

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

By William Shakespeare

November 12-27, 2005

STUDY GUIDE AND RESOURCES

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Nay, let them go, a couple of quiet ones.

–Baptista, III.ii.238

COMING TO THE THEATRE

 **Educators, the following is an overview of general theatre etiquette which may be useful to review with your students before attending a performance:**

Plays are written to be performed **live** in front of an audience. Each performance is unique—no two occur in exactly the same way. In television and film, there is a removed distance between the performer and spectator. In theatre, the audience sees and hears the actors, and the actors see and hear the audience. The participation of the audience is therefore a key component of how the play unfolds—indeed, the audience often becomes part of the story. Characters may speak directly to you!

Here's how to be a part of the play in a way that everyone—audience, actor, and crew—can enjoy:

1. **It's perfectly all right to laugh, cry, gasp, or applaud** if the play makes you feel like doing so. You're there to experience the story, after all. It could not be told without you, and it is more than acceptable to experience and share your feelings with the actors in a way that does not disrupt the performance (i.e. standing up and telling a character what you think of them—it's probably safe to assume that that's disruptive!).
2. **Do not talk with fellow audience members during the performance**—you might miss something important or distract other audience members. Share your thoughts during intermission or after the performance.
3. **Please keep anything that makes noise back at school or in the bus.** If you have to have a cell phone, beeping watch, or other object that may make noise with you, turn it off. For safety's sake and the enjoyment of the play, all electronic gadgets should be off and stowed in jackets, purses, or on the bus. That includes I-Pods, Gameboys, Walkmans, PDAs, or any other devices.
4. **Do not eat or drink in the theatre.**
5. **NO PHOTOGRAPHS with a camera or cell phone camera.** Flashes can be dangerous to actors onstage working in a darkened theatre. Even without a flash, photographs during the live performance are against performing industry rules. Your film will be confiscated or pictures erased.

You can help us create an exciting imaginary world by working with the actors to tell the story together. Remember, it is a special occasion when people gather to experience a live performance—other audiences won't see the same show you will. We can all **play a role** in making it a memorable experience. Enjoy!

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT AND ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

In April 1564 in Stratford-on-Avon, England, William Shakespeare was born. The world celebrates his birth on April 23rd, three days prior to his recorded baptism, because this was the customary period between birth and the ceremony. John and Mary Shakespeare had six children—William was the oldest.

No records exist to verify that William Shakespeare had a formal education. However, as the son of a city official, he was eligible to attend petty school (like kindergarten), followed by King Edward IV's New School for 7-14 year old boys. The curriculum included Latin literature, Greek, grammar, arithmetic and possibly rhetoric. If William's father's finances had not taken a turn for the worse, the completion of this schooling would have made him eligible for Oxford or Cambridge.

Eighteen-year old William married Anne Hathaway, the 26 year-old daughter of a local farmer, and six months later their daughter Susana was born. In 1585, two years later, twins Judith and Hamnet were born. Shakespeare was 21 years old and had to support a wife and three children. It is possible that he was able to do this by performing with a troupe of traveling players. Shakespeare eventually left his wife and family behind in Stratford to go to London and earn a living writing and performing in the theatre. He continued to visit his family in the country and work in the city until his retirement in 1611.

After just 6 years in London, William Shakespeare had made a name for himself as both an actor and playwright. By 1594, he was a partner in one of the most prestigious theatre companies, the Lord Chamberlain's Men—where he was both the star actor and poet. He wrote approximately two plays a year during his time in London—and is credited with a total of 38 plays, 2 extended poems and numerous sonnets. After a prolific career as a writer and years of critical acclaim as an actor, Shakespeare died in the city of his birth, Stratford, on April 23, 1616.

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND

Elizabeth I ruled England from 1558 to 1603 during a period of relative peace and prosperity. The daughter of Henry VIII and his second wife, Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth was regarded by many Catholics as an illegitimate child and monarch. The politics of religion constantly threatened Elizabeth's reign even though it was one of the most sure that England had known for hundreds of years. She had no heir, and the matter of succession was a disturbing threat to national security.

