kathleen Widdoes, and Barnard Hughes
A stage production by the New York Shakespeare Festival on film, known for its complete use of the text.

Much Ado About Nothing (1967)

Directed by Alan Cooke
Starring Maggie Smith and Michael Byrne

Much Ado About Nothing (1993)

Directed by Kenneth Branagh
Starring Emma Thompson, Kenneth Branagh, Denzel Washington, Keanu Reeves,
and Kate Beckinsale

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: BOOKS AND INTERNET

(page 1 of 2)

General Shakespeare Resources and Lesson Plans

Folger Shakespeare Library

folger.edu

PBS' "Shakespeare in the Classroom"

pbs.org/shakespeare/educators/

The BBC's "ShakespeaRe-told"

bbc.co.uk/drama/shakespeare

"Tudor and Elizabethan Times"

snaithprimary.eril.net/ttss.htm

"Life in Elizabethan England"

elizabethan.org/compendium/

Shakespeare Resource Center's "Elizabethan England"

bardweb.net/england.html

The Kennedy Center's "The Poetics of Hip Hop"

artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/3656/

Edutopia's "Lights! Camera! Action! Public-Service Announcements: Violence Awareness"

edutopia.org/pdfs/PA-ti-lessons/edutopia-romeo-and-juliet-psa.pdf

"Shakespearean Insult Worksheet"

gallery.carnegiefoundation.org/collections/quest/collections/sites/divans-hutchinson_yvonne1/yvonne%20scans/insultsheet.pdf

Teaching Resources for *Much Ado About Nothing*

Folger Education's "Teaching Much Ado About Nothing"

folger.edu/template.cfm?cid=2774

Folger Education's Much Ado About Nothing lesson plans

folger.edu/eduLesPlanArch.cfm#49

"Much Ado about Nothing - activities on the plot and character relationships"

collaborativelearning.org/muchadoplplotrelationships.pdf

The Stratford Festival's Much Ado About Nothing animated version:

stratfordfestival.ca/education/activities/muchado/06_animation/index.html

The BBC's Much Ado About Nothing lesson plan for Upper-Intermediate to Advanced students

teachingenglish.org.uk/try/lesson-plans/much-ado-about-nothing

Folger Shakespeare Library Education Department's curriculum guide to Much Ado About Nothing

series.simonandschuster.net/tagged_assets/cg14_859_3920.pdf



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: BOOKS AND INTERNET

(page 2 of 2)

Books

Davis, James E., ed. *Teaching Shakespeare Today: Practical Approaches and Productive Strategies*. Urbana, Ill: National Council of Teachers of English, 1993.

Crystal, David, and Crystal, Ben. *The Shakespeare Miscellany*. The Overlook Press, Peter Mayer Publishers, Inc. Woodstock and New York, 2005.

Crystal, David, and Crystal, Ben. *Shakespeare's Words: A Glossary and Language Companion*. Penguin Books, The Penguin Group. London, 2002.

Papp, Joseph and Elizabeth Kirkland. *Shakespeare Alive!* New York, New York: Bantam Books, 1988.

Epstein, Norrie. *The Friendly Shakespeare: A Thoroughly Painless Guide to the Best of the Bard*. New York, New York: Penguin Books, 1993

Asimov, Isaac. *Asimov's Guide to Shakespeare*. New York, New York: Random House, 1970.

Bender, Michael. *All the World's a Stage: a Pop-Up Biography of William Shakespeare*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1999.

Foster, Cass and Lynn G. Johnson. *Shakespeare: To Teach or Not To Teach. Grades 3 and Up*. Scottsdale, AZ: Five Star Publications, 1992.

Garfield, Leon. *Shakespeare Stories*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998.

Morley, Jacqueline and John James. *Shakespeare's Theatre: the Inside Story*. East Sussex, London: Simon and Schuster Young Books, 1994.



