

### ABOUT THIS PACK

This pack supports the RSC's 2014 production of *Love's Labour's Won (also known as Much Ado about Nothing)*, directed by Christopher Luscombe, which opened on 3 October 2014 at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon.

The activities provided are specifically designed to support KS3-4 students studying the play or participating in the broadcast of *Love's Labour's Won* to UK schools on **Thursday 30 April 2015**, with some extension activities for older or more able students.

## ABOUT YOUNG SHAKESPEARE NATION



Over six years, the RSC will stage the 36 plays that make up the First Folio of Shakespeare's work. RSC Education invites you to join us on this inspirational journey in a new initiative called Young Shakespeare Nation.

Whether you want to teach a new play or teach in a new way, Young Shakespeare Nation can give you the tools and resources you need.

- Find inspiration online with images, videos and more teachers' packs at <a href="www.rsc.org.uk/education">www.rsc.org.uk/education</a> or start to explore our interactive Learning Resources at <a href="http://interactive-learning.rsc.org.uk">http://interactive-learning.rsc.org.uk</a>
- Participate in our Schools' Broadcasts, continuing with Love's Labour's Lost and Love's Labour's Won (Much Ado about Nothing) on 19 March and 30 April 2015.
- Explore a new text or a new way of teaching through our CPD programme
- Try one of our range of courses for teachers and students in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Find out more at <a href="https://www.rsc.org.uk/education">www.rsc.org.uk/education</a>

#### **USING THESE RESOURCES**

In order for students and young people to actively engage with Shakespeare's text we encourage you to introduce your students to this play in performance, either through our UK Schools' Broadcast series or on stage. This pack provides a number of activities you can use to prepare your students before seeing the play.

At the RSC we see direct parallels between teaching and learning in the classroom and the way our theatre company works, making discoveries through collaborative enquiry. Throughout this resource you will find notes which link the activities here to those conducted as part of the rehearsal process.

These symbols are used throughout the pack:



#### READ

Notes from the production, background info or extracts



#### ACTIVITY

A practical classroom or open space activity



#### WRITE

A classroom writing activity



#### LINKS

Useful web addresses and research activities



# EXPLORING THE STORY

In the 2014 production, Christopher Luscombe and designer Simon Higlett have set the play in the aftermath of World War One. The following activities will help students to explore what happens in the play as well as considering how different settings might affect the actions in the play.

Notes from the Rehearsal Room

As rehearsals on *Love's Labour's Won* begin, Christopher Luscombe and the company explore the facts surrounding the different characters, looking at each of their backstories and discussing details for the relationships that already exist between characters. This involved a lot of discussion around the context of World War One and the impact that the war would have had on the returning soldiers and the relationships they had with those still at home.



## **ACTIVITY 1: THE STORY IN 10 SCENES**

- Organise students into groups of three or four.
- Provide each group with one of the scene descriptions from the Resource Materials.
- Explain to each group that they will need to create a short performance of their scene, using the lines from the text they have been given.
- Encourage them to use the description as part of their performance. This might mean one student takes on the role of narrator, or that they share the description between them at different points.
- Allow the groups time to perfect their performances.
- Invite each group to perform their scene in sequence, creating an overview of the story.
- After watching, reflect with students on what the play reveals:
  - O Who are the principle characters and what happens to them?
  - O Reflect with students on the setting of the play. How might the play be different if the men have just come back from a small skirmish in comparison to having just come back from World War One? Look particularly at Benedick and Hero in light of this; what sort of relationships do we expect to see between soldiers who have been through war together?



Edward Bennett as Benedick and Michelle Terry as Beatrice in Christopher Luscombe's 2014 production of Love's Labour's Won. Photo by Manuel Harlan.

#### WAYS TO EXTEND THIS WORK

- Encourage students to think about the individual characters and find a single line of text from the play which demonstrates that character.
- Thinking about characters, invite students to debate which of the characters this play is about. Is the play about Hero and Claudio or Beatrice and Benedick, or one of the other characters? What reasons can they offer?





