Troilus and Cressida Study Guide

Troilus and Cressida by William Shakespeare

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

Contents

Troilus and Cressida Study Guide....1

Contents....2

Introduction....3

Plot Summary....5

Characters....9

Further Study....18

Copyright Information....21

Introduction

Elizabethan audiences would probably have been intimately familiar with the details and nuances of the Trojan War from both medieval and classical accounts. The Elizabethan age glamorized and romanticized the myths and accounts of antiquity. Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* disappoints that romanticism by presenting a picture of the Trojan War, in which all its participants fall short of their mythological proportions and become all too human and frail. But Shakespeare's intention, perhaps, is not to present a pessimistic world both inside and outside the walls of Ilium in order to induce a similar pessimism and cynicism in his contemporary audiences; rather, he reduces the mythological figures of the antique world to human proportions in order to debunk the notion that the antique world embodied a nobility and virtue against which the Elizabethan world could not compare. It is worth noting that the practice of idealizing the past is not limited to the Elizabethan's idealization of antiquity. Many societies look back on past times and wistfully recall values that the present time may lack.

Many of the characters in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* border on the despicable, and none of the characters are consistently noble and virtuous. Thersites is a character so vicious, unsavory, and ungovernable that the Greeks, in not only tolerating his presence but finding him amusing, condemn their own virtue. Pandarus, by his own admission, is a bawd pure and simple. Helen, renowned throughout the ages for her beauty and command of men, is pictured as a trifling and superficial woman. At the beginning of the play, it is related that she has found great amusement in flirting with the young Troilus as she counts the hairs in his fledgling beard. Later, we see her at play, singing and dancing while the brutalities she has instigated are safely distanced from her by the walls of Troy. Paris is as his father, Priam, accurately describes him when he says to him,

Paris, you speak

Like one besotted on your sweet delights.

You have the honey still, but these the gall;

So to be valiant is no praise at all.

(II.ii. 143-46)

Shakespeare's Cressida is no better than Helen; she is, most critics agree, a coquettish whore. Achilles, the great and powerful Greek warrior, is so selfindulgent and proud that he will not leave his tent to fight and maintain the reputation that has evoked the praise to which he has been accustomed. And his furtive and cowardly killing of Hector hardly allows us to understand why he has been so highly praised throughout the play. Even Hector, the Trojan pillar, is not consistent. He withdraws his objection that Helen is not worth the lives her defense has exacted when Troilus appeals to Hector's pride and alludes to the opportunity the war has provided for glorious deeds in battle. In the final battle, Hector follows and kills a Greek soldier who is trying to run away so that he might have that soldier's attractive armor.

Shakespeare systematically denies audiences any opportunity to continue in their idealizations of the antique world. The Trojan War, fought over the idealization of Helen's worth, becomes a metaphor for the danger of disguising the "real" with the "ideal," illustrated at two moments in Shakespeare's play. Near the beginning, Ulysses offers that the Greek army has failed because the hierarchy of authority is no longer recognized, and he justifies that hierarchy in the Great Chain of Being, a conception of the universe often advanced as the conservative norm in Elizabethan England. But in building Ajax up as an ideal figure, Ulysses only succeeds in creating a substitute for Achilles who, in leading by example, is a distraction from and subversion to divinely sanctioned authority. Near the end of the play, Troilus strikes Pandarus and exclaims, "Hence, broker, lackey! Ignominy, shame / Pursue thy life, and live aye with thy name!" (V.x.33-34) But Pandarus gets the last words in the play and wonders aloud why he is so mistreated for that which he was asked to do. He has given Troilus just what the young Trojan wanted. If Troilus has idealized the relationship had with Cressida and suffers as a consequence, that is his fault, not Pandarus's.

When Troilus finds out that Hector has died, he becomes stronger and articulates his new resolution to stay the field and do what must be done. When he proclaims that Hector is dead, Aeneas says, "My lord, you do discomfort all the host" (V.x. 10). Troilus explains that it is not his purpose to do so; he wants only to announce his conviction, the discovery, finally, of who he is. Similarly, perhaps Shakespeare's purpose is not to evoke pessimism in his audience, but to suggest that his own age can find its own identity, its own literary and cultural legacy by turning from an idealization of the past just as Troilus does in the absence of his dominant brother. The same concept can be applied in modern times. Often, in today's society, some people argue that life in the present day compares unfavorably to the, past in a number of areas including values, political policies, and art. In the United States, for example, political leaders and time periods long or even recently past are often held up as models that current leaders and times do not measure up to. Yet, what is often forgotten or overlooked is the fact that these people, these past times were plagued with their own vices and problems. Just as in Shakespeare's time, the danger in idealizing the past is that the value of the present is not fully realized.

