Two Gentlemen of Verona Study Guide

Two Gentlemen of Verona by William Shakespeare

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Introduction

In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona,* the principal characters—and some of the secondary ones as well—feel compelled to act and speak in certain ways when they fall in love. The conventions of courtly love (a practice which flourished during the Middle Ages and influenced Renaissance literature) required such things as serenades, the frequent exchange of letters, and extravagant praise of one's beloved. Are young people today free to express love according to their individual natures, or is there a standard they have to follow? In the past, young women in love have had to act coy, as Julia does in I.ii, and mask their feelings. Additionally, society has not always encouraged young women to speak openly of their love; rather, they have had to indicate their feelings indirectly, as Silvia does in II.i with her comments on the letter Valentine has written for her. Do some of these conventions affect the way modern young people in love conduct themselves? Has the experience of romantic love changed significantly since Shakespeare's time?

Most commentators believe that *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* places a higher value on friend ship than on romantic love. They believe the play depicts Proteus's betrayal of Valentine as a worse sin than his betrayal of Julia. What would happen today if two young men—or two young women—who have been the closest of friends fell in love with the same person? Would one of them have to step aside, sacrificing love so that the friendship could continue? Or would the friendship come to an end?

The play also addresses the issue of constancy or faithfulness in love. Julia and Silvia—and Launce, too, in his own way—represent constancy. Proteus, on the other hand, seems to fall in and out of love with very little justification. He's attracted to Silvia at least as much because of Valentine's praise of her as for her merits alone. He appears to believe that all men are vulnerable to beauty and that they are helpless to resist its power. Is it human nature, as Proteus claims, to be attracted to others even when one is already committed to an individual? Is it hopelessly idealistic to expect that one's partner will be faithful forever?

Another issue raised in the play is the relation between older and younger generations. When Antonio decides that the time has come for his son to leave home, his decision is final, and Proteus accepts this—perhaps in part because he's not alto gether unhappy at the prospect. But what happens when parents' choices for their children are not the ones the children would choose for themselves? The duke insists that his daughter marry Thurio, though he knows she detests him. Such tyrannical fathers are less common today. However, even in the late twentieth century, parents continue to attempt to influence the direction of their children's lives. Are young people today more inclined to defy their parents, as Silvia does? Does the tension between parental authority and their children's desire for independence necessarily lead to antagonism? Though the world has changed in countless ways since the sixteenth century, perhaps the conflict between gen erations is timeless.

Plot Summary

Act I

The historical period in which the dramatic action occurs is not specified□it may be the fifteenth or sixteenth century. The first act takes place in the Italian city of Verona. As the play begins, two young men□close friends since childhood□are bidding each other farewell. One of them, Valentine, is about to leave for Milan, to learn the sophisticated ways of courtly society. He says he regrets that his friend Proteus will not be going with him, though he understands that love keeps him in Verona. The setting shifts to a garden outside a villa, where Julia, the object of Proteus's love, is talking with her maid Lucetta. When Lucetta tries to give her mistress a letter from Proteus, Julia pretends to be outraged by her maid's boldness and sends Lucetta away. Immediately regretting this, she calls her back. When Lucetta gives her the letter, Julia takes one look at it, then tears it into pieces and sends Lucetta away again. Julia picks up some of the pieces from the ground where she has thrown them and reads the words written on the fragments, treating each scrap with passionate tenderness. The scene shifts once again, this time to an unspecified location, where Proteus's father Antonio and Antonio's servant Panthino are deep in conversation. In the course of their talk, Antonio decides that Proteus ought to be travelling or studying at a university instead of remaining at home, and he resolves to send Proteus to Milan the very next day. Proteus enters, reading a letter from Julia. He pretends to his father that it's from Valentine, urging him to come to Milan. Antonio tells Proteus that's precisely what he wants him to do and that he should prepare to leave immediately.

Act II

At the duke of Milan's palace, Valentine's young page Speed makes fun of his master, telling him that he shows all the signs of being madly in love with Silvia□the duke's daughter. Silvia joins them presently, and Valentine gives her a love letter she has commissioned him to write, on her behalf, to someone she loves but will not name. Silvia hands the letter back to Valentine, telling him the words "are for you" (II.i.127). He fails to understand, but when Silvia leaves, Speed explains to him that Silvia was expressing her love indirectly by having Valentine write a letter to himself. Back in Verona, Proteus and Julia meet briefly as he is about to set off for Milan. They exchange rings in token of the constancy of their love for each other. On a street in Verona, Proteus's servant Launce appears, weeping and leading his large dog Crab. Launce describes to himself the heart-rending scene that took place when he parted from his family; everyone was grief-stricken except Crab, who, to Launce's disgust, shed not one tear. Panthino appears and drags Launce away to the ship that will take him and his master to Milan. Sometime later, at his palace in Milan, the duke announces to Valentine, Silvia, and Sir Thurio□one of Silvia's suitors□that Proteus has arrived. Valentine introduces Proteus to Silvia, who welcomes him to her father's house. When they are alone, Valentine, tells Proteus that he's in love with Silvia and that they're

engaged to be married. Unfortunately, explains Valentine, her father wants her to marry Thurio, so the young couple has made plans to elope. When Valentine leaves, Proteus reveals in a soliloquy that he is now in love with Silvia himself. On the day that has been fixed for the elopement, Proteus speaks in another soliloquy of his intention to warn the duke about Valentine and Silvia's plans. Back in Verona, Julia tells Lucetta that she intends to travel to Milan to be with Proteus. She asks her maid to help her put together a masculine disguise to wear on the journey.