A full synopsis of the play is available while the play is on at: http://www.rsc.org.uk/whats-on/the-two-gentlemen-of-verona/synopsis.aspx

# ESTABLISHING THE WORLD

As students might have already discussed, the world that is created for the play can have a really powerful effect on how characters and their relationships are perceived. In the 2014 production, Leonato's house has been acting as a hospital during the war and is being used at the start of the play as a convalescent home for returning soldiers.

In the following activities, focusing on the opening scene, students will explore how setting can affect the choices within a scene.



# **ACTIVITY 2: SETTING THE SCENE**

Notes from the Rehearsal Room

Having explored backstories and looked at the action of the play, the acting company begin to work on individual scenes and how these can be played on the Royal Shakespeare Theatre's thrust stage. These discussions look at interaction and movement as well as the clues in the language which reveal how characters might be interacting.

Organise students into pairs and ask them to assign themselves the roles of Beatrice and Benedick.

Provide each pair with a copy of the Act 1 Scene 1 extract in the Resource Materials and ask them to read this

together in their pairs.

- Reflect with students on what kind of relationship they think exists between these two characters.
  - O Do they know each other? How can you tell?
  - O What kind of relationship do they have?
- Alert students to the fact that later in the play Benedick declares that





- every word Beatrice says 'stabs'. What does this tell us about how this conversation might be performed?
- Encourage each pair to look closely at their lines and to re-read them to each other, picking out one particular word which they think would be particularly hurtful or wounding to the other person. When they reach those words encourage them to take a step forward towards the other person and to use their voice to make sure that chosen word has real impact.
- Explain that a key part of rehearsals was about considering key words in this way and which words needed to be emphasised. Invite students to share some of the words they picked out and explain their reasons why.
- Share with students that staging and movement across the space also affects the way a moment like this is rehearsed.
- Ask students to stand diagonally opposite their pair and to re-read the scene making sure that they are always on a diagonal. They can move as close to each other or as far away as they want, but they must make sure they are always at the right angle if the other person moves.
- Reflect with students on how this simple rule changed their movement in the scene? Were they always close together or further apart? If the diagonal changed, which character changed it most or was it equal?
- Ask students to consider how the scene might be different if it was played:
  - In front of Beatrice's family
  - With Benedick's fellow soldiers
- Explain that this dialogue takes place in a very public place, in front of family and friends to both characters. Can they find any lines that make this quite clear?

# FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS

Notes from the Rehearsal Room

In discussing the impact of World War One on Leonato's household the company look closely at the role of Beatrice and Hero within the world of this production. They discuss the contrast between these two characters as well as their closeness and look at ways of conveying this on the stage.



# **ACTIVITY 3: BEATRICE AND HERO**

The following activity will allow students to explore the relationship between Beatrice and Hero as well as the contrast between these two female characters.

- Organise students into small groups of two or three and assign each group one character — either Beatrice or Hero.
- Ask each group to use the quotations and information on their information sheets, in the Resource Materials, to create a freeze frame of their



- character. Encourage them to think about how they might stand and what expression they might have.
- Challenge each pair to add movement to their freeze frame and to speak one line of the text they have been given.
- Allow students to share their animated images with the rest of the group.
- Reflect on the main differences that can be seen in the two female characters.
  - O Who seems to be the stronger of the two?
  - O What would their relationship be like?
  - Why do you think they are each the way they are? Are there influences you can see that would have made them the characters they have become?
- Allow students to then think about both characters' relationship with Leonato; provide each group with the text scraps describing the two women that come from their father figure, Leonato.
- Challenge groups to decide on which lines, delivered by Leonato, are aimed at each of the two women.
  - O What do each of the lines show about his relationship with that person? How do his feelings towards Beatrice differ from his feelings towards Hero? Why do you think that might be?