Elizabethan England was a smaller, more isolated country than it had been previously or would be later. The exploration of the New World was just beginning, and the nation's economy was based in agriculture. The plague was ravishing England's cities, killing 11,000 Londoners in 1593 alone.

James I of England, or James VI of Scotland, succeeded Elizabeth to the crown in 1603. The first monarch to rule over England, Scotland, and Ireland simultaneously, he was a respected intellectual, albeit, some would argue, a political failure: the conflicts of his rule became the seeds of the English Civil War during his son's reign. Shakespeare's later plays were written during James' reign. (In fact, one of James' scholarly works, the *Daemonologie* of 1599, is sometimes considered one of Shakespeare's minor sources for *Macbeth*.)

ELIZABETHAN THEATRE

James Burbage built the first commercial theatre in England in 1576, about 15 years before Shakespeare arrived on the London theatre scene. Burbage managed to skirt rigid rules governing entertainment in London by building his theatre just outside the city limit, in the less-than-glamorous community of “Shoreditch.” The name was a reflection of the theatre’s location, on the shore of the river Thames and just beyond the ditch created by the walls of London.

Many different kinds of people came to the Globe Theatre, where Shakespeare’s plays were performed. A full house would hold 3,000 audience members. (By comparison, the UWM Peck School of the Arts Mainstage Theatre, where the Milwaukee Shakespeare production takes place, has a maximum capacity of 486.) They arrived well before the play began to meet friends, drink ale and eat snacks sold at the theatre. It was more akin to a football game or rock concert than our understanding of going to the theatre today.

Wealthy theatergoers paid two or three pence for gallery seats (above the stage), while the “common folk” stood for a penny on the floor in front of the stage. They were a demanding audience, and Shakespeare had the challenge of appealing to every level of society when writing his plays.

All performances took place during the day (electric lighting instruments wouldn’t exist for a few centuries) and sets and props were basic.

Most plays only rehearsed for a couple of days due to the large volume of productions. All actors were male; the female roles were played by young men. It was not until 1660 that women would be allowed to act on the English stage.

In 1642, the Puritans succeeded in closing the theatres altogether. They did not reopen until Charles II came to power 18 years later. The Globe Theatre (the second to be built after the first burned down during a production of *Henry VIII*) was later destroyed in the Great Fire of London in 1666.

“CODEBREAK” THE LANGUAGE

WHY THE POETRY?

Why do we admire a great writer or performer of lyrics, novels, screenplays, or even improvisational or stand-up comedy?

Picking the reasons apart, the most common responses are usually that 1) they know how to use language—vocabulary, punctuation, rhyme, etc.—in a way that tells a meaningful and entertaining story to an audience, and 2) they can deliver it with timing and intention that makes their story clear.

Shakespeare’s scripts are no different.

Like any other wordsmith, he uses vocabulary, rhyme, and rhythm to suggest emotions, relationships and motivations. Did people in Shakespeare’s day speak in rhymed verse? No, of course not—no more than we speak in rap. But then and now, people have enjoyed the rhythms and rhyme of verse—and sometimes the language and rhythm of verse tunes us in more immediately, more completely to the feelings and choices of characters. It’s why people listen to the blues; to hip-hop; to classical music—it’s simply another medium of language and sound which gives us an immediate emotional rhythm with which we can identify.

HOW FOREIGN IS ELIZABETHAN ENGLISH?

The most important thing to remember when preparing to read or hear Shakespeare is that ***it’s still English***. As we might listen to a new song on an album or on the radio a few times before we pick up every word and layer of meaning, we might have to mull over a passage of a play a few times in order to glean meaning from the language tools Shakespeare employs. And that’s not just students of Shakespeare; that’s Shakespearean actors, directors, designers, scholars—anyone who might be considered, pardon the pun, *well-versed* in the language already!