Act III

In Milan, Proteus tells the duke about the elopement, including the fact that Valentine will use a cord ladder to carry Silvia away from her chamber in a tower. Valentine enters, and Proteus leaves. The duke, a widower, invents a story about a woman he loves and wants to marry. He leads the unsuspecting Valentine to give him advice about how to court her and gain admittance to her room, which, he says, is high above the ground. The duke removes Valentine's cloak and finds a letter to Silvia and the cord ladder Valentine means to use for the elopement. The duke rages at Valentine and orders him to leave Milan at once. Proteus and Launce come upon the grieving Valentine. Proteus tells him that Silvia has heard of his banishment and pleaded with her father to change his mind. The duke is so angry with her, Proteus reports, that he has made her a virtual prisoner in her chamber. Proteus offers to accompa ny Valentine to the north gate of the city, and they depart, ordering Launce to find Speed and tell him where they're headed so he can meet them there. However, when Speed appears, Launce draws him into an extended conversation about a woman he is thinking of marrying. When he finally gives Speed the message from Valentine, the boy races off. Back at the palace, the duke assures Thurio that now, with Valentine banished, Silvia will bestow her affections on him. Proteus joins them, and the duke asks him to assist Thurio in courting Silvia. Proteus advises Thurio to gather a consort of musicians together and serenade Silvia outside her chamber window. Thurio regards this as excellent advice. He says he has already written a sonnet that will serve the purpose, and he and Proteus go off to find musicians to provide an accompaniment for it.

Act IV

In a forest somewhere between Milan and Mantua, Valentine and Speed encounter a band of outlaws, who threaten to rob them. Valentine explains that he has no money with him. He tells them he was banished from Milan for killing a man. Impressed by Valentine's appearance, and by his claim to be able to speak foreign languages, the outlaws ask him to be their leader. Given the choice between accepting the offer or being killed if he doesn't, Valentine agrees. Back in Milan, Julia, disguised as a page, has found lodging at an inn. She asks the innkeeper to take her to Proteus, and he leads her to the place outside the ducal palace where Thurio's serenade to' Silvia is about to begin. During the song□which is usually sung by the actor playing Proteus, though the text does not specify who the singer should be□Julia learns from the innkeeper that Proteus is reported to be in love with Silvia. The serenade over, Thurio

and the musicians depart. As Julia stands hidden nearby, Proteus woos Silvia, but she rejects his suit and calls him a traitor to love. Proteus admits that he did once love another woman, but, he lies, she is dead. When Silvia reminds him that he's betraying his friendship with Valen tine by courting her, Proteus says he's also heard that Valentine is dead. He begs her for a picture of herself, and she agrees, telling him to send a servant for it the next morning.

Early the following day, a courtier named Sir Eglamour arrives beneath Silvia's window, as she has asked him to do. She tells him that she means to follow Valentine into banishment and asks Eglamour if he will accompany her for protection. He agrees, and they arrange to meet that evening at the cell of a cleric, Friar Patrick. Sometime after Eglamour leaves, Launce appears, relating his disastrous attempt to deliver Crab as a present from Proteus to Silvia. He reports that the dog stole a chicken leg from Silvia's plate, farted under the table, and urinated on Silvia's dress. Proteus enters with Julia, still disguised as a page; she has introduced herself to Proteus as Sebastian, a young man seeking employment. Proteus is outraged to learn that Launce has lost the dog he bought for Silvia□a small, elegant one□and tried to replace it with the hulking Crab. He dismisses Launce and employs Julia in his place. He tells Julia to fetch the picture Silvia has promised him. Pulling from his finger the ring she gave him when he left Verona, Proteus instructs Sebastian/Julia to present it to Silvia. Proteus leaves, and Silvia enters. Silvia is unaware that the messenger from Proteus is Julia, but she will have neither the ring nor the letter he has sent along with it. Together, the two young women lament Proteus's inconstancy and Julia's unhappy fate.

Act V

At sunset, Eglamour meets Silvia at Friar Pat rick's cell near the city walls, and together they leave the city. Back at the duke's palace, Proteus and Sebastian/Julia are jesting with Thurio when they are joined by the duke. He reports that a cleric, Friar Laurence, has encountered Silvia and Eglamour in the forest. Realizing that Silvia is on her way to find Valentine, the duke asks them to help him recover his daughter. In the forest, Silvia is captured by the outlaws, who report that her companion ran away so fast they were unable to catch him. In another part of the forest, Valentine hears people approaching and steps aside so they won't see him. Proteus appears, with Silvia and Sebastian/Julia. As Valentine listens, Proteus□who has rescued Silvia from the outlaws□renews his courtship of Silvia, but she continues to rebuff him. Proteus declares he will force her to love him and moves toward her menacingly, as if he means to rape her. Valentine intervenes and denounces Proteus as a traitorous friend. Proteus says he is overwhelmed by shame and guilt. Valentine forgives him and, as a sign that he regards Proteus as truly penitent, he offers to give Silvia to him. Julia faints. As they revive her, she shows them a ring. Proteus recognizes that it's the one he gave Julia when he left Verona, and the supposed page reveals her true identity. Declaring that man's greatest fault is inconstancy, Proteus turns to Julia, and they join hands. The outlaws suddenly appear, with the duke and Thurio as their prisoners. Seeing Silvia, Thurio asserts his claim to her, but quickly withdraws it when Valentine threat ens to kill him. The duke declares that he's content to have Valentine as a son-in-law, and he

revokes the banishment. Valentine calls for one more act of forgiveness: the outlaws, he says, are reformed and ready to return to society. The duke pardons every one of them, and the entire party sets off for Milan, where, Valentine predicts, they will celebrate two marriages and the prospect of mutual happiness.