CLASSROOM ACTIVITY GUIDE

September 2010

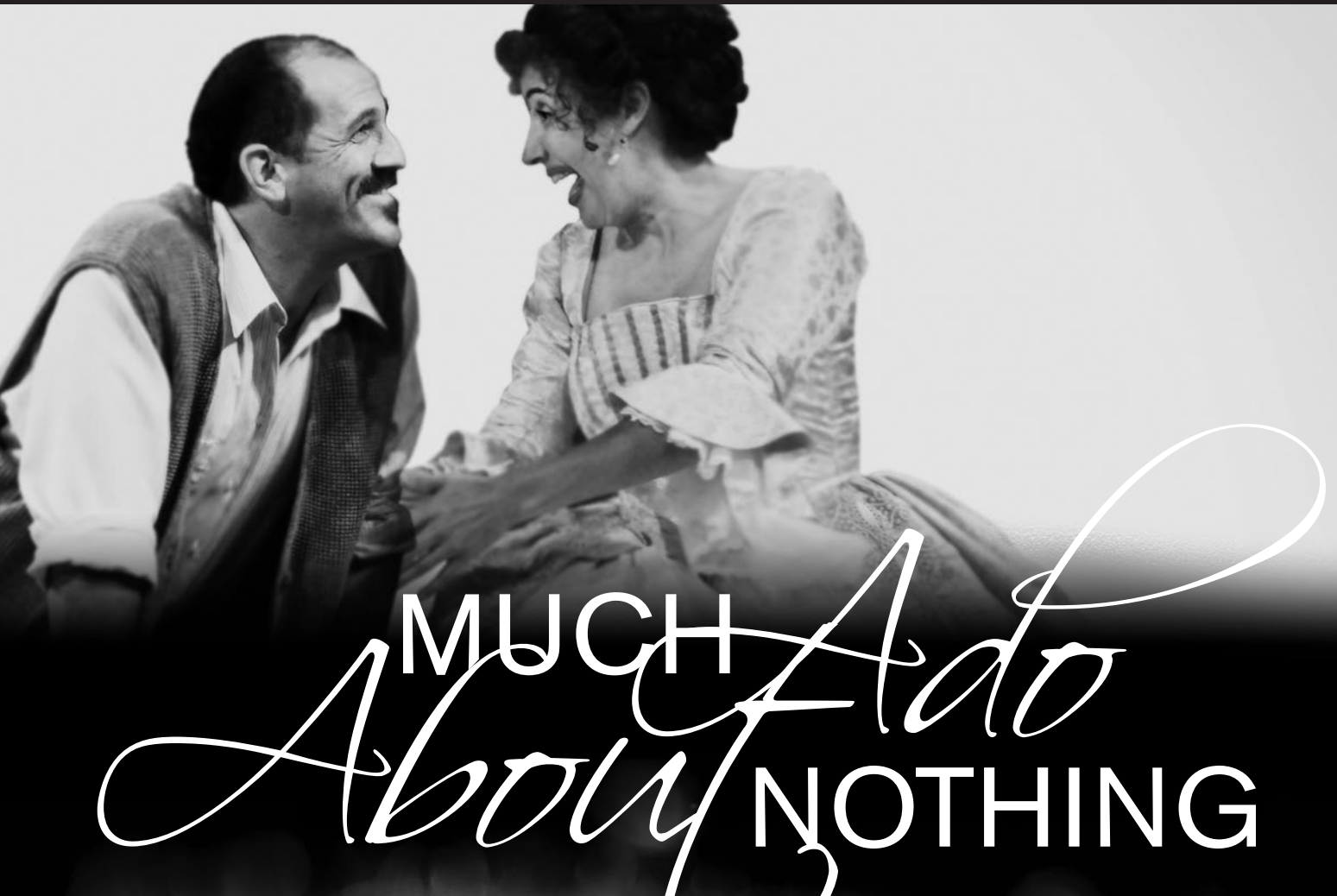
Jonathan Moscone
Artistic Director

Susie Falk
Managing Director

Trish Tillman
Director of Artistic Learning

Emily Morrison
Programs Manager

Samantha Fryer
Artistic Learning
Administration Manager



NOTE TO TEACHERS: This guide was created as a supplement for teachers preparing students to see California Shakespeare Theater's production of *Much Ado About Nothing*. Worksheets are designed to be used individually or in conjunction with others throughout the guide. While we realize that no aspect of this guide fully outlines a course for meeting a subject area standards, discussion questions and topics are devised to address certain aspects of California state standards. The activities here can be minimally reproduced for educational, non-profit use only. All lessons must be appropriately credited.