A basic knowledge of the use of language and poetic form can enhance understanding and enjoyment of Shakespeare's plays.

"Shakespeare's vocabulary was immense; it is estimated that he used more than 20,000 root words in his plays, almost half of all the words then existing in English. No writer before or since has so mastered the lexicon of his or her own tongue.

His plays contain thousands of precise allusions: some 70 trees, 75 flowers, 90 nautical terms, 125 four-footed animals, 175 birds, and 250 mythological characters. He quoted or cited from 42 books of the Bible (he was ecumenical; his citations include references from 18 books of the Old Testament, 18 of the New, and 6 from the Apocrypha!) as well as from over 100 literary and historical works. His plays contain phrases, lines, speeches, and sometimes whole scenes in French, Welsh, Latin, and Italian. No one in his original audience could have understood, certainly not at one hearing, all the words in his plays – and his plays were, consequently, written with that in mind. Indeed, many of the obscure and difficult words in Shakespeare were meant to be obscure and difficult; they were obscure and difficult in Shakespeare's day as well as ours."

-from Robert Cohen's *Acting in Shakespeare*

👉 **Below are several "tools for the toolbox": language devices Shakespeare often employs and which you can use to get to know his style of playwriting.**

VERSE VS. PROSE

Shakespeare employs several forms of language in his plays: prose, blank verse, and rhymed verse. **Prose** is what we think of as everyday speech, without specific rules of rhyme and rhythm. **Verse**, then, can be defined as giving order, or form, to the random stress pattern of prose. This repeating combination of stressed and unstressed syllables is known as a **foot**, which is the basic unit of verse. An **iamb**, or **iambic foot**, is a foot of poetry containing two syllables, with an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable:

"ta DUM."

BLANK VERSE: UNRHYMED IAMBIC PENTAMETER

Blank Verse is the standard poetic form Shakespeare uses in his plays. It can also be defined as **unrhymed iambic pentameter**. That is, a line of poetry containing five ("penta" meaning five) iambic feet, not rhyming with any adjacent line. That's ten syllables all together. The pattern flows easily for speakers of English, and the stresses match the human heart beat - "ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM." If you say "I went downtown to buy a card today" with normal inflection, you will have spoken a line of iambic pentameter:

i WENT | down TOWN | to BUY | a CARD | to DAY

Now say a line from *The Taming of the Shrew*—part of Kate's determination to go to her bridal dinner:

I see a woman may be made a fool

or

i SEE | a WO | man MAY | be MADE | a FOOL

Shakespeare does not slavishly follow the rhythm in every line. He occasionally varies the stresses or uses a period in the middle of a line, which causes us to pause longer. Nor does every line contain exactly ten syllables. Some lines may contain an added syllable, others may drop a syllable. Shakespeare's most common variation in iambic pentameter is the use of the **feminine ending** – lines of text which add an unstressed eleventh syllable. For example, read Kate's speech to her father, paying close attention to the first two lines of verse:

What, will you not suffer me? Nay, now I see
She is your treasure, she must have a husband,
I must dance barefoot on her wedding-day,
And for your love to her lead apes in hell.

or (looking at the second line)

she IS | your TREA | sure, SHE | must HAVE | a HUS | band

Interesting in this line is also the fact that the pronoun “she” falls in a stressed syllable position; usually pronouns are not stressed, but in this position “she” focuses the split between Katherina’s and Bianca’s prospects.

SHARED LINES & SPLIT LINES

Shakespeare sometimes splits a line of verse, so that two characters share the ten syllables. This is called a **shared line** or **split line**, and helps show quick thinking or strong emotion, as well as creating a sense of accelerated action. Thus we have both the effect of poetry AND of natural speech. Examine I.ii.194-195 from *The Taming of the Shrew*, in which Petruchio’s servant Grumio asks him the following:

Grumio	But will you woo this wildcat?
Petruchio	Will I live?