Characters

Antonio:

A nobleman of Verona, he is Proteus's father. Antonio is easily manipulated by his servant Panthino and follows his advice; yet he is a tyrant toward his son Proteus. In I.iii, when Panthino suggests that Proteus ought to be out in the world, gaining knowl edge and experience, Antonio quickly agrees. He says he's been thinking the very same thing over the past month□though there's some doubt about whether he's telling the truth here. He asks Panthino where he thinks Proteus ought to be sent, and he takes his servant's advice: Proteus should go to Milan the next day. When Antonio tells his son that he's to leave for Milan almost immediately, he appears brusque and decisive: "what I will, I will, and there's an end" (I.iii.65). He appoints Panthino to see to it that Proteus is on his way to Milan the following day.

Crab:

Crab is Launce's dog. He appears with his master in Act II, and Launce reveals how hurt he is that Crab didn't shed a tear as Launce prepared to leave for Milan. In Act IV, Launce describes how he tried to pass Crab off as a gift to Silvia from Proteus, but Crab misbehaved badly. The dog was supposed to be punished for his behavior, but Launce takes the whipping for Crab.

Duke of Milan:

See Milan

Eglamour:

A courtier whose name suggests constancy in love, he accompanies Silvia when she flees Milan. When he appears below her chamber window in IV.iii, she says she's chosen him as her escort because she knows he's devoted to the memory of his own true love□a woman who died, and on whose grave he has sworn perpetual chastity. Eglamour pities Silvia's circumstances and agrees to help her. In V.i, they meet at Friar Patrick's cell and set out for Mantua. Their journey takes them through a forest where, we learn in V.iii, they are attacked by outlaws. According to the report of one of the outlaws, Sir Eglamour took to his heels when he saw them, abandoning the woman he'd promised to protect. Earlier in the play, when Julia and Lucetta are reviewing a list of Julia's suitors, one name they mention is that of "the fair Sir Eglamour" (I.ii.9), a knight of Verona; this is not the same Sir Eglamour who provides dubious assistance to Silvia.

Host:

An innkeeper in Milan, he escorts Julia□who is disguised as a young boy□to the place where Silvia is being serenaded. He and Julia conceal themselves from the serenaders. After the song, Julia responds to the host's direct comments on the music with veiled allusions to Proteus's unfaithfulness. The host tells her that, according to Launce, Proteus is madly in love with Silvia. During the exchange between Proteus and Silvia that follows the serenade, the host falls asleep. Julia wakes him when Proteus leaves, and the host accompanies her back to the inn, where, he assures her, Proteus is staying.

Julia:

A young woman of Verona, she loves Proteus and remains constant, even when he betrays her. Julia is alternately resourceful and vulnerable, charm ing and petulant, courageous and foolish. Commentators generally regard her as the most authentic, true to life character in the play. Several of them have noted an interesting paradox: Julia disguises herself and assumes a male role as the page Sebastian, yet she remains true to herself through the period of her transformation.

Julia seems younger and less self-assured than Silvia, her unwilling rival for Proteus's love. Her mood swings, playfulness, and emotional outbursts betray her immaturity. In I.ii, as she finds herself falling in love with Proteus, she seems astonished by her feelings and unable to control them. At first she pretends to be indifferent when Lucetta includes Proteus's name in a catalogue of Julia's suitors: "he of all the rest hath never moved me" (I.ii.27). She throws a tantrum when Lucetta produces a letter from Proteus. Yet only moments before she had said she wished she knew what he thought of her, and the letter is a likely source of such information. In the course of her soliloquy at I.ii.50-65, she goes back and forth between self-criticism and condemnation of Lucetta, before concluding on a note of humility. Then, in an outburst of petulance, she tears up the letter, unread. In another mood altogether, she retrieves the scraps, treating each one as if it had individual significance. Finding one that bears her name, she throws it to the ground and stamps on it. One that has Proteus's name inscribed on it is tucked into the bodice of her dress. And when she finds a third that has both their names, she folds it so that "Proteus" and "Julia" are pressed against each other.

Her naivete is reflected in her idealization of Proteus. As she prepares to follow Proteus to Milan, Julia insists that Lucetta is wrong to question his faithfulness: "His words are bonds, his oaths are oracles, / His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate" (II.vii.75-76). She has a rude awakening, however, when she reaches the city and observes the serenade to Silvia. With only an anonymous innkeeper to support her, she suffers heartbreak and disillusion. She stands helplessly by while she hears Proteus woo Silvia and claim that the girl he loved in Verona has died.

Yet Julia is resilient. Shortly after receiving this devastating blow, she conceives a plan that will allow her to stay in Milan until, she hopes, Proteus comes to his senses.

However, as Proteus's page, she is given an assignment that increases her suffer ing: to woo Silvia on Proteus's behalf. "How many women would do such a message?" (IV.iv.90), she asks herself. She pities Proteus, she says, because she loves him. And because she loves him, she's willing to suffer and be humiliated. Her interview with Silvia is poignant. When Silvia / asks her to describe the woman in Verona whom Proteus has betrayed, Julia responds with a veiled description of herself and of a festival in which she played Ariadne, a legendary figure who was deserted by her lover. Julia weeps, and Silvia is moved to tears as well. Yet when Silvia leaves, Julia recovers some degree of self-assurance□and displays a streak of envy as well. Looking at the portrait of Silvia that she is supposed to carry back to Proteus, Julia remarks uncharitably that "the painter flatter'd her a little" (IV.iv.187). She declares that if she were dressed as well as the woman in the picture, she would look just as beautiful as she does. Neither of them has a perfect forehead, Julia notes, and their eyes are the same color. The only difference she can find is that Silvia's hair is auburn, while hers is blond□and a wig would easily mask that difference. With renewed self-confidence, Julia returns to Proteus.

