Love's Labor's Lost Study Guide

Love's Labor's Lost by William Shakespeare

BOOKRAGS

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Introduction

Love's Labor's Lost focuses on the problem of telling the truth. The play opens with a solemn vow to study and to avoid the company of women. But the king of Navarre, who as leader ought to be a model of truth and virtue, breaks his own promise in the second scene of the play. After that, all of his followers break their promises as well: instead of avoiding women, they fall in love with and pursue the ladies of France who are visiting the king's court. But because they have already broken their first vow, their promises of love do not ring true. Although all four of them write effective love poems, clever poetry does not necessarily express sincere feeling. Even more telling, in the Masque of the Muscovites when everyone involved is disguised, the men cannot recognize their ladies, though the ladies recognize the men. The love promises that the lords have made seem particularly hollow if they cannot even tell their love objects apart. The ladies question the lords' capacity to speak truly of love at all. In modern times as well, the effort to speak truthfully about one's feelings remains difficult. It is often easier to make promises than it is to keep them—especially when it comes to love relationships. Further, it is often easier to love one's ideal image of someone than to recognize him or her for who he or she is. .

Yet the ladies in the play insist that it is in fact possible to speak truly, not only of love but of other things as well. The play is full of banter and wordplay, and the ladies participate in the clever use (and abuse) of words just as much as the lords. But the ladies mock the lords in order to point out their mistakes and offer insight, for example after the Masque of the Muscovites. In addition, the ladies mock themselves and each other without being cruel or destructive, whereas the men make fun of the Nine Worthies actors to the point of injuring them. Rosaline points out that the "prosperity" or usefulness of words does not depend on the experience of the speaker, but upon the effect on the audience—in other words, clever language and wordplay are not "prosperous" if they cause harm to those who hear them. The lords behave like bullies, making fun of less privileged men, much as the school bully might make fun of the weaker kids in class. The meaning of words depends on how the audience understands them, not on how much fun the bully might have in his mockery.

To modern audiences, the idea of establishing an "academy" at court might seem foreign. Nothing like the court system exists in modern life in many countries; the renaissance court was a legal and political hub, but also a social center where young gentlemen and gentlewomen lived lives of leisure supported by royalty. The king of Navarre's court is more like a boarding school or college than like a political or legal center. And the academy of *Love's Labour's Lost* represents a rather extreme version of what happened regularly in Renaissance courts: the education of young men (and to some extent women). Young courtiers were taught to read and write as well as to behave like gentlemen. The king of Navarre has a particularly idealistic notion of the study involved in courtly life. He thinks that in order to create a court as a center of learning, the members of the court must be extreme in swearing off almost all other activity. He even goes so far as to insist that love and studying are mutually exclusive. Certainly in modern life the same conflict can recur—the conflict between studying and

social life, or between work and love. Indeed, there are plenty of parents who require that their children finish their homework before they see their friends, and plenty of college students who, like the lords of Navarre, confront the difficulties of balancing study with newfound desires. But what makes the court of Navarre particularly unconventional is that in the end, neither study nor love wins out. The "academy" is destroyed, but there is nothing left in its place. The king and all his lords are sent off to different corners of the world to live alone and contemplate their lives. In effect, the court itself is exposed as a superficial and untrustworthy place.

Plot Summary

Act I

When the play opens, the king of Navarre and his lords, Berowne, Dumaine, and Longaville, have just sworn an oath together: they will all live at the court of Navarre, forming a "little academe" together, committed to learning and contemplation. They swear to fast, to sleep minimally, and most important, to avoid the company of women for the next three years. The king has issued a proclamation stating that no woman shall come within a mile of his court. But the princess of France is due to pay a visit to the court; the king resolves to speak with her, going back on his oath for her sake. But the first member of the court to disobey the new rules is Costard the clown, whom the Spanish courtier Armado catches with a country woman, Jaquenetta. Dull, the constable, brings Costard before the king, who sentences Costard to a week's confinement with only bread and water, with Armado as his jailkeeper. In the next scene, it is revealed that Armado himself is in love with Jaquenetta.

Act II

The princess arrives with her three ladies in waiting—Rosaline, Maria, and Katherine—and her lord Boyet. The king arrives and tells the princess she must be lodged in a field, rather than at court, in order to fulfill his prohibition against women at court. The princess and the king negotiate for the return of Aquitaine, a province in France, which her father the king of France had lost to Navarre's father. Navarre believes the king of France owes him money before he can give up Aquitaine; the princess holds that the money has already been paid, and Aquitaine belongs to France. The negotiations promise to take several days. Meanwhile, the lords have all fallen in love with the princess's ladies.

Act III

The act begins with Moth, Armado's page, making fun of his master. Armado has written Jaquenetta a love letter. He sets Costard the clown free from confinement in order to pay him to carry the letter to Jaquenetta. Berowne then appears and pays Costard to carry a love letter to Rosaline.

Act IV

The princess's party are hunting in the forest when Costard delivers his letter—but it is the wrong letter. Boyet reads aloud Armado's suit to Jaquenetta. In the next scene, Holofernes the schoolteacher and Nathaniel the curate encounter Costard and Jaquenetta. Jaquenetta asks Holofernes to read a letter aloud to her. It was intended for Rosaline, and Holofernes decides to deliver it to the king himself. Meanwhile, Berowne

appears in the woods, bemoaning his love for Rosaline. The king appears after him, and Berowne climbs a tree. The king reads aloud a love letter he has written to the princess. Longaville and Dumaine appear in turn, both reading love poems aloud. Then each lord emerges one by one. Longaville emerges to accuse Dumaine of breaking his oath; the king accuses both Dumaine and Longaville; finally, Berowne emerges to "whip hypocrisy" and accuse the king himself along with the others. Costard and Jaquenetta reappear with Berowne's letter to Rosaline. All four lords resolve to remain faithful lovers. Berowne gives a lengthy speech about love's capacity for making men virtuous and charitable.

Act V

Holofernes, Nathaniel, Dull, Moth, and Armado plan to put on a Pageant of the Nine Worthies, nine famous heroes from classical to Biblical to modern times, before the lords and ladies. Meanwhile, the lords have sent the ladies love-tokens and letters of praise. Boyet warns the ladies that the men are dressing up as Russians in order to woo them in disguise. The ladies put on masks of their own and exchange love tokens, so that in this so-called "Masque of the Muscovites," each lord mistakenly woos the wrong lady. When they return in their usual clothes, Rosaline tells them that a group of foolish Russians has just appeared; Berowne finally confesses they themselves were the Russians. The princess reveals that the ladies knew all along. Costard the clown arrives to announce another drama, the Pageant of the Nine Worthies. The king almost puts a stop to it, worried the play will cause even further embarrassment. The actors make many mistakes. The lords (with the help of Boyet) interrupt and mock the play so ruthlessly that they only make it worse. They drive Holofernes to say,' "This is not generous, not gentle, not humble" (629). The princess interjects a few notes of sympathy, but the men keep taunting the actors. The play is interrupted by the arrival of Marcade, a messenger, who announces the death of the princess's father, the king of France. She must prepare to leave that night. The lords of Navarre's court, including the king himself, make pleas for their ladies' love. But the ladies tell their lords to spend a year in contemplation first, for they are not trustworthy. As Berowne puts it ruefully, a year's time is "too long for a play": this play will not end with marriages but with a song sung of spring and winter by all the performers.

