

Study Guide 2023-2024



The Comedy of Errors by William Shakespeare

Florida Standards

Language Arts

LAFS.910.RL.1: Key Ideas and Details
LAFS.910.RH.1: Key Ideas and Details
LAFS.1112.SL.1: Comprehension and Collaboration
LAFS.910.W.1: Text Types and Purposes
LAFS.1112.RL.1: Key Ideas and Details
LAFS.910.RL.3: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Theater

TH.912.F.2: Careers in and related to the arts
TH.68.S.1: The arts are inherently experiential.

PG-13

Language, Comic Mischief, Crude Humor, Suggestive Themes

Most appropriate for Grade 6 and up. Children under 5 will not be admitted to the theater.

The Comedy of Errors

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The Comedy of Errors

An Introduction

Educators:

Thank you for taking the time out of your very busy schedule to bring the joy of theatre arts to your classroom. We are well aware of the demands on your time and it is our goal to offer you supplemental information to compliment your curriculum with ease and expediency.

We hope this Study Guide and the companion Spotlight Guide will help you prepare your students to experience live theatre at Orlando Shakes! Additionally, we would love to come to your classroom to introduce your students to the Shakespeare play of your choosing and teach them how to unlock the meaning of our favorite playwright. With a few simple tools, they will realize that Shakespeare isn't scary, rather can be quite contemporary!

Please take a moment to explore our website at orlandoshakes.org/education for the following ways to add to your curriculum.

- Our Virtual Workshop *Spotlight: Theatre Careers*, which introduces students to the many professions in Theatre Arts.
- Classroom Activities to energize students to explore character status and motivation
- Shortened Shakespeare scripts that range from 60 – 120 minutes long that are perfect for school productions

We look forward to hosting you at the Lowndes Shakespeare Center. Feel free to contact us at Orlando Shakes should you have any questions or suggestions on how we can better serve you. We are always learning from you.

Thank you for your tremendous work in nurturing our audiences of tomorrow.

Anne Hering
Director of Education

Jennifer Paxton
Education Coordinator



The Comedy of Errors *Enjoying Live Theater*

Theater is a Team Sport

The **Playwright** writes the script. Sometimes it is from an original idea and sometimes it is adapted from a book or story. The Playwright decides what the characters say, and gives the Designers guidelines on how the play should look.

The **Director** creates the vision for the production and works closely with the actors, costume, set and lighting designers to make sure everyone tells the same story.

The **Actors** use their bodies and voices to bring the author's words and the director's ideas to life on the stage.

The **Designers** imagine and create the lights, scenery, props, costumes and sound that will compliment and complete the director's vision.

The **Stage Manager** assists the director during rehearsals by recording their instructions and making sure the actors and designers understand these ideas. The Stage Manager then runs the show during each performance by calling cues for lights and sound, as well as entrances and exits.

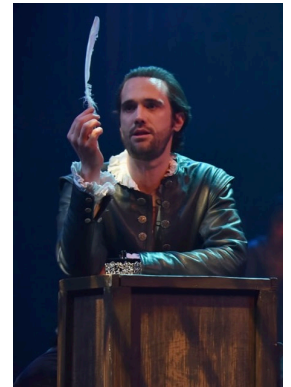
The **Shop** and **Stage Crew** build the set, props and costumes according to the designer's plans. The Stage Crew sets the stage with props and furniture, assists the actors with costume changes and operates sound, lighting and stage machinery during each performance.

The **Front of House Staff** welcomes you to the theater, takes your tickets, helps you find your seat and answers any question you may have on the day of performance.

The **Theater** is where it all takes place. Orlando Shakespeare Theater In Partnership with UCF is the only professional, classical theater company in Central Florida, reaching students and audiences in the surrounding eight counties.

Mission:

To enrich our community with engaging professional theater, inspiring educational experiences, and thought-provoking new plays.



The Comedy of Errors *Enjoying Live Theater*

The Actor/Audience Relationship

The Audience is the reason Live Theater exists. At Orlando Shakes, we cherish the Actor/Audience relationship, the unique give and take that exists during a performance which makes the audience an ACTIVE participant in the event. The actors see the audience just as the audience sees the actors, and every laugh, snuffle, chuckle and gasp the audience makes effects the way the actor plays his next moment. We want you to be engaged and to live the story with us!



There are certain Conventions of the Theatrical Event, like, when the lights go down you know that the show is about to start, and that the audience isn't encouraged to come and go during a performance. Here are some other tips to help you and your classmates be top notch audience members:

- Please make sure to turn off your cell phones. And NO TEXTING!
- Please stay in your seat. Use the restroom before you take your seat and stay in your seat unless there is an emergency.
- Please do not eat or drink in the theater.

Talkback

After the performance, the actors will stay on stage for about 10 minutes to hear your comments and answer any questions you have about the play and the production. We'd love to hear what you felt about the play, what things were clear or unclear to you, and hear your opinions about what the play means. This last portion of the Actor/Audience Relationship is so important to help us better serve you and enrich your artistic experience.

