

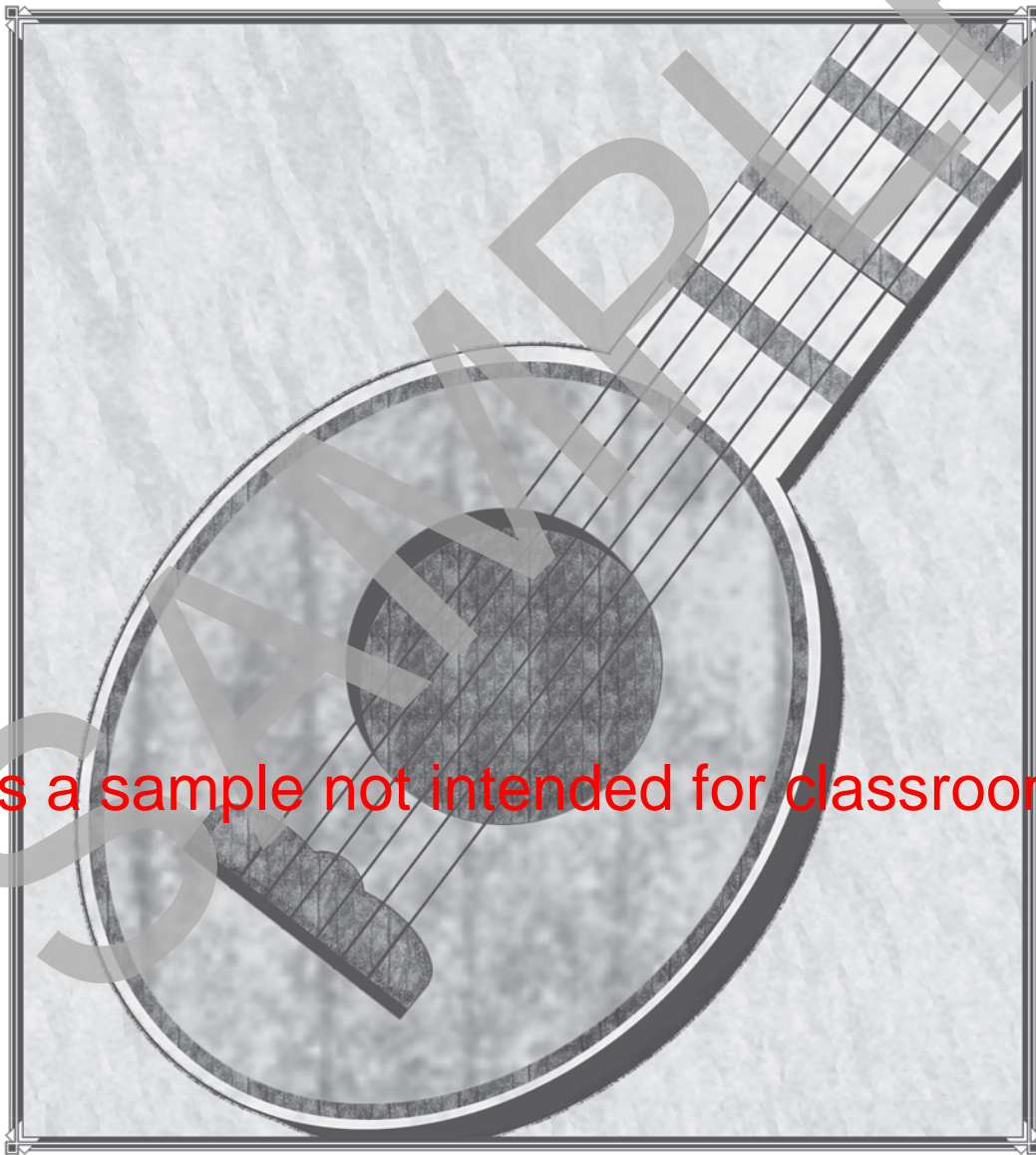


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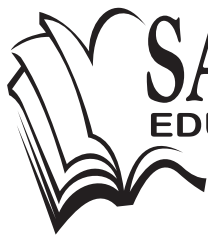
SHAKESPEARE

MADE EASY

Twelfth Night



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To the Teacher

As any teacher or student who has read Shakespeare knows, his plays are not easy. They are thought-provoking and complex texts that abound with romance, deceit, tragedy, comedy, revenge, and humanity shown at its very worst as well as its very best. In short, to read Shakespeare is to explore the depths and heights of humanity.