Plot Summary

Act I

The play opens within the walled city of Troy, which is besieged by Greek armies intent on recovering Helen. Helen has been abducted from Menelaus, her elderly Greek husband, by the younger Paris, son of Priam and brother of the renowned Trojan warrior Hector. In the opening scene, Troilus, the younger brother of Paris and Hector, debates whether or not to arm himself for the daily skirmish over Helen between the Trojan and Greek soldiers when he is engaged in his own romantic siege of Cressida's affections (Cressida is the daughter of the Trojan priest Calchas, who has taken sides with the Greeks). Troilus is finally convinced to arm himself that day by Aeneas, another famous Trojan warrior. Pandarus, Cressida's uncle, has been acting as a go-between for the two young Trojan lovers, and he advises Troilus to be patient. In an effort to convince Cressida that Troilus is mature and noble beyond his years, Pandarus tells Cressida that Helen loves Troilus even more than she loves Paris. Paris then situates Cressida so that she may see the Trojan warriors as they pass over the stage, returning from battle. Not only is this scene a clever theatrical device for acquainting the audience with some of the major characters but it also provides Pandarus with an opportunity to extol Troilus's virtues as Troilus is favorably compared to each returning warrior. Cressida is consistently resistant to and dismissive of Pandarus's praise of Troilus, but when her uncle leaves, she admits that she is in love with Troilus and has been acting coy so that she might remain in control of the situation. In the Greek camp outside of Troy, the Greek princes are confused by their failure to topple Troy after seven long years of siege. Agamemnon, the Greek general, proposes that the Greek cause is being tested by the gods, and Nestor, his venerable old advisor agrees. Ulysses asks leave to speak and suggests that the Greek army has failed because the hierarchy of command is no longer honored within it. He cites Achilles, the greatest Greek warrior, as an example: Achilles rests on his laurels and makes fun of Agamemnon, who cannot compel him to fight the Trojans. Aeneas enters the Greek camp under truce and announces Hector's challenge to engage in a contest of strength with any Greek warrior who desires to fight for his mistress' honor. Ulysses proposes to Nestor that Hector's challenge provides them with the opportunity to deflate Achilles's pride and restore respect for authority by advancing Ajax, the Greek's second-best fighter, as their champion against Hector.

Act II

Ajax quarrels with Thersites, his fool, and strikes him. Achilles, who has learned that Ajax will fight Hector in his place, visits Ajax and appropriates his fool□even though Thersites is too cynical and contrary to belong rightfully to either one. Inside the walls of Troy, Priam and his sons consider the latest ultimatum from the Greek armies to deliver Helen. Hector proposes that Helen is not worth the lives that have been sacrificed on her behalf; Helenus, a priest and another son of Priam, agrees with him. Troilus reminds the Trojan royal family that all had supported Paris in his abduction of Helen. Priam's daughter, the prophetess Cassandra, enters and warns the assemblage of the dire consequences of their continued defense of Helen. Paris, of course, argues that the defense of Helen should continue but is admonished by Priam for being less than impartial in the matter. Troilus finally convinces Hector—and thus the rest—that Helen gives Troy "a theme of honor and renown, / A spur to valiant and magnanimous deeds" (II.ii. 199-200). Meanwhile, in the Greek camp, Achilles will not grant Agamemnon audience when the latter comes to his tent. When Achilles refuses to speak to him a second time, Agamemnon sends Ajax with a third request, but Ulysses intervenes, arguing deliberately that such a mission would be beneath the dignity of one as great as Ajax. Ulysses is sent instead; when he returns, again with a negative reply, he, Agamemnon, and Nestor stand outside Achilles's tent and volubly praise Ajax.

Act III

As he makes arrangements to bring Troilus and Cressida together, Pandarus asks Paris to tell Priam later, at dinner, that Troilus is absent because he is sick. Paris and Helen are in a frivolous mood, contrasting sharply with the condition of war they have precipitated all around them, and Helen insists that Pandarus sing for her. Pandarus humors her. Pandarus then brings Cressida to Troilus, and the latter is at first tongue-tied but soon confesses his love for Cressida, who does likewise, but in a seemingly more calculated attempt to enthrall Troilus completely. Pandarus conducts them to a chamber with a bed in the home of Calchas, his brother and Cressida's father. In the Greek camp, meanwhile, Calchas, who has gone over to aid the Greek army after having a prophetic vision that Troy would be ruined, asks the Greek princes to exchange his daughter for Antenor, an important Trojan lately taken prisoner. He has been of service to the Greek cause, so his request is granted. Ulysses sees another opportunity to prick the pride of Achilles and arranges for the Greek troops to either ignore Achilles completely or acknowledge him disdainfully as they pass by his tent. Achilles is upset at being so treated and sends word to Ajax, asking that Ajax invite Hector to Achilles's tent after the contest so Achilles might view the great Trojan warrior unarmed.

Act IV

Early in the morning, the Trojan Aeneas accompanies the Greek Diomedes to Calchas's house so that Diomedes might conduct Cressida to her father in the Greek camp. Pandarus wakes Troilus and Cressida and jovially teases them in their embarrassment. After being informed of Cressida's situation by Aeneas, Pandarus informs her of her fate. Troilus and Cressida briefly exchange vows of fidelity and Troilus gives her his sleeve as a pledge of his love, promising to risk the dangers of the Greek camp and visit her there. Troilus accompanies Cressida to the gates of Troy and charges Diomedes to treat her well. Diomedes tells Troilus that he will treat Cressida according to her merit; he does not recognize any authority in Troilus to admonish him to do so. Both Troilus and Diomedes vow to fight aggressively when they encounter one another on the field of battle. When Cressida arrives in the Greek camp, she responds warmly to the flattery of the assembled Greek nobles, obliging each with a welcoming kiss when she is requested. Ulysses notes a deliberate coyness in her demeanor. Along with a Trojan contingent, Hector arrives to fight with Ajax. Aeneas asks Agamemnon whether the chivalric contest will be one to the death or one that might be halted by any spectator. Agamemnon defers to Hector's desire for the latter. The two combatants enter the lists and battle until Aeneas and Diomedes simultaneously call a halt to the action. When Ajax protests that he is just warming up, the decision is again left up to Hector, who ceases because he does not want to kill Ajax, his father's sister's son. Hector is cordially greeted by the Greek nobles and is invited to Agamemnon's quarters for feasting. Achilles surveys Hector and wonders aloud in which limb he will mortally wound the Trojan hero. Hector warns Achilles not to take him so lightly. Ajax reminds Achilles that the latter might engage Hector in battle whenever he has the nerve. Ulysses agrees to guide Troilus to Calchas's tent so that the young Trojan might see Cressida.