Consider the Themes and Key Questions above and ask yourself:

1. What Key Questions did the play answer?
2. Do you agree with everything the play said about these themes?
3. How did the actors, directors, and designers all address these themes?
4. What opinion did the artists bring to the process, did those opinions change throughout the process (designing, rehearsing, performing) and how did that impact their work?

The Comedy of Errors

About the Play

Summary

Because of recent enmity, no Syracusan is allowed in Ephesus. A Syracusan merchant Egeon, searching for his wife and twin boys separated and lost at sea, has been found there and arrested. The Duke is sympathetic, so gives him a day to find a way paying his fine before the death penalty has to be carried out.

Antipholus and servant Dromio of Syracuse (S) arrive in Ephesus, on their travels. They are instantly mistaken by the townsfolk to be Antipholus and servant Dromio of Ephesus (E). Antipholus (E) meets Dromio (S), who denies knowledge of money given to him earlier. Adriana, the wife of Antipholus (E) sends Dromio (E) to find his master. They encounter Antipholus and Dromio (S). Antipholus (S) does not recognize Adriana, and Dromio (S) denies he received instructions from her.

Adriana insists they both accompany her home, and they think they are going mad.

Antipholus (E) meanwhile arrives home with merchant Balthazar and goldsmith Angelo, who is making a gold chain for Adriana. Dromio (S) and kitchen-maid Luce refuse to let them in, much to the annoyance of Dromio (E), so Antipholus (E) goes to a tavern instead. Inside the house, Antipholus (S) has fallen in love with Adriana's sister Luciana, much to her amazement; and Dromio (S) is awed by a kitchen-maid who claims him as hers.

Antipholus (S) meets Angelo, who gives him the chain, proposing to return later for the money. Angelo, being himself pressed for a debt, later meets Antipholus (E) and asks for his money. When Antipholus (E) denies having had the chain, Angelo has him arrested until he pays the amount. Antipholus (E) sends Dromio (S) to Adriana for the money, which she immediately sends.

Dromio (S) brings the money to Antipholus (S). They meet a Courtesan with whom Antipholus (E) had dined and who asks for the return of a ring Antipholus (E) had taken, but Antipholus (S) of course denies knowledge of it. Dromio (E) meets the arrested Antipholus (S), who asks for the money to obtain his release, but Dromio (E) obviously does not have it. Adriana arrives with Dr Pinch, who tries to conjure the supposed madness out of Antipholus (E). Both he and Dromio (E) resist and they are arrested and taken away. Adriana and the

others then immediately meet Antipholus (S) and Dromio (S) with swords drawn, and, confused by their sudden liberty, flee from them.

Angelo meets Antipholus (S), sees the chain, and prepares to fight him. On the arrival of Adriana and the others, Antipholus and Dromio (S) run into a priory for safety. The abbess Aemilia discusses his supposed madness with Adriana, but refuses to let her enter the priory. Adriana decides to complain to the Duke, who is nearby for Egeon's execution, to get to see her supposed husband. Antipholus (E) and Dromio (E) appear and also complain to the Duke. All parties tell what has happened from their own point of view. Egeon recognises Antipholus (E) as his son, but Antipholus does not know him. Aemilia then brings out Antipholus and Dromio (S), and all is revealed. Egeon recognizes Aemilia as his wife. The Duke forgives Egeon. The two pairs of twins are reunited.

playshakespeare.com



The Comedy of Errors

About the Play

Characters



Solinus, Duke of Ephesus rules his town with great respect for law, insisting that he cannot go against the set rules even if he wishes to, though he is willing to bend them a little on occasion.

Egeon is an old man of Syracuse who sneaks into the city to seek for his lost twin sons, both called Antipholus.

Antipholus of Ephesus is one of Egeon's twin sons. He was brought up in Corinth, never knowing his father, and brought to Ephesus by Duke Menaphon of Corinth.

Antipholus of Syracuse is the other of Egeon's twin sons. Separated from his twin at birth, at the age of eighteen he decided to travel the world to find him, and has been searching for him these last seven years.

Dromio of Ephesus is Antipholus of Ephesus's servant.

Dromio of Syracuse is Antipholus of Syracuse's servant.

Balthazar is a merchant of Ephesus and a friend of the local Antipholus.

Angelo is a goldsmith in Syracuse, the maker of a fine gold chain commissioned by Antipholus of Ephesus.

The First Merchant warns Antipholus of Syracuse to hide his identity, given the penalty for a Syracusan to be caught in Ephesus. He leaves his traveling companion

to take care of some business, though promising to join him again in the evening.

The Second Merchant is on the verge of a journey to Persia, and therefore needs every penny he can get.

Doctor Pinch is a conjurer and exorcist hired by Adriana to cure Antipholus of Ephesus of his madness.

Abbess Aemilia is an abbess in Ephesus, highly respected by all.

Adriana is Antipholus of Ephesus's wife, and a proto-feminist distraught that her husband is paying attention to another woman and irritated that men are not as bound as women are, nor women as free as men.