But she faces further shame and humiliation. Julia is with Proteus when he rescues Silvia. She remains silent while Proteus speaks once again of his love for Silvia, and she says nothing when he attacks her. Julia's swoon when she hears Valentine offer Silvia to Proteus has been variously interpreted. Some commentators think that she only pretends to faint. Most think her swoon is genuine□ a natural response to the shock she has received. She has just heard Proteus apologize for his behavior toward his friend, and perhaps this gives her renewed hope. If so, Valentine's offer now dashes that hope. Yet when she is revived, Julia recovers her poise. She calls attention to the ring Proteus gave her before he left Verona, and, when he recognizes it, she reveals her true identity. She chides him for his unfaithfulness and for the shame he has brought upon her. Her anger fades, however, when Proteus apologizes and Valentine joins their hands together. Julia's conception of love is generous. It includes forgiveness, as well as pity and constancy. As many commentators have pointed out, Julia's view of love is the most noble one in the play.

Launce:

He is Proteus's servant. Launce's natural wit and native intelligence are concealed beneath the facade of a rustic buffoon. Launce's realistic appraisals of love and friendship provide insights into the principal themes and characters in the play. Sometimes his commentary is direct. For example, when he observes Proteus hypocritically offering to help Valentine□after he has repeatedly betrayed him□Launce remarks, "my master is a kind of knave" (III.i.264). More often his commentary is indirect or implicit. Through descriptions of events that apparently focus on himself and through exchanges with Valentine's servant Speed, Launce provides a parody of romantic love, idealized concepts of friendship, and Proteus's faithlessness to Julia.

Launce's description of how he and his family part follows directly after the scene in which Julia and Proteus bid farewell to each other. The copious weeping of Launce and

his family may be compared to the "tide of tears" that overwhelms Julia and prevents her from speaking (II.ii.14). Proteus believes that some lovers become literally speechless when they must say goodbye. Launce, on the other hand, complains in II.iii that his dog Crab was mute as well as dry-eyed at the prospect of leaving his family. In that same scene, Launce has great difficulty in sorting out the props he uses□shoes, hat, walking stick□to tell his sad story. His predica ment sheds a different light on issues that recur throughout the play: the confusion of identities and the difficulty of recognizing another person's true nature.

Launce in love is an implicit mockery of Proteus and Valentine in love. His hard-headed, practical approach parodies their fantasies and romantic raptures. In III.i, Launce indicates that he has given some thought to marrying a milkmaid□a woman with "more qualities than a water-spaniel" (IU.i.272- 73)□and that he has received a written report about her. He charitably regards the vices listed there as virtues, recognizing that a person's strengths and weaknesses are often reverse sides of the same coin. When he hears that she has "more faults than hairs" on her head (III.i.364), he's momentarily downcast. But he cheers up when he learns that she has "more wealth than faults" (III.i.367). In his concern with the mercenary aspects of marriage, Launce is not unlike the duke of Milan, who is happy to see his daughter marry a fool, so long as he is a rich fool. Incidentally, the written report on the milkmaid's qualities is also a burlesque of the flurry of love letters the principal characters are constantly writing to each other.

Launce's relationship with Speed represents an ironic treatment of the theme of friendship in the play. Since Proteus and Valentine are such close friends, it might be expected their servants would be, too. But Speed's airs and affectations offend Launce. Further, he doesn't trust Speed with secrets. Whereas Valentine foolishly tells Proteus all the details of his planned elopement with Silvia, Launce remains tight-lipped when Speed tries to interrogate him about how matters stand between Proteus and Julia. Speed thinks that Launce is too thick-headed to understand the meaning of clever words and phrases, but he's mistaken. Launce's ability to manipulate words is as deft as Speed's, but in a different vein. He exploits Speed's arrogance in III.i, when he pretends he's illiterate and gets Speed to read out the items on the report about the milkmaid. Launce keeps him at this task long enough to insure that the page will receive a whipping from his master for keeping him waiting.

In addition to serving as a kind of ironic chorus to the main action, Launce is truly comic himself. For example, the business with the shoes in II.ii□"This shoe is my father. No, this left shoe is my father; no, no, this left shoe is my mother" (II.ii.14- 16)□invariably evokes gales of laughter from theater audiences. Launce's affection for Crab is both funny and touching. In IV.iv, Launce scolds Crab for having forgotten all that he's taught him about how to act properly. In the duke's dining room, Launce points out, in the company of the ruling family and their courtiers, Crab has behaved like a common cur. His misconduct would have earned him a whipping, except that Launce stepped forward and took the blame□and the whipping□for him.

Commentators have frequently noted that Launce's willingness to suffer for love is comparable to Julia's. When Julia is sent to Silvia to plead for Proteus, she muses to

herself, "How many women would do such a message?" (IV.iv.90). Only moments before, while reminding Crab that he's covered up for him on many occasions, Launce remarks to his dog, "How many masters would do this for his servant?" (IV.v.29-30). After Proteus sends Launce away and tells him not to return again unless he can find the small dog that was stolen from him, the rustic clown never reappears. His place as Proteus's servant is taken by Julia, the woman with whom he shares a similar notion of the kind of devotion that love requires.