Act V

Agamemnon takes his leave, and Hector is escorted to Achilles's tent. Achilles has earlier informed his aide Patroclus and the fool Thersites that though he will entertain Hector that night, he intends to kill him the next day. Ulysses positions Troilus outside of Calchas's tent that he might see Cressida. Thersites has followed them out of curiosity, and he takes up a position away from them to witness what will happen. Diomedes approaches, and Cressida emerges from her father's tent to meet him. She is familiar with Diomedes but, at first, resists his advances. When he starts to leave, she calls him back and agrees to meet him later, giving him Troilus's sleeve as a pledge of that promise. When she refuses to inform Diomedes whose sleeve it is, he determines to wear it on his helmet in the field of battle and see who it entices to quarrel. Troilus is devastated by Cressida's infidelity and must be restrained by Ulysses; he initially refuses to believe it is his Cressida who has so quickly become unfaithful. He vows to avenge his disgrace on Diomedes's head. All the while, Thersites has been cynically commenting on the folly of these proceedings. Aeneas arrives and informs Troilus that they must leave and arm themselves for battle as Hector is probably doing at that very moment. In Priam's palace, Andromache, Hector's wife, begs her husband not to fight this day; she has had a vivid dream that Hector will be killed in battle. Cassandra has had a similar vision, and when Hector will not be swayed by their premonitions, Andromache and Cassandra enlist Priam to dissuade Hector from his intention to fight. Hector, having promised the Greeks to meet them on the field, is deferential to his father and asks his permission to do what is noble; Priam consents. Hector has been influenced enough by his wife's fear that he tries to dissuade Troilus from fighting, but the young lover is incensed. Pandarus brings a letter from Cressida to Troilus, who tears it up and throws it to the wind. A series of alarums and excursions, brief glimpses of the larger battle that rages between the Greeks and Trojans, follows: Troilus engages Diomedes and the two fight; the life of Thersites is spared by Hector; Diomedes appears and orders his servant to deliver Troilus's horse to Cressida; Agamemnon appears and bemoans a list of Greek warriors who have been killed; Nestor has the dead body of Patroclus sent to Achilles and sends word to Ajax to hurry to arms since Hector is unstoppable; Ajax appears calling for a fight with Troilus; Troilus appears to Diomedes and the two exit fighting; Hector and Achilles fight, and when Hector chivalrously allows Achilles time to catch his breath, the Greek hero runs off; Hector uncharacteristically pursues a fleeing Greek soldier so that he might possess his beautiful armor; Achilles plots with his followers, the Myrmidons, to ambush Hector; Hector is surprised by Achilles and shot by the Myrmidon archers as he rests without his armor; the cry goes out that Hector is dead; Agamemnon respects Hector's courage and silences the triumphant cries; Troilus informs Aeneas that Hector is dead and that his body has been dragged through the field while tied to the tail of Achilles horse. Troilus vows to fight determinedly to the end, but the outcome of this battle is never revealed. Pandarus approaches Troilus and is rebuked and struck by him. In a somewhat strange and disconcerting moment, Pandarus is left on stage to make a final appeal to the pimps ("traders in the flesh" [V.x.46]) in the audience.

Characters

Achilles:

In most accounts of the Trojan battles, Achilles is the most prominent Greek warrior. In Shakespeare's account, Achilles has that reputation but performs no noteworthy deeds. He spends most of his time in his tent being amused by the impersonations of his aide Patroclus and accepting the adulation of the common soldiers for deeds he has performed in the past. In the minds of his military commanders, Achilles sets a dangerous precedent for the other soldiers who imitate him and take their ease, refusing to fight the Trojans. Achilles's arrogance has grown to such a degree that he refuses to answer even a summons from the Greek general Agamemnon. It is implied that the Trojan war drags on as a consequence of his inactivity.

When Hector issues his challenge to fight any Greek willing to do so, Achilles is the natural choice. But Ulysses, Nestor, Agamemnon, and others have hatched an elaborate plot to bring Achilles down a peg by advocating Ajax as the Greek champion. In another calculated effort to puncture Achilles's pride, a Greek contingent passes Achilles's tent and treats him with less respect than that to which he has been accustomed. Achilles questions Ulysses, who is the last person in this entourage, and Ulysses advises him of what today we might call the "old gunslinger syndrome": The reputation that is not constantly renewed against every ambitious newcomer becomes tarnished and fades. Shakespeare downplays the fact that Achilles refuses to fight the Trojans because he has made a pledge to Polyxena, Hector's sister, not to do so. When he first sees Hector after the Trojan hero's tournament with Ajax, Achilles taunts him by conjecturing in which limb he will fatally wound him. In the next scene, however, he receives a letter from Polyxena reminding him of his pledge, which Achilles immediately renews. He is finally galvanized to action when the slain body of Patroclus is sent to him during the play's last battle. He kills Hector in a treacherous ambush with the help of his Myrmidon archers after Hector has treated him chivalrously in an earlier encounter.