Luciana is Adriana's sister, and dwells with her and Antipholus of Ephesus.

Luce, also known as Nell, is a maid at Antipholus of Ephesus's. She has little patience with loud ruffians at the gate, whom she consigns to the stocks.

A Courtesan counts Antipholus of Ephesus among her favored clients, and entertains him often enough to make his wife jealous.

The Jailer has custody of Egeon, and accompanies him in his search for someone to pay his ransom.

The Messenger rushes in to warn Adriana to flee from her husband, who has broken loose from his bonds. He is clearly terrified.

The Officer is a debt recovery officer, who can be hired to arrest defaulters.

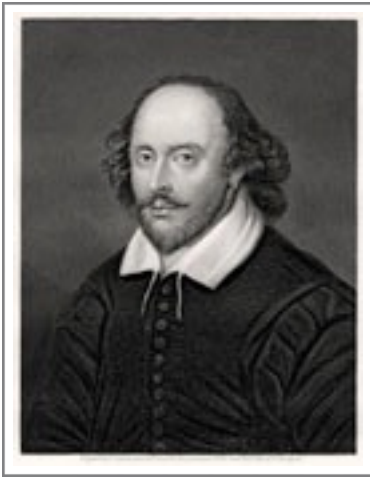
The Headsman is in charge of executing Egeon, and leads him to his death.

<https://www.playshakespeare.com/comedy-of-errors/characters>

The Comedy of Errors

About the Play

Meet the Playwright



William Shakespeare is a mystery. He never went to college, only the local grammar school, but ended up writing the most famous plays in the history of the world. How did it happen? Nobody really knows.

We know very little about Shakespeare's personal life, his childhood and his marriage when you think about the impact he's had on our world. We have none of Shakespeare's letters, diaries, or original manuscripts. All we have is his signature on a couple of legal documents. In fact, the lack of information on him has made a lot of people argue that he never really wrote all those plays or even existed at all!

Never forget, Shakespeare wrote his plays to be **PERFORMED** not read. Never sit down to READ one of his plays if you don't know it. Get up and try ACTING IT OUT. You'll be surprised how much you'll understand. Reading Shakespeare is ALWAYS hard, Performing him is EASY.

Will wrote over 40 plays, but only 37 have survived. He wrote every kind of story you can think of- tragedies, comedies, histories. 22 of his plays were about **WAR**. Guess he had human nature down... In his plays you can find teenagers fighting with their parents, teenagers running away, teenagers

falling in love, ghosts, gods, witches, drunks, murderers, a woman caressing her lover's body minus its head, a woman caressing her lover's head minus its body, weddings, funerals, death by stabbing, suffocation, poison, decapitation, spiking, hanging, execution, being made into a meat-pie, and drowning in a vat of wine. The point is that Shakespeare did it ALL!

Everybody went to see Shakespeare's plays: children, peasants, royalty, merchants, every kind of person from every social group and clique. It was the one place where a beggar could rub elbows with the rich and famous. Remember there were no televisions, no radios, no magazines, and only the beginnings of newspapers. Not that newspapers mattered much considering most people COULDN'T read or write! Aside from the plays, there were bear-baitings, cockfights, bull-baitings and if you were lucky, the occasional execution. That was all. Seeing one of his plays was something like a cross between a Magic basketball game and a rock concert. It was noisy, crazy, usually messy, and a whole lot of fun.

Shakespeare's Early Years

William Shakespeare was born on April 23, 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. He died on the exact same day fifty-two years later, in 1616. He lived during what was called the Elizabethan Era because at that time the queen of England was Queen Elizabeth I.

William Shakespeare's father, John Shakespeare, was a glovemaker by trade and ran a 'general store'. He was a prominent citizen in the town of Stratford-upon-Avon and even served as mayor for a term. The very first mention of John Shakespeare is in 1552. He was fined for keeping a 'dunghill' in front of his house. When William was eight years old, his father's fortunes started to decline. His father stopped going to church meetings and town council

meetings, and his application for a coat-of-arms was turned down. A 'coat-of-arms' was an important status symbol in Elizabethan England. Today it would be like the U.S. Government and everybody else in the country recognizing that you and your family were upper class and treating you like you were somebody important. Basically, you got invited to all the 'A-List' parties. Nobody knows why John Shakespeare's mysterious decline occurred.

Shakespeare's mother was Mary Arden, a young lady from a prominent Catholic family. She married John Shakespeare in 1557 and they had seven children. William's older sisters Joan and Margaret died when they were babies. His younger sister Anne died when he was fifteen. The most of what we know about his three younger brothers is the youngest was named Edmund and that he later became an actor in London. Edmund died at age twenty-seven and was buried in London. We don't really know much about Shakespeare's other two brothers.