Characters

Armado (Don Andriano de Armado):

Armado is first described by the king, just before he enters the stage in the play's first scene, as "One who the music of his own vain tongue / Doth ravish like an enchanting harmony" (Li. 166-7). Armado is a self-important Spanish courtier—not unlike Don Quixote in character—who is in love with the country wench Jaquenetta. When he comes upon her with Costard the clown (outside the play's action) he sends a letter to the king demanding Costard's punishment. Given the task of keeping the clown under his guard, Armado sends him to deliver a courtly and elaborate love letter to Jaquenetta. Armado's language may be described as pretentious throughout. He condescends to his own page, Moth, who in turn makes fun of his master, usually in asides to the audience. Armado claims to be on intimate terms with the king and the ladies of France, who actually ridicule him—especially when his letter is delivered accidentally into the hands of Rosaline instead of Jaquenetta. Yet Armado is one of the courtiers sworn not to keep company with women; he is a member of the academy. He thus acts as a double of the more aristocratic characters in the play. Like them, he writes an illicit love letter; he even holds court, of a kind, with a rebellious follower, Moth—much as the king holds court with his rebellious follower, Berowne.

Later, Armado's role becomes part of the pathetic final comedy of the play. He plays the Trojan warrior Hector in the Pageant of the Nine Worthies, and nearly enters into a duel with Costard, egged on by the mocking lords of Navarre. Armado combines the stereotype of the passionate Spaniard with the elaborate language of what he imagines to be courtly elocution. At the same time his love for Jaquenetta reveals the degree to which his courtly pretensions are false, for his passion is expended on a distinctly non-courtly object. Armado's love highlights the self-indulgence of all the court lords. But it is Armado who brings the Nine Worthies play to its most violent pitch. It is also he who defends the worth of the dead hero he impersonates, against the mockery of the court: "The sweet warman is dead and rotten, sweet chucks, beat not the bones of the buried. When he breathed, he was a man" (V.ii.660). Armado's passions, even though they may be expressed in ridiculous ways, nonetheless emerge as more genuine and respectful than those of the other courtiers. The pathos of these lines points out a serious problem with any verbal mockery that knows no limits. And Armado brings the play to its rather serious and almost philosophical, plain-style close by insisting that his fellow performers be allowed to sing their song of the seasons. Armado's role defines the limits of what the play portrays as acceptable courtly behavior.

Berowne:

He is the central figure of the play. One of the king's lords, he is infatuated with language (especially his own), and yet even from the beginning exhibits the most suspicion toward the "academy" of the court. In the opening scene, Berowne protests

the stringency of the oath of chastity and study he has sworn, arguing that the oath will be too difficult for the lords to keep. He argues further that "all delights are vain" (I.i.72), even the pleasure of scholarship and books—he protests the oath not only because it is impractical but also because it is selfish and vain. Nevertheless, he signs the vow and claims that he will keep it best of all of them. Then, he points out that the princess will soon arrive, forcing the king to break his oath immediately.

Berowne's speech is full of the puns (or "quibbles" as they were called in Shakespeare's language) that characterize the play as a whole. He takes delight in disrupting whatever scene is at hand, criticizing everyone (including himself), and generally expounding upon every step of the play's action. He utters between a fifth and a quarter of the play's lines, and even at several moments takes over authority from the king himself. When the lords confess their loves in succession in Act IV, it is Berowne who witnesses the king's own confession and exposes his hypocrisy—and finally, it is Berowne who confesses his own love as well. The king's oath had provided a courtly bond among the men, but clearly had not done so effectively. In Act IV, it is Berowne's idea to form a bond of love among them all: "Sweet lords, sweet lovers, O, let us embrace! / As true we are as flesh and blood can be" (FV.iii.210-11). Berowne's more practical and tolerant leadership offsets the king's misguided strictness. In the last scene of the play, Berowne again argues against the king's command. Navarre wants to cancel the Pageant of the Nine Worthies because he is ashamed of its actors, but Berowne insists that the players' lack of skill will be all the more reason for humor.

Rosaline's description of Berowne in II.i praises him for his voluble and clever discourse: "His eye begets occasion for his wit, / For every object that the one doth catch / The other turns to a mirthmoving jest" (II.i.69-71). Indeed, Rosaline's words suggest to the princess that her ladies are all in love, even before the lords begin to woo them. Rosaline is the appropriate match for Berowne partly because her beauty is dark (unconventional by Renaissance standards), but also because she herself engages in the puns and mockery at which Berowne excels. By the end, she beats him at his own game. When the lords impersonate Russian courtiers in the Masque of the Muscovites, Rosaline does not hesitate to tell Berown later that the Russians were fools, a joke that Berowne finds "dry" (V.ii.373). Thoroughly humbled by her mockery of their Russian act, Berowne claims that he will no longer trust his own clever language but will accept her mockery: "Here stand I, lady, dart thy skill at me" (V.ii.396). Yet even in claiming that he will speak plainly from now on, Berowne cannot help interjecting a foreign word, "sans" (V.ii.415), into his discourse.

Still, by the last scene of the play, it seems that Berowne has begun to humble himself. His clever language has turned to the subject of love. He gives a long speech at the end of Act IV on the capacity of love to create virtue and charity. But his mocking temperament does not simply evaporate. During the Pageant of the Nine Worthies, Berowne is one of the most brutal mockers of them all. It is for this reason that Rosaline demands in her parting speech that he spend a year doing charitable deeds, helping the sick. "A jest's posperity lies in the ear/ Of him that hears it, never in the tongue / Of him that makes it" (V.ii.861-63), she tells him. Jests for their own sake, or for the sake of the speaker's pleasure in his own cleverness, do not do the world much good; they are not

funny unless the speaker communicates to his audience in a kind or "prosperous" way. We have seen evidence during the last two acts that Berowne may be ready to learn this lesson, but Rosaline consigns him to a whole year helping the sick before she will marry him.