RHYMED VERSE

Rhymed Verse consists of lines which rhyme at the end, usually in either an ABAB rhyme scheme or in **couplets** or pairs. Shakespeare sometimes uses rhymed verse to signal a character's heightened emotional state and couplets are common at the conclusion of an act or scene. Many rhymed couplets all together give a lighter tone to a speech. Note the rhymed verse of several characters near the end of the play (V.ii.181-186):

Petruchio	Why, there’s a wench! Come on, and kiss me, Kate.
Lucentio	Well, go thy ways, old lad, for thou shalt ha’t.
Vincentio	‘Tis a good hearing, when children are toward.
Lucentio	But a harsh hearing, when women are forward.
Petruchio	Come, Kate, we’ll to bed.
	We three are married, but you two are sped.

SOLILOQUIES & ASIDES

A passage such as Petruchio’s plan of IV.i.175-198 is called a **soliloquy**, which is a speech in which a character is not speaking to any other character in the play, but is thinking out loud and thus speaking truth as far as he or she understands it. An **aside** is a passage of text, where the lines are delivered directly to the audience. Look at III.i.45-48, in which Hortensio shares his suspicion that Lucentio is wooing Bianca for himself:

Hortensio	Madam, ‘tis now in tune.
Lucentio	All but the bass.
Hortensio	The bass is right, ‘tis the base knave that jars.
	[<i>Aside.</i>] How fiery and forward our pedant is.
	Now, for my life, the knave doth court my love.
	Pedascule, I’ll watch you better yet.

ABOUT *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW*

CLASSIFYING THE PLAY

Undoubtedly *The Taming of the Shrew* is one of Shakespeare's earliest comedies, and, like *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, it is partially domestic: the play opens in Warwickshire, with a tinker and tavernkeeper, a country house, players, and a lord hunting with his attendants before it ever moves to Italy. (Milwaukee Shakespeare's production, in order to highlight the story as one about players, honors the "domesticity" of the initial action by placing it in post-Elizabethan England but shifts the tavern setting directly to the backstage of a theatre.)

Interesting to note is that *The Taming of the Shrew* is the only play in which Shakespeare includes an Induction (a preface or prologue). In the modern sense of the word, an induction is both a ceremony in which someone is given an office and the presentation of evidence in support of an argument. These meanings in view of the prank on Christopher Sly—his "induction" as a lord as well as the pranksters assembling a play for him to see—gently suggest to the reader or audience member that the "taming" plotline may have more behind it than it seems. Many productions of *Shrew* cut the Induction for performance, but in attending the Milwaukee Shakespeare production, it may be valuable to consider how these initial scenes are necessary to a richer experience of the play-within-a-play.

The Taming of the Shrew first appeared in print with the Folio of 1623, but some scholars date its first performance back to 1592-1593—even as far back as 1589. *The Comedy of Errors* is typically considered Shakespeare's first comedy, but the growth in writing skill and the more complex view of women in marriage which appears in *Comedy* through the character of Adriana point to the possibility that *Shrew* preceded it.

INFLUENCES AND SOURCES ON THE WRITING

According to Brian Morris, editor of the Arden edition of the play, one of the major sources for *The Taming of the Shrew* includes George Gascoigne's *Supposes* of 1566, a translation of Ariosto's *I Suppositi* which had made its way to the English stage. In the Prologue of the comedy, the playwright says, "A *Suppose* is nothing else but a mistaking or imagination of one thing for an other," and the disguise and trickery which the comedy contains reflects itself thematically and directly in *The Taming of the Shrew*. Beyond the disguises which Bianca's suitors don in order to woo her and trick her father, and beyond the outrageous mask Petruchio assumes in order to "tame" Katherina, is the very fact that the majority of the play is itself a trick: a group of players "pulling one over on" a drunk.