There are many excellent lesson plans for *Much Ado About Nothing* on the Internet. Please see our Resources page for links. This guide concentrates primarily on ideas that help students understand language, plot and character through activities that get students on their feet and speaking.

If you are interested in a California Shakespeare Theater Professional Development Workshop, which provides easy-to-learn tools for teachers to incorporate theater and arts education activities into California standards-based core curriculum, please contact the Artistic Learning Administrations Manager at 510-548-3422 x105 or learn@calshakes.org.

CAL SHAKES
CALIFORNIA SHAKESPEARE THEATER

CAL SHAKES' MISSION AND FUNDERS

OUR MISSION

We strive for everyone, regardless of age, circumstance, or background, to discover and express the relevance of Shakespeare and the classics in their lives by:

- making boldly imagined and deeply entertaining interpretations of Shakespeare and the classics.
- providing in-depth, far-reaching creative educational opportunities.
- bringing disparate communities together around the creation of new American plays inspired by classic literature.

OUR FUNDERS AND SPONSORS

PRESENTING SPONSORS



SEASON SPONSORS



STUDENT DISCOVERY UNDERWRITERS



California Shakespeare Theater's production of *Much Ado About Nothing* is part of *Shakespeare for a New Generation*, a national initiative sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts in cooperation with Arts Midwest.

Cal Shakes Artistic Learning programs are also supported by the Dale Family Fund, Dodge & Cox, The Thomas J. Long Foundation, The San Francisco Foundation, and numerous individual donors.

SEASON UNDERWRITERS



SOCIAL NETWORKING CHARACTER STUDY: “SHAKESBOOK”

Overview: Have your students create a Facebook profile like the following for a character from the play. Being able to empathize with fictional characters sheds light on our own personal situations, and recast the plot of the play in relevant terms.

Grades: 6–12

Goal: To bring the characters of *Much Ado About Nothing* into a real-world context.

State Standards: English Literary Response and Analysis 3.0-3.4

Outcomes: Students will be able to use basic facts from the text to imaginatively enter into the thoughts, feelings, and motivations of fictional characters by creating a mock Facebook page.

Activity: Familiarize students with the profile layout of a social networking site page such as Facebook. (See the following examples in parentheses.)

1. Ask the students to fill in the profile with

- a. Vital statistics
- b. Likes and dislikes
- c. Friends

Note: Students should use information drawn from their knowledge of the play (Dogberry likes being in charge), filled out by their imaginations (when Dogberry was a teenager, he held mock trials of his schoolmates whenever they got in trouble with the teacher).

2. Profile photos may be drawn or cut out from magazines, or an actual photo of the student could be used and attached to the page. Remember, many actual Facebook profile pages do not have an actual photo of the person who made them—Facebook members sometimes choose a picture of something they feel represents them such as a tree, a poster they like, et cetera.

3. Share the pages you have created in student pairs or in a group discussion.

Reflection:

- Name one thing you had to imagine about your character that you think is really interesting.
- Was it easy to imagine beyond the play—for instance, what Don Pedro’s activities and interests might be? Or do you feel the play did not provide enough information? How so?
- How easy was it to decide who your character’s friends were? Would your character ignore a friend request from other characters in the play? Why or why not?

Extension exercise in writing dialogue:

Beyond the basic profile information, a further way to extend the activity is to have the students write on each other’s profile “walls”. A wall is the area on a profile page where friends can write short messages to each other that are posted directly on the page for others to view.

Note: Require the students to fill out the worksheet manually, rather than actually filling out a public profile online. If you can post the mock profile page that follows onto your school’s website or blog for students to fill out online within the framework of this project, that would work as well, but false profiles in a public space should be actively discouraged. Student examples should show a deep understanding of the plot and qualities of the character. Some examples follow.





Dogberry

Wall

Info

Photos

Dogberry Remember that I am an ass!

