

5 - PORTIA'S SUITORS

Why does Portia reject her suitors?

WHAT YOU NEED

- Some pieces of paper, or a notebook and something to write with.
- A computer with internet connection, ready to visit [this page](#).
- A copy of Act 1 Scene 2 from *The Merchant of Venice*, to read either on the page or onscreen.

ACTIVITY

- Visit the Characters page on the Shakespeare Learning Zone [here](#). Click on Portia to read the detailed information.
- Find the place in Act 1 Scene 2 where Portia says, "O me, the word choose!" and read until Portia says, "I will do anything, Nerissa, ere I will be married to a sponge."
- Choose one of the suitors that Portia and Nerissa talk about.
- Imagine that suitor has an online dating profile. Make that profile, either working on paper or using digital technology. Include what their age might be, where they are from, what they might look like, and what they might say about themselves and what they want. Draw him or find a suitable photograph to represent him. Label your image, using your own words and what Portia says about him.
- Ask yourself: Why does Portia reject this suitor?
- Find the place in Act 1 Scene 2 where Portia says, "If I live to be as old as Sibylla." and read to the end of the scene.
- Make yourself a dating profile for Portia, including what she might say about herself and what she wants.
- Ask yourself: Why does Portia reject her suitors?

EXTENSION

- Choose other suitors that Portia and Nerissa talk about in Act 1 Scene 2, and make dating profiles for them.
- Imagine you are Portia. Write a letter to your father, explaining how you feel about the casket challenge he has set, and expressing how you hope you will find a husband.