Boyet

The princess's lord, Boyet acts as an intermediary between the lords and the ladies. Boyet is at least middle-aged, and carries gossip to and fro, both enabling and mocking love throughout the play. Katherine calls him "Cupid's grandfather" (II.i.253). Boyet introduces the princess onstage in II.i, where he praises her and urges her to negotiate well to acquire Aquitaine. He then goes to the court to announce his lady's arrival. When the king greets the princess and her train, his lords become smitten with her ladies, and each one approaches Boyet to ask his lady's name. Boyet is thus privy to their feelings from the beginning. He also notices the king's feelings for the princess. Boyet engages in the banter that the ladies share among themselves, but is generally treated fondly by them even as they tease him for his age. It is Boyet who recognizes the missent letter from Armado the Spanish courtier; he seems to know the court scene well/More important, he recognizes that Rosalind may be in love, and teases her about having been "hit" with Cupid's arrow (IV.i.118). Then, in the final scene of the play, it is Boyet who warns the ladies that the lords are approaching disguised as Russians for the Masque of the Muscovites. Boyet's mirth when he announces their foolish masquerade suggests that in spite of Katherine's accusation about his matchmaking tendencies, he looks down on the lords, and does not endorse any match-making; indeed, he helps the ladies mock their potential lovers. Yet at the end of the act, when the Pageant of the Nine •Worthies begins, Boyet is one of the principal mockers; together with Berowne, Dumaine, Longaville, and even the king, Boyet eggs on the offended actors. By the play's end, when solemnity replaces mirth, Boyet himself effectively disappears. His role as catalyst for the action and spur to lovegames is, by the end, unnecessary. Moreover, his lighthearted and gossiping presence is inappropriate for the rather more solemn modd at the end of the play. Perhaps more effectively than any other character, Boyet makes love seem not only ridiculous and infirm but trivial as well.

Costard

The play's clown is the first to break the court's rule against consorting with women. Don Armado catches him with Jaquenetta, has him arrested, and writes to the king reporting the clown's infraction. Costard gives his own oral version of his misdemeanor, defending it on the grounds that it was perfectly natural: "Such is the simplicity of man to hearken after the flesh" (I.i.217), he says. He thus highlights the ridiculous idealism of the king's academy. In addition, his monosyllabic interruptions during the reading of Armado's elaborate letter make the letter look equally ridiculous. Costard's language contains occasional malapropisms, or misused words, but for the most part he merely insists on a rhetorical simplicity that the other characters do not share. He mispronounces Armado's name as "Dun Adramadio" (IV.iii.l95)in a kind of unwitting mockery. His puns

are so obvious that they make fun of the other characters' quibblings, as when he makes fun of legal language in I.i.205-11.

Everyone else considers Costard an entertaining commoner, and for the most part the other characters condescend to him (even while they engage his services in delivering their letters). Boyet refers to him as "a member of the common wealth" (IV.i.41), or a commoner; Berowne calls him and Jaquenetta "turtles" (IV.iii.208) when they are slow in leaving the lords' company. In the Pageant of the Nine Worthies, however, Costard is the only actor to finish his part with comparative grace. Costard also appreciates Moth's wit (V.i.72-3), indicating that he is not as witless as the lords may make him out to be.

Costard is also a go-between, but unlike Boyet he botches his mission. Armado gives him a love letter to deliver to Jaquenetta, and Berowne gives him a love letter to deliver to Rosalind, but Costard switches the two so that Rosalind receives Armado's poem, while Jaquenetta (who cannot read) receives Berowne's highly skilled poem to Rosalind. Costard is thus the unwitting instrument by which Berowne's love is revealed to the other lords, for in IV.iii he brings the misdirected letter to the king. Near the end of the play, Berowne encourages Costard to rile Armado by suggesting that Jaquenetta is pregnant by the Spanish courtier. They threaten to duel, but are interrupted by the solemn entrance of Marcade. In the end, their duel is absorbed into the general solemnity of the Spring-Winter song.

Don Andriano (Don Andriano de Armado):

See Armado

Dull

The constable first appears with Costard, whom he has arrested for being caught in the company of a woman, Jaquenetta (I.i.180). Dull's name indicates his principal characteristic: he is not bright, and as a result speaks little. He stumbles over Armado's name (I.i.187). He takes the fancy Latinate language of Holofernes and Nathaniel at face value, understanding everything so literally that Holofernes is inspired to call out to "monster Ignorance!" (IV.ii.22). He is present throughout V.i, but never speaks until the end, when he makes clear he does not understand the pedant's discourse and will not act in the Pageant of the Nine Worthies.

Dumaine

Dumaine is one of the king's lords, along with Berowne and Longaville, and falls in love with Katherine. His oath to the king in the opening scene is elaborately and recklessly self-sacrificial; whereas Longaville speaks of the mind's nourishment while the body pines, Dumaine says he is "mortified" —that is, his flesh is in a sense killed, and the pleasures of the world are dead to him—"To love, to wealth, to pomp, I pine and die" (I.i.28-31). Katherine describes Dumaine, before they meet, as goodlooking, young and

a bit reckless with words because he is naive to the consequences of his speech: he has "Most power to do most harm, least knowing ill" (II.i.58). It is as though he swears to the king's academy for the sound of the words as much as for their sense.

When he falls in love, Dumaine (unlike Longaville) is more interested initially in praising his lady's attractions than in worrying about breaking his oath. The breaking of the oath, in fact, becomes the reason for writing her a love poem—again, as if he is more interested in the words themselves than in expressing feeling to his beloved. His language repeats and inverts itself, and is least direct of all the lords' poetry: "Do not call it sin in me, / That I am forsworn for thee" (IV.iii.l 13-14). Later, during the Pageant of the Nine Worthies, Dumaine distinguishes himself in his cruelty to Holofernes, whom he calls "a Judas!" (IV.iii.596), making a punning joke on his character's name. Judas Iscariot, who identified Jesus to his Roman captors with a kiss, had become the ultimate signifier of betrayal. It is ironic that Dumaine, whose betrayal of his oath and whose betrayal of the significance of words themselves have defined his character throughout the play, should mockingly accuse the vulnerable Holofernes of betrayal.

By the end, Dumaine has become only slightly more self-conscious; after Holofernes leaves the stage, he says, "Though my mocks come home by me, I will now be merry" (IV.iii.635). He doesn't care what the consequences are, he will continue to enjoy himself. So he eggs Armado on to challenge Costard to a duel, and when it becomes clear that the ladies must abruptly leave, he still hopes humorously for Katherine's hand: "But what to me, my love? but what to me? A wife?" (IV.iii.823). His recklessness persists to the last, even in his plea for her hand.

