

ENGLISH HOMEWORK BOOKLET

YEAR 7 – Shakespeare’s comedies

Dear parents, carers and most importantly, students,

Evidence shows that the **impact** of homework, on average, is **five months' additional progress**. Evidence also suggests that homework that **relates to learning** during normal school time is **important**. Therefore this booklet is separated into different sections as each helps to **prepare** for content covered in lessons across the half term and also **reinforces** past learning; both help to move your child’s **knowledge** into their more secure **longer term memory**. For more information please visit the Education Endowment Foundation webpage.

- ✓ Each half term a new **booklet** will be published on Teams for you to access.
- ✓ Every week, on a **Monday**, the homework is set and due by the **Sunday** of the same week.
- ✓ There is a set of **mastery** and **challenge** tasks which are **compulsory** (you have to do them).
- ✓ There is also an **extension** task which is **optional** (you can choose to do them).
- ✓ There is also a set of **revision tasks** on page 1 which should be done **from time to time** throughout the half term.
- ✓ If you get stuck, email your **teacher** or see them during the week at school for help.
- ✓ We also have a **homework club** where staff are able to help you each week.
- ✓ Please post your completed homework on **Teams** in your class group.
- ✓ Remember to revise the literacy **vocabulary lists** each week as well. Get a parent or carer to test you.
- ✓ Please dip into the recommended **reading list** for Ks3: challenge yourself to read a new author!

Thank you for **your support** and **effort!**

Optional (but recommended) revision tasks

Practice every these regularly to get the knowledge into your long-term memory for exam success.







1. Revise key vocabulary weekly throughout spring term 2. Test yourself using homemade flashcards: we can provide card. Write the definition on one side and the word on the other. Separate into a pile you know and a pile you don't. Test. Repeat over time: days and weeks.

2. Read a book of your choice from start to finish: <https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/reading-lists-for-ks3-pupils/suggested-reading-list-for-year-7-pupils-ks2-age-11-12/>

Get a parent or carer to sign you have read it for positive points.

3. Any week you can 'switch' the homework task and write a review of a book you have read from the above link. Your teachers love hearing about the books you read!

*A hard copy of the texts these extracts were taken from, '*Shakespeare's World: Theatre and Entertainment*' by Kathy Elgin (ISBN: 9781842345184) can be found in our school's library.

	Word	Definition/In a Sentence
	alliteration	<i>Alliteration</i> is the repetition of the same initial (first) sound in a series of words.
	caesura	<i>Caesura</i> is a break or pause in the middle of a line.
	enjambment	<i>Enjambment</i> is when a sentence is continued over more than one line without pause or punctuation.
	form	<i>Form</i> means the type or style of text.
	metaphor	A <i>metaphor</i> is a statement or phrase that is not literally true, but which is used to create an image in your mind.
	meter	<i>Meter</i> is a rhythmic pattern created by stressed and unstressed syllables.
	personification	<i>Personification</i> is a type of figurative language, whereby human characteristics are given to non-human things.
	repetition	<i>Repetition</i> is deliberately using the same word, phrase or structure more than once in a text for effect.
	rhyme	<i>Rhyme</i> is when words have the same final sound.
	semantic	<i>Semantic</i> means to do with meaning, and when words have the same or similar meanings we group them together in a 'field'.
	sibilance	<i>Sibilance</i> is the deliberate repetition of 's' or 'sh' sounds in a series of words.
	simile	A <i>simile</i> is a comparison using 'like' or 'as' to create an image or impression in the reader's mind.
	sonnet	A <i>sonnet</i> is a form of poetry made up of fourteen lines. Traditionally, they follow a set rhyme scheme and are written in iambic pentameter.
	structure	<i>Structure</i> means the order of events in a narrative (story) or plot.
	tone	<i>Tone</i> means the mood or atmosphere conveyed by a writer.

Week 1: The theatres

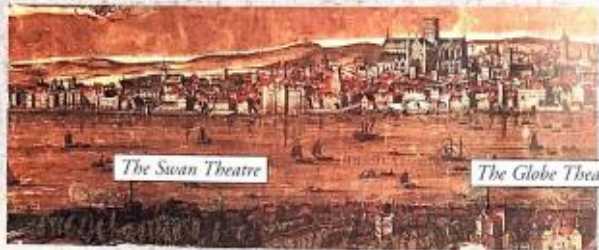
Mastery – read the text on the next page called ‘Theatres’ and answer the questions below in full sentences:

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- 1. When were permanent theatres established in London?*
 - 2. Where were they built?*
 - 3. How were they shaped and what were they made from?*
 - 4. Who were the groundlings?*
-

Extension – find out ten facts about your local theatre house. Write them in the space below.