The Comedy of Errors

About the Play

Meet the Playwright

As far as Shakespeare's education, even less is known. We assume he went to the local public grammar/elementary school in Stratford, but there are no records to prove it. We're also pretty sure he never went to college or university (pretty incredible when you consider Shakespeare invented over 2500 words that we still use everyday- including the words "puke", "eyeball", and "vulnerable"). In fact, after his baptism the next record we have of William Shakespeare is his marriage in 1582 to Anne Hathaway. William was eighteen years old when he married and Anne was twenty-six. Anne was also several months pregnant! Susanna, Shakespeare's first child, was born in 1583. Two years later, Shakespeare and Anne had twins, Judith and Hamnet. Sadly, Hamnet died only eleven years later. There is no record of his cause of death. William was deeply affected by his only son's death and after it spent more time in Stratford, traveling to London only for important theater business.

The London Years

Nobody knows exactly when William Shakespeare moved to London or how he supported himself once he got there. We do know he was an actor before he was a playwright. Even when he was thriving as a playwright, he still found time to act in his own plays. He played roles such as Adam in *As You Like It* and the ghost of Hamlet's father in *Hamlet*.

In 1589-92, Shakespeare's first plays were all HITS in London. By 1594, Shakespeare's own acting troupe, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, became the premier acting company in London.

In 1598, Shakespeare built his famous theater- The Globe Theater. It was located on the south bank of the Thames River in London. The new theater's motto was "Totus mundus agit

histrionem" or in English instead of Latin "All the world's a stage".

The Globe Theater could accommodate over 3,000 spectators and admission in the early 1600's was one penny. The Globe had twenty sides and was an "open-air" theater, meaning there was no roof in the center. What roof there was, was thatched (made of hay). The rest of the building was made of wood. From above it looked like a large donut. Performances were given every day from 2-5 in the afternoon (so the sunlight wouldn't bother the audience or the actors) except Sunday. The beginning of a show was signaled by three blasts from a trumpet and a flag raised at the same time: black for tragedy, red for history, and white for comedy. Why didn't they just pass out leaflets? Going to plays was considered immoral and advertising for plays was prohibited. Yet, everybody came! Vendors at the shows sold beer, water, oranges, gingerbread, apples, and nuts. All of these were THROWN at the actors if the audience didn't like the show! Audience members also frequently talked back to the actors. For example, if a murderer was sneaking up on somebody, the audience usually screamed out "LOOK BEHIND YOU!"

On June 29, 1613, the Globe Theater burned to the ground. It was during a performance of *Henry the Eighth*. The cannon shots that were fired to 'announce the arrival of the king' during the first act of the play misfired and engulfed the thatched roof in flames. One man's breeches (pants) caught on fire but before he got hurt badly somebody dumped their beer on him and put it out! While the rest of the audience escaped unharmed, The Globe Theater was completely destroyed. Thirty years later, an ordinance (law) was passed to close all theatres. Acting and plays were outlawed because they were considered immoral.

The Later Years

Back in Stratford, William Shakespeare enjoyed his retirement and his status as 'Gentleman'. He purchased 'New House', the second largest home in Stratford-upon-Avon and often invited his friends and fellow artists over to hang out. One such visit is recorded in the journal of John Ward, a vicar in Stratford. He wrote, "Shakespeare, Drayton, and Ben Johnson had a merry meeting, and it seems drank too hard, for Shakespeare died of a fever there contracted". Shakespeare indeed died thereafter and was buried in his family's church in Stratford on his birthday in 1616.

In all, Shakespeare had written over 40 plays in two years. Two members of his acting company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, published all the plays they could find in 1623. This collection of 37 of Shakespeare's plays has come to be known as The First Folio. If it had not been for these two men, John Heminges and Henry Condell, we might have no record of William Shakespeare's work and the world as we know it would be a very different place. In the preface to the Folio these men wrote, "We have but collected them (the plays) and done an office to the dead... without ambition either of self-profit or fame; only to keep the memory of so worthy a friend alive, as was our Shakespeare".

Shakespeare's friend and fellow playwright Ben Johnson wrote this about Shakespeare when William died- "... I loved the man, and do honor his memory as much as any. He was indeed honest, and of an open and free nature: had excellent fantasies, brave notions, and gentle expressions..."

The Comedy of Errors

About the Play

Meet the Playwright

Shakespeare's Plays

1589	<i>Comedy of Errors</i>	1601	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>
1590	<i>Henry VI, Part II</i> <i>Henry VI, Part III</i>	1602	<i>All's Well That Ends Well</i>
1591	<i>Henry VI, Part I</i>	1604	<i>Othello</i> <i>Measure for Measure</i>
1592	<i>Richard III</i>	1605	<i>King Lear</i> <i>Macbeth</i>
1593	<i>Taming of the Shrew</i> <i>Titus Andronicus</i>	1606	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>
1594	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> <i>Two Gentlemen of Verona</i> <i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	1607	<i>Coriolanus</i> <i>Timon of Athens</i>
1595	<i>Richard II</i> <i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	1608	<i>Pericles</i>
1596	<i>King John</i> <i>Merchant of Venice</i>	1609	<i>Cymbeline</i>
1597	<i>Henry IV, Part I</i> <i>Henry IV, Part II</i>	1610	<i>Winter's Tale</i>
1598	<i>Henry V</i> <i>Much Ado about Nothing</i>	1611	<i>Tempest</i>
1599	<i>Twelfth Night</i> <i>As You Like It</i> <i>Julius Caesar</i>	1612	<i>Henry VIII</i>
1600	<i>Hamlet</i> <i>Merry Wives of Windsor</i>		