Ferdinand (King Ferdinand of Navarre):

See Navarre

Forester

The forester appears briefly in IV.i to show the ladies where to hunt most successfully.

France (Princess of France)

The princess of France is the moral center of the play. She arrives at the court of the king of France just after he and his lords have sworn an oath to remain celibate and study together in a courtly academy for three years. Because they also swear to avoid the company of women entirely for those three years, and the king issues a proclamation forbidding women in his court, the princess and her three ladies are forced to camp in a field on the grounds of the court rather than be lodged inside. The princess, who greets most of the play's actions with a practical and straightforward reasonablenes, accepts these terms, but not without protest: "The roof of this court is too high to be yours, and welcome to the wide fields too base to be mine" (II.i.93-94), she tells him. Her mission at his court is to resolve a dispute that arose between their

fathers. Apparently they traded Aquataine, a French province, for a loan of money some time ago. Though the king of Navarre no longer wants Aquitaine, he does claim that the king of France owes him money in order to get the province back. The princess, as her father's diplomat, tells the king of Navarre that her father already paid him his money, and therefore Aquitaine should belong to France. The two disagree on the facts; their negotiations promise to take a few days; as a result, the princess and her ladies remain camped in the fields.

During the initial scene of negotiations (which are never resumed during the play's action), the king's three lords fall in love with the princess's three ladies. After each lord has asked Boyet about his respective love-object, Boyet further informs the princess that the king must be in love with her— and indeed, we find out later that Boyet is right. But the princess remains modest and, unlike the ladies, never betrays her feelings for the king. Indeed, even at the play's end her intentions are not clear.

Later in the play, the princess and her ladies go deer hunting. The princess's characteristic mercy and compassion are revealed even here, for she remarks upon the cruelty of killing deer for sport (IV.i.21ff). At the same time, though, she is not without a sense of humor. Costard's accidental delivery of Armado's florid letter inspires her to make several jokes, and after the lords have begun to send them love tokens, she is quite happy to make fun of them: "Sweet hearts, we shall be rich ere we depart, / If fairings come thus plentifully in" (V.ii.1-2), she tells her ladies. It is the princess of France's idea to put on masks when the lords come dressed for the Masque of the Muscovites, as well. Here, as always, there is purpose even in the princess's humor: "The effect of my intent is to cross theirs: / They do it but in mockery merriment" (V.ii.138-39). Convinced that the lords are not serious, she wishes to let them know that the ladies cannot take them seriously either. More than her ladies, in fact, the princess sees the lords' limitations. And whereas Rosaline actually enjoys making a fool of Berowne, the princess expresses a more serious and dignified idea that the lords' love, unless expressed and taken seriously, should be pointed out as a sham.

Indeed, the princess also points out the particular hypocrisy of the king. After his appearance as a Russian, he reappears and invites the ladies to come stay inside at court after all. The princess refuses, on the grounds that he would be "perjur'd," that is, he would break his oath. Essentially, she points out that while he was unwilling to break his oath for the sake of being polite to his visitors, he is now willing to do so for the sake of his own desires. She calls attention to his lack of integrity. And then she opens him up to the mockery of Rosaline, who makes fun of the socalled Russians and then reveals that the dressed-up lords misrecognized the masked ladies. The irony of this situation is that the lords, even dressed as foreigners, were completely recognizable to the ladies, whereas the ladies, hastily disguised, were unrecognizable to the lords. The princess's measured and dignified speech points out, even more than Rosaline's banter does, that the men are not ready to be serious about their loves.

During the play of the Nine Worthies, the princess of France is the only one to respond politely to the actors, while everyone else is making fun. The king does not silence his increasingly abusive lords. When Marcade appears in the final action of the play and

announces that the princess's father has just died, she retains a dignity even in her comparatively brief and plain language. The king's response to her abrupt departure is to propose; the princess replies simply at first, "I understand you not, my griefs are double" (V.ii.752). When she recovers her eloquence, she tells him that she will not trust his oaths of love until he has been a hermit for a year. She thus establishes the terms by which her ladies can all refuse to marry as well. In the end, it is the princess's practical, serious behavior that establishes the play's meaning. Of all the characters, it is she who uses language with the least elaboration and the most integrity. It is the princess, that is, for whom language actually has the most direct effects in the world of practical action.

Holofernes

The pedantic schoolteacher Holofernes, along with the parson Nathaniel, does not appear until late in the play (IV.ii). He speaks in lists of synonyms, words that have roughly the same meaning; he particularly likes Latin-sounding words and Latin tags. Holofernes is a kind of walking, talking thesaurus. He is usually an object of comedy within the play, although the curate Nathaniel treats him with fawning respect and imitates his language. He goes on at length about the death of one deer when the princess and her party are hunting (IV.ii). Later, he exhibits profound exasperation with Dull, the constable, who misunderstands most of Holofernes's pretentious language. Holofernes has a certain fawning tendency himself, exhibited in his desire to bring Berowne's misdirected letter straight to the king. He is also a bit hypocritical in his treatment of Armado, whom he mocks when Armado is offstage, but very soon praises in his presence (V.i).

There is a serious side to Holofernes as well, just as there are so often serious sides to Shakespeare's comic characters. With.his love for synonyms and Latinisms, he takes his place among the other language-infatuated characters. Whereas Armado's language is elaborately courtly, as if he is trying to prove his aristocratic status, Holofernes's language is elaborately academic. More than Armado's, then, Holofernes's language has only a specialized audience (essentially, Nathanial) and therefore risks a kind of isolated disconnection, a failure to communicate, that represents one of the central threats of the whole play. If Holofernes cannot even have a conversation with the constable Dull about the death of a deer, then what good is his elaborate learning anyway? Yet at the same time, Holofernes expresses eloquently the love for poets of the past that permeates not only *Love's Labor's Lost* but other Shakespeare plays as well. When he praises Ovid, for example, there is a heartfelt and poignant appreciation of another poet's art even as the imagery makes that art seem vaguely degraded: ' for the elegance, facility, and golden cadence of poesy ... Ovidius Naso was the man. And why indeed 'Naso' but for smelling out the odiferous flowers of fancy, the jerks of invention?" (IV.ii. 121-24).

In the Pageant of the Nine Worthies, Holofernes is director; he also plays Judas Maccabeus. His speech is interrupted by Dumaine, joined by Berowne and Boyet; though at first he is determined not to mind their insults, he grows more and more

frustrated. "I will not be put out of countenance" (V.ii.607), he says; but later, after insults to his face, he says, "You have put me out of countenance" (V.ii.621). Finally, he is unable to finish his speech; they dismiss him, effectively calling him an ass, and he objects in uncharacteristically plain language (though retaining his tendency to synonyms), "This is not generous, not gentle, not humble" (V.ii.629). The words are profoundly accusatory, and communicate better than much of his discourse has until now: he prompts the princess's first intervention in the baiting of the players. Indeed, it is at Holofernes's aborted speech where the tone of the actor-banter becomes outright insulting, and where the lords' use of language becomes not only careless but outright cruel.