The Theatres

Plays used to be performed by travelling groups of actors who set up temporary stages in towns and villages. By about 1570, however, permanent theatres were being built in London to meet the popular demand for drama. People flocked in their thousands to the Theatre, the Curtain, the Rose, the Swan and the Globe. All theatres had to be built outside the city boundary, and several were built on the south bank of the Thames, which made going to the theatre an exciting excursion.



The Swan Theatre

The Globe Theatre

A view of the Thames in 1616 shows the Globe and Swan theatres on the south bank, with St Paul's Cathedral opposite.

cockpit: the theatre, similar in shape to the pit where cock-fighting was held
vasty: vast
casques: helmets
affright: frighten

... Can this cockpit hold
The vasty fields of France? Or may we cram
Within this wooden O the very casques
That did affright the air at Agincourt?
HENRY V, ACT I, PROLOGUE

The "wooden O" is a good description of the public theatres. They were large, round timber buildings with an open space in the middle surrounded by galleries of seats. The stage projected into the central space, with a building behind it containing dressing rooms. The gallery roof was usually thatched, which made fire a constant hazard. The first Globe burned down after sparks from a stage cannon set light to the thatch.

...Can this cockpit hold The vasty fields of France?



Groundlings (people who stood in front of the stage) often ate and drank throughout performances.

A model of Shakespeare's Globe. The theatre was reconstructed close to the original site in the 1990s.

O, it offends me to the soul to hear a
robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a
passion to tatters ... to split the ears of the
groundlings, who for the most part are
capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-
shows and noise.

HAMLET, ACT 3, SCENE 2

robustious: boisterous, noisy
periwig-pated: wearing a wig
capable of: appreciative of

The better-off people sat in proper seats in the galleries, where they could show themselves off as well as watch the play. For a penny, poorer people could stand in the space in front of the stage. These were the "groundlings" Hamlet is making fun of: They were famous for their rowdy behaviour. Caught up in the excitement of the play, they often joined in, shouting out comments and sometimes climbing on the stage.

casques That did affright the air at Agincourt?

Or may we cram Within this wooden O the very

Week 2: Elizabethan plays

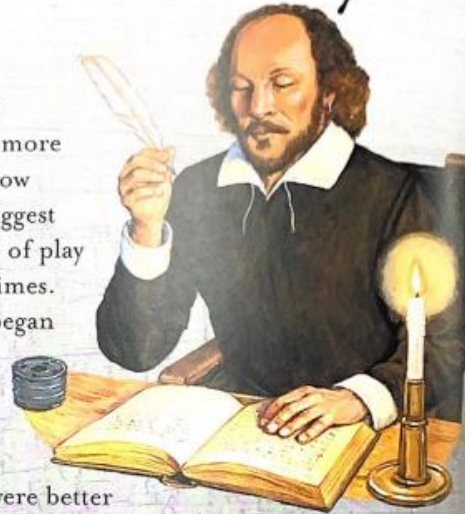
Mastery – read the text on the next page called ‘Elizabethan plays’ and answer the questions below in full sentences:

-
- 1. What was fashionable to write about in plays during Shakespeare’s time?*
 - 2. How did Shakespeare make his plays more interesting?*
 - 3. What were comedies about?*
 - 4. What made the audience feel patriotic?*
 - 5. What does pastoral and monologue mean (use a dictionary for these definitions)?*
-

Extension: Write a monologue reflecting on your day so far.

Elizabethan Plays

The new permanent theatres allowed writers to produce more sophisticated plays. They could now include spectacular effects and suggest different locations. Certain types of play became fashionable at different times. For example, when Shakespeare began to write, plays about revenge and supernatural events involving ghosts were all the rage. Shakespeare was clever enough to follow the fashion, but his plays were better than the others because he made his characters more interesting by showing what they were thinking.