The Comedy of Errors

Historical Context

Elizabethan Theater

Statistics from the late 16th century suggest that more than 10% of the population regularly attended plays. The first regular London playhouse, The Theatre, had been built by the actor and carpenter, J. Burbage, in 1576. Actually, it was built just outside the city of London in order to escape the Puritan civic authorities. Up to this time players had been forced to perform mostly in inn yards. In the typical Elizabethan playhouse:

- The overall shape was roughly round or octagonal shaped with an open space in the middle, or an unroofed yard surrounded by one or two galleries.
- The stage was an open platform, jutting out into the center of the yard.
- Under the stage, hidden by drapery, was a cellar with machinery for projecting ghosts and devils through trapdoors.
- Above the stage the first gallery provided an open balcony which could be used for appearances of actors.
- Above the balcony was a hut to house machinery to raise or lower actors or property onto the stage.

The audience could stand around the stage, on three sides, for the payment of a penny. In the galleries, the best places cost as much as sixpence. Depending on the theatre, there were as many as 2,000 to 3,000 places for spectators.

Shakespeare's company, the King's Men, owned and produced their plays in the Globe Theatre, which they opened in 1589. Like many others of its time, it was an open-roofed structure with a jutting stage, surrounded by curving balcony of seats. The stage itself was roofed and had many levels, so that almost any kind of scene could be represented.

There was little in the way of props and scenery. Shakespeare's play often contain prologues apologizing for the poverty of the set and inviting the viewers to use their imaginations. The plays are full of vivid speeches that use words to create the scene for the audience.

In an open theatre, plays were performed during the day with no lighting available beyond natural daylight. In an enclosed theatre, such as the Blackfriars which the King's Men purchased in 1609, evening performances could be given by torch and candlelight. This type of performance was more expensive and attracted a higher class audience.

Theatre companies during Shakespeare's time consisted of male actors only; no women appeared on the stage. Young men dressed in women's clothing played these parts. The theatre was considered too vulgar an environment for women and a temptation to public "immorality." Needless to say, the men were presented with the same temptations, but it was considered more socially acceptable for them. Although an actor could make a good living, the profession was not considered respectable and the association between acting and a "loose" lifestyle is one that lives on today.

The Comedy of Errors

Lesson Plan: Page to Stage

In this lesson, students will read an excerpt from Act II, Scene 2 of *The Comedy of Errors*. Students will also participate in a Socratic Seminar covering topics such as Shakespeare's use of imagery, comparison/contrast, verbal wordplay and disguise. Students will complete a handout where they will analyze how Shakespeare creates dramatic tension through the use of staging, timing, physicality and vocal delivery. Students will also compare/contrast reading and watching a scene from the play. For the summative assessment, students will write an essay comparing and contrasting reading an excerpt from *The Comedy of Errors* to watching it live on stage, making a claim as to which medium was more impactful. All student handouts are included below.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Plead you to me, fair dame? I know you not:
In Ephesus I am but two hours old,
As strange unto your town as to your talk;
Who, every word by all my wit being
scann'd,
Want wit in all one word to understand.

LUCIANA

Fie, brother! how the world is changed with
you!
When were you wont to use my sister thus?
She sent for you by Dromio home to dinner.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

By Dromio?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

By me?

ADRIANA

By thee; and this thou didst return from him,
That he did buffet thee, and, in his blows,
Denied my house for his, me for his wife.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Did you converse, sir, with this
gentlewoman?

What is the course and drift of your
compact?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I, sir? I never saw her till this time.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Villain, thou liest; for even her very words
Didst thou deliver to me on the mart.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I never spake with her in all my life.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

How can she thus then call us by our names,
Unless it be by inspiration.

ADRIANA

How ill agrees it with your gravity
To counterfeit thus grossly with your slave,
Abetting him to thwart me in my mood!

Be it my wrong you are from me exempt,
But wrong not that wrong with a more
contempt.
Come, I will fasten on this sleeve of thine:
Thou art an elm, my husband, I a vine,
Whose weakness, married to thy stronger
state,
Makes me with thy strength to communicate:
If aught possess thee from me, it is dross,
Usurping ivy, brier, or idle moss;
Who, all for want of pruning, with intrusion
Infect thy sap and live on thy confusion.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

To me she speaks; she moves me for her
theme:

What, was I married to her in my dream?
Or sleep I now and think I hear all this?
What error drives our eyes and ears amiss?
Until I know this sure uncertainty,
I'll entertain the offer'd fallacy.

