

# 2 - THE CHARACTERS

What kind of people live in the world of this play?

## WHAT YOU NEED

- Some pieces of paper, or a notebook and something to write and draw with.
- A computer with internet connection, ready to visit [this page](#).
- A copy Act 1 Scene 1 of *The Merchant of Venice*, on the page or on screen to read.

## ACTIVITY

- Choose one character from the opening scene of the play that interests you and that you would like to create a Mind Map for. This might be the character you like best or someone you think is important in the plot.
- Read through the opening scene, making a list of everything you can find that is important for your character. These might be: people they talk about, things they do, interesting words they say, how others describe them.
- Take a fresh piece of paper and write your character's name in the middle. Imagining this paper is your character's mind, start to fill the page with words or drawings from your list. If you think something or someone is important to your character, place it nearer their name. You can make this map as full and colourful as you like.
- Visit the Who's Who page on the RSC Learning Zone [here](#). Choose any other character and create a labelled diagram for them, using the information on this page. Again, you can write down key words or use illustrations.
- Ask yourself: Which words have you decided to write and which have you illustrated with pictures? What colours have you used? What does this tell you about your character?

## EXTENSION

- Design a private room for your favourite character to live in. Now you know more about them and what they are like, see if you can imagine how they would live.
- If you feel very ambitious, you can build a model box of this room and making their personal possessions and clothes out of modelling clay or scrap material or paper. Don't forget to make your character too and put them in it! Photograph or film your character in their room. How do they behave in their own space?