The *Shakespeare Made Easy* Activity Guides are designed by teachers for teachers to help students navigate this journey. Each guide is broken into six sections of four activities and one review. At the end of each guide is a final test, a variety of culminating activities, and an answer key. The activities are meant to aid textual comprehension, to provide creative

opportunities for the reader to make personal connections with the text, and to help busy teachers gain quick access to classroom-tested and age-appropriate activities that make the teaching of Shakespeare an easier task.

Each regular activity, as well as each culminating activity, can be modified to be an individual or a group task, and the reviews and tests can be used as quick comprehension checks or formally scored assessments. The guides may be used in conjunction with the Barron's *Shakespeare Made Easy* texts or alone. Ultimately, the *Shakespeare Made Easy* Activity Guides are intended to assist teachers and students in gaining an increased understanding of and appreciation for the reading of Shakespeare.

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Introduction to the Play

Background to *Twelfth Night*

The title, *Twelfth Night*, is most likely a reference to the celebration of the Feast of Epiphany, which occurs the twelfth night after Christmas, on January 6. In the Christian church, the Epiphany is the final night of the celebration of Christmas. On this night, the celebration centers on the Three Wise Men who journey to find Jesus and present to him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. However, in Shakespeare's era, this religious celebration was also part of a cultural tradition. In the same way, the Easter Bunny is a cultural tradition during Easter, which is a religious celebration of the resurrection of Christ.

When Shakespeare was writing his play, the Feast of Epiphany or Twelfth Night was celebrated in secular society as the Feast of Fools. This celebration involved a reversal of roles between people in authority and their subordinates. Everyday rules and procedures were changed or abandoned. The Feast of Fools was a great time of partying and joking, and people who were tired of taking orders from their superiors could be in charge and play pranks, or "punch" orders. This celebration of role reversal, and the drinking and playing that accompanied it (instead of quiet, work, and sobriety), is very important to the action of this play.

The second part of the play's title, *What You Will*, is a wonderful play on the name of the author, William Shakespeare. In addition, it

indicates that the play is not a religious pageant but is open to interpretation. It is as if Shakespeare says with deep seriousness, "Here is Twelfth Night." And then immediately he changes his tone in a light, flippant way to say, "Or, whatever. . . ." The second part of the title also helps us understand the play, because it is defined by mistaken identities, gender switches, love at first sight, and pranks, as well as loyalty, reunion of siblings, and marriage.

The plot of the play is similar to an Italian play called *Gl'Ingannati*. In that play, a brother and sister are parted by a twist of fate, but they eventually find each other. The sister disguises herself as a male page at the court of a count. The count asks his page to be his ambassador to a disdainful woman, who falls in love with the sister dressed as the page. Eventually the brother arrives on the scene, and the woman transfers her affection to the brother. However, Shakespeare takes this basic plot outline and fills it out with great language, humor, and memorable characters.

Another key component of the play is mistaken affection. Orsino, the Duke of Illyria, is mistaken in his love for Silvia. Olivia, a rich countess, is mistaken in her love for Viola, who is disguised as Orsino's page. Malvolio, a steward of Olivia, is mistaken when he assumes that Olivia is in love with him. Sir Andrew Aguecheek, a friend to Sir Toby Belch, Olivia's uncle, is also mistaken in thinking that Olivia would consider him a worthy suitor. The only character who is not mistaken is Viola, who

their masters, or from hangmen, who received the clothes of their victims as payment for their services.