LUCIANA

Dromio, go bid the servants spread for
dinner.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

O, for my beads! I cross me for a sinner.
This is the fairy land: O spite of spites!
We talk with goblins, owls and sprites:
If we obey them not, this will ensue,
They'll suck our breath, or pinch us black
and blue.

LUCIANA

Why pratest thou to thyself and answer'st
not?

Dromio, thou drone, thou snail, thou slug,
thou sot!

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I am transformed, master, am I not?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I think thou art in mind, and so am I.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Nay, master, both in mind and in my shape.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Thou hast thine own form.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, I am an ape.

LUCIANA

If thou art changed to aught, 'tis to an ass.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

'Tis true; she rides me and I long for grass.
'Tis so, I am an ass; else it could never be
But I should know her as well as she knows
me.

ADRIANA

Come, come, no longer will I be a fool
To put the finger in the eye and weep,
Whilst man and master laugh my woes to
scorn.
Come, sir, to dinner. Dromio, keep the gate.
Husband, I'll dine above with you to-day
And shrive you of a thousand idle pranks.
Sirrah, if any ask you for your master,
Say he dines forth, and let no creature enter.
Come, sister. Dromio, play the porter well.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Am I in earth, in heaven, or in hell?
Sleeping or waking? mad or well-advised?
Known unto these, and to myself disguised!
I'll say as they say and persevere so,
And in this mist at all adventures go.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Master, shall I be porter at the gate?

ADRIANA

Ay; and let none enter, lest I break your pate.

LUCIANA

Come, come, Antipholus, we dine too late.

Exeunt

The Comedy of Errors

Lesson Plan: Page to Stage

Prior to the watching the performance, respond in writing to the **first two socratic seminar questions**. All responses should be supported using detailed textual evidence from the scene. You should have a solid, well-supported paragraph for each question.

1. How does Shakespeare use wordplay in the scene? (Hint: Look for the rhyming words)
2. What do the women suspect the men of? What do the men suspect the women of?

After watching the performance, respond in writing to the **third socratic seminar question** considering the categories below.

3. How do the actors and director create physical comedy in *The Comedy of Errors, Act II, Scene 2*?

Staging:

Timing:

Physicality:

Vocal Delivery:

The Comedy of Errors

Lesson Plan: Page to Stage

Comparing reading a scene from *The Comedy of Errors* to watching a scene from *The Comedy of Errors*.

Similarities

Differences

Impact on the audience due to the difference between reading and watching:

The Comedy of Errors

Activities: Shakespeare Taboo

From “assassination” to “zany,” Shakespeare has given us words that we encounter every day. It is almost impossible to discuss such diverse subjects as advertising, business, law, medicine, or even dinner engagements and romance without using a word first penned by the Bard.

In this activity, students will be introduced to some of these terms and gain a new appreciation for Shakespeare. Each card contains a word first penned by Shakespeare, its definition, derivation, and the play(s) in which it first appeared.

You will need:

Shakespeare Taboo cards, a one minute timer

Instructions:

1. Print the next three pages of this Study Guide and cut them into cards, each with one word that Shakespeare coined.
2. Divide class into two teams, sitting on opposite sides of the room.
3. Decide which team will go first. Each team has one minute.
4. One person from that team is the "giver," who takes the top card and attempts to prompt his or her teammates to guess the word at the top.
5. While the giver is prompting the teammates they may make as many guesses as they want with no penalties for wrong guesses.
6. Once the team correctly guesses the word exactly as written on the card, the giver sits down and the next person from his/her team moves on to the next word on the next card, trying to get as many words as possible in the allotted time.
7. A player may choose to “pass,” and give the next player from their team their card. When time runs out, play passes to the other team.
8. The playing team receives one point for correct guesses.
9. When you’ve gone through all of the cards, the team with the best score wins.

Rules:

Unlike traditional Taboo, the "giver" may use any information on the card as well as break the word down into syllables or get his teammates to say words that rhyme with the word or a syllable in the word. For instance, if the word is “dwindle”, the student may say, “This word means to decrease or shrink. It has two syllables. The first syllable rhymes with thin. The second syllable sounds like a word for not sharp (dull).” The giver may only use speech to prompt his or her teammates; gestures, sounds (e.g. barking), or drawings are not allowed.



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AROUSE (v)

To stir or waken; to excite

Shakespeare added the prefix *a-*. *arouse* is formed from the verb *rouse* which in Middle English had as its original sense “to shake the feathers” describing the behavior of hawks trained for hunting.

2 Henry VI, The Two Noble Kinsmen

SWAGGER (v)

To bluster or walk arrogantly; to act superior; to bully

Perhaps from the Norwegian word *svagga* (“to sway in walking”)

A Midsummer Night's Dream, Troilus and Cressida, 2 Henry IV

CRITIC (n)

One who passes judgement or expresses a reasoned opinion; reviewer

From the Greek verb *krinein*, “to judge or decide.”