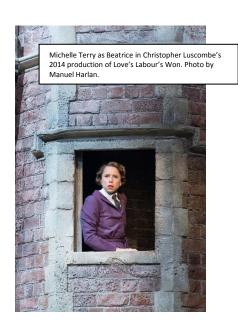
# BEATRICE AND BENEDICK



# **ACTIVITY 4: THE GULLING SCENES**

Explain to students that Shakespeare creates two very similar scenes in *Much Ado about Nothing* in which first Benedick and then Beatrice are tricked, or gulled, into thinking the other is in love with them. Comparing these two scenes seems natural as they are so similar but the tricking is done in very different ways. The following activity will help students to explore these differences.

- Organise students into groups of four or five and provide each group with a copy of the Gulling Scenes Resource from the Resource Materials.
- Invite one person from each group to stand in the middle of the rest while their group form a small circle around them.
- Ask the other members of the group to face away from the person in the middle, so they can't see them, and to read the lines from Beatrice's Gulling. They can read them at any volume they want to, but the purpose is for Beatrice to hear them.
- Ask each of the Beatrices to feedback on how that felt. They may well mention how frustrating it was not to be able to speak out or reply. Explain that in Benedick's scene he





- does respond, by speaking to the audience.
- Invite one group to do the same thing again, while everyone else watches as an audience. This time the group members around the outside should read the lines, but Benedick can respond with his lines. The person playing Benedick should avoid being heard by the people around the edge, but direct his lines to the audience.
- Reflect with students on the similarities and differences between these two scenes:
  - What difference does it make being able to respond to the criticisms of your character? What does that reveal about Benedick?
  - O Was there any difference in the kind of things that were said about Beatrice in comparison to what was said about Benedick? How much did the other characters talk about them, for example?
  - O How might each of the characters feel after these scenes?

Michelle Terry talked in rehearsal about how difficult it must be for Beatrice to hear the things she hears in her Gulling scene from Hero, in particular. Having already looked at Beatrice and Hero's relationship, why do they think that might be?



## ACTIVITY 5: THE WEDDING

During the wedding scene, Act 4 Scene 1, Claudio refuses to marry Hero, publically shaming her for being unfaithful in front of her family and everyone else. The audience is aware that Claudio has been tricked into thinking this by Don John, but all his friends know him to be an honest man. With so many characters involved in this scene, the following activity will help students to explore this pivotal moment from several different perspectives.

- Invite students to form a circle and explain that they are going to narrate what happens in the wedding scene from different points of view.
  - O Before starting to narrate, agree on the 10 main things that happen in the scene and the order they occur in.
- Start by all narrating from the same point of view, taking turns to describe each of the 10 steps in the scene, using one of the following characters:
  - o Beatrice
  - o Hero
  - o Leonato
  - o Claudio
  - o Don Pedro
- Challenge students to then start changing perspective on your instruction, thinking about how Don Pedro might perceive certain parts of the scene differently to Hero and so on.
  - O Some steps may take longer to narrate from certain perspectives so encourage students to take their time.



Michelle Terry as Beatrice and Flora Spencer-Longhurst as Hero in Christopher Luscombe's 2014 production of Love's Labour's Won. Photo by Manuel Harlan.



- You may also want to stage the scene itself in the centre of the circle while it is being narrated so that students can explore the relationship between the characters' inner thoughts and their actions.
- Reflect with students as to why the scene ends in the way it does:
  - Why do you think the Friar and Leonato decide to pretend Hero is dead?
  - o Why do you think Beatrice asks Benedick to 'kill Claudio'?
    - What makes the characters reach these extremes?



## ACTIVITY 6: THE RESOLUTION

Whilst Much Ado about Nothing ends with Claudio and Hero's marriage as well as Beatrice and Benedick's marriage, the play has involved a lot of lies and deceit.

The following classroom activity will help students to explore the thoughts and feelings of each character as the play ends.