Jaquenetta

The love object of both Costard the clown and Don Armado, Jaquenetta is a country wench, or a lower-class woman. In I.ii.130-45 she meets Armado briefly and answers his declarations of love with humor; during IV.iii she is with Costard when he delivers Berowne's missent letter to the king.

Katherine

Along with Maria and Rosaline, Katherine is one of the princess of France's ladies, and Rosaline's principal companion in banter. Though Katherine ends up beloved of Dumaine, at first it is Berowne who approaches her. While the princess and the king discuss their political differences, Berowne asks whether Katherine danced with him once; she quickly rejects his advances, though, saying she hopes he will never be her lover (II.i.126). Katherine also banters with Boyet, who flirts with her, offering in jest to kiss her (II.i.223). Later, Katherine and Rosaline debate about their respective beauty. While Rosaline is dark, Katherine is fair, or blond, and therefore more conventionally beautiful in Renaissance terms. They tease each other, playing on the various meanings of "dark" and "fair," in the beginning of V.ii. Then all four ladies complain about their respective lords; Katherine calls Dumaine's message "A huge tranlation of hypocrisy, / Vildly [vilely] compiled, profound simplicity" (V.ii.51-52). When the lords arrive dressed as Russians for the Masque of the Muscovites, Katherine abruptly insults Longaville (who has mistaken her for Maria), essentially calling him a calf and a cuckold. Finally, when pressed by the impatient Dumaine to answer his proposal of marriage, she straightforwardly demands maturity ("a beard" [V.ii.826]), along with honesty. Katherine is a foil to the lively and more central Rosaline, but she also provides much of the play's clever, blunt humor herself.

King (King Ferdinand of Navarre):

See Navarre

Longaville

Along with Berowne and Dumaine, Longaville is one of the king's lords, and he is in love with Maria. Longaville is more moderate than either Berowne or Dumaine, and exhibits the heaviest guilt for breaking his oath to the academy. Longaville initially comes to terms with the stringency of the academy's oath by focusing on the mind's growth: "The mind shall banquet, though the body pine" (I.i.25), he says, accepting the term more willingly than either of the other two lords. It is also Longaville who comes up with the idea of banishing all of womankind from the king's court for the three years they have agreed to work together. Longaville thus emerges as the most eager student of the academy, and perhaps it most willing sufferer. Yet when he falls for Maria, he exhibits impatience—first with Boyet, who banters with him instead of telling him Maria's name (II.i.197-208), and later with his own poetry-writing, of which he says, "I fear these stubborn lines lack power to move" (IV.ii.53). When he mistakes Katherine for his beloved in the Masque of the Muscovites, Katherine teases him about being silent, or slow to speak: "What, was your vizard [mask] made without a tongue?" (V.ii.242). He is also less involved in the abuse of the Nine Worthies actors than the other two lords. In the end, his plea to Maria is brief, and he agrees to wait a year quietly. Longaville may be an eager academician initially, but he also emerges as less clever than Berowne and Dumaine: less an abuser of language, and more ready to admit himself a novice at proper linguistic behavior.

Marcade

Marcade appears only once in the play. He is the messenger who, in the last scene of the play, brings the princess the news of her father's death (V.ii.715). This is an important moment in the play, when solemnity is suddenly injected into the otherwise light and clever action.

Maria

One of the princess of France's ladies, along with Rosaline and Katherine, Maria is beloved of Longaville. She is the least active of the three ladies, but makes fun of Boyet with Katherine (II.i.254), and enters into a bit of banter herself with Boyet and Costard (IV.i.129). She does her share in the Masque of the Muscovites, where Dumaine mistakes her for Katherine. In the end, she is perhaps the least resistant of the ladies, for she suggests that at the end of the year she might actually marry Longville— "I'll change my black gown for a faithful friend" (V.ii.834), she tells him. Of course, we do not know (nor does he) who that friend might be; but she leaves him more hope than any of the others, who promise only to reconsider in a year.

Moth

Armado's page is a young, small person, and many of the jokes about him revolve around his small stature (especially as compared to Armado's tall figure). Moth consistently makes fun of his master's pretensions, often through punning asides to the audience. In a sort of reversal of the lords' academy, Moth frequently plays teacher to Armado. At one point, Armado asks him to give a definition, in grammar-school pedagogical fashion: "Define, define, well-educated infant" (I.11.90); at another point, the boy addresses his master as "Negligent student" (III.i.32). Moth is expert at logical twists and repetitions that invert his master's intended meanings.

Moth first appears in III.i, where he sings a lovesong to his master and then warns Armado about the aristocratic love language that Armado uses, suggesting that aristocratic embellishment is not the proper method for wooing a "coy wench" like Jaquenetta. In V.i, Moth's mockery of Holofernes entertains Costard so well that the clown gives him money—a particularly strange moment, since money is usually a gift from noble to lower-class characters. Moth teases Holofernes for his pedantry and self-importance by implying that he is a cuckold. The lords employ Moth as their Russian herald; when the ladies turn their backs on him unwelcomingly, he humorously changes the language of his greeting, only to be irritably corrected by Berowne. Later, in the Pageant of the Nine Worthies, Moth plays Hercules—an opportunity for physical hilarity, since Moth is small in stature. Holofernes has said that Moth represents "Hercules in minority" (V.i. 134), or Hercules as a child, but the humor persists. Moth's role in the play is frequently one of staging reversals of the characters' expectations— especially those of the self-important Armado and Holofernes—so his paradoxical tiny Hercules is actually an appropriate role.

Nathaniel

Nathaniel is the local curate, or parish priest, and he is Holofernes's companion and friend. His attitude toward Holofernes is one of extreme respect —to the point that he is something of a flatterer. In response to the constable Dull's failure to understand Holofernes's Latin language, Nathaniel bemoans the constable's ignorance in a set of rhymed couplets (IV.ii.28-33). He calls Holofernes a rare teacher and a "good member of the commonwealth " (IV.ii.76), i.e. a good citizen; and in V.i. he praises Holofernes's rhetorical skills in his own elaborate rhetorical terms. In the Pageant of the Nine Worthies, he plays Alexander the Great, but cannot remember beyond the first line of his speech (V.ii.562).