Playwrights were not rich men. The writers of one play in 1599 were paid £8, while a single costume for the same play cost £10.

The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral ...

HAMLET, ACT 2, SCENE 2

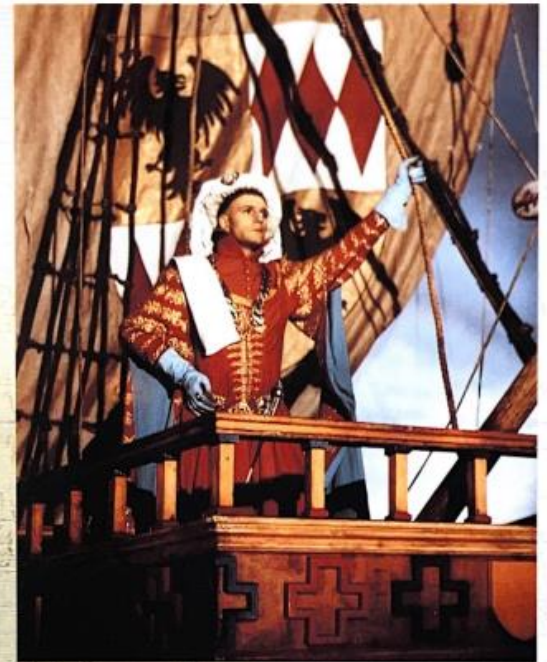
pastoral: set in the country

Theatre companies had to be able to perform a wide variety of plays. Tragedies were serious dramas about the downfall of heroes, usually including murder and revenge. Comedies weren't necessarily funny, but just light-hearted plays with happy endings. Pastoral plays showed the simple lives of shepherds and farmers. As more people left the countryside to live in towns, they became nostalgic for this old way of life. Especially popular in wartime were plays based on real historical events. Being reminded of the exploits of the great King Henry V, for example, made English people feel patriotic.

If this were played upon a stage now, I should condemn it as an improbable fiction.

TWELFTH NIGHT, ACT 3, SCENE 4

Elizabethan theatre was, above all, great entertainment. Even serious plays included songs and dances to break up the action and please the groundlings. Audiences loved to be scared by supernatural elements like ghosts, witches and magicians, and grisly murders were a frequent feature. It was also quite usual for playwrights to recycle plots from earlier plays or from published stories. Shakespeare borrowed material from all kinds of sources, especially translations of foreign tales.



The Spanish Tragedy:

Or, HERONIMO is mad againe.

Containing the lamentable end of Don Horatio, and Selowena; With the pitifull Death of HERONIMO.

Nimely Corrected, Amended, and Enlarged with new Additions, as it hath of late bene divers times Acted.



LONDON Printed by Iacobus Mathews, for Francis Gosse and are to be sold at his Shoppe in the Strand, upon Seers-bill. 1633.

This film of Henry V, about the English victory over the French at Agincourt (1415), was made during the Second World War. It was shown to British soldiers to raise morale.

As its title page shows, Thomas Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy was full of the sensational events audiences loved, including madness and several murders.

The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral ...

historical-pastoral...

Week 3: Stage, sets and costumes

Mastery – read the text on the next page called ‘Stage, sets and costumes’ and answer the questions below in full sentences:

-
- 1. What did the audience have to conjure up in their imagination?*
 - 2. Why did Shakespeare have to include lots of description in his dialogue?*
 - 3. What items could be used on stage?*
 - 4. What were very expensive?*
 - 5. What props might a king wear to discern himself on stage?*
-

Extension: Design a costume for a character. Label your creative decisions which should focus on making the character easily recognisable to an audience (their status, gender, employment etc).

Stage, Sets and Costumes

Theatre in Shakespeare's time did not have sets or scenery. There was just an open stage, with pillars to support a platform above, called "heaven". The audience conjured up the location and the scenery in their own imagination, helped by the power of Shakespeare's descriptive language and the actors' skill. Even uneducated people were accustomed to using their imagination in this way.

*Is it not monstrous that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit
That from her working all his visage
wann'd.*

HAMLET, ACT 2, SCENE 2

but: only
conceit: thing
he was
imagining
visage: face
wann'd: went
pale

Because there was so little scenery on stage, the actors had to hold the audience's attention by the force of their acting. Hamlet is talking here about an actor who is moved by the power of his own performance. The big, open stage was bare apart from small items like chairs or tables which could be carried on. There was usually a curtain behind which characters could hide or listen unseen to other characters' conversation, when the plot demanded it.