Love's Labors Lost

ASSASSINATION (n)

Murder of a prominent person

The noun *assassin* appeared in English in the 13th c deriving from an Arabic word denoting a sectarian group whose members took hashish or marijuana before killing a king or public figure. From the Arabic root of *assassin*, meaning “eater of hashish.”

Macbeth

MOONBEAM (n)

Ray of reflected light from the moon

Shakespeare was the first to coin the compound word

A Midsummer Night's Dream

EMPLOYER (n)

One who makes use of or hires.

Shakespeare added the suffix *er-* From the Latin *implicare* (“to enfold or involve”). In some Shakespeare texts, the noun is spelled *imploier*.

Much Ado About Nothing

PUKE (v)

To vomit

Possibly from the Old English *spiwan* (“to spew or spit”) and the modern German verb with the same meaning, *spucken*.

As You Like It

BUMP (n)

Swelling or raised spot on a surface

Both noun and verb are probably onomatopoeic, reflecting the sound of a blow. Shakespeare's *bump* is a swelling that might be caused by a blow.

Romeo and Juliet

FARMHOUSE (n)

Farmer's home; rural dwelling

Farm is from the fourteenth century from the Old French term meaning “lease,” based on the Latin verb *firmare*, “to make firm.” Shakespeare coined the compound word, hyphenating it as *farm-house*.

The Merry Wives of Windsor

BEDROOM (n)

Space for sleeping; area in or for a bed

Shakespeare uses *bed-room* to mean “room or space within a bed,” not the modern “room with a bed.”

A Midsummer Night's Dream

CIRCUMSTANTIAL (adj)

Indirect; dependent upon circumstances or situation

Shakespeare added the suffix *ial-* to the noun *circumstance*, which refers to the incidental or “surrounding” details (such as time, place, manner or occasion) or an action

As You Like It

FLAWED (adj)

Imperfect; showing a weakness or imperfection

Shakespeare coined the adjective, based on the Middle English *flaw*, meaning “flake or chip.”

King Lear, Henry VIII

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FORTUNE-TELLER (n)

Seer or prophet; one who professes to see the future

Shakespeare was the first to coin the compound word.

The Comedy of Errors, The Merry Wives of Windsor

MIMIC (n)

Performer skilled at imitating or aping

From the Greek mimos for “mime or actor.”

A Midsummer Night's Dream of Errors, The Merry Wives of Windsor

DWINDLE (v)

To decrease or shrink; to become less

Probably based on Middle English *dwine*, meaning “to waste away”.

1 Henry IV, Macbeth

FRUGAL (adj)

Sparing; thrifty or economical

Based on the Latin *frugalis*, derived from *frux* for “fruit” or “value.”

The Merry Wives of Windsor, Much Ado About Nothing

ADDICTION (n)

Leaning or inclination; devotion to a habit

From the Latin *addicere*, meaning “to favor.”

Henry V, Othello

MANAGER (n)

One who controls or directs; person in charge

From the Latin *manus*, “hand.”

Love's Labor's Lost, A Midsummer Night's Dream

GENEROUS (adj)

Of noble birth; kind; freely giving or liberal

From the Latin *genus* (“birth” or “decent”).

Love's Labors Lost

LUGGAGE (n)

Something lugged; baggage belonging to a traveler

From the verb *lug*, from Middle English *luggen*, “to pull or drag by the hair or ear.”

1 Henry IV, The Tempest

PREMEDITATED (adj)

Contemplated or thought about beforehand; planned

From the Latin prefix *prae-*, “before,” and the verb *meditari*

1 Henry VI, A Midsummer Night's Dream

LONELY (adj)

Having no companionship; feeling cut off or desolate

Coined from alone, from the Old English combination of *al* (“all”) and *an* (“one”).

Coriolanus, The Winter's Tale

EYEBALL (n)

Rounded capsule that forms the eye; organ for vision

Eye may be traced back to Old English and Germanic roots. Shakespeare was the first to use the compound word.

A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Tempest

UNAWARE (adv)

Unknowingly; suddenly; without warning

From the Old English *waer*, “careful or wary.”

Venus and Adonis, 3 Henry VI

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GLOOMY (adj)

Dark and dismal; depressing

Shakespeare coined the adjective from the earlier verb *gloom*, meaning “to look, feel or act sullen or despondent.”

1 Henry V

WORTHLESS (adj)

Having no value or merit; contemptible

Shakespeare added the suffix to the Old English root *weorth* (“worthy”)

3 Henry VI, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Titus Andronicus, 1 Henry VI, 2 Henry VI

SHOOTING-STAR (n)

Meteor appearing like a streak of light

Shakespeare coined this compound word

Richard II

HURRY (v)

To rush or move quickly

Of unknown origin.

The Comedy of Errors, Venus and Adonis

SKIM-MILK (n)

Milk with its cream removed

Shakespeare coined this compound word

1 Henry IV, A Midsummer Night's Dream

VULNERABLE (adj)

Immune to harm or injury, having no weakness

From the Latin, *vulnerare*, “to wound or injure.”