Navarre (King Ferdinand of Navarre):

The king of Navarre is the leader of the socalled academy of lords, all of whom, at the play's opening, take a vow to be celibate and absorb themselves, in scholarship for three years. In the course of the play, however, he falls in love with the princess of France. The king is motivated at first by the desire to transcend the world of mortality:

he wants to live forever in men's memories. He refers in his opening speech to "cormorant devouring Time" (I.i.4), as if time itself were a predatory creature. He seems to believe that only scholarship and study will bring time to a halt; that social life as a whole—and love in particular—threatens his own and others' autonomous and youthful existence. Thus not only his lords but he himself appears young, and naively idealistic, especially since the vow is immediately called into question. He has forbidden the academy to experience the company of women for three years. But the king, we are reminded from the beginning, is still a king. That is, he is the leader and ruler of a state. And as part of his political duties, he must receive and negotiate with a woman—the princess of France, who is to arrive immediately.

Even before the princess's arrival breaks the new law, though, Costard the clown is brought before the king for consorting with Jaquenetta. The king immediately punishes Costard—though not as brutally as the law threatens—by confining him to the care of Don Armado (himself, of course, in love with Jaquenetta). The king exerts the power of his office particularly ineffectually here, since Armado frees Costard almost immediately in order to get the clown to deliver a love letter. Not only has the king's law been broken, but the punishment he decrees goes unheeded.

Berowne calls into question the king's authority in yet another way. Even from the beginning, Berowne remarks upon the flexibility of the king's laws and of the language of their shared vow (I.i.59-93). He points out that study itself can apply to the art of love, and in fact that study is itself a form of pleasure—that very same thing which the academy claims to avoid for the next three years. Further, he argues that study is meaningless if it is completely removed from real life. In answer to all this, the king says only, "How well he's read, to reason against reading!" (I.i.94). The king does not answer Berowne's primary question: What is the good of studying? How does the king' academy benefit the rest of the world? "What is the end of study, let me know" (I.i.55), says Berowne. As the play progresses, the king of Navarre shows little ability to abide by his own commands and vows, let alone defend the effectiveness of those commands and vows in any wider context.

In IV.iii, when all four lords declare their love for their ladies, the king is the only one who exhibits no remorse for the vow he breaks. In one sense, this is a perfectly conventional kingly role: his own will can determine the laws and the rules of his realm. In another sense, however, this is evidence of a weak and self-centered king. His elaborate love poem uses as its central image (or "conceit," as such images were called in Shakespeare's time) the idea that the king's object of desire appears in the very tears he sheds for her (IV.iii.25-40). Significantly, it is Berowne who witnesses the king's outpouring of love for the princess. In fact, at this point Berowne himself takes over some aspects of the leadership of the lords. It is his idea for the four of them to form a bond of love, rather than a bond based on an academic vow (IV.iii.210). Berowne also gives a long speech in praise of the cosmic power of love (IV.iii.285-362). The king, on the other hand, mocks Berowne for being in love with a darkhaired woman, and then proposes that the lords devise some entertainment for their ladies. It is during this entertainment, especially the Masque of the Muscovites, that the king's role becomes least commanding and most pleading. He asks Rosaline to dance (thinking that she is

his beloved princess), and she first says yes, then no. Soon, his mistake is revealed: he tried to woo the wrong woman, as did the other lords during the Masque of the Muscovites, and his efforts to swear oaths of love to the princess therefore seem all the more foolish and untrustworthy.

Finally, during the Pageant of the Nine Worthies, the king does not prevent his lords from mocking the actors mercilessly, but even joins in (V.ii.636). When the princess's father dies, the king tries to persuade her not to leave, and asks her to rejoice at having found new friends even as she is grieving for her father. He misreads her situation: she replies simply, "I understand you not" (V.ii.752). She then insists that he stay in a hermitage for a year before she will consider marrying him. At this point in the play, the king's authority—like his academy —has been revealed as superficial. It is the play's lower-class citizens, its "commons," who sing the final song of the seasons.

Princess of France

See France

Rosaline

One of the princess's ladies, Rosaline is the unconventionally dark beauty who so appeals to Berowne. She is as full of wit as he is, and engages both Boyet and Berowne on their own terms; she challenges the other ladies in banter as well. Although she recalls having met Berowne from the beginning (II.i.67-76), she withholds any encouragement of his love, just as do the other ladies. Especially in the latter half of the play, Rosaline emerges as the most ruthlessly mocking, and at the same time, with the princess herself, the most overtly concerned with the proper and useful application of langauge. Even when Boyet teases her about being in love with Berowne, Rosaline refuses to admit that she may be, so her feelings for him never fully emerge. "Still you wrangle with her, Boyet," Maria observes, "and she strikes at the brow" (IV.i.117). When the ladies banter among themselves, Rosaline stands out as skillful in her use of language.

When the lords make their appearance in the Masque of the Muscovites, the princess dictates how the ladies will trick them. Rosaline plays the princess in the deception, and quibbles with the enamored king about the distance they have travelled and her own supposedly moon-like countenance, and then refuses to dance with him. Afterwards, Rosaline is more dismissive of the men than ever: "They were all in lamentable cases!" (V.ii.273) she cries. And here, she does take over a bit of the princess's role for real—but in a very different manner than Berowne's "o'erruling" of his king. Rosaline presents her suggestion as advice, not usurpation. She advocates continuing to mock the lords by telling them how foolish the Russian visitors were. And when it comes time to do so, Rosaline is the ringleader: she mocks the supposed Russians so mercilessly that Berowne says her jesting is "dry to me" (V.ii.373). Love for her, in fact, makes Berowne humble himself immensely, calling himself a fool and even begging for her further verbal

violence: "Here stand I, lady, dart thy skill at me, / Bruise me with scorn" (V.ii.396-97). Yet she remains merciless. When he claims to abstain from his own elaborately punning language in favor of plain honesty, she catches him out using the foreign word "sans" (V.ii.415-16).

In the end, though, the reasons behind Rosaline's seemingly cruel and unnecessary wit come to the fore. She tells Berowne that he is well known for his own merciless wit, and that she can be won only if he will "weed this wormwood from your fructful brain" (V.ii.847) by working in a hospital for the next year—and, by implication, accomplishing some good with his linguistic skill. As Rosaline puts it, Berowne must learn that mockery has social effects; it is not mere pleasure for the speaker. "A jest's prosperity lies in the ear / Of him that hears it, never in the tongue / Of him that makes it" (V.ii.861-63), she admonishes him. And indeed, her own jests have had the social effect of humbling her suitor, showing up the limits of elaborate language, and insisting on the social uses of jesting itself.

Further Reading

Barton, Anne. Introduction to *Love's Labor's Lost,* by William Shakespeare. In *The Riverside Shakespeare,* edited G. Blakemore Evans, 174-78. Chicago: Houghton Mifflin, 1974.