In the floor of the stage was a trap-door, through which devils or ghosts could appear.

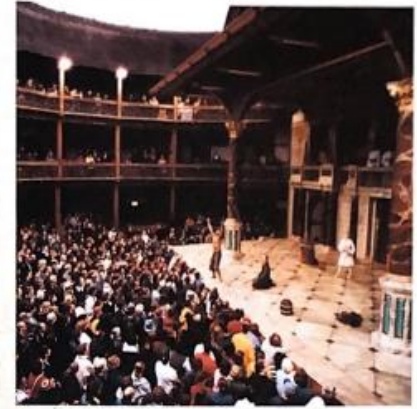


passion, could force his soul so to his own conceit that from her working all his visage wann'd.

Is it not monstrous that this player here, but in a fiction, in a dream of

I will discharge it in either your straw-colour beard,

At the reconstructed Globe, original performances are recreated as closely as possible.



*I will discharge it in either your
straw-colour beard, your orange-
tawny beard, your purple-in-grain
beard, or your French-crown-
colour beard, your perfect yellow.*

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM,
ACT 1, SCENE 2

discharge: perform
orange-tawny: tan-coloured
purple-in-grain: scarlet or crimson
French-crown: a gold coin

Costumes were very expensive. The main actors had special outfits, but the rest usually had to make do with what was in stock. Some actors wore or carried props to suggest their character – kings wore crowns, huntsmen carried bows, and so on. Characters could also be identified by the style of wig or beard they wore, which is why Bottom here is worrying about his beard.

Apart from plays like Julius Caesar, which needed historical costume, most were probably performed in elaborate versions of Elizabethan dress.



your orange-tawny beard, your purple-in-grain beard, or your

French-crown-colour beard, your perfect yellow.

Week 4: The Actors

Mastery – read the text on the next page called ‘The Actors’ and answer the questions below in full sentences:

- 1. Where did actors learn how to act?*
 - 2. Who were the greatest tragic actors?*
 - 3. What was William Kemp famous for doing?*
 - 4. Who did Shakespeare favour for his comedy routines?*
 - 5. Why did Queen Elizabeth get upset with Tarleton?*
-

Extension: Who are your favourite actors? Write ten facts about their career below:

The Actors

Although they were regarded with suspicion by the authorities, actors were, on the whole, respectable and reasonably educated people. As there were no drama schools, they learned their craft on stage. Shakespeare joined the theatre as an actor and probably went on performing on and off while he was writing. One of his roles was Old Adam, the family servant in *As You Like It*. Ben Jonson also began his career as an actor, although apparently a very bad one.

*Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more.*

MACBETH, ACT 5, SCENE 6

Macbeth here reminds us that an actor's performance is soon over and forgotten. Nevertheless, some Elizabethan actors became great celebrities. Audiences saw actors regularly in a variety of roles and liked to pick out their favourites. The two greatest tragic actors were Edward Alleyn of the Admiral's Men and Richard Burbage of Shakespeare's company. Shakespeare almost certainly wrote the roles of Hamlet, Othello and King Lear for Burbage, and he was especially famous for his performance as Richard III.

*Edward Alleyn retired from
the stage early and became a
wealthy businessman.*



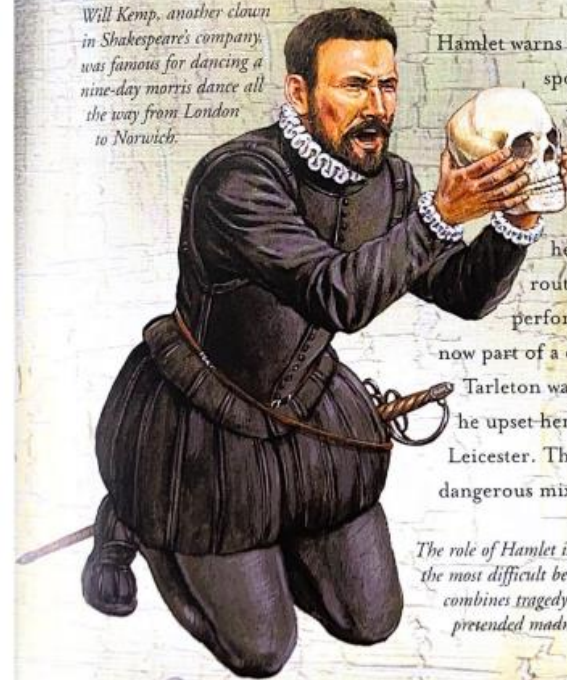
And let those that play your



*And let those that play your clowns
speak no more than is set down for
them – for there be of them that will
themselves laugh, to set on some quan-
tity of barren spectators to laugh too...*