Though Shakespeare's stage directions are sparse, definition of a few key terms will be helpful for the reader. The following is a brief glossary of stage directions commonly found in Shakespeare's plays.

Selected Glossary of Stage Directions in Shakespeare's Plays

Above: an indication that the actor speaking from above is on a higher balcony or other scaffold that is higher than the other actors

Alarum: a stage signal, which calls the soldiers to battle; usually trumpets, drums, and shouts

Aside: words spoken by the actor so the audience overhears but the other actors on the stage do not. An aside may also be spoken to one other actor so that the others on stage do not overhear.

Calls within: a voice offstage that calls to a character on the stage

Curtains: fabrics draped around a bed that could be opened or closed for privacy

Draw: Actor pulls their swords from their sheathes.

Enter: a direction for a character to enter the stage. This can be from the audience's right (stage right) or the audience's left (stage left).

Enter Chorus: a direction for an actor to come to the center of the stage and offer some introductory comments, usually in blank verse or rhyming couplets. In *Romeo and Juliet*, the Chorus delivers a sonnet, a form of poetry associated with love.

Exeunt: All characters leave the stage, or those characters named leave the stage.

Exit: One character leaves the stage.

Flourish: A group of trumpets or other horn instruments play a brief melody.

Have at: Characters begin to fight, usually with swords.

Pageant: a show or spectacle of actors in unusual costumes, usually without words

Prologue: an introduction spoken by the Chorus that gives an overview to the audience and invites them into the play or scene

Retires: A character slips away.

Sennet: a series of notes sounded on brass instruments to announce the approach or departure of a procession

Singing: a signal for the actor to sing the following lines as a tune

Within: voices or sounds occurring offstage but heard by the audience

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Introduction to Shakespeare

A Brief Biography of William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare was born in April 1564 to John and Mary Shakespeare in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. His birthday is celebrated on April 23. This is memorable because April 23 is also the day Shakespeare died in 1616.

Shakespeare was the eldest of nine children in his family, six of whom survived to adulthood.

William Shakespeare's father worked with leather and became a successful merchant early in his career. He held some relatively important government offices. However, when William was in his early teens, his father's financial position began to slide due to growing debt. After many years, John Shakespeare's fortunes and respect were restored, but records indicate that the years of debt and lawsuits were very stressful.

Historians assume that young Will went to school and took a rigorous course of study including Latin, history, and biblical study. In 1582, at the age of eighteen, he married Anne Hathaway, who was three months pregnant.

Studies of Elizabethan family life indicate that Anne's situation was not unusual since it was accepted that the engagement period was as legally binding as the marriage. The couple had a daughter, Susanna, followed by twins, Hamnet and Judith. Not much is known about Shakespeare during the next seven years, but his name is listed as an actor in London by 1592. This was a difficult time for the theater

because measures to prevent the spread of the plague regularly closed the theaters.

Between 1594 and 1595, Shakespeare joined the Chamberlain's Men as a playwright and actor. The acting company featured actor Richard Burbage, and they were a favorite of Queen Elizabeth I. During this time, Shakespeare was writing such plays as *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Even though Shakespeare was enjoying great success by the time he was 32, it was dampened by the death of his son, Hamnet, in 1596. Soon after, Shakespeare refocused on his home in Stratford where he bought an estate called New Place, with gardens, orchards, and barns in addition to the main home. He still maintained a home in London near the theater.

In 1599, Shakespeare wrote *Henry V*, *Julius Caesar*, and *As You Like It*. The Globe Playhouse was up and running, with Shakespeare a 10 percent owner. This means that he was able to earn 10 percent of any show's profits. This business position helped him solidify his wealth.

In 1603, Shakespeare's reputation earned his acting troop the sponsorship of James I, who requested one play performance per month. Their name changed to the King's Men. By this time, Shakespeare had written and performed in almost all of his comedies and histories. He was proclaimed the finest playwright in London.