- Organise students into pairs and provide them with a character slip and their final line from the play.
- Invite each pair to read their final line from the play and to imagine what they would be thinking as they deliver that line.
- Encourage them to think about:
  - O What they feel about what has happened in the play
  - O Why they have just said what they've said
  - O What they might be thinking about the future and what will happen next
- Ask each pair to write down a short paragraph, explaining what their character is thinking, before sharing these as a group.
- Reflect with students on how satisfactory the ending is for each of the characters. Are there any characters for whom this ending is more difficult?

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# **RESOURCES**

### THE STORY IN 10 SCENES

1. Prince Don Pedro is returning victorious from the wars with his brother Don John and his men Bendick and Claudio. Tired but very happy to be going home, they arrive at the house of Leonato, the Governor of their town. As soon as they arrive, the battle of wits between Benedick and Leonato's strong-willed niece Beatrice immediately starts again.

Beatrice: I wonder that you will still be talking, Signor Benedick:

nobody marks you.

Benedick: What, my dear Lady Disdain! Are you yet living?

 Claudio sees Leonato's daughter Hero and falls in love with her at first sight. Claudio feels too shy to approach Hero, but Prince Don Pedro has a plan: at the masked ball that night to celebrate the return from war, Don Pedro will pretend to be Claudio and win over Hero for Claudio.

Don Pedro: If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it,

And thou shalt have her.

Claudio: How sweetly you do minister to love.

3. Don John, Prince Don Pedro's half brother, is a jealous and bad tempered man who resents Don Pedro. He finds out that Claudio fancies Hero and sees a chance to make trouble. As he tells his followers and mates, Conrade and Borachio -

Don John: That young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow; if I

can cross him in any way, I bless myself every way.

4. Don John is determined to cause as much trouble as possible. His man, Borachio, has a plan: he will climb up to Hero's bedroom window in the dead of night. He will persuade Margaret, Hero's lady-in-waiting, to meet him at the window, wearing Hero's clothes. Borachio tells Don John he should persuade Don Pedro to keep watch that night so he will see the fake Hero secretly meeting with Borachio. Don John is delighted with the plan and says to Borachio,

Don John: I will put it into practice. Be cunning in the working this, thy fee is a thousand ducats.

5. Don Pedro has a plan to bring Beatrice and Benedick together. Don Pedro, Leonato and Claudio hold a loud conversation which they know Benedick, who is keeping out of sight, will hear.



Don Pedro: Hath she made her affection known to Benedick?

Leonato: No, and swears she never will.

Claudio: Never tell him, my lord.

Benedick is amazed and thrilled by the idea that Beatrice loves him. Immediately he sees their relationship in a whole new light.

6. Hero and her ladies in waiting, Margaret and Ursula, have created very much the same situation for Beatrice. They arrange for her to overhear this conversation:

Ursula: But are you sure

That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?

Hero: So says the Prince. Ursula: It were not good

She knew his love, lest she make sport of it.

Beatrice is stunned! And very excited!

7. Don John tells Claudio and Don Pedro the false story of Hero's secret affair with Borachio. They agree to watch her window that night. Even before he sees any evidence, however, Claudio says he will expose Hero publicly if the story is true.

Claudio: If I see any thing tonight why I should not marry her, tomorrow in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

Don John's villainous trick works. At the wedding ceremony Leonato makes to give away his daughter, Hero, and Claudio rejects her. There is total confusion at the wedding! Despite her quiet protests, almost everyone thinks Hero is guilty – even her father. But the Friar believes her and has an idea for protecting Hero while more evidence is gathered and tells everyone to pretend she is dead.

8. Beatrice, meanwhile, is furious at Claudio's treatment of her cousin, Hero. She challenges Benedick to prove his newly confessed love for her.

Benedick: I protest I love thee.

Beatrice: I was about to protest I love you.

Benedick: Come, bid me do anything.

Beatrice: Kill Claudio.

9. Borachio, the betrayer, has confessed his part in Don John's plot and is brought for sentencing to Don Pedro by the town's band of watchmen. When he hears this news, Leonato repents bitterly of his treatment of his daughter. He thinks he has a way of



repairing the damage. He tells Claudio no one can bring Hero back to life, but his brother has a daughter who looks just like Hero: Claudio must marry her. Claudio is grateful his punishment is not more severe.

Claudio: O noble sir!

Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me.

10. Leonato invites everyone to this new wedding. Benedick asks to marry Beatrice at the same time – a double wedding is on! And it's a masked one, to keep Hero's identity secret until Claudio has accepted her as his wife.

Claudio: I am your husband, if you like of me. Hero (unmasking): And when I lived I was your other wife.

Claudio: Another Hero!

Beatrice and Benedick have the last word.

Benedick: I take thee for pity.

Beatrice: I yield upon great persuasion.

Benedick: Let's have a dance ere we are married. Play, music. Prince,

thou art sad; get thee a wife, get thee a wife.

#### ACT 1 SCENE 1 EXTRACT

#### **BEATRICE**

I wonder that you will still be talking, Signor Benedick; nobody marks you.

#### BENEDICK

What, my dear Lady Disdain! Are you yet living?

#### **BEATRICE**

I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.

#### BENEDICK

God keep your ladyship still in that mind! So some gentleman or other shall 'scape a scratched face.

#### **BEATRICE**

Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours were.



#### **BENEDICK**

Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

BEATRICE A bird of my tongue is better than a beast of yours.

### **COMPARING BEATRICE AND HERO**

## Hero:

- How fair young Hero is!
- Is she not a modest young lady?
- The lady is very well worthy.
- In mine eye, she is the sweetest lady that ever I looked on.
  Can the world buy such a jewel?

### Beatrice:

- My dear lady disdain!
- She speaks poniards and every word stabs
- She cannot endure to hear tell of a husband
- She is never sad but when she sleeps
- You have a merry heart
- She mocks all her wooers out of suit

#### Leonato's Lines:

Looking at the below lines, who do you think Leonato is talking to – Beatrice or Hero?

- mine innocent child
- thou wilt never get a husband if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue
- remember what I told you: if the prince do solicit you in that kind, you know your answer
- you apprehend passing shrewdly
- will you look to those things I told you of?
- Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes?
- When I send for you, come hither masked.

#### THE GULLING SCENES



### Beatrice

she is too disdainful;

her spirits are as coy and wild as haggards of the rock.

Nature never framed a woman's heart of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice.

Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes

She cannot love

I never yet saw man, how wise, how noble, young, how rarely featured, but she would spell him backward.

so odd and from all fashions

**BEATRICE** 

(Coming forward) What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true?

Stand I condemned for pride and scorn so much?

### Benedick

I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

most wonderful that she should so dote on Signor Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviors seemed ever to abhor.

#### BENEDICK (Aside) Is't possible? Sits the wind in that corner?

I cannot tell what to think of it

I would have I thought her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection.

I would have sworn it had, my lord, especially against Benedick.

BENEDICK (Aside) I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it; knavery cannot, sure, hide himself in such reverence.

He would make but a sport of it and torment the poor lady worse.

She's an excellent sweet lady, and, out of all suspicion, she is virtuous.

And she is exceeding wise.

In every thing but in loving Benedick.

Hero thinks surely she will die; for she says she will die, if he love her not;



#### Exeunt DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO and LEONATO.

#### BENEDICK Thev

(Coming forward) This can be no trick. The conference was sadly borne. have the truth of this from Hero.

## FINAL LINES

LEONATO We'll have dancing afterward.

CLAUDIO I had well hoped thou wouldst have denied Beatrice, that I might have

cudgelled thee out of thy single life, to make thee a double-dealer; which, out of question, thou wilt be, if my cousin do not look exceedingly narrowly to thee.

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 Prince, thou art sad; get thee a wife, get thee a wife.

HERO And here's another

Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,

Containing her affection unto Benedick.

DON PEDRO How dost thou, Benedick, the married man?