Aeneas:

We learn from other accounts that Aeneas is the son of the goddess Venus and the Trojan Anchises. It is Aeneas who, in Virgil's *Aeneid,* survives the destruction of Troy and is the connecting link between the two great civilizations of Greece and Rome. In Shakespeare's play, he is not much more than a messenger, announcing Hector's arrival to the tournament and negotiating the conditions of that fight, and, later, informing Troilus that he must leave his position outside of Calchas's tent in the Greek camp to arm for impending battle. Shakespeare is sometimes criticized for not fully developing Aeneas as a character. Other critics argue that there is no way Shakespeare could have presented in *Troilus and Cressida* all the information that circulated about mythological Trojan and Greek heroes. As the Prologue suggests, the play "Leaps o'er the vaunt and firstlings of those broils / Beginning in the middle" (Pro. 27-28). The action is reduced "To what may be digested in a play" (Pro. 29).

Agamemnon:

Agamemnon is the supreme general of the Greek forces outside the walls of Ilium. He has staged the siege of Troy to assuage the honor of his brother, Menelaus, whose wife Helen has been kidnapped by Paris. After seven long years of siege, Agamemnon still believes in the Greek cause and suspects that its failures are the consequence of a trial imposed by the god Zeus. Agamemnon is a fair-minded leader who respects the valiant heroism of his enemy, Hector. When he is informed that Hector has been killed by Achilles, he says, "If it be so, yet bragless let it be, / Great Hector was as good a man as he" (V.ix.5-6). But apparently, Agamemnon does not have an imposing physical presence, for Aeneas has no idea that the person to whom he talking is the great Greek leader.

Ajax:

Ajax has Greek and Trojan blood and is related to Hector; he is the son of Hector's aunt. He is selected by the Greek commanders to answer Hector's general challenge to individual combat. He is strong, being perhaps the Greeks' second-best warrior. Alexander, Cressida's servant, satirically describes Ajax in the following manner: "he is as valiant as the lion, churlish as the bear, slow as the elephant; a man into whom nature hath so crowded humors that his valor is crush'd into folly, his folly sauc'd with discretion" (I.ii.21-23). Ajax is somewhat dull-witted, unaware that he has been picked to fight Hector in order to make Achilles jealous. He believes that all the praise heaped upon him is sincere and quite quickly becomes arrogant. When his engagement with Hector is halted, Ajax expresses his desire to fight on, having only just warmed to his task, but accepts Hector's decision to cease fighting and embraces the Trojan defender.

Alexander:

Alexander is a servant to Cressida. Early in the play, when Cressida inquires, he identifies Helen and Queen Hecuba, Priam's wife, and informs her of their intent to witness the battle from a vantage point on the eastern tower. He relates how Hector has gone early to battle eager to avenge his embarrassment at being knocked down the previous day by Ajax.

Andromache:

Andromache is Hector's wife. She has a dream that Hector will be killed and begs him to forego the final battle of the play. Hector discounts her premonition and dismisses her. We get some sense of their relationship when Hector says, "Andromache, I am offended with you, / Upon the love you bear me, get you in" (V.iii.78-79). Andromache dutifully departs.

Antenor:

Antenor is an important Trojan military commander. He is captured by the Greeks and exchanged for Cressida at the request of her father Calchas who has left her behind in defecting to the Greek side in the Trojan War. According to Calchas, Antenor is crucial to the Trojan side in plotting the stratagems of war.

Attendants:

These are the attendants in Priam's palace, waiting upon the Trojan royals. They attend Helen and Paris in the scene in which Helen entices Pandarus to sing. Attendants enter with the Trojan contingent which accompanies Hector to the tournament in the Greek camp.

Calchas:

Calchas is Cressida's father. He has the gift of prophecy and has had a vision of Troy's destruction, prompting him to abandon the walled city and join the Greeks outside. When he requests that Antenor be exchanged for Cressida, he suggests that he is owed that much, having endured the reputation of a traitor and the separation from his daughter in doing the Greek side some unstipulated service.

Cassandra:

Cassandra is Priam's daughter and is sister to Hector, Paris, and Troilus. She has the gift of prophecy but has been cursed by the gods to never have her prophetic voice believed. As the Trojan royal family discusses whether or not to continue their resistance to the Greek siege, Cassandra enters raving and proclaims, "Troy must not be, nor goodly Ilion stand. / Our fire-brand brother Paris burns us all" (II.ii.109-10). She later supports Andromache, pleading with Hector not to arm for the final battle.