The prank on a drunk tinker was, in fact, another one of Shakespeare's sources—it was an oft-used conceit in English comedy in the 1590s. As soon as the character appeared, audiences would know what he was in for—and the disguises or plays-within-plays which followed could therefore pursue any number of tracks in order to teach him a lesson, make a fool of him, or simply become a showcase for the prowess of the pranksters. Christopher Sly, the victim of the trick in *The Taming of the Shrew*, joins the ranks as perhaps the best-remembered.

IF YOU LIKE *SHREW*...

Consider these other plays or films which handle similar characters or circumstances as the plot of *The Taming of the Shrew* or the milieu of Milwaukee Shakespeare's production:

- ✦ 17-th CENTURY: *The Woman's Prize: or, The Tamer Tamed*. John Fletcher's 1611 comedy features the return of Petruchio. Widowed, he has re-married—and his new wife Maria decides to turn the tables on him with the help of his former sister-in-law, Bianca.
- ✦ CONTEMPORARY: *Compleat Female Stage Beauty*. Jeffrey Hatcher's play, recently adapted into the film *Stage Beauty* with Claire Danes and Billy Crudup, explores art and gender through the Restoration-era introduction of women onto the English stage.
- ✦ CONTEMPORARY: *Shakespeare in Love*. This Tom Stoppard-penned screenplay handles in part the "day-to-day" of Elizabethan actors and playmaking, including the convention of men playing women onstage.
- ✦ CONTEMPORARY, LIGHT FARE: *10 Things I Hate About You*. One in a long list of light-fare youth-Hollywood retellings of Shakespearean plots, this film sets the general storyline of *The Taming of the Shrew* in a high school with Petruchio as an exchange student from Down Under.

PEOPLE AND PLACES

As seen in the 2005 Milwaukee Shakespeare production

PEOPLE

RESIDENT THEATRE COMPANY

Christopher Sly/Pedant
Actor Manager/Vincentio, *a rich citizen of Pisa, father of Lucentio*
Bathol'mew/Woman-servant/Widow
Stagehand/Servant/Officer
Stagehand/Curtis, *head servant at Petruchio's house*
Stagehand/Tailor
Stagehand/Haberdasher

TRAVELING THEATRE COMPANY

Actor Manager/Baptista Minola
Actor/Katherina, *the Shrew, elder daughter of Baptista*
Actor/Petruchio, *a gentleman of Verona, suitor to Katherina*
Actor/Grumio, *Petruchio's personal servant*
Actor/Bianca, *younger daughter of Baptista*
Actor/Gremio, *rich old citizen of Padua, suitor to Bianca*
Actor/Hortensio, *gentleman of Padua, suitor to Bianca*
Actor/Lucentio, *a gentleman of Pisa, suitor to Bianca*
Actor/Tranio, *manservant to Lucentio*
Actor/Biondello, *boy-servant to Lucentio*

PLACES

Backstage at an English theatre, 1669
In the play: Padua and Verona

THE PLOT

In an English theatre, Christopher Sly passes out after an argument with his Actor-Manager. When a troupe of traveling actors arrives at the theatre, the Actor-Manager enlists their help to play a trick on Sly. He dresses Sly as a wealthy nobleman and insists that another member of the resident company, Barthol'mew, pose as Sly's wife. Sly awakens only to be convinced that he dreamed his beggarly existence, and the players present the following story for him:

Lucentio comes to Padua with the intention of studying at the university. On his way into town, he meets Baptista and his two daughters Katherine and Bianca, along with Bianca's rivaling suitors, Gremio and Hortensio. Baptista insists that Bianca shall not marry before her older sister Katherine (called Kate). Kate's prospects do not look good. Though beautiful, she is widely considered a shrew. Lucentio falls in love with Bianca immediately and plans to pose as a Latin tutor so that he can woo her in secret. His servant Tranio dons Lucentio's clothes, poses as his master, and puts his hat in the ring for Bianca's hand.

