

Year 7 – Much Ado about Nothing – English Knowledge Organiser

Expectations and content

What is this unit about and why do we teach it?

- In this unit students are introduced to one of Shakespeare's finest comedies. We will focus on exploring themes and characterisation and study dramatic techniques used in play scripts. We study Shakespeare throughout the curriculum and this unit enables students to build on existing knowledge and understanding of Shakespearean conventions.

Key Vocabulary taught:

- Courtly Love
- Erudite
- Masquerade
- Cynical
- Props
- Stage directions

Key terminology taught:

- Inference
- Symbols/symbolism
- Theme
- Setting
- Soliloquy
- Dramatic irony
- Imagery
- Malapropism
- Juxtaposition
- Exposition
- Rising action
- Climax
- Denouement

If your child needs support

Suggested activities to help:

- We understand that Shakespeare can be challenging and confusing for our students at first and therefore recommend they understand the time period better. Students could research:
 - The Shakespearean theatre
 - Comedy in the sixteenth century
 - Shakespeare's characters
 - How Shakespeare became so popular
- The terminology taught in our Shakespeare unit is relevant to all our modern texts as well - students can explore where they have seen some of these terms so far this year.
- The vocabulary in this play is quite challenging - encourage your child to write down some of the words they do not know and look them up.
- We will be watching the film adaptation in class but students would always benefit from seeing Shakespeare on the stage: You can see what is on by visiting www.rsc.co.uk or your local theatre websites.

If your child needs extension

Questions to discuss with your child:

- How do Shakespeare's conventions of comedy appear in modern comedies you have seen either in literature or TV?
- Why do you think comedies often include a villainous character?
- Why do you think our perceptions of marriage have changed over the centuries?

Challenging activities to complete:

- Design a mask for each of the main characters to wear to the masquerade ball that reflects their character traits.
- Write an alternative ending to the play that includes dramatic irony.
- Create a poem about malapropism. Take some inspiration from *Mr Malaprop* by Ron Wallace - you can find this online.

Suggested further reading:

- Any of Shakespeare's comedies such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night* or *The Merchant of Venice*.
- A more challenging read would be *A Winter's Tale* as this is one of Shakespeare's tragicomedies combining the aspects of both genres.
- *Speak Easy, Speak Love* by Mckelle George is an adaptation of the play about the romantic misunderstandings of teenage relationships.