Cressida:

Cressida is the daughter of Calchas and the niece of Pandarus. She is united with Troilus through the efforts of her uncle, Pandarus, who has to work at convincing her that Troilus is a worthy match. He situates her so that she might see a parade of noble Trojan warriors as they pass. Pandarus devalues each of these warriors in order to inflate the value of Troilus in Cressida's eyes. But Cressida resists her uncle's efforts. When he leaves, she says, "But more in Troilus thousandfold I see / Than in the glass of Pandar's praise may be" (I.ii.284-85). She again plays the coquette when she is conducted into the Greek camp after being exchanged for Antenor. Cressida kisses all of the Greek commanders with barely subdued enthusiasm, prompting Ulysses to remark that everything about her can be set down "For sluttish spoils of opportunity, / And daughters of the game" (IV.v.62-63); he considers her a prostitute. Diomedes's assessment of her is no more noble. He is interested only in her physical beauty, and he refuses to play her trifling games of love making. When she plays hard to get and refuses his early advances, he walks away, and she is forced to go after him, losing the advantage which she seems to find so enjoyable in her relationships with men. Cressida perhaps knows what men want of her, and she attempts to maintain a sense of dignity in what she seems to perceive as the only way available to her. In her soliloquy after Pandarus attempts to con vice her of Troilus's worth, Cressida says, "Men prize the thing ungain'd more than it is" (I.ii.289), realizing that "Achievement is command; ungain'd beseech" (I.ii.293). Even when she admits to Troilus that she loves him, she is in control, pretending embarrassment at having revealed too much when her real intention is to inflame his passion all the more and gain firmer control. Cressida is unfaithful, and typically viewed as a whore, but it is arguable that she follows the only path that yields the results she seems to be seeking.

Deiphobus:

Deiphobus is another of Priam's sons, a brother to Hector, Paris, and Troilus. He is part of the procession of returning Trojan warriors upon which Pandarus and Cressida comment near the beginning of the play. He, along with Aeneas, accompanies Diomedes to Cressida as Diomedes escorts her from Troy to the Greek camp. He appears in the last scene of the play without speaking.

Diomedes:

Diomedes is the Greek chosen to escort Cressida to the Greek camp after she has been exchanged for Antenor, a prisoner of war. Diomedes is a nononsense man, a slave neither to courtesy nor to courtly convention. When Troilus commands him to treat Cressida well, Diomedes replies that he will do as he pleases; he will not be dictated to by the young Trojan. When Cressida acts coy with him after inviting him to visit her at her father's tent, he walks away uninterested in her games of love. Cressida calls him back and he says, "No, no, good night, I'll be your fool no more" (V.ii.32). She gives him Troilus's sleeve as a pledge that she will meet him later, and Diomedes announces his callous intention to wear that sleeve in battle the next day in order to find out who initially gave it to Cressida, adding insult to Troilus's injury. Diomedes and Troilus engage one another several times in the final battle without a decisive outcome.

Hector:

He is the son of Priam and brother to Paris and Troilus. Hector is the embodiment of the idealism and romance associated with Troy, and his death precipitates the fall of that legendary city. He is strong, brave, and unselfish and commands the respect of his enemies. He has the reputation, among Trojans and Greeks alike, of fighting only those soldiers who oppose him in offensive positions, sparing those who are defenseless or fleeing. He is kind and deferential to his father even though Priam, like everyone else, yields to Hector's wishes. Informed of Andromache's dream and fear for his life, he is as concerned with Troilus's safety as he is unconcerned with his own. In his encounters with the two most renowned Greek fighters Achilles and Ajax, he treats both according to the code of chivalry. But there are chinks in Hector's armor. The first appears when he retreats from his position that Helen is not worth all the suffering undergone on her behalf. He succumbs to Troilus's argument that Helen provides Troy with a theme for enacting noble deeds, a direct appeal to the heroic nature of Hector, but one that reveals a streak of selfish pride in the noble Trojan. The second chink appears when Hector, contrary to his reputation for doing otherwise, pursues the fleeing Greek soldier, intent on acquiring that soldier's ornate armor. When he says, "Most putrefied core, so fair without, / Thy goodly armor thus hath cost thy life" (V.viii.1-2), it is a metaphor, in Shakespeare's play, for both the Trojan War itself and Hector's outdated chivalry.

Helen:

Helen is depicted as a woman of great outer beauty but little inner substance. On the few occasions in the play when we hear of or see her activities, she seems to be occupied with petty diversions and courtly entertainments, seemingly unmindful of her pivotal role in affairs of state. She provides the theme for the Trojan War, a theme as empty of substance as she is and as fragile and false as Cressida's love turns out to be.

Helenus:

Helenus is another of Priam's sons, brother to Hector, Paris, and Troilus. He is also a priest. When Hector provides reasons that the defense of Helen should not be prolonged, Troilus objects that such petty reasons diminish great Priam's power and sway. Helenus sides with Hector and accuses Troilus of being incapable of reasoning. Troilus responds, "You are for dreams and slumbers, brother priest, / You fur your gloves with reason" (II.ii.37-38), implying that Helenus, by reason of his vocation, is cowardly and passionless.

Margarelon:

Margarelon is the bastard son of Priam. He appears briefly in the final act and challenges Thersites, who, before he runs away, protests that he is a bastard too and bastards should not fight one another since they share the same shameful stigma.

Menelaus:

Menelaus is the brother of Agamemnon and the rightful husband of Helen. He is the ruler of Sparta, the Greek city from which Paris has abducted Helen. Menelaus is history's most famous cuckold, a name derived from the cuckoo bird, which had a reputation for taking over the nests of other birds, just as Paris now occupies the nest that rightfully belongs to Menelaus. Cuckolds were assigned symbolic horns, representative of the frustrated masculine virility invoked by the absence of the cuckold's wife in her diversion to pleasures elsewhere. Menelaus and his symbolic horns are the object of much ridicule in the play. Even the courteous and respectful Hector cannot resist poking fun at Menelaus. Upon meeting Menelaus, Hector says of Helen, "She's well, but bade me not commend her to you" (IV.v.180). Agamemnon has agreed to the siege of Troy so that he might help his brother regain his wife and his honor. If the Trojan excuse for war□ the defense of the superficial and frivolous Helen□ is flimsy and unjustifiable, the Greek cause□to regain for Menelaus an adulterous wife who no longer wants him□is equally so.

