



STUDENT PACKET

GRADES 9-12

The Merchant of Venice

William Shakespeare



This is a sample not intended for classroom use.

READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The Merchant of Venice

William Shakespeare

STUDENT PACKET

NOTE:

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Name _____

The Merchant of Venice
Activity #2 • Journal Writing
Use Before Reading

Directions

Freewrite for a few minutes, using each of the following sentence-starters. Later, compare your responses with what you find in the play.

Act I

1. When a friend is down _____

2. Borrowing money _____

Act II

3. A good test of whether a man and woman are compatible _____

4. A daughter might take money from her father without asking _____

Act III

5. Revenge _____

6. "A friend of his is a friend of mine" _____

Act IV

7. Showing mercy _____

8. Playing a trick on someone you love _____

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Act V

9. Relief is when _____

10. All's well that ends well _____

Name _____

7. Why was Gratiano so eager for Bassanio to pick the right casket?
8. When Lorenzo shows up with Jessica, what does Gratiano call her?
9. What is in the letter Salerio brings Bassanio?
10. How does Portia react to the news about Antonio's loss?
11. What does Jessica tell the others about her father?
12. Why does Portia tell Bassanio to "be gone"?

Act III, Scene III

1. According to Antonio, why does Shylock refuse to show him mercy?
2. Why doesn't Antonio think the Duke will be able to help him?

Act III, Scene IV

1. Why is Portia sure that Antonio is worth helping?
2. What does Portia want Lorenzo to do while she is gone?
3. What does Portia tell Lorenzo she and Nerissa will be doing?
4. Who is Doctor Bellario?
5. What instructions does Portia give Balthasar?
6. What does Portia tell Nerissa about her plan?

Act III, Scene V

1. Why does Launcelot think that Nerissa is doomed?
2. How does Nerissa think her husband will "save" her?
3. Who is the father of "the Moor's" unborn baby?
4. What does Lorenzo want to talk about over dinner?

Prediction

Why is Portia disguising herself and Nerissa?

Act IV, Scene I

1. What is the Duke's opinion of Shylock?
 2. What does the Duke mean when he tells Shylock, "*We all expect a gentle answer*"?
- (34)

Name _____

The Merchant of Venice
Activity #4 • Shakespeare's Language
Use After Reading

Shakespeare used many words which we use today—but in an UNFAMILIAR way. For example, when Launcelot hands Lorenzo the letter and says:

“And it shall please you to break up this,” (2.4.10)

he means: “You’ll want to open this.”

NOT: “You’ll want to smash this.”

Circle the letter of the definition that BEST fits the **boldfaced** word in each sentence below. If Shakespeare used the word to mean what it most commonly means today, circle choice (d).

1. Go, draw aside the curtains and **discover**
The several caskets to this noble Prince. (2.7.1)
a) reveal b) take c) open d) find out
2. The **villain** Jew with outcries raised the Duke,
Who went with him to search Bassanio’s ship. (2.8.4)
a) dim-witted bachelor b) faithless c) low-bred fellow d) rogue
3. Who chooseth me shall get as much as he **deserves**. (2.9.35)
a) desires b) risks c) owes d) merits
4. Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant, and thou hast incurred
The danger formerly by me **rehearsed**. (4.1.361)
a) warned b) cited c) caused d) practiced
5. Here in her hairs/The painter plays the spider, and hath woven/ A golden mesh t’
entrap the hearts of men/**Faster** than gnats in cobwebs. (3.2.123)
a) tighter b) smaller c) lighter d) quicker
6.you shall find three of your argosies/Are richly come to harbor suddenly./ You
shall not know by what **strange** accident/I chanced on this letter. (5.1.278)
a) secret b) astonishing c) unfortunate d) odd
7. The Duke himself, and the magnificoes/Of greatest port have all persuaded with
him/ But none can drive him from the **envious** plea/ Of forfeiture, of justice, and
his bond. (3.2.282)
a) unrelenting b) whining c) malignant d) jealous

Name _____

Scene	What Happens	Inner Selves
8. The Duke makes his appeal to Shylock.		
9. Shylock demands his due.		
10. Portia, in disguise, wins the case for Antonio.		
11. Gratiano and Bassanio lose their rings.		
12. Lorenzo and Jessica declare their love for each other.		
13. Portia and Nerissa tease their husbands about the rings.		
14. Jessica learns that she will inherit her father's property upon his death.		

II. Write a review of the movie. Include these elements:

- Description of Joan Plowright's Portia
- Description of Laurence Olivier's Shylock
- How the Portia and Shylock resemble or differ from other versions—of Shakespeare's
- Most telling scenes
- Changes in Shakespeare's story—such as omission of Old Gobbo
- Comment on how well the 19th century setting "works."
- Comment on the setting, props, scenery, lighting, costuming, voices, gestures.
- How does the humor come across?
- What is Shakespeare saying about commitment—and Jewishness?

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Name _____

28. The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose. (1.3.95)

_____ : _____

29. You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine. (1.3.108-109)

_____ : _____

30. It is a wise father that knows his own child. (2.2.76-77)

_____ : _____

31. "All that glitters is not gold." (2.7.65)

_____ : _____

32. I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions,
senses, affections, passions? (3.1.55-57)

_____ : _____

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33. There is no vice so simple but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts. (3.2.81-82)

_____ : _____