ACTIVITY 1

The Lovesick Duke Orsino

Act one, Scene 1

Background We will see much more of the lovesick Duke pining away for his love, but you should first attempt to get your bearings on his situation.

Directions Answer the following questions based on the Duke's first speeches in Act one, Scene 1. Use another sheet of paper, if necessary.

1. What is "the food of love"? Why does the duke wish for the "excess" of it? (lines 1 and 2)
2. The Duke plays on the double meaning of "hart" (lines 21–23). What are its two meanings, and in what way is he Olivia's hart?
3. According to Valentine, why won't Olivia accept the Duke's courting of her or be seen in public? (lines 24–32)
4. How does the Duke turn even Olivia's mourning into something passionate in lines 33–41? Put another way, why does Olivia's commitment to mourn make the Duke believe in her ability to love passionately?
5. The relationship between love and music is a recurring theme in *Twelfth Night*, so be looking for it as you read the play. As the play begins, the Duke is like a lovesick teenager who listens to the same melancholy love tune over and over as he dreams of the object of his affection. Why do you think music has such a powerful effect on so many people?

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ACTIVITY 2

The Shipwrecked Viola

Act one, Scene 2

Background Moments after washing ashore, a shipwrecked Viola plans her future.

Directions Fill in the blanks to test your understanding of the events in this scene and Viola's plan to start her new life.

Viola is shipwrecked on the coast of _____, and she thinks that her brother is _____. Viola gives the captain _____ for telling her that he saw her brother hanging onto a _____ and floating upon the sea. A noble duke named _____ rules the country on which Viola is shipwrecked, and this Duke seeks the love of _____, who is the daughter of a _____ who died. Olivia's _____ also died, and for his sake she is avoiding the sight of _____. Viola asks the captain to provide her with _____ so that she may serve the _____. She will present herself as a _____ to the Duke, and she will be pleasing to him because she can _____ for him. She asks the captain for his _____, and he agrees.

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ACTIVITY 3

Fools' Play

Act one, Scene 3

Background In a Shakespearean comedy, there are many fools, intentional or unintentional, who err in their choice of words or make puns (a play on words) for comic purposes.

Directions Note the lines below, and briefly explain why each may be considered humorous.

1. Line 30: “By this hand, they are scoundrels and substractors that say so of him.” (Sir Toby)
2. Line 38: “. . . for here comes Sir Andrew Agueface.” (Sir Toby)
3. Line 41: “Bless you, fair shrew.” (Sir Andrew)
4. Line 49: “Good Mistress Mary Accost—” (Sir Andrew)

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ACTIVITY 4

Viola's First Meeting with Olivia

Act one, Scene 5

Background In this scene, Viola, disguised as Cesario, goes to Olivia to plead Orsino's love for her.

Directions Summarize the interaction between Olivia and Viola (disguised as the young servant Cesario) starting with line 155 and ending with line 275. Suggested length: 2–5 paragraphs. Use another sheet of paper, if necessary.

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ACTIVITY 5

Review

Directions Test your knowledge of the characters thus far by matching each character with the correct description of him or her. Write the letter of the correct character in the space provided. All letters will be used at least once.

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------|----------|
| a. Orsino | d. Maria | g. Viola |
| b. Olivia | e. Sir Toby | |
| c. Malvolio | f. Feste | |

- _____ 1. was shipwrecked and fears her brother is dead
- _____ 2. thinks she is falling in love with the Duke's servant
- _____ 3. pretending to be the Duke's servant
- _____ 4. dislikes Olivia's jester
- _____ 5. has harsh words for Sir Toby and his foolish friend
- _____ 6. mourns her brother and father
- _____ 7. is in love with a lady who doesn't return his affection
- _____ 8. spends much of his time drinking
- _____ 9. calls his lady a fool and tells the servants to take her away
- _____ 10. discloses that she would like to be married to the Duke

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