Nestor:

Nestor is a Greek commander, an advisor to Agamemnon. He is a sage old man well-respected for his age and knowledge. His enthusiasm for war is greater than his physical ability to actively engage in fighting. He says that he will answer Hector's challenge to individual combat if no other Greek soldier has the courage to do so. When he meets Hector before his tournament of single arms with Ajax, he tells the Trojan hero that in his own day he would have been more than a match for Hector. Despite his reputation for wisdom, it is Ulysses who proposes the most plausible answer for the failure of the Greek armies to topple Troy after seven years' siege. And it is Ulysses who conceives of the stratagem to induce Achilles to action, proposing that idea to Nestor first only because the venerable old man has the ear and respect of Agamemnon.

Pandarus:

Pandarus is Calchas's brother and Cressida's uncle. His function in the play is to bring Troilus and Cressida together. He treats both young lovers as commodities, inflating Troilus's worth in the mind of Cressida and perversely displaying a great sense of pride in Cressida's beauty, a beauty that is said to rival that of Helen. When Troilus and Cressida foreshadow the association their names will have with "true" and "false" love, Pandarus adds, "Let all constant men be Troiluses, all false women Cressids, and all brokers-between Pandars" (III.ii.202-04). In fact, Pandarus predicts accurately; "panderers," "bawds," "pimps" all are synonymous. In the last speech of the play, after he has been rejected by Troilus, Pandarus asks the bawds in the audience to "weep outatPandar's fall" (V.x.48), as if the entire play has been about Pandarus's tragic circumstances. In a sense, Pandarus is right. By giving him the last lines in the play, Shakespeare reduces the epic love story of Troilus and Cressida to the tawdry spectacle of prostitution, beauty as a commodity and pretext for war.

Paris:

Paris is Priam's son and brother to Hector and Troilus. With the full consent of Priam and the rest of the Trojan royal family, he has inflicted damage on their Greek enemies by abducting Helen from her husband, Menelaus, in Sparta, an action that sparked Greek retaliation and precipitated the Trojan War. Paris really is a fire brand, a description of him stemming from the fact that his mother, Hecuba, had dreamed she was touched by fire when she gave birth to him. He is lusty and passionate, delighting in his possession of Helen. His fierce defense of her is admittedly selfish, and he is the first to agree with Troilus when the latter reframes the defense of Helen as the defense of the honor and integrity of Troy.

Patroclus:

Patroclus is an aide to Achilles. Apparently, he has the gift of mimicry. According to Ulysses, Patroclus endlessly entertains Achilles with impersonations of a pompous, self-important Agamemnon and a feeble, old, shuffling Nestor. Later, when Thersites impersonates Ajax, Patroclus takes the part of a questioning Thersites. After the soldiers parade by Achilles's tent, Ulysses informs Achilles that the latter has been treated unceremoniously because his warlike reputation has faded. Patroclus apologizes to Achilles for making him "an effeminate man / In time of action" (III.iii.218-19). In a later scene, Thersites refers to Patroclus's reputation as a "male varlot" (V.i.16), Achilles's "masculine whore" (V.i.17).

Priam:

Priam is the King of Troy, the husband of Hecuba, and the father of Hector, Paris, Deiphobus, Helenus, Cassandra, and Troilus. He conducts the Trojan synod which will determine whether or not Troy continues to harbor Helen. In a later scene, he is recruited by Andromache and Cassandra to exercise his authority over Hector and make his son refrain from what Andromache and Cassandra feel will be the fateful battle. Although he is appealed to as a source of great strength and authority, on both occasions Priam defers to the judgment of Hector. Priam's castle is called Ilium, a name from which is derived *The Iliad,* Homer's epic account of the Trojan War.

Servant (to Diomedes):

Diomedes's servant appears briefly in the last act as he is directed by Diomedes, who has apparently gained a momentary advantage over Troilus, to take Troilus's horse to Cressida.

Servant (to Paris):

Paris's servant engages in a humorous exchange with Pandarus when he comes to see Paris and ask him to make excuse for Troilus's absence from dinner.

Servant (to Troilus):

In I.ii, a servant to Troilus informs Pandarus that Troilus wants to speak with him. Both the stage direction and speech prefix designate this servant as "Boy." In in.ii, a servant to Troilus informs Pandarus that Troilus is waiting to be conducted to Cressida. Both the stage direction and speech prefix designate this servant as "Man." They might be the same person, but, more probably, they are different characters.

Soldiers:

These are common foot soldiers. They appear at the end of the procession that is returning from battle, filing past the vantage point of Pandarus and Cressida.

Thersites:

Thersites is Ajax's fool at the beginning of the play, but Achilles finds Thersite amusing and, in effect, takes him away from Ajax. Thersites comments cynically on Cressida's fall to the lusty Greek Diomedes, but he is not sympathetic to Troilus; he seems to hate everyone. His language is filled with base and graphic imagery. Thersites's cynicism is almost certainly meant to illustrate the extreme of human depravity. Although cynicism pervades the play, that cynicism is probably meant as a way of stripping away the idealization of the Trojan War and its participants, and is fundamentally different from the hopeless pessimism embodied by Thersites.