Invulnerable: *King John, Hamlet, The Tempest*
Vulnerable: *Macbeth*

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Activities: Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is Orlando Shakespeare Theater's primary tool for unlocking Shakespeare's text, both in the classroom and for our professional company. What is the definition of paraphrasing?

Paraphrase: n. a rewording of the meaning of something spoken or written.

Example:

When the Adriana complains about marriage and says,

"There's none but asses will be bridled so."

She figuratively means, "Only stupid women let men rule them."

Exercise:

When Dromio of Ephesus says to his twin brother, Dromio of Syracuse...

Dromio of Ephesus:

Methinks you are my glass, and not my brother.

I see by you I am a sweet-faced youth.



He figuratively means...

(write your own
paraphrasing in the
bubble below)

Dromio of Ephesus:



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Activities: Write a Review

Explain to students that the director's job is to take the words on the script from the printed page to the stage and bring them to life. Explain that theater critics review shows and publish their opinions. For AmericanTheatreCritics.org, critic Sherry Eaker wrote, "My point of view was that it wasn't the theatre critic's place to tell the playwright what he or she should be doing; instead, the critic should focus on what is already there and explain either why it works or why it doesn't work."

After seeing the production, have each student write a review of Orlando Shakes' production. The review should include one paragraph each for:

Introduction – What did you watch, where and when, and maybe, why?

The script – Did you like the writing, the story, the characters? Why or why not?

The acting – Did you believe and care about the characters as portrayed? Why or why not?

The design – Did you like the set, costume and light designs? Why or why not?

The staging – How did the director stage the violence? Was it effective?

The audience – What ways did the audience respond to particular moments?

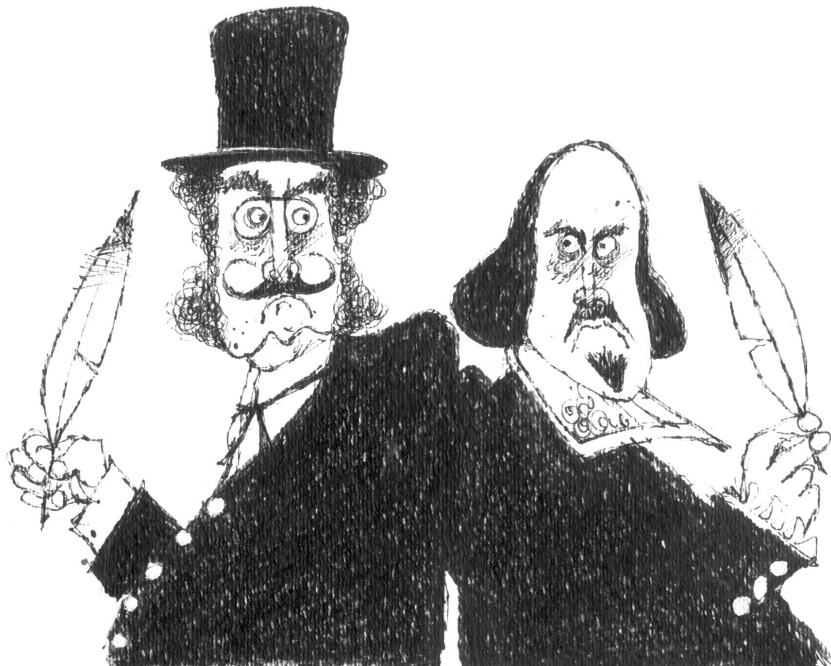
Conclusion – What will you remember about this performance?

If you wish, send your reviews to us at: anneh@orlandoshakes.org

We'd love to hear your opinions of our show!

Read more: How to Become a Theater Critic

ehow.com/how_2079002_become-theater-critic.html#ixzz1v9tEyMnc



The Comedy of Errors

Discussion & Themes

1. Consider the title of the play. Why do you think Shakespeare chose it? How many mistaken identities occur in the play?
2. Is there something about love or being in love that makes us do or think things we normally would not do? Have there been any experiences in your own life that are similar to what happens in the play?
3. How powerful are words? Think of words that have power, such as hate, love, war, anger. What makes these words powerful? How careful should you be when using these words?



Identity

**"I to the world am like a drop of water
That in the ocean seeks another drop,
Who, falling there to find his fellow forth -
Unseen, inquisitive - confounds himself.
(Antipholus of Syracuse, Act 1 Scene 2)**

Honor

**"O, villain, thou hast stol'n both
mine office and my name:
The one ne'er got me credit, the
other mickle blame.
(Dromio of Ephesus, Act 3
Scene 1)**

Deception

**"Ill deeds is doubled with an evil word."
Luciana, Act 3, Scene 2**

Information courtesy of folger.edu, www.william-shakespeare.info, online-literature.com, playshakespeare.com, bard.org, enotes.com, famousshakespearequotes.net, osfashland.org, shmoop.com, Coined by Shakespeare by Stanley Malles, Jeffrey McQuain, R. O. Blechman