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# Intro To Twelfth Night

— ENG1D/2D/3C —

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# William Shakespeare (1564 - 1616)



## PERSONAL LIFE

- Born in Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwickshire, England
- Attended grammar school, but did not go to University
- Married Anne Hathaway when he was 18
- They had 3 children (Susanna, and twins, Hamnet and Judith). Hamnet died when he was 11.
- Actor and poet
- Wrote for a small theatre in England
- His father was an alderman (high ranking official)



# William Shakespeare



## CAREER

- Globe Theatre
- Wrote many plays and sonnets

*Good friend, for Jesus' sake forbear  
To dig the dust enclosed here.  
Blest be the man that spares these stones,  
And curst be he that moves my bones.*

(inscribed on his grave, written by himself?)

- The Holy Trinity Church in Stratford

# Shakespeare's Language

The language Shakespeare used is an early form of Modern English that is different from today's English in a variety of ways.

1. Shakespeare often used contractions or omitted syllables in order to maintain the meter. He also dropped letters, particularly vowels, at the ends of words and in the ending -est.

## Examples

Orsino: 'Tis [it is] not so sweet now as it was before (1.1.8)

Toby: She'll none o' [of] th' [the] Count (1.3.104).

Toby: O knight, thou lack'st [lackest] a cup of canary! (1.3.79).

Andrew: And you love me, let's do't [do it] (2.3.61).

\*\*\* Remember: if you see the apostrophe ( ' ), then something has been omitted.

# Shakespeare's Language

Shakespeare used many words that we no longer use today. Words that have dropped out of the language are called "archaic":

Hence (from now; from that time or place)

Thy (your)

Thence (from a place; as a consequence)

Thou (you; subject of a verb)

Whence (from what place?)

Thee (you - singular)

Thither (there)

Thine (yours)

Whither (to what place; to which)

Hither (to this place)

Ay (yes)

Ho (look there)

Spake (spoke)

# Shakespeare's Language - Translate!

Rewrite these lines from Othello in today's English, replacing the archaic words and spellings with more modern forms:

1) Th' art i' th' right (2.3.118).

You are in the right.

2) I prithee tell me what thou think'st of me (3.1.140).

Please tell me what you think of me.

3) Fear'st thou that, Antonio? (5.1.222).

Do you fear that, Antonio?

# Iambic Pentameter

Shakespeare wrote using “Iambic Pentameter”

Each line has 10 syllables - 5 stressed and 5 unstressed.

Here is an example: If music be the food of love, play on,

You can break up the line into smaller sections that have two syllables. These sections are called feet.

If mu sic be the food of love, play on,

Each foot has one stressed and one unstressed syllable. In iambic pentameter, the second syllable in a foot usually gets the strong stress.

If **mu** sic **be** the **food** of **love**, play **on**,

# *Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare

**Genre:** Comedy, light, and cheery

**Written:** between 1600 and 1602 in England

First published in 1623

**Based on** numerous Italian comedies

**Setting:** Illyria (present-day Albania). The Ancient Romans conquered Illyria in 168 B.C. The setting for this play is a fictional kingdom.

**Protagonist:** Viola

**Major Conflict:** Viola is in love with Orsino, who is in love with Olivia, who is in love with Viola's male disguise, Cesario. This love triangle is complicated by the fact that neither Orsino nor Olivia know that Viola is really a woman.



# ***Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare**

## **Where does the name “Twelfth Night” come from?**

Written as a Christmas season production for “Epiphany,” which is a Christian holiday/feast day that celebrates the revelation of God incarnate as Jesus. It takes place on the twelfth night after Christmas, when, according to religious tradition, Jesus was introduced to the world.

# *Themes in the Play*

**As we read, we will explore the following themes:**

- 1) Vanity or Self-love

Who demonstrates vanity? How does it end up hurting them? Do they overcome it? How does each character's self-love manifest itself?

- 2) Masks and disguises

Who disguises themselves and why? What disguises are literal and what are they meant to protect the person from? What other kind of masks do characters wear? When do they come off and why?

- 3) Fools and ambition

There are many kinds of Fools in the play. What is the difference between each kind? How does each character's ambition make them act as a fool? Who is made a fool in the play? What does this say about the characters?

# *Themes in the Play*

**As we read, we will explore the following themes:**

## 4) Gender Confusion

In Shakespeare's time, women were not allowed to perform on stage, so all of the roles were performed by men. This means that Olivia was played by a young man. Viola was a boy, pretending to be a girl, pretending to be a boy. How does Shakespeare make this clear to us as an audience? How does he use it to humorous effects?

## 5) Love and suffering

How closely related are the ideas of love and suffering? Does anyone fall in love in this play who doesn't suffer? How does this relate to your own life?