

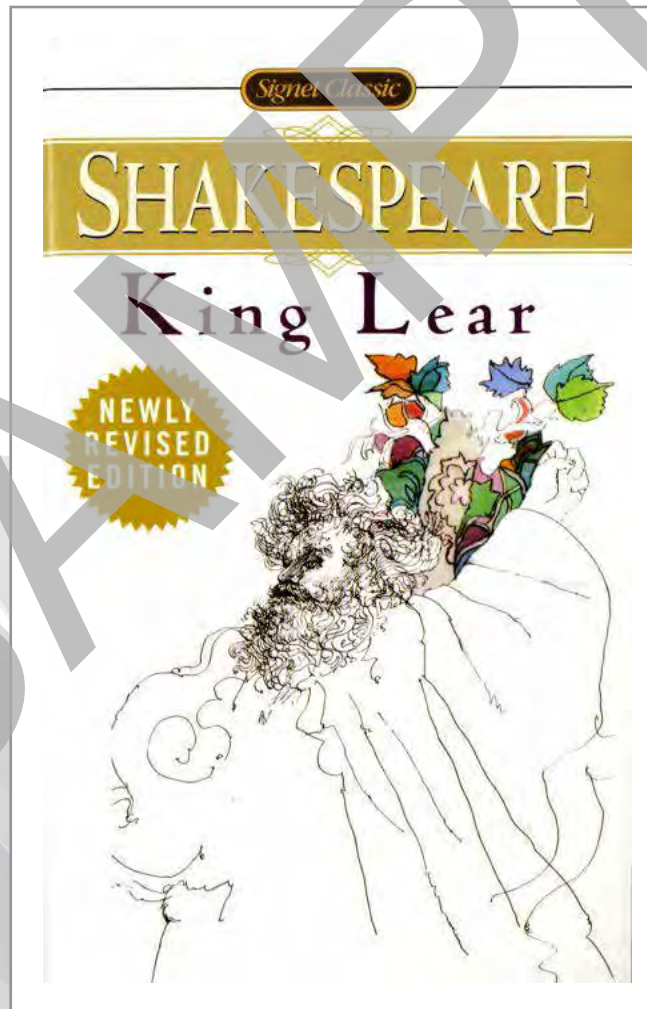


STUDENT PACKET

GRADES 9-12

King Lear

William Shakespeare



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Name _____

Directions: Rate the following statements before you read the story. Compare and discuss your ratings with a partner. After you have completed the novel, discuss the ratings again in light of the story.

1 ————— 2 ————— 3 ————— 4 ————— 5 ————— 6
agree strongly strongly disagree

Before **After**

- | | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| 1. You should marry for money, not love. | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Most sisters are jealous of each other. | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Power corrupts. | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Good usually conquers evil. | _____ | _____ |
| 5. The guilty are usually punished. | _____ | _____ |
| 6. An illegitimate child should be treated the same way as his or her legitimate siblings. | _____ | _____ |
| 7. What may sound crazy is often true wisdom. | _____ | _____ |
| 8. Things are seldom what they seem. | _____ | _____ |
| 9. Those who claim to be the most virtuous are often the ones who have the most to hide. | _____ | _____ |
| 10. Revenge is the best medicine. | _____ | _____ |
| 11. Some people are born to lead and others, to serve. | _____ | _____ |
| 12. Rejecting an elderly, loving parent is one of the most despicable things a person can do. | _____ | _____ |
| 13. Good parents often bear bad children. | _____ | _____ |
| 14. One bad decision can change a person’s life. | _____ | _____ |
| 15. It is important to maintain social and moral order. | _____ | _____ |

Act One, Scene i

1. What does Gloucester have to say about his son? What is your first impression of Edmund?
2. What is Lear saying in his first long speech, lines 38-56?
3. How does Lear react to Cordelia's speech?
4. What happens to the part of the kingdom that was to have been Cordelia's?
5. Who tries to get Lear to reconsider his rather harsh decision? What happens to him?
6. Who are Albany and Cornwall?
7. What does Cordelia have to say to her sisters before she leaves with the King of France? Is she better off with him than with Burgundy?
8. How do Regan and Goneril really feel about King Lear?
9. **Prediction:** Cordelia says, "Time shall unfold what plighted cunning hides/Who covers fault at last shame them derides." (lines 282-283) Paraphrase this quote. What do you think it has to do with forthcoming events?

Act One, Scenes ii-v

1. Summarize what Edmund is saying in his long speech at the beginning of scene two.
2. How does Edmund play on his father's gullibility to carry out his plan?
3. What is ironic about Edgar's statement, "Some villain hath done me wrong"? (ii, 177)
4. What value would you say is most closely connected with Kent?
5. What do you think motivates Goneril to treat Lear as she does?
6. What analogy does the Fool make between the hedge-sparrow and Lear's situation?
7. Why does Lear get so angry with Goneril?
8. What is Lear beginning to realize about Cordelia? (iv, 273-278)
9. What part has the Duke of Albany played in this act? How does Goneril treat her husband?
10. **Prediction:** What will happen when Lear arrives at Regan's? Will he receive a warm welcome from his middle daughter?

Name _____

Directions: In this play, there are some characters who are extremely evil, some who are extremely good, and some who fall in between. Consider the list of adjectives below, and decide which ones describe the characters in the boxes. Add several other adjectives of your own. Write the appropriate adjectives in the boxes. You may use one adjective several times, others not at all.

loyal, kind, gullible, compassionate, jealous, deceitful, wise, honest, cunning, cruel, patient, self-centered, religious, unstable, courageous, cowardly, foolish. loving, dependable, scholarly, treacherous

Other adjectives of your own:

Lear

Goneril

Regan

Cordelia

Gloucester

Edmund

Edgar

Kent

Cornwall

Albany

Oswald

Name _____

Sonnet

A **sonnet** is a fourteen-line poem with a single idea—often love for someone—that is brought to a conclusion at the end of the poem. Shakespeare has written some of the best-known sonnets.

Read some Shakespearean sonnets. Pay attention to how the poem is divided: into an octet (8 lines) and a sestet (6 lines). Also pay attention to the meter and rhyme scheme. For example, in this sonnet, “When Forty Winters,” Shakespeare put ten syllables in every line and accented every other syllable (iambic pentameter):

The RHYME SCHEME is

A•B•A•B•C•D•C•D•E•F•E•F•G•G

This means that the first line rhymes with the third, the second with the fourth, the fifth with the seventh, and so forth.

The last two lines, which form a rhyming couplet, usually summarize or conclude the thoughts expressed in the sonnet.

*When forty winters shall beseige thy brow
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,
Thy youth's proud livery, so gazed on now,
Will be a tattered weed, of small worth held:
Then being asked where all thy beauty lies,
Where all the treasure of thy lusty days,
To say, within thine own deep-sunken eyes,
Were an ill-eating shame and thriftless praise.
How much more praise deserved thy beauty's use,
If thou could'st answer "This fair child of mine
Shall sum my count and make my old excuse,"
Proving his beauty by succession thine!
This were to be new made when thou art old,
And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold.*

Write a sonnet from one character in the play to another. For example:

- Goneril or Regan's sonnet to Edmund
- Lear's sonnet for Cordelia, after he realizes his mistake
- Gloucester's sonnet for Edgar
- Sonnets from Burgundy or France when they were courting Cordelia