Barton explains the history of the play's composition and critical reception, calling the play "relentlessly Elizabethan" in its word games and topical allusions. She examines why it is that the play's comic resolution cannot occur within the confines of its plot.

Breitenberg, Mark. "The Anatomy of Masculine Desire in *Love's Labour's Lost." Shakespeare Quarterly* 43, no. 4 (1992): 430-49.

Breitenberg argues that sexuality and violence are linked in *Love's Labor's Lost:* "even such a lighthearted and playful comedy" participates in the darker side of masculine desires.

Carroll, William C. *The Great Feast of Language in* Love's Labour's Lost. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976.

Carroll argues that the play has been oversimplified as an argument for "Life" over "Art," and that instead the play is a rejection of bad art. Includes chapters on prose, theatrical, and poetic style; on the transformations within the play; on the play's structure; and finally, on the two final songs that conclude the work.

Curtis, Harry, Jr. "Four Woodcocks in a Dish: Shakespeare's Humanization of the Comic Perspective in *Love's Labour's Lost." Southern Humanities Review* 13 (1979): 155-24.

Curtis maintains that the play violates the comic form and repeatedly draws the audience's attention to this deviation. Shakespeare thereby insists, Curtis argues, that the characters undergo change, not only in their external manner but in their approach to life beyond the fiction of the play.

David, Richard. Introduction to *Love's Labour's Lost,* by William Shakespeare, xiii-li. The Arden Shakepeare. London: Methuen, 1951.

David explores the comedy's dating, sources, and topical references, as well as its content. Writing at the beginning of a critical revival of interest in the play, he compares it to a work of music, specifically opera, in its conventional and stylized presentation.

Erikson, Peter B. "The Failure of Relationship Between Men and Women in *Love's Labour's Lost." Women's Studies 9,* no. 1 (1981): 65-81.

Erikson argues that the bonding of male characters in the play promotes a view of women as dangerous outsiders, so that the women become inaccessible, domineering, and punitive. The play does not finally affirm such a structure, Erikson maintains, but ends in "uneasy stasis."

Gilbert, Miriam. *Love's Labour's Lost.* Shakespeare in Performance Series. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993.

Contains chapters on the historical performances of the play, from the Elizabethan stage to performances in 1857, 1946, 1968, 1978, and 1984. Discusses the balance between language as the wit of sophisticated people, on the one hand, and on the other hand as the efforts of immature people to impress each other. The play has tended to be staged elaborately, but some of its best stagings have been more homespun, Gilbert argues.

Greene, Thomas. *"Love's Labour's Lost:* The Grace of Society." In *The Vulnerable Text,* 140-59. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.

Greene makes an argument that a variety of styles of speech emerge in the play, and that the appropriateness of these styles is necessary to the proper functioning of society. Additionally, Greene links language style to social virtue to assert that the play's object is to live with poise, decorum, and charity.

Hassel, R. Chris, Jr. "Love Versus Charity in *Love's Labour's Lost." Shakespeare Studies* 10(1977): 17-41.

Examines the doctrine of charity in the context of its opposition in Protestant and Catholic theologies and discusses Shakespeare's treatment of this doctrine in *Love's Labor's Lost.*

Hibbard, G. R. Introduction and Appendices to *Love's Labour's Lost,* by William Shakespeare, 1-84 and 237-46. The Oxford Shakespeare. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.

Analysis of the play, its performances, its date and sources, and its textual history; appendices on revisions, lineation, music, and the name of Armado's page. Discusses the ways in which the play refuses the conventions of comedy. Hibbard argues that the play is stylized and formal, like a dance, and calls attention to the artificiality of its characters and their setting, though unexpected depths are sounded as well.

Hunt, Maurice. ' The Double Figure of Elizabeth in *Love's Labour's Lost." Essays in Literature* 19, no. 2 (1992): 173-92.

Argues that the play's princess of France evokes two contrasting images of the historical Queen Elizabeth of England: one powerful and seductive, and the other morbid and violent toward her suitors. Hunt maintains that the play thus attempts to make a difficult historical situation more managable.

Muir, Kenneth. *Shakespeare's Comic Sequence,* 135-40. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1979.

Muir argues that *Love's Labor's Lost* is a didactic comedy that criticizes its characters for their linguistic excess and foolish behavior, but ultimately the play is a plea for good sense and balance, as evidenced in the final songs of Winter and Spring.

Taylor, Rupert. *The Date of* Love's Labour's Lost. New York: Columbia University Press, 1932. Reprint, AMS Press, Inc., 1966.

This book marks a turning point in criticism on the play, establishing its date as later than had previously been thought—in 1596 rather than very early. Chapter VI (pp. 72-90) contains a useful analysis of the significance of this date, which reveals a more definite purpose, thorough-going execution, and unified design than critics had previously granted the play. Also makes a less well-accepted argument for topical references within the play.

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Introduction

Purpose of the Book

The purpose of Shakespeare for Students (SfS) is to provide readers with a guide to understanding, enjoying, and studying novels by giving them easy access to information about the work. Part of Gale's“For Students” Literature line, SfS is specifically designed to meet the curricular needs of high school and undergraduate college students and their teachers, as well as the interests of general readers and researchers considering specific novels. While each volume contains entries on “classic” novels frequently

studied in classrooms, there are also entries containing hard-to-find information on contemporary novels, including works by multicultural, international, and women novelists.

The information covered in each entry includes an introduction to the novel and the novel's author; a plot summary, to help readers unravel and understand the events in a novel; descriptions of important characters, including explanation of a given character's role in the novel as well as discussion about that character's relationship to other characters in the novel; analysis of important themes in the novel; and an explanation of important literary techniques and movements as they are demonstrated in the novel.

In addition to this material, which helps the readers analyze the novel itself, students are also provided with important information on the literary and historical background informing each work. This includes a historical context essay, a box comparing the time or place the novel was written to modern Western culture, a critical overview essay, and excerpts from critical essays on the novel. A unique feature of SfS is a specially commissioned critical essay on each novel, targeted toward the student reader.

To further aid the student in studying and enjoying each novel, information on media adaptations is provided, as well as reading suggestions for works of fiction and nonfiction on similar themes and topics. Classroom aids include ideas for research papers and lists of critical sources that provide additional material on the novel.