Petruchio also disembarks in Padua to visit his friend Hortensio and search for a rich wife. When he learns of Kate, he immediately vows to woo her. Meanwhile, Hortensio disguises himself as a music tutor so that he too can secretly meet Bianca.

Petruchio arrives at Baptista's house with Gremio and Hortensio. Thrilled, if slightly shocked, that someone is interested in his daughter, Baptista begins to work out the marriage plans. A battle of wits begins as Petruchio endeavors to woo Kate. Petruchio's compliments turn into teases and Kate, angered to the extreme by his attitude, strikes him. When her father enters, Kate declares that Petruchio is a lunatic and she would rather see him hanged than marry him. Petruchio, placidly ignoring her, insists that the wedding will take place on Sunday and saunters off.

Upon this affirmation, Bianca's suitors Gremio and Tranio (still disguised as his master Lucentio), celebrate Bianca's availability. Baptista agrees that the richer of the two may wed Bianca. Tranio as Lucentio, declaring he has unlimited funds, wins with the condition that his father guarantee his wealth.

On Sunday everyone gathers for Kate's wedding, but the groom is late. Katherina is furious. When Petruchio finally arrives with his servant Grumio, both are dressed outrageously and embarrassingly behaved. After the ceremony is performed, Petruchio refuses to stay for the reception and drags Kate away.


The newlyweds travel home, where Petruchio continues to rave like a maniac. He declares that everything in his household must be perfect for his bride, and in doing so prevents her from eating and sleeping. This strategy to wear her down continues for days until the pair makes a return journey to Padua.

In Padua, Lucentio's other servant Biondello has found a Pedant on the street to masquerade as Lucentio's father, Vincentio. Having met whom he believes to be Lucentio's father, Baptista consents to the union. Meanwhile, Biondello arranges for a priest and witnesses at a church nearby to conduct a speedy ceremony between Bianca and the real Lucentio.


At the same time, the real Vincentio arrives at Baptista's house and fumes to find Tranio dressed as his son and a Pedant claiming his own identity. Lucentio and Bianca return to announce their marriage and set things straight.

At Bianca's wedding feast, the husbands compare wives, including Hortensio, who has married a widow. When the women leave the room, the men make a bet to see whose wife will come when called. No one is able to anticipate who will win the bet....

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS

 **Educators, feel free to use the following questions, activities, and lesson plans for your study of *The Taming of the Shrew* both prior to and after attending a performance. Some questions may also be appropriate as essay topics.**

PERFORMANCE TEXT INFORMATION

 Milwaukee Shakespeare's production of *The Taming of the Shrew* is using The Arden Shakespeare edition as its rehearsal/performance text, with an arrangement of the Induction by director Susan Finque: Shakespeare, William. *The Taming of the Shrew*. Ed. Brian Morris. Singapore: Arden Shakespeare, Thomson Learning, 2002. ISBN 1-903436-10-9 (pbk). Visit the Arden website at <http://www.ardenshakespeare.com> for more information.

STORY COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS BY ACT

INDUCTION

1. Who is Sly, and what is the conflict between him and the Hostess (or Tapster)?
2. What does the Lord decide to do with Sly? What are the orders he gives his men?
3. Who arrives at the Lord's manor (or, in the case of the production, the theatre)? What orders does he give them?
4. What are the orders the Lord sends to his Page?
5. What entertainment is Sly to receive?

ACT I

1. Why has Lucentio come to Padua? What advice does his servant Tranio give him?
2. Why is Baptista allowing no suitors to woo his youngest daughter Bianca?
3. What does he ask Bianca's would-be suitors?
4. What do Bianca's would-be suitors, Hortensio and Gremio, plot to do?
5. What has happened to Lucentio by observing this scene? What does he want?
6. What do Tranio and Lucentio propose to each other in order to achieve Lucentio's goal?
7. What story do they tell Biondello, Lucentio's other servant, in order to keep Lucentio's secret plan from him?
8. Why has Petruchio come to Padua?
9. How does Hortensio use his reason to further his own ends? How does he suggest Petruchio present him to Baptista, and for what purposes?
10. Whom has Gremio hired to tutor Bianca in poetry?
11. Tranio enters as Lucentio, and the other suitors discover his intent to woo Bianca as well. Where does Tranio invite all of the suitors?