Updated: 400 years ago

Share

“if I were as tedious as a king, I could find it in my heart to bestow it all of your worship”

Wall

Networks: [Messina, Sicily](#)
Sex: Male
Relationship Status: Single

Information

Email: dogberry@iamnotanass.net
Current city: [Messina, Sicily](#)

Likes & Interests

Interests: [Making arrests, organizing the Prince's Watch and fighting knavery.](#)

Activities: [Withholding the honor of the law, reprimanding the immorally weak, and generally keeping the disquiet.](#)

Favorite TV Show: [CSI, Judge Judy](#)

Favorite Music: [Indiana Jones theme music](#)



[Verges](#) Didn't see any knives today; will try again tomorrow.



[Dogberry](#) New episode of *Judge Judy* tonight! Such a suspectable woman! I have so much to learn from her.

Friends

4 Friends

[See All](#)

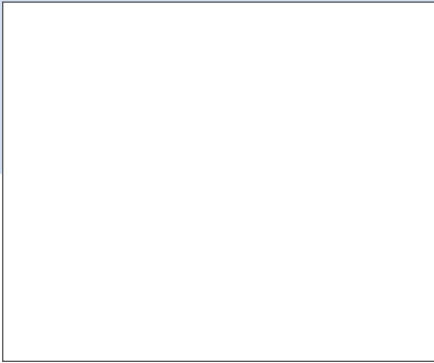


[Verges](#)



[George Seacole](#)





Wall

Info

Photos

Updated:

Share

Wall

Recent Activity:

Networks:

Sex:

Relationship Status:

Information

Email:

Current city:

Likes & Interests

Interests:

Activities:

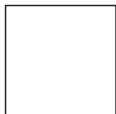
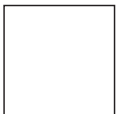
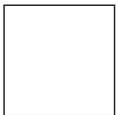
Favorite TV Show:

Favorite Music:

Friends

4 Friends

See All



COMIC BOOK

Overview: Creating comic books is an ideal way to help ELL students visualize the language, increase literacy, and get all students engaged with Shakespeare’s words.

Grade: 5–12

Goal: Students will be able to visualize the dramatic situations from the play, realizing the relationships between the characters and the high stakes of each moment.

State Standards: English Literary Response & Analysis §3; Visual Arts Creative Expression §2.

Outcomes: Students will be able to demonstrate discriminatory thinking in their choice of scenes, and translate the dramatic moments of Shakespeare’s play into the medium of the dramatic elements of the familiar comic.

Materials:

If you are planning to use technology to achieve this project, you will first need a digital camera. Software to manipulate the photo into the cartoon style is available over the internet. The exercise below is written using Photoshop. See Technology notes below.

If you wish to achieve this without using a computer, have clean white paper of a standard size and many colors and textures of markers available.

Activity: Students should be familiar with the story.

1. Have students decide on the key scenes in the story and list them in order. If you have done tableaux with your students, they can use those scenes and add to them so there are enough scenes to create a comic book of the whole story.
2. Assign each group of students a “scene” to turn into one page of the comic book.
3. Students should highlight the one or two line(s) from the original text that best illustrate that scene.
4. Students paraphrase Shakespeare’s words into their own language.
5. Have students “pose” each scene as a tableau.
6. Take a digital photograph of the pose. Using the Photoshop filter, transform the scene to comic book style.
7. Add “speech” bubbles and fill bubbles with the relevant line(s) of Shakespeare’s text.
8. Assemble all the pages into one comic book.
9. Add a Title Page.

Technology Notes: Photoshop is the software program most readily available to create the comic book effect.

Comic Life for the Mac is also quite easy to download and use at www.plasq.com. A look around the internet will be able to lead you to many other programs for PC as well.

Coaching:

You don’t have to do the comic book all at once. The whole class can work together on one page a day. If your students don’t have access to a digital camera and Photoshop, have students draw the scene on standard sized paper. Show samples of different comic book styles (Disney/superhero/manga/anime, et cetera) and have students vote on one “style” to use for all the drawings so that the finished book has continuity).

Reflection:

Ask student audience to evaluate the “pose” and make suggestions to improve it. The scene should clearly indicate the emotions of the characters and convey the context and main idea of the text.



COMIC BOOK



Comic book of King Lear performed and produced by Claire Stoermer's fifth-grade class at Fruitvale Elementary School, Oakland, CA.