Selection Criteria

The titles for each volume of SfS were selected by surveying numerous sources on teaching literature and analyzing course curricula for various school districts. Some of the sources surveyed included: literature anthologies; Reading Lists for College-Bound Students: The Books Most Recommended by America's Top Colleges; textbooks on teaching the novel; a College Board survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; a National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; the NCTE's Teaching Literature in High School: The Novel;and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) list of best books for young adults of the past twenty-five years. Input was also solicited from our advisory board, as well as educators from various areas. From these discussions, it was determined that each volume should have a mix of “classic” novels (those works commonly taught in literature classes) and contemporary novels for which information is often hard to find. Because of the interest in expanding the canon of literature, an emphasis was also placed on including works by international, multicultural, and women authors. Our advisory board members—educational professionals— helped pare down the list for each volume. If a work was not selected for the present volume, it was often noted as a possibility for a future volume. As always, the editor welcomes suggestions for titles to be included in future volumes.

How Each Entry Is Organized

Each entry, or chapter, in SfS focuses on one novel. Each entry heading lists the full name of the novel, the author's name, and the date of the novel's publication. The following elements are contained in each entry:

- Introduction: a brief overview of the novel which provides information about its first appearance, its literary standing, any controversies surrounding the work, and major conflicts or themes within the work.
- Author Biography: this section includes basic facts about the author's life, and focuses on events and times in the author's life that inspired the novel in question.
- Plot Summary: a factual description of the major events in the novel. Lengthy summaries are broken down with subheads.
- Characters: an alphabetical listing of major characters in the novel. Each character name is followed by a brief to an extensive description of the character's role in the novel, as well as discussion of the character's actions, relationships, and possible motivation. Characters are listed alphabetically by last name. If a character is unnamed—for instance, the narrator in Invisible Man-the character is listed as “The Narrator” and alphabetized as “Narrator.” If a character's first name is the only one given, the name will appear alphabetically by that name. • Variant names are also included for each character. Thus, the full name “Jean Louise Finch” would head the listing for the narrator of To Kill a Mockingbird, but listed in a separate cross-reference would be the nickname “Scout Finch.”
- Themes: a thorough overview of how the major topics, themes, and issues are addressed within the novel. Each theme discussed appears in a separate subhead, and is easily accessed through the boldface entries in the Subject/Theme Index.
- Style: this section addresses important style elements of the novel, such as setting, point of view, and narration; important literary devices used, such as imagery, foreshadowing, symbolism; and, if applicable, genres to which the work might have belonged, such as Gothicism or Romanticism. Literary terms are explained within the entry, but can also be found in the Glossary.
- Historical Context: This section outlines the social, political, and cultural climate in which the author lived and the novel was created. This section may include descriptions of related historical events, pertinent aspects of daily life in the culture, and the artistic and literary sensibilities of the time in which the work was written. If the novel is a historical work, information regarding the time in which the novel is set is also included. Each section is broken down with helpful subheads.
- Critical Overview: this section provides background on the critical reputation of the novel, including bannings or any other public controversies surrounding the work. For older works, this section includes a history of how the novel was first received and how perceptions of it may have changed over the years; for more recent novels, direct quotes from early reviews may also be included.
- Criticism: an essay commissioned by SfS which specifically deals with the novel and is written specifically for the student audience, as well as excerpts from previously published criticism on the work (if available).

- Sources: an alphabetical list of critical material quoted in the entry, with full bibliographical information.
- Further Reading: an alphabetical list of other critical sources which may prove useful for the student. Includes full bibliographical information and a brief annotation.

In addition, each entry contains the following highlighted sections, set apart from the main text as sidebars:

- Media Adaptations: a list of important film and television adaptations of the novel, including source information. The list also includes stage adaptations, audio recordings, musical adaptations, etc.
- Topics for Further Study: a list of potential study questions or research topics dealing with the novel. This section includes questions related to other disciplines the student may be studying, such as American history, world history, science, math, government, business, geography, economics, psychology, etc.
- Compare and Contrast Box: an “at-a-glance” comparison of the cultural and historical differences between the author's time and culture and late twentieth century/early twenty-first century Western culture. This box includes pertinent parallels between the major scientific, political, and cultural movements of the time or place the novel was written, the time or place the novel was set (if a historical work), and modern Western culture. Works written after 1990 may not have this box.
- What Do I Read Next?: a list of works that might complement the featured novel or serve as a contrast to it. This includes works by the same author and others, works of fiction and nonfiction, and works from various genres, cultures, and eras.

Other Features

SfS includes “The Informed Dialogue: Interacting with Literature,” a foreword by Anne Devereaux Jordan, Senior Editor for Teaching and Learning Literature (TALL), and a founder of the Children's Literature Association. This essay provides an enlightening look at how readers interact with literature and how Shakespeare for Students can help teachers show students how to enrich their own reading experiences.

A Cumulative Author/Title Index lists the authors and titles covered in each volume of the SfS series.

A Cumulative Nationality/Ethnicity Index breaks down the authors and titles covered in each volume of the SfS series by nationality and ethnicity.

A Subject/Theme Index, specific to each volume, provides easy reference for users who may be studying a particular subject or theme rather than a single work. Significant subjects from events to broad themes are included, and the entries pointing to the specific theme discussions in each entry are indicated in boldface.

Each entry has several illustrations, including photos of the author, stills from film adaptations (if available), maps, and/or photos of key historical events.

Citing Shakespeare for Students

When writing papers, students who quote directly from any volume of Shakespeare for Students may use the following general forms. These examples are based on MLA style; teachers may request that students adhere to a different style, so the following examples may be adapted as needed. When citing text from SfS that is not attributed to a particular author (i.e., the Themes, Style, Historical Context sections, etc.), the following format should be used in the bibliography section:

“Night.” Shakespeare for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 234-35.

When quoting the specially commissioned essay from SfS (usually the first piece under the “Criticism” subhead), the following format should be used:

Miller, Tyrus. Critical Essay on “Winesburg, Ohio.” Shakespeare for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 335-39.

When quoting a journal or newspaper essay that is reprinted in a volume of SfS, the following form may be used:

Malak, Amin. “Margaret Atwood's “The Handmaid's Tale and the Dystopian Tradition,” Canadian Literature No. 112 (Spring, 1987), 9-16; excerpted and reprinted in Shakespeare for Students, Vol. 4, ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski (Detroit: Gale, 1998), pp. 133-36.

When quoting material reprinted from a book that appears in a volume of SfS, the following form may be used:

Adams, Timothy Dow. “Richard Wright: “Wearing the Mask,” in Telling Lies in Modern American Autobiography (University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 69-83; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 1, ed. Diane Telgen (Detroit: Gale, 1997), pp. 59-61.

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The editor of Shakespeare for Students welcomes your comments and ideas. Readers who wish to suggest novels to appear in future volumes, or who have other suggestions, are cordially invited to contact the editor. You may contact the editor via email at: ForStudentsEditors@gale.com. Or write to the editor at:

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