HAMLET, ACT 3, SCENE 2

*Will Kemp, another clown
in Shakespeare's company,
was famous for dancing a
nine-day morris dance all
the way from London
to Norwich.*



Hamlet warns the company's comic actors not to spoil scenes, as they often did, by fooling about or adding extra jokes to get a laugh. Shakespeare probably had Richard Tarleton in mind, the famous clown for whom he had written many great comedy routines. Tarleton had been a solo performer and sometimes forgot he was now part of a company with a script to follow.

Tarleton was Queen Elizabeth's favourite, until he upset her by making jokes about the Earl of Leicester. Theatre and politics could be a dangerous mixture!

*The role of Hamlet is one of
the most difficult because it
combines tragedy and
pretended madness.*

there be of them that will themselves laugh, to

clowns speak no more than is set down for them – for

Week 5: Boy Actors

Mastery – read the text on the next page called ‘Boy Actors’ and answer the questions below in full sentences:

-
- 1. Why didn’t women act on stage?*
 - 2. Having boys play women on stage gave the playwrights the chance to write funny plots where what happens?*
 - 3. Which schools were invited to perform for the court?*
 - 4. In ‘Twelfth Night’ which character plays a girl disguised as a boy?*
 - 5. What did boy actors wear on stage?*

Extension: When were females allowed to perform on stage? How did this change occur? Research this and answer below in full sentences.

Boy Actors

Because women were not allowed to act on stage, all the female roles had to be performed by boys whose voices had not yet broken. Playing a young girl like Juliet may not have been too difficult, but Shakespeare's older heroines, such as Cleopatra, or Rosalind in *As You Like It*, must have taken a lot of skill. When they joined a company, boys learned their trade by being apprenticed to older actors.

10 The Roaring Girl:

OR
Moll Cut-Purse.

As it hath lately bene Acted on the Fortune-stage by the Prince his Players.

Written by T. Middleton and T. Dekker.



Printed at London for Thomas Archer, and are to be sold at his shop in Popes head-palace, neere the Royall Exchange, 1611.

The title page of a play written in 1611 by Thomas Dekker and Thomas Middleton. A boy of about fourteen would have played Moll Cutpurse, a real-life female pickpocket who dressed as a man.

Nay, faith, let not me play a woman: I have a beard coming.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM,
ACT 1, SCENE 2

Francis Flute here is dismayed at being cast as the heroine in the play. He tries to get out of it by saying he is old enough to shave. But boys didn't only play female characters. Shakespeare also wrote excellent children's roles, like William in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Having boys play women also gave playwrights the chance to write funny plots in which female characters have to disguise themselves as boys. The audience is then watching a boy playing a girl who is pretending to be a boy.

There is, sir, an eyrie of children,

little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for't. These are now the fashion, and so berattle the common stages...

HAMLET, ACT 3, SCENE 2

eyrie: nest
eyases: young hawks
on the top of question: with maximum force
tyrannically: forcefully
berattle: fill with noise
common stages: public playhouses



In Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, Viola disguises herself as a boy called "Cesario" to serve Duke Orsino.

Boy actors discovered that female clothes meant tight waists and stiff, uncomfortable bodices.

In this quote, Hamlet is hearing about a company of boy actors who have put the adult players out of a job. Amateur acting was part of a boy's education, and the scholars of Eton, St Paul's and Westminster were frequently invited to court to perform their plays privately for the queen. Around 1600 there developed a fashion for companies of professional child actors who performed adult plays. These companies became extremely popular, to the extent that they threatened the adult companies.



little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most

tyrannically clapped for't. These are now

stages...
18

the fashion, and so berattle the common

Week 6: On Tour

Mastery – read the text on the next page called ‘On Tour’ and answer the questions below in full sentences:

- 1. Why was the life of an actor hard work?*
 - 2. What is a Troupe of players?*
 - 3. Why were local authorities suspicious of actors?*
 - 4. Who was Shakespeare often summoned to perform in front of?*
 - 5. Which plays were performed at Oxford University?*
-

Extension: - Choose a play we have studied so far in this unit and design a theatre poster for it.