MUSICAL INTERLUDE

(Page 1 of 2)

Overview: Write the story of the play through popular song titles.

Grade: 6–12

Goal: To use contextual clues to relate the Shakespeare text and current songs.

State Standards: English Writing Applications §2; Theater Arts §1

Outcomes: Students will research the play for clues to the characters, fully describe the arc of the play through modern lyrics and mood of the music played, and engage critical thinking skills to determine their choices.

Activity:

1. Students will research current music to find connections of meaning through lyrics and musical expression to the plot of the play
2. Students will create a list of song that accurately describe the arc of the plot of the play, paying attention to particular words and moods that connect the song and the original text.
3. Have students share their lists, playing a few selections in class as time permits.

Reflection:

- What difficulty did you have finding the right songs, if any?
- Were certain points of the play harder than others for which to find a current expression?
- Does your soundtrack point to a certain interpretation of the story as you see it?
- Were there certain characters you chose to highlight? Why?

See example of music titles summarizing *Romeo and Juliet* on the next page.

The Plot of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*

(Page 2 of 2)

- Act I:** 1. "Unnecessary Trouble" (Hard-Fi, *Stars of CCTV*)
2. "Older Guys" (Teenage Fanclub, *Thirteen*)
3. "The Wrong Girl" (Belle and Sebastian, *Fold Your Hands Child You Walk Like a Peasant*)
4. "Fresh Feeling" (Eels, *Souljacker*)
- Act II:** 5. "Does He Love You?" (Rilo Kiley, *More Adventurous*)
6. "Hesitating Beauty" (Billy Bragg & Wilco, *Mermaid Avenue*)
7. "Marry Me" (St. Vincent, *Marry Me*)
- Act III:** 8. "Sugar Assault Me Now" (Pop Levi, *The Return to Form Black Magick Party*)
9. "The Payback" (James Brown, *Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* OST)
- Act IV:** 10. "Vengeance Is Sleeping" (Neko Case, *Middle Cyclone*)
11. "I Love You Always Forever" (Donna Lewis, *Now in a Minute*)
- Act V:** 12. "We Will Not Grow Old" (Lenka, *Lenka*)
13. "Brand New Colony" (The Postal Service, *Give Up*)
14. "Arms Tonite" (Mother Mother, *O My Heart*)
15. "O My Heart" (Mother Mother, *O My Heart*)
16. "How to Fight Loneliness" (Wilco, *Summerteeth*)
17. "Adventures in Solitude" (The New Pornographers, *Challengers*)
18. "The Ghost of You Lingers" (Spoon, *Ga Ga Ga Ga Ga*)
19. "Heaven Knows I'm Miserable Now" (The Smiths, *Hatful of Hollow*)
20. "Bad Day" (Daniel Powter, *Daniel Powter*)



CHARACTER BACKSTORY: WHAT MAKES A PERSONALITY?

(Page 1 of 2)

Overview: Write the backstory for one of the minor characters in *Much Ado About Nothing*: Leonato, Borachio, Margaret, Ursula.

A “backstory” is the personal history of a character that is not described in the actual play or story. In other words, it is what happens to the character before the play starts.

Grade: 4–12

Goal: To use contextual clues to create an imaginative experience of a minor character.

State Standards: English Writing Applications §2; Theater Arts §1 Identify character’s objective and motivations to explain the character’s behavior.

Outcomes: Students will research the play for clues to the characters, and fully describe an imagined life previous to the play’s beginning that justifies the way the character acts in the play.

On Your Feet Activity: Warm-up to think like the character.

Write the names of a few of the characters from *Much Ado About Nothing* onto post-it notes and then stick the notes on the foreheads of the students so that the students cannot see the post-it note on their own heads but can read everyone else’s. The students then talk among themselves, asking each other questions about their own characters. A student may only ask questions that can be answered with a “yes” or a “no”. After a few minutes, all the questioning should stop and the students should state who they think their character is and then see if they are correct.

Activity: Explain to the students that the interior life of the character is something an actor must be able to imagine as they start to understand how to play that character. The life of a minor character has been a popular literary and theatrical exercise and can illuminate the main story even more brightly. For instance, *Wicked* is a very popular book-turned-Broadway musical that explores the backstory and unseen lives of the witches of Oz.

