

7 - SHYLOCK AND ANTONIO'S BOND

Why and how do Shylock and Antonio agree to the bond?

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 3 from The Merchant of Venice, to read either on the page or onscreen.

ACTIVITY

- Visit the Language page on the Shakespeare Learning Zone [here](#). Click on the link explore and ask yourself questions about the scene.
- Make paper cutouts to represent the characters, or use everyday household objects. Read the scene aloud, and move your representations as you read, with 'Shylock' still, and 'Antonio' and 'Bassanio' moving around him.
- Read the scene aloud again, this time with 'Antonio' and 'Bassanio' still and 'Shylock' moving around them.
- Ask yourself: Who is challenging who, when and why during this scene? Why and how do Shylock and Antonio agree to the bond?
- Watch the film of RSC actors playing this scene from our 2015 production, on the [same page](#).
- Ask yourself: How do the actors come across in this version?
- Imagine you are the director of this scene. Write or record your notes for how you would like this scene to be brought to life in performance, including how the actors should move in relation to each other and why.

EXTENSION

- The last two lines of this scene are a 'rhyming couplet'. Visit the Shakespeare Learning Zone [here](#) and click on 'Rhyming couplets' to explore how RSC actors work with rhyming couplets in rehearsal.
- Add to your directors notes how you would like to see the final rhyming couplet of Act 1 Scene 3 of the Merchant of Venice brought to life, and why.