Troilus:

Troilus is the son of Priam and the brother of Hector and Paris. He is young and idealistic. He appeals to Pandarus to woo Cressida for him, believing that she is a beautiful and worthy maid. When he argues with Hector over the desirability of continuing to protect Helen, he may have in mind his idealized conception of Cressida. He envisions Cressida as having the kind of beauty that Helen is thought to have, a beauty that sets men at war against one another. He is unaware that neither of the women is what she seems. When Pandarus brings the two lovers together, Troilus is passionate and vows his faithfulness and seems to view the arranged tryst (Pandarus has prepared a chamber for them complete with a bed and a guaranteed privacy) as a lasting love affair.

Later, when Troilus watches Cressida caress Diomedes and show him affection, his pain is almost palpable to the audience. Troilus cannot believe his eyes, preferring to think that there are two Cressidas than to think that she has so soon betrayed his love. His reason and passion struggle against one another. He knows by reason that Cressida cannot be in two places at once, but his emotion desperately wants to make it so. He does not mature, however, in this moment of witnessing Cressida's infidelity. He still clings to a romanticized version of their relationship, vowing to avenge the loss of that romance on the head of Diomedes. Troilus, as Cressida comments in V.ii.l 11-12, is full of turpitude, a disquiet that will not go away until he abandons his idealized conception of Cressida. But at the end of the play he says, "Hope of revenge shall hide our inward woe" (V.x.31), a statement that applies as much to his disappointment in Cressida as it does to the circumstances of Hector's death.

Ulysses:

Ulysses is a Greek commander. He issues two great speeches in the play. In the first (I.iii.75-137), he explains that the Greek army has failed in achieving its goal because "degree" is no longer respected. He goes on to describe the Great Chain of Being: The heavens themselves are ordered, each planet observing the superiority of the sun. This order should be paralleled on earth in the affairs of men, the gods sanctioning kings and generals to rule over other men in degree of diminishing succession. Order is only maintained when each man observes the degree and rank of his superiors. In the second (III.iii.l 12-41), Ulysses tells Achilles that one only knows one's value when it is reflected in the attitudes of others. The eye of the observer is the only weather vane of worth. Although Ulysses has a large presence throughout the play, like Aeneas, he is not fully rendered to Elizabethan audiences who would have been thoroughly acquainted with his stature and his past deeds through Homer's *The Odyssey,* a works that details Ulysses's perilous journey home to his wife Penelope after the conclusion of the Trojan War.

Further Study

Barton, Anne. Introduction to *Troilus and Cressida,* by William Shakespeare. In *The Riverside Shakespeare,* edited by G. Blakemore Evans, 443-47. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974.

Barton discusses the textual history and presents a general reading of the play. She argues that no character in *Troilus and Cressida* is consistent or representative of truth or nobility. The only thing that saves the audience from the characters' destructive nihilism, Barton maintains, is the integrity and artistry of the play shaped by Shakespeare.

Cole, Douglas. "Myth and Anti-Myth: The Case of *Troilus and Cressida." Shakespeare Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (1980): 76-84.

Cole argues that Shakespeare's treatment of the myth of Troy undermines the way societies create myth as a way to connect with specific histories and define their values.

Dusinberre, Juliet. *"Troilus and Cressida* and the Definition of Beauty." *Shakespeare Survey* 36 (1983): 85-95.

Dusinberre examines how concepts of beauty function in the play. She argues that Helen and Cressida are valued only for their physical beauty and not their spiritual or moral beauty.

Fly, Richard D. "Cassandra and the Language of Prophecy in *Troilus and Cressida." Shakespeare Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (1975): 157-71.

Fly examines the prophecy that abounds in *Troilus and Cressida* and argues that from the prophecies of Cassandra and Calchas to the Elizabethan audience's knowledge of the fate of Troy, the play is pervaded by a sense of doom.

Foakes, R. A. *"Troilus and Cressida* Reconsidered." *University of Toronto Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (1963): 142-54.

Addressing the confused question of *Troilus and Cressida's* genre, Foakes argues that the first three acts are comedy and the last two lead to an unresolved ending that is both comic and tragic.

Franson, J. Karl. "An Antenor□Aeneas Conspiracy in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida." Studies in the Humanities* 7, no. 1 (1978): 43-47.

Franson demonstrates that Shakespeare takes from Chaucer's account of Troilus and Cressida the idea that Antenor was the one who betrayed Troy. He argues that in the exchange of Antenor for Cressida the obviously greater value of Antenor is ignored by the Greeks, implying a conspiracy, involving Aeneas, to get Antenor back into the walled city of Troy.

Greene, Gayle. "Language and Value in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida." Studies in English Literature* 21, no. 2 (1981): 271-85.

Greene argues that in the sixteenth century, the ability of language to communicate meaning completely and effectively was being questioned. The characters' failure to communicate in *Troilus and Cressida* defeats the hierarchical social order described by Ulysses.

Hunter, G. K. *"Troilus and Cressida:* A Tragic Satire." *Shakespeare Studies* 13 (1974-75): 1-23.

Hunter discounts the notion that Shakespeare relied heavily or exclusively upon medieval sources for the story of Troilus and Cressida, arguing-that Shakespeare's play adopts the tone and themes of Homer.