Lucetta:

She is Julia's confidante as well as her maid. Lucetta's lively wit and facility with words, as well as her affection for Julia, are evident in the two scenes in which she appears. In I.ii, she gives Julia a letter from Proteus that she has accepted on her behalf. Julia acts offended and says that Lucetta had no right to do this. Though Julia sends Lucetta away□with instructions to return the letter to its sender□she's not really angry with her. When Julia calls her back, Lucetta makes a show of dropping the letter, then picking it up again. Recognizing Julia is eager to read it, Lucetta teases her and holds it back for awhile. When she finally gives it to her mistress, Julia tears it up and orders Lucetta to leave the pieces lying on the ground. Lucetta departs, understanding Julia's true feelings about the letter and Proteus. In II.vii, Julia turns to Lucetta for advice about how she "may undertake / A journey to [her] loving Proteus" (II.vii.6-7). Lucetta's response is eminently practical; she recommends that Julia cool her ardor until Proteus returns to Verona. When Julia insists she will go to Milan, disguised as a boy, Lucetta offers sound advice mixed with a bawdy joke. She will make Julia a pair of men's breeches, says Lucetta, but they must have a codpiece (used to conceal an opening in the front of men's breeches): though Julia doesn't really need one, it will serve as a handy pincushion. Lucetta also tries to warn Julia about what she may discover when she gets to Milan. Men can be deceitful, she points out, and Julia should be prepared to find her lover unfaithful. Julia denies that Proteus is like other men, and she sets off on her journey, heedless of her maid's sound advice.

Milan:

The ruler of Milan, he is also Silvia's father. The duke makes no secret of the fact that he wants his daughter to marry Sir Thurio, a man of great wealth but with little else to recommend him. Silvia's own feelings on the question of marriage are of no importance to the duke. He locks her in her room when she refuses to transfer her affection from Valentine to Thurio. The duke's principal objection to Valentine as a potential son-in-law seems to be the young man's inferior status. Though Valentine is a gentleman, he has neither wealth nor a noble title. The duke regards Valentine as an upstart who is trying to marry above his station in life. The duke is sometimes cunning or sly. In order to trick Valentine into talking about his plans to elope with Silvia, the duke invents a tale about a woman he's in love with and solicits Valentine's advice in conducting the affair. But since the duke conceives this plan after he has learned all the details of the elopement from Proteus, the only point of the duke's game seems to be to humiliate Valentine. The duke

is not so clever when it comes to Proteus. He trusts Proteus alone with Silvia because he believes in Proteus's reputation as a young man who is constant in love; the duke mistakenly thinks that faithfulness to Julia will keep Proteus from courting Silvia.

In V.iv, the duke rapidly changes his mind about Valentine. The young man's spirited assertion of his claim to Silvia at V.iv. 126-31 impresses the duke. Whereas earlier he described Valentine as a "base intruder, [an] overweening slave" (III.i.157), he now calls Thurio "degenerate and base" (V.iv. 136) and praises Valentine as "worthy of an empress" (V.iv. 141). The duke forgives Valentine's past offenses against authority and welcomes him as a son-in-law. At Valentine's urging, he pardons the outlaws as well, and orders that suitable employment be found for each of them.

Musicians:

They accompany the serenade to Silvia in IV.ii.

Outlaws:

They are a band of robbers who live in the forest between Milan and Mantua. Though they have a reputation as menacing figures, they seem more absurd than threatening. Some of them are gentlemen by birth□a fact of which they're very proud. Each of them has been banished from society for one crime or another, such as abducting a lady or stabbing a gentleman. But, the outlaws are careful to point out, these crimes were committed while they were under the influence of youthful, uncontrolla ble emotions. The outlaws are impressed by Valentine's beauty, his poise, and his professed ability to speak several languages. They offer to make him their leader, adding that if he doesn't accept the office they'll kill him. Valentine accepts, but only if they will promise to "do no outrages / On silly women or poor passengers" (IV.i.69-70). The outlaws have no difficulty going along with this; indeed, they assert that they "detest such vile practices" (IV.i.71). In V.iv, Valentine swears to the duke that the outlaws are endowed with many worthy qualities. The duke accepts Valentine's description of them as "full of good, / And fit for great employment" (V.iv. 156-57). He pardons them all and admits them back into society.

Panthino:

He is a servant to Antonio, Proteus's father. In I.iii, Panthino has little trouble persuading Antonio that Proteus ought to be seeking his fortune in other lands or devoting himself to studies at a university, rather than living idly at home in Verona. He reminds Antonio that Proteus's friend Valentine is in Milan and recommends that Proteus should be sent there. He points out that a group of gentlemen are leaving for Milan the next day, and that Proteus could travel in their company. By the time he's finished, he has led his master to adopt his own point of view of what should be done, how it should be done, and when it should be done. Panthino also has an exchange with Launce in II.iii. In this

scene, Panthino has no patience with Launce's grief over leaving Verona; he brusquely hurries him along to the ship where Proteus and the others are waiting.

Proteus:

A young gentlemen of Verona, his father sends him to Milan to gain worldly experience and knowledge of life at court. Proteus has the same name as a sea god in Greek and Roman mythology who could alter his shape and assume various forms whenever he wanted. The adjective "protean" is derived from the name of this sea god; it means a changing, variable, or inconstant person. In the play, Proteus is as changeable and unfaithful as his name suggests. He abruptly switches his affections from Julia to Silvia soon after arriving in Milan. In V.iv, only moments after he was about to rape Silvia, he declares that he is overwhelmed by "shame and guilt" (V.iv.73) and begs Valentine to forgive him. He quickly sets aside his ardent devotion to Silvia after his page Sebastian is revealed as Julia and Valentine urges that they be reconciled. At the prospect of marriage to Julia, Proteus swears that now he has his "wish forever" (V.iv. 119).

Commentators disagree sharply about the character of Proteus. Many describe him as treacherous, egotistical, predatory, or contemptible. Others view him sympathetically, defending him as an immature, confused young man; in their judgment, he doesn't really mean to hurt anyone. They see him as motivated not by malice, but by the irresistible power of romantic love. Readers who share this point of view contend that from the moment he first considers abandoning his love for Julia and pursuing Silvia instead, Proteus agonizes over his betrayal of Valentine's friendship. Both those who defend Proteus and those who condemn him cite his soliloquies at II.iv. 192-214 and II.vi. 1-43 to reinforce their respective claims. These passages have been variously read as evidence that he's torn apart by guilt, that he's giving thoughtful consideration to what he's about to do, that he's chiefly motivated by self-gratification but pretending not to be, and that he's simply a scoundrel. Commentators with widely varying opinions of Proteus frequently agree on one thing: Proteus seems to take his deception of Valentine more seriously than his betrayal of Julia.