On Tour

The big permanent theatres only existed in London. Elsewhere in the country people still looked forward to the visits of small companies of actors who travelled around, setting up their temporary stages in inn-yards and public houses as they had for a hundred years. Touring was hard work. The actors had to carry all the costumes and props around with them on dangerous, poor-quality country roads, and lodgings were often uncomfortable.

Will you see the players well bestowed?... Let them be well used, for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time.

HAMLET, ACT 2, SCENE 2

bestowed: given lodgings
abstract: summary,
description

The troupe of players who have arrived at court here in *Hamlet* are professionals on tour from the city. Major London companies, like Shakespeare's own, also went on tour in the summer months. Often they were forced to do this when plague broke out in London and the theatres had to close. Hamlet's visitors are lucky that he admires them and wants them taken care of, but actors weren't always welcome. Local authorities were suspicious of them because performances attracted rough company like pickpockets and other thieves.



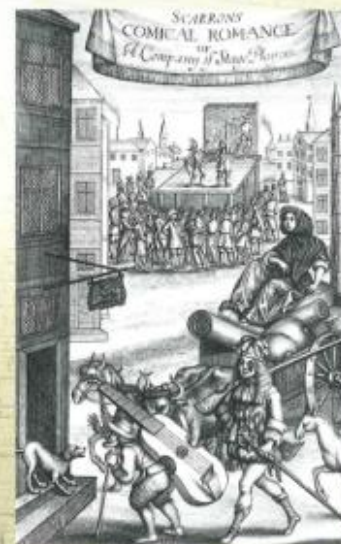
When Shakespeare's company went on tour, they did not perform in inn-yards but in the country houses of rich families like this one.

Here's a marvellous convenient place

Here's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal. This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn-brake our tiring-house.
A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM,
ACT 3, SCENE 1

brake: clump of trees
tiring-house: dressing room

The amateur players here are rehearsing outdoors, but their performance eventually takes place at court in front of the duke. Shakespeare knew all about this because his own company was often summoned to perform for Queen Elizabeth, either at court or in the houses of the various nobles she stayed with. They also played in university towns like Oxford, where *The Comedy of Errors* and *Hamlet* were performed in 1603. They were fortunate. The university authorities were choosy and some other visiting companies were paid to go away without performing!



It was a great event in a small town when a troupe of strolling players arrived to set up their stage.



Valuable costumes were always at risk on tour. Any actor tempted to wear his costume off-stage could incur a very expensive fine.

for our rehearsal. This green plot shall be our stage,

this hawthorn-brake our tiring-house

Week 7: Revise for your assessment

Revise the answers to the questions in the box.

Revise the meaning of the dialogue from 'Much Ado About Nothing' Act 5 scene 4

BEATRICE

Do not you love me?

BENEDICK

Troth, no; no more than reason.

BEATRICE

Why, then my cousin Margaret and Ursula
Are much deceived; for they did swear you did.

BENEDICK

They swore that you were almost sick for me.

BEATRICE

They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me.

BENEDICK

'Tis no such matter. Then you do not love me?

BEATRICE

No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

What are the features of a Shakespearian comedy?

What are the common characters found in Shakespeare's comedy?

How was Shakespeare influenced by society?

What is iambic pentameter?

What are the features of prosodics?

What is a pun?

What is a typical comedic ending?

What is satire?

What is repartee?

LEONATO

Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

CLAUDIO

And I'll be sworn upon't that he loves her;
For here's a paper written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,
Fashion'd to Beatrice.

HERO

And here's another
Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedick.

BENEDICK

A miracle! here's our own hands against our hearts.
Come, I will have thee; but, by this light, I take
thee for pity.

BEATRICE

I would not deny you; but, by this good day, I yield
upon great persuasion; and partly to save your life,
for I was told you were in a consumption.

BENEDICK

Peace! I will stop your mouth.

Kissing her