Kaula, David." 'Mad Idolatry' in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida." Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 15, no. 1(1973): 25-38.

Kaula points out the biblical allusions in *Troilus and Cressida* and argues that there is an implied Christian reading of the play opposed to the idolatry of the Greeks and Trojans.

Kimbrough, Robert. "The Troilus Log: Shakespeare and 'Box-Office'." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 15, no. 3 (1964): 201-09.

Kimbrough argues that, in *Troilus and Cressida,* Shakespeare was trying to please a sophisticated, courtly audience that was extremely cynical and desired keen satire in the dramatic entertainment offered to them.

Powell, Neil. "Hero and Human: The Problem of Achilles. "*Critical Quarterly* 21, no. 2 (1979): 17-28.

Powell defends Achilles as the only consistent character in *Troilus and Cressida.*

Rabkin, Norman. *"Troilus and Cressida:* The Uses of the Double Plot." *Shakespeare Studies* 1 (1965): 265-82.

Rabkin discusses the ways in which *Troilus and Cressida* poses the value of both love interests and political ends as a struggle between reason and emotion.

Rowland, Beryl. "A Cake-Making Image in *Troilus and Cressida." Shakespeare Quarterly* 21, no. 2 (1970): 191-94.

By examining the sexual implications of cake baking in Pandarus's insistence that Troilus be patient in his realization of union with Cressida, Rowland argues that Troilus's attraction to her is physical only.

Roy, Emil. "War and Manliness in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida." Comparative Drama* 7, no. 2 (1973): 107-120.

Roy argues that both the Greek and Trojan warriors manifest an Oedipal struggle in their repeated warlike activities.

Stockholder, Katherine. "Power and Pleasure in *Troilus and Cressida,* or Rhetoric and Structure of the Anti-Tragic." *College English* 30, no. 7 (1969): 539-54.

Stockholder analyzes Cressida, Hector, Helen, Troilus, and Ulysses and proposes that Shakespeare undoes the tragic import of his play by offering characters who are only concerned with their transitory images and who do not fulfill the expectations of audiences familiar with the characters' historical significance.

Thompson, Karl F. *"Troilus and Cressida:* The Incomplete Achilles." *College English* 27, no. 7 (1966): 532-36.

Thompson argues that Shakespeare's play is full of inconsistencies, most notably in Shakespeare's failure to develop fully the characters of Ulysses and Achilles and to account for the latter's pledge to Hector's sister, Polyxena, that he would not fight the Trojans.

Copyright Information

This Premium Study Guide is an offprint from *Shakespeare for Students*.

Project Editor
David Galens

Editorial
Sara Constantakis, Elizabeth A. Cranston, Kristen A. Dorsch, Anne Marie Hacht, Madeline S. Harris, Arlene Johnson, Michelle Kazensky, Ira Mark Milne, Polly Rapp, Pam Revitzer, Mary Ruby, Kathy Sauer, Jennifer Smith, Daniel Toronto, Carol Ullmann

Research
Michelle Campbell, Nicodemus Ford, Sarah Genik, Tamara C. Nott, Tracie Richardson

Data Capture
Beverly Jendrowski

Permissions
Mary Ann Bahr, Margaret Chamberlain, Kim Davis, Debra Freitas, Lori Hines, Jackie Jones, Jacqueline Key, Shalice Shah-Caldwell

Imaging and Multimedia
Randy Bassett, Dean Dauphinais, Robert Duncan, Leitha Etheridge-Sims, Mary Grimes, Lezlie Light, Jeffrey Matlock, Dan Newell, Dave Oblender, Christine O'Bryan, Kelly A. Quin, Luke Rademacher, Robyn V. Young

Product Design
Michelle DiMercurio, Pamela A. E. Galbreath, Michael Logusz

Manufacturing
Stacy Melson

©1997-2002; ©2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc.

Gale and Design® and Thomson Learning™ are trademarks used herein under license.

For more information, contact
The Gale Group, Inc
27500 Drake Rd.
Farmington Hills, MI 48334-3535
Or you can visit our Internet site at
http://www.gale.com

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
No part of this work covered by the copyright hereon may be reproduced or used in any

form or by any means—graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, Web distribution or information storage retrieval systems—without the written permission of the publisher.

For permission to use material from this product, submit your request via Web at http://www.gale-edit.com/permissions, or you may download our Permissions Request form and submit your request by fax or mail to:

Permissions Department
The Gale Group, Inc
27500 Drake Rd.
Farmington Hills, MI 48331-3535

Permissions Hotline:
248-699-8006 or 800-877-4253, ext. 8006
Fax: 248-699-8074 or 800-762-4058

Since this page cannot legibly accommodate all copyright notices, the acknowledgments constitute an extension of the copyright notice.

While every effort has been made to secure permission to reprint material and to ensure the reliability of the information presented in this publication, The Gale Group, Inc. does not guarantee the accuracy of the data contained herein. The Gale Group, Inc. accepts no payment for listing; and inclusion in the publication of any organization, agency, institution, publication, service, or individual does not imply endorsement of the editors or publisher. Errors brought to the attention of the publisher and verified to the satisfaction of the publisher will be corrected in future editions.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". © 1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". © 1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

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 memberseducational 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.

We Welcome Your Suggestions

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:

Editor, Shakespeare for Students
Gale Group
27500 Drake Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48331-3535