Proteus's concept of love appears to be more heavily influenced by romantic conventions than by genuine emotion. Like Valentine, he tries to pattern his behavior on the model of courtly love. Through out the play he shows greater familiarity with the outward signs of being in love□exchanging letters and rings, serenading his mistress, and so on□than a true understanding of the nature of love itself. Proteus has only a superficial appreciation of what love requires. This shallow perspective is reflected in Valentine's description of him as a man who is "a votary of fond desire" (I.i.52); Proteus is more devoted to erotic love than to Julia. In the play' s first scene, when Proteus is alone, he complains that loving Julia has changed his very shape and form, causing him to desert his friends and lose his identity. Whether he's truly lost his sense of self at this stage of the dramatic action is debatable. But when desire for Silvia leads him to be unfaithful to Julia and betray Valentine, he does become untrue to himself. In II.vi, he admits that the course he has chosen will inevitably lead to a terrible compromise of the image he previously held of himself. However, he's uncertain now about his essential

integrity and how to be faithful to it: "I cannot now prove constant to myself / Without some treachery us'd to Valentine" (II.vi.31-32). That Proteus is more focused on the superficial aspects of love than on its substance may be seen in the episode where he begs Silvia to give him a portrait of herself. If he cannot have the real woman to love, he says, he will speak and "sigh and weep" (IV.ii.122) to an image of her.

Indeed, he says, this would be appropriate, for as long as she remains devoted to another man, he is "but a shadow," so to her shadow he will "make true love" (IV.ii. 124, 125).

The onset of Proteus's obsession with Silvia provides important clues to an understanding of his character. In the opinion of many modern commentators, Proteus is not entirely to blame for his obsession. In II.iv, shortly after Proteus arrives in Milan, Valentine praises Silvia extravagantly and urges Proteus to join him in regarding her as the most beautiful, desirable woman on earth. When Proteus asks if he may not prefer his own love, Valentine says no□though' he does grant that Julia is worthy enough to hold up the hem of Silvia's gown so that it doesn't touch "the base earth" (II.iv. 159). When Valentine leaves□after telling him about the plans for eloping with Silvia□Proteus appears amazed that his affections have shifted from Julia to Silvia so quickly. He says he doesn't know whether it was the evidence of his own eyes or Valentine's praise of her that caused this. Recognizing that if he loves Silvia he'll be false to both Valentine and Julia, Proteus says he will try to do the ethical thing; but if he can't stop himself from falling in love with Silvia, he adds, he'll use all his skills to obtain her. His skills apparently include telling Silvia's father about the elopement, falsely reporting to Silvia that Julia is dead, hoodwinking the duke and Sir Thurio, and continuing to play the role of true friend to Valentine. He even tries to rape Silvia when, as he thinks, they are alone in the forest.

Proteus is, of course, startled when Valentine suddenly appears and prevents the attack. The depth of his repentance is not so clear. His apology comes quickly, and is just as quickly accepted. Whether Proteus is genuinely repentant is not a question that usually arises in discussions of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona.* As commentators have noted, Proteus's redemption is required to assure that the comedy has a happy ending.

Silvia

The duke's daughter, she has spent her life at court and is thus familiar with the rules and conven tions that govern daily life there. She acts as a referee in the "fine volley of words" (II.iv.33) between Valentine and Thurio, and coyly reveals her feelings to Valentine by having him write a love letter on her behalf. But Silvia is more than a young woman with courtly accomplishments and fine manners. She defies her father and leaves the security of Milan to seek out her beloved Valentine when he is banished. And she demonstrates poise and self-control at critical moments□for example, when she's captured by the outlaws in V.iii.

Silvia's loyalty to Valentine cannot be shaken. She is a model of constancy and seems never to doubt his love for her. Her innate sensitivity is evident in her many compassionate expressions of sympathy for Julia, particularly in IV.iv, when Julian/Sebastian attempts to woo Silvia on Proteus's behalf. Silvia's sensitivity is also evident in her reaction to Proteus's courtship: she is repulsed by him and almost feels ashamed that he is attracted to her. Normally even-tempered and moderate in her choice of words, Silvia repeatedly and bluntly rebukes Proteus. Silvia calls Proteus treacherous and cunning, a "perjured, false, disloyal man" (IV.ii.95). She tells him she despises him, and, when he rescues her from the outlaws, she says she would rather have been "seized by a hungry lion" (V.iv.33) than saved by Proteus.

From one perspective, Silvia seems enviable. She has physical beauty, inner strengths and virtues, an eminent position in society, and□according to the song□all the young men adore her. Yet in the world of the play she is often treated as a commodity. Her father has the right to pick and choose who she will marry. Thurio regards her as a prize he's entitled to because of his wealth. Proteus swears that he worships her□but he threatens to rape her when she continues to resist him. Even Valentine, who appears to love Silvia deeply and sincerely, seems to think he has the right to offer her as a token of his friendship for Proteus.

Silvia's silence during this last episode has troubled many readers and commentators. Some have suggested that her complete faith in Valentine gives her confidence that he wouldn't really hand her over to the man who, only moments before, was on the verge of attacking her. Others have suggested that she accepts the notion that masculine friendship is a higher ideal than romantic love, and therefore she modestly raises no objections to Valentine's offer. It's also possible that as a woman, Silvia has no role to play in working out the happy ending of the comedy.

Speed:

Employed as a page to Valentine, he is fre quently referred to as "boy," which emphasizes his youthfulness. Speed has a quick wit, and he is more clever at manipulating words than his master. Like Launce and Lucetta, he provides an ironic commentary on romantic love. In II.i, he pokes fun at what he sees as Valentine's love-sickness. Speed believes that beauty has no objective reality. He tells Valentine that his perception of Silvia's beauty is biased by his love for her. But this is understandable, Speed adds, for "Love is blind" (II.i.70). The page's superior insight is evident in II.i, when Valentine presents Silvia with the love letter she has asked him to write. Speed immediately perceives what Silvia intended to accomplish with this ploy. Valentine doesn't understand until, after she has left, Speed explains it to him.

Speed seems to revel in his facility with words, and he delights in argumentation. At I.i.72-150, while Proteus waits to hear a report on Julia's reaction to the letter he entrusted Speed to deliver to her, the page indulges in an extended development of strained metaphors and puns on the words ship, sheep, and shepherd. But Speed meets his match in the seemingly slow-witted Launce. Launce regards Speed as "an

unmannerly slave, that will thrust himself into secrets" (III.i.383-84). In II.v, when Speed tries to find out from Launce how the affair between Julia and Proteus is progressing, Launce responds deviously. The frustrated Speed is forced to admit that he cannot understand. In Ill.i, Launce pretends that he is unable to read, and he asks Speed to help him with a written report about the woman Launce contemplates marrying. Speed's function in this episode is limited to a mechanical recital of the list of items describing the woman's virtues and vices, while Launce gets to make all the jokes. Only when the entire list has been reviewed does Launce tell Speed that Valentine is waiting for him at the north gate of the city. So much time has elapsed that Speed faces a beating for being late, and he hurries off. Speed's final appearance is in IV.i, when he and Valentine are captured by the outlaws. He speaks only briefly there, and then he disappears from the play.

Thurio:

A nobleman at the duke's court in Milan, he wants to marry Silvia. Silvia's father favors Sir Thurio above all her other suitors. According to Valentine, this is because Thurio is wealthy. Silvia is generally polite to Thurio, but she refuses to marry him. Thurio tries to adhere to the rules of courtly love, yet his attachment to Silvia seems conventional rather than sincere. As Valentine points out, Sir Thurio knows all the right words and phrases, but he uses them mechanically or unimaginatively; Valentine easily defeats him in a competition of wit and word-play at II.iv.9-46. Thurio is easily fooled by Proteus, who promises to help him woo Silvia. He stands by helplessly while Proteus assumes the featured role in the serenade. Admittedly, Thurio is not a devoted lover. He agrees to help the duke pursue Silvia and Eglamour into the forest, but he does so, as he says, "to be revenged on Eglamour" (V.ii.51-52), not for love of Silvia. He gives up his claim to her in V.iv with more sense than sensibility, declaring that a man is a fool to endanger his life for a girl who doesn't love him.

Valentine:

A young gentleman of Verona, he goes to Milan to broaden his education and become familiar with courtly customs. Valentine is the name of two Italian saints, one of whom is the patron saint of lovers. In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona,* Valentine tries to follow the rules traditionally set forth for young men who are head over heels in love. In several scenes, he demonstrates his familiarity with the language of love, though it's questionable how much he understands about love itself. Valentine has drawn a variety of responses from readers of the play. Some commentators emphasize his immaturity and misplaced idealism, while others see him as a selfish egotist. A considerable number of readers have called him a fool or a simpleton. Most agree, however, that he generally means well and that he's a faithful friend to Proteus.

Valentine may not be a fool, but he is easily manipulated by others, and his ability to compre hend what's happening around him sometimes seems severely limited. In II.i, he fails to grasp what Silvia is trying to say to him when she returns the letter he's

written for her to an unknown lover. Speed remarks that her intentions are as clear "as a nose on a man's face, or a weathercock on a steeple!" (II.i. 136). But not to Valentine, who requires a lengthy explanation of the jest from Speed. When the duke invents a story about a woman he loves who is promised to another man and whose bed chamber is "aloft, far from the ground" (III.i.l 14), Valentine fails to see that the duke's description matches Silvia's situation exactly. He stands help lessly while his cloak is removed to reveal a cord ladder and a letter from Silvia. Even then, Valentine doesn't understand that he's been deliberately placed in a compromising situation, that the duke knew about the elopement, and that the only one who could have told him was Proteus. In terms of its consequences, Valentine's most serious misjudg ment occurs in II.iv, when he over-praises Silvia and refers to Julia disdainfully. His bragging words about his own love and his contemptuous attitude toward Julia are more than rude or arrogant. They help persuade Proteus that there is only one woman in the world worth loving, and her name is Silvia.

Generations of readers have sought an explanation for Valentine's sudden forgiveness of Proteus in the final scene and his startling offer: "All that was mine in Silvia I give thee" (V.iv.83). Some see this behavior as irrational or foolish. Several commentators regard it as Valentine's acknowledgment that he is partly to blame for Proteus's treachery. Either consciously or unconsciously, they argue, Valentine is admitting that his excessive praise of Silvia was arrogant and that it inspired envy in Proteus. Several other commentators assert that Valentine's behavior here reflects the play's emphasis on friendship as a higher ideal than romantic love. Seen from this perspective, Valentine's actions represent an endorsement of the superior claim of friendship. According to some scholars, an Eliza bethan audience would share this point of view and thus would have seen Valentine's behavior as a suitable climax to the dramatic action.