ACT II

1. Who is arguing at the beginning of the Act, and why?
2. What proposal does Petruchio present to Baptista?
3. Describe who has brought whom to tutor the ladies: who are the suitors? Who is in disguise?
4. What is the dowry upon which Petruchio and Baptista settle?
5. Who is injured by Katherina, and how?
6. Petruchio reveals his initial plans to woo Kate before she enters—how, in sum, does he intend to counteract her railing?
7. Because of Petruchio's declaration that Kate has agreed to marry him, what contest can then take place before Baptista? What specific goods are put up as offers? What is Baptista's final decision?
8. What does Tranio (disguised as Lucentio) do to satisfy Baptista?

ACT III

1. How do Lucentio and Hortensio in turn woo Bianca in the first scene? Does Hortensio suspect Lucentio? What does Lucentio confess to Bianca during the lesson?
2. What's the major crisis on the day of Kate and Petruchio's wedding?
3. How does Biondello describe Petruchio's appearance in approaching the wedding?
4. When Baptista entreats Petruchio to change his clothes, what reason does he give for refusing?
5. What is Tranio's next task to help Lucentio win Bianca?
6. When the bulk of the wedding party leaves, what does Lucentio share that he wants to accomplish?
7. Describe the wedding ceremony as Gremio recounts it.
8. What does Petruchio announce after the wedding?

ACT IV

1. Grumio shares the events of Katherine and Petruchio's trip home with Curtis. Describe what has happened along the way.
2. When Kate and Petruchio arrive, what complaints does Petruchio make against the servants and supper? How does Kate respond?
3. After Kate has been left in the bridal chamber, Petruchio shares the method of his "taming" so far and plots out what he will try next. What is it he plans to do?
4. Back in Padua, what do Tranio (disguised as Lucentio) and Hortensio witness? What oath do they make to each other as a result?
5. How does Bianca respond to the comment that Hortensio will also tame the widow he plans to marry?
6. What is Tranio's next task?
7. How does Tranio convince the Pedant to play the role he suggests?
8. What is Kate's argument with Grumio about?
9. What complaint does Petruchio find against both the haberdasher and the tailor? How does Kate react?
10. Who has become Petruchio's partner in crime in his plans? (see #6 for a clue)
11. Why are Kate and Petruchio's plans to feast at her father's house ruined?
12. What are Tranio and the Pedant able to accomplish on Lucentio's behalf?
13. How does Petruchio test Kate as they prepare once again to travel to Padua? How does she respond?
14. Whom does Kate call a young girl? Why is he traveling? What news do they give him?

ACT V

1. Who harasses Vincentio at the window of his son's house? What conflict and danger does this present?
2. Whom does Biondello swear by? What will happen to Vincentio as a result?
3. When Lucentio and Bianca return from church, how is the situation resolved?
4. Kate and Petruchio have one final exchange before following the crowd. What is it about?
5. Kate is ready for a fight at the feast—with whom, and why?
6. What bet do the husbands make about their wives?
7. Who wins the bet, and why?
8. What does Kate say to Bianca and the Widow?