1. Create Word Bank: Create a word bank as a class on the board about a particular character from the book. Use descriptive concrete sensory details (sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing). Guide students through describing how the character looks, how s/he acts (personality), and what we already know about him/her from the book.

2. Write Summary – Prep for writing Backstory: Students choose a character from the reading, and using descriptive words, write a one-page description using words like those in the word bank.

Include when possible:

- Timeline of significant events in the character’s life
- Physical description
- Personality traits
- Also answer the following questions about the character:
 - Where and when does s/he live?
 - What does s/he want more than anything?
 - Who or what is standing in the way of what s/he wants? What is in his/her pockets?
 - What is your character afraid of?
 - Who are his/her friends?
 - What makes him/her happy? What does s/he think about when s/he is alone?
 - How does s/he react to stressful situations?
 - What is s/he most proud of in his/her life?

CHARACTER BACKSTORY: WHAT MAKES A PERSONALITY?

(Page 2 of 2)

What does s/he do for fun?

Who has helped him/her?

3. Group Activity: Divide students into groups of four or five. Students in each group read their descriptions to each other. Pick one to share with the class and add others if there is time.

4. Theatrical Presentation: Each group should pick one of those stories to present to classmates in an artistic way. They can choose how to present it. Possibilities include: a rap, comic strip drawings, tableau, puppet show, et cetera.

Coaching: Tell the students that this requires them to use their imagination! Think of what the character does in the play and imagine reasons why the character ends up doing what he/she does. Remember, there is no “right” answer to an open-ended exercise, as long as they can justify their choices using the text. This exercise is specifically designed to explore the life of minor characters in the play—characters that are often overlooked, but can yield fascinating discoveries. Actors, even when playing a smaller role, must do this same kind of research to be able to make that character believable on stage.

Rubric for the backstory:

- Be creative.
- Describe the setting (when and where the backstory takes place).
- Describe the character in vivid detail as s/he was early in life—personality, looks, situation, who s/he is friends with, what his or her interests are, how s/he looks or talks, etc.
- Use action words, descriptive words, dialogue, and images.
- Be based on clues from the main story when possible.
- Describe a problem that the character faces and why it is a problem (“I had no idea that I was part of this horrible trick Don John played on Hero; I feel really responsible” or “I am so ashamed of my daughter that I wish she had never been born” et cetera).
- Describe specifically why s/he chooses to do those things (for example, personal satisfaction, revenge, habit, being forced to do them by someone else, et cetera).
- Describe how the character feels about doing what s/he does in the play.

Reflection:

- What did you learn about your character that you didn't know before?
- What did you especially like about one of the descriptions you heard today?
- Did you see a picture of the character in your head?
- How did you describe it in your writing so that other people could imagine the same thing you did?
- (To classmates): Did you see that character the same way the writer did? What was different if anything?
- Who imagined their character's day while writing the description? What was it like?
- Why did you decide on the specifics that you did for your character? For example, why did you choose a particular setting for that character's childhood?
- Does the play provide enough clues to spark your imagination? Why or why not?
- What did you find (in your backstory or someone's from your group) that was particularly interesting?
- How hard was it to imagine beyond the story?

DOGBERRYISMS

(Page 1 of 2)

Goal: To give students an appreciation and understanding of how particular word choice shapes perception of character.

Outcomes: Students will write and perform a short scene using malapropisms.

Standards: Grades 9-12. English Comprehension & Analysis 2-2.4; Literary Response & Analysis 3-3.4; Writing Response to Literature 2.2; Speaking Applications 2.3

Vocabulary: Malapropism, dogberryism

Materials: Dictionary of Shakespeare's vocabulary and word use (see Internet and Books resource pages; dictionary of modern English words.

Activity: Using the worksheet that follows, direct students to do the following steps. You might want to work with partners, speaking these phrases out loud.

- Define the word in bold as it appears in each sentence below.
- Using context clues, write in the word that you think Dogberry could have chosen to speak correctly.

Translate the phrase with an appropriate word, and then translate the phrase again with the word Dogberry uses.

Discussion: Do Dogberry's malapropisms contain some hidden meaning? For instance, is the effect only comic or does the incorrect phrase take on a deeper meaning – a tedious king, for instance, is a very potent image. What do you read as Shakespeare's intention?

Reflection: What assumptions do you make about people who speak in certain ways? Are there speech tics that you have or you have noticed in others? One example is people who say "like" quite frequently. What are some others?



DOGBERRYISMS WORKSHEET

(Page 2 of 2)

1. *Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you that **decerns** you nearly.*

- Definition of misused word: _____
- Word that is meant: _____
- Translation of the phrase with an appropriate word: _____
- Translation of the phrase with Dogberry's word: _____

2. *if I were as **tedious** as a king,*

- Definition of misused word: _____
- Word that is meant: _____
- Translation of the phrase with an appropriate word: _____
- Translation of the phrase with Dogberry's word: _____

3. *Our watch, sir, have indeed comprehended two **aspicious** persons*

- Definition of misused word: _____
- Word that is meant: _____
- Translation of the phrase with an appropriate word: _____
- Translation of the phrase with Dogberry's word: _____

4. *Is our whole **dissembly** appeared?*

- Definition of misused word: _____
- Word that is meant: _____
- Translation of the phrase with an appropriate word: _____
- Translation of the phrase with Dogberry's word: _____

5. *...by this time our sexton hath **reformed** Signior Leonato of the matter*

- Definition of misused word: _____
- Word that is meant: _____
- Translation of the phrase with an appropriate word: _____
- Translation of the phrase with Dogberry's word: _____



BRUSH UP YOUR SHAKESPEARE REFERENCE SHEET

Below are some commonly used, but unfamiliar, Shakespearean words.

<p><i>addition</i> - title</p> <p><i>affined</i> - bound by duty</p> <p><i>alarum</i> - call to arms with trumpets</p> <p><i>anatomize</i> - to analyze in detail</p> <p><i>ancient</i> - ensign</p> <p><i>anon</i> - until later</p> <p><i>arrant</i> - absolute</p> <p><i>aroint</i> - begone</p> <p><i>assail</i> - to make amorous siege</p> <p><i>attend</i> - to await</p> <p><i>aye</i> - yes</p> <p><i>baffle</i> - to hang up (a person) by the heels as a mark of disgrace</p> <p><i>baggage</i> - strumpet, prostitute</p> <p><i>balk</i> - to disregard</p> <p><i>barm</i> - the froth on ale</p> <p><i>belike</i> - maybe</p> <p><i>belov'd</i> - beloved</p> <p><i>blank</i> - a target</p> <p><i>bolted</i> - refined</p> <p><i>brach</i> - bitch hound</p> <p><i>brake</i> - bushes</p> <p><i>brave</i> - fine, handsome</p> <p><i>bum</i> - backside, buttocks</p> <p><i>caitiff</i> - a wretched humble person</p> <p><i>catch</i> - song</p> <p><i>character</i> - handwriting</p>	<p><i>Cousin</i> , 'coz - relative, good friend</p> <p><i>chuck</i> - term of endearment, chick</p> <p><i>clout</i> - a piece of white cloth</p> <p><i>cog</i> - to deceive</p> <p><i>coil</i> - trouble</p> <p><i>cousin</i> - any close relative</p> <p><i>descant</i> - improvise discourses - speaks</p> <p><i>dispatch</i> - to hurry</p> <p><i>e'en</i> - evening</p> <p><i>enow</i> - enough</p> <p><i>fare</i> - <i>thee-well</i> -goodbye</p> <p><i>fie</i> - a curse</p> <p><i>fustian</i> - wretched</p> <p><i>got</i> - begot</p> <p><i>grammarcy</i> - thank you</p> <p><i>halter</i> - noose</p> <p><i>honest</i> - chaste, pure</p> <p><i>heavy</i> - sorrowful</p> <p><i>housewife</i> - hussy, prostitute</p> <p><i>impeach</i> - dishonor</p> <p><i>list</i> - listen</p> <p><i>mayhap</i> - maybe</p> <p><i>mess</i> - meal, food</p> <p><i>mew</i> - confine</p> <p><i>minister</i> - servant</p> <p><i>moiety</i> - portion</p> <p><i>morrow</i> - day</p> <p><i>nay</i> - no</p> <p><i>ne'er</i> - never</p> <p><i>office</i> - service or favor</p> <p><i>oft</i> - often</p>	<p><i>passing</i> - surprisingly, exceedingly</p> <p><i>perchance</i> - maybe</p> <p><i>perforce</i> - must</p> <p><i>politician</i> - schemer</p> <p><i>post</i> - messenger</p> <p><i>power</i> - army</p> <p><i>prithee</i> - please</p> <p><i>quest</i> - a jury</p> <p><i>recreant</i> - coward</p> <p><i>resolve</i> - to answer; reply to</p> <p><i>but soft</i> - be quiet</p> <p><i>soundly</i> - plainly</p> <p><i>stale</i> - harlot</p> <p><i>subscription</i> - loyalty, allegiance</p> <p><i>tax</i> - to criticize; to accuse</p> <p><i>troth</i> - belief</p> <p><i>teem</i> - to give birth</p> <p><i>thee</i> - you (informal)</p> <p><i>thou</i> - you (informal)</p> <p><i>thy</i> - your (informal)</p> <p><i>tucket</i> - trumpet flourish</p> <p><i>verge</i> - edge, circumference</p> <p><i>verily</i> - truly</p> <p><i>villain</i> - common person, not noble</p> <p><i>want</i> - lack of, don't have</p> <p><i>well-a-day</i> - alas</p> <p><i>wherefore</i> - why</p> <p><i>yea</i> - yes</p> <p><i>zounds</i> - by his (Christ's) wounds</p>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------



YOU'RE THE CRITIC: CAL SHAKES PLAY CRITIQUE (Elementary and Middle School)

NAME: _____

1. Circle the number of stars that best matches how you'd rate this performance. (One star is the lowest rating and five stars is the best rating.) Then write a paragraph on the back of the paper that specifically describes why you gave it that rating. Do not simply say "I didn't like it," but say why. For example, "I didn't like the fact that the director changed the setting to New York" or "I loved the way the actors made me believe that they were really going to kill each other."



2. Outline the main actions that happened in the plot (what were the big events in the story?).a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

f.

3. What is the central idea or theme of the play?

4. Describe what the actors did to help you understand the Shakespearean language.

5. What did you particularly like or dislike about the staging (set design, lights, costumes, music, etc.)?

6. Shakespeare writes about feelings that we all experience. In *Much Ado About Nothing*, we see people dealing with emotions like love, jealousy, death, anger, shame, and many others. Pick one of these emotions that you've experienced strongly and write what happened in your life to make you feel that way, and what happened because of it.



YOU'RE THE CRITIC: CAL SHAKES PLAY CRITIQUE (Middle and High School)

Give this production a rating of one to five stars. (One star is the lowest rating and five stars is the highest.) On a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph review of the play. In other words, describe why you gave it that rating. Give specific examples to support your reasons. On the same sheet of paper, reflect on the following questions:



1. How would you describe the character of Beatrice as she is portrayed in this production?
2. The watchmen appear to be the clowns of the play. However, by uncovering the plot against Hero, they become the champions of the story. What is Shakespeare signifying by their heroism?
3. Does Shakespeare give any reasons as to why Don John behaves so malevolently toward others? What justifications can you find and do you believe them?
4. Which character did you sympathize with most? Why?
5. Think about and describe:
 - i. the vocal and physical actions of the actors (characterization)
 - ii. the set
 - iii. the costumes
6. What do you think are some of the themes of the play?
7. Did the elements of characterizations, set, and/or costumes reinforce any of these themes?
8. Shakespeare writes about things that we all experience: Love, jealousy, death, anger, revenge, passion, misunderstandings, et cetera. Write a paragraph about one big emotion in the play that you've also experienced in your life.
9. Now, imagine you are the director of *Much Ado About Nothing*, and use a new sheet of paper to create your new production.
 - Cast the characters of Beatrice and Benedick with famous actors. Why would you choose these two people?
 - Many directors set Shakespeare plays in time periods other than the Renaissance. What other setting could you place the play in that would make sense? Why?
 - How about costumes? Imagine how the characters in your new production would be dressed that would illustrate the kinds of characters they are and what setting you have put the play in.