Other commentators have argued that such forgiveness reflects the true spirit of generosity embodied in Julia, Silvia, and Launce. To be able to ignore or forgive the offenses of others represents the highest standards of ethical conduct. Another way of looking at Valentine's behavior here is to see it as his recognition that reconciliation necessarily involves compromise. If a peaceful resolution of the conflict is to be achieved, giving up Silvia may be the only way to attain this. Some readers find Valentine charitable and generous by nature, a young man so full of warmth and kindness that he will sacrifice Silvia so that Proteus may have her. A few have suggested that Valentine is testing Proteus's repentance and renewed vows of friendship: he hopes that Proteus will refuse the offer, but he's willing to risk losing Silvia in order to find out whether his friend is truly penitent. Finally, some commentators, noting that *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* is among Shakespeare's earliest plays, view Valentine's abrupt forgiveness of Proteus and his offer of Silvia as evidence of a dramatist who has not yet mastered his craft and who could find no other, more rational, means of reconciling the characters and achieving a happy ending for the comedy.

Further Study

Arthos, John. *"The Two Gentlemen of Verona."* In *Shakespeare: The Early Writings,* 104-73. Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1972.

Arthos sees significant philosophical issues woven into the romantic comedy of this play, including questions about the nature of faithfulness, what suffering can teach us about friendship and love, and what constitutes perfection. He views Silvia as an illustration of what perfection may be: holy, wise, and fair. Proteus, by contrast, shows us that love without reason leads to loss of integrity and the betrayal of truth.

Berry, Ralph. "Love and Friendship." In *Shakespeare's Comedies: Explorations in Form,* 40-53. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972.

Berry regards Valentine as a self-absorbed young man who affects the pose of a conventional romantic lover and adapts his behavior in keeping with what he sees as the rules of that convention. Berry perceives Proteus as a self-conscious role-player, too, and he compares the play's final scene to a major theatrical production staged□for their own benefit□by "the two egotists of Verona."

Carroll, William C. "'Forget to Be a Woman.'" In *The Metamorphoses of Shakespearean Comedy,* 103-37. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985.

In a section (pp. 107-17) of this chapter, Carroll discusses the implications of Julia's adoption of the role of Sebastian. Ironically, he points out, her willingness to change, to be flexible, demonstrates her constancy in love. Carroll argues that Julia and Silvia are portrayed as steadfast□though not rigid□in a world where men swear vows and quickly betray them.

Charney, Maurice. *"The Two Gentlemen of Verona." In All of Shakespeare,* 11-17. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993.

Charney asserts that the play's characters are not fully developed figures; their actions are not explainable in terms of ordinary human motives, he contends, because all of them□but most particularly Proteus□are driven by the whims of love. Charney further maintains that the play establishes friendship as a higher ideal than romantic love and that Valentine's offer to give up Silvia ought to be viewed in this light.

Ewbank, Inga-Stina. " 'Were man but constant, he were perfect': Constancy and Consistency in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona."* In *Shakespearian Comedy,* Stratford-upon-Avon Studies 14, 31-57. London: Edward Arnold, 1972.

Ewbank shows how, on the one hand, the play uses the conventional language of courtly love to express real feelings and, on the other hand, exposes that language as lifeless. She believes that a central problem with the play is its emphasis on "what characters say"□that is, their attitudes□rather than on who they are as individuals.

Girard, Rene "Love Delights in Praises: A Reading of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona." Philosophy and Literature* 13, no. 2 (October 1989): 231-47.

Girard contends that Proteus desires Silvia not because she is more beautiful than Julia, but because his long friendship with Valentine has conditioned him to want whatever Valentine wants. In addition, Girard declares that Valentine unconsciously makes Julia seem pathetic when he over-praises-Silvia in II.iv; in order to justify his own choice, Valentine must insinuate that Proteus's preference for Julia is irrational. In Girard's view, Valentine eventually realizes he's partly to blame for what happened, and his offer of Silvia to Proteus is an effort to atone for his error.

MacCary, W. Thomas. *"The Two Gentlemen of Verona."* In *Friends and Lovers,* 91-109. New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.

MacCary focuses on how Proteus and Valentine learn to let go of their idealized notion of love□a fantasy that prevents them from distinguishing between illusion and reality. In MacCary's judgment, the play dramatizes a universal truth: all lovers unconsciously use their objects of desire to provide a frame of reference for their own self-images; thus Valentine and Proteus must learn to love actual women, not an ideal of one, before they can determine their true selves.

Ornstein, Robert. *"Two Gentlemen of Verona."* In *Shakespeare's Comedies,* 48-62. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1986.

Ornstein traces the development, scene by scene, of Shakespeare's portrait of "male rivalry and romantic egotism" in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona.* In extended analyses of the central characters, Ornstein declares that Valentine's arrogant and egotistical boast ing about Silvia (II.iv) implicates him in Proteus's unfaithfulness to Julia; that Proteus's infidelity is motivated not by passion for Silvia but by the thrill of competition with his friend; and that Julia's courage and self-composure show her to be "stronger than the man who betrays her."

Schlueter, Kurt. Introduction to *The Two Gentlemen of Verona,* by William Shakespeare, 1-49. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Schlueter's introduction includes an extended overview of the play's stage history from 1762 to the present, as well as an analysis of its structure and literary sources. Schlueter argues that the dramatic action is linked to a "test-of-friendship" motif. He sees Valentine as well-intentioned but foolish, an essentially passive figure who "walks blindly into the trap Silvia's father has set for him" in III.i.

Slights, Camille Wells. "Common Courtesy in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona."* In *Shakespeare's Comic Commonwealths,* 57-73. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993.

Slights maintains that the play upholds the value of courtly manners and style, though it also demonstrates that this value can be perverted. In her view, the comedy shows Valentine and Proteus learning that the superficial elegance of a courtier□for example,

fine manners and verbal dexterity□is more easily attained than are the true qualities of what it means to be a gentleman: honesty, sensitivity, and social responsibility.

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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

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- 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.
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- 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.
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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.

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□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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