SELECTED VOCABULARY LIST

Definitions taken from Arden edition footnotes and Schmidt's Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary

affied	betrothed
beetle-headed	stupid
burden	musical accompaniment
cavil	a frivolous objection
compound	settle (in <i>Shrew</i> , a quarrel)
conserves	candied fruit
countenance	(v.) to greet
crupper	strap of leather reaching from the saddle to the tail of a horse
dresser	a table or sideboard
extempore	on the fly; with no previous meditation
face the matter out	get one's way
feeze	beat, flog, drive off
gamesome	fond of games, sportive
gamut	the musical scale (where the expression "run the gamut" comes from?)

gird	taunt
<i>Imprimis</i>	first
indifferent	not different (the same)
Jack	base or silly fellow
jade	worn-out horse, which soon tires
junkets	delicacies, sweetmeats
look what	whatever
meacock	weak, spiritless
<i>Mi perdonato</i>	excuse me
parle	parley
satiety	full gratification
sharp	starving
specialties	explicit contracts
sped	done for
thirdborough	petty constable of a township
trow	I dare say
turtle	turtle-dove, symbol of faithful love
untoward	unruly, perverse
watch	to keep awake

FOREIGN LANGUAGE/ ARCHAIC PHRASES & PROVERBS

Redime te captum quan queas minimo. (Latin)

Ransom yourself from captivity as cheaply as you can.

Con tutto il cuore ben trovato (Italian)

With all my heart well met.

Alla nostra casa ben venuto, molto honorato signor mio Petrucio. (Italian)

Welcome to our house, my much-honored Signor Petrucio.

“dance barefoot on her wedding day” (II.i.33, Kate): there was a custom in which elder unmarried sisters would have to dance barefoot on their sisters’ wedding day

“lead apes in hell” (II.i.34, Kate): because old maids had no children to lead them into heaven, they had to lead apes in hell

MIDDLE SCHOOL-LEVEL STUDIES

There are minor differences in questions between middle school and high school questions. Use this section or the next, whichever is most beneficial for your study.

This section covers Wisconsin DPI Standards: A.8.2, C.8.2, C.8.3, C.8.7, D.8.2, E.8.4, E.8.5
If attending any of the Milwaukee Shakespeare performances in conjunction with this guide: A.8.1

BEFORE ATTENDING THE PRODUCTION: FOR DISCUSSION

1. *Hot Topics.* a. Why do you think two people fall in love? b. Do you think things change between them once they get married? c. How do you think Kate and Petrucio feel about each other at the end of the play? d. What about Bianca and Lucentio? e. Or Hortensio and the Widow?
2. *Hot Topics.* As in the old cliché “opposites attract,” a. Do you think Kate and Petrucio are similar or different? b. In what ways? c. Read this line: “And where two raging fires meet together, They do consume the thing that feeds their fury” (II.i. 132-133). Do you think Kate and Petrucio are equal in any way? d. How so?
3. *Location.* a. Where does the action of the play take place? b. What about the play-within-the-play? c. How many places (cities) do the characters go to throughout the play-within-the-play? d. Why?
4. *The Shrew.* In earlier centuries, a shrew was equated with the devil or demons. Look for references to a “devilish spirit” and a “devil” in the script. a. To whom do these descriptions refer? b. Can anyone besides Kate be classified as a shrew? c. Why or why not?

5. *The Shrew Part 2*. Brian Morris lists several definitions of a shrew in his introduction to the Arden edition of the play:
- ◆ Around the 13th century, a “wicked, evil-disposed, or malignant man”
 - ◆ Around the end of the 14th century, the Devil himself
 - ◆ Around the 16th century, “a woman given to railing or scolding”
 - ◆ From a 1966 book on mammals of Western Europe: an active solitary surface dweller which suffers from lack of food in a few hours; one which fights mostly through loud squeaking matches; one which shows aggressive behavior at all times except when making love
- a. How many of these definitions can you apply to Kate or other “shrewish” characters in the play? b. Can you find examples from the script?
6. *Between Husband and Wife*. After Petruchio’s first meeting with Kate, he declares to her father and Bianca’s suitors, “If she and I be pleased, what’s that to you?/ ‘Tis bargain’d ‘twixt us twain, being alone,/ That she shall still be curst in company” (II.i.296-298). a. How does this keep Kate from disagreeing? b. Does Petruchio defend Kