

# 12 - THE CASKET SCENE

What exercises do RSC actors use to explore a scene?

## WHAT YOU NEED

- Some pieces of paper, or a notebook and something to write with.
- A computer with internet connection, ready to visit these pages on [Language Analysis](#) and [The Casket Scene](#).

## ACTIVITY

- Visit the Shakespeare Learning Zone page exploring Act 3 Scene 2 [here](#), and read the description of the scene.
- Ask yourself: At the beginning of this section, what does each character want? Write these down. In rehearsals, we call these objectives. What does each character fear? We call these obstacles for the characters. Write them down as well.
- Put Bassanio's first speech into your own words. In rehearsals, we call this paraphrasing. Write your paraphrase down.
- Ask yourself: Why does Bassanio reject the gold and silver caskets, and choose the lead one? Which words from this speech help us to understand his reasons?
- Read Portia's speech aloud, exaggerating the sounds in the words. Make the most of the vowel sounds, and speak the consonant sounds as precisely as you can, paying particular attention to any repeated sounds.
- Ask yourself: How do the sounds in this speech help us to understand how Portia is feeling?
- Watch the film of this scene in the 2015 RSC performance on the same [page](#).

## EXTENSION

- Watch the film of The Casket Scene in performance [here](#).
- Ask yourself: How were the caskets brought to life in the 2015 production?
- Visit the photo gallery in the 'imagine' section to compare the caskets in past RSC productions.
- Design the gold, silver and lead caskets. Look back at Act 2 Scene 7 and Act 2 Scene 9 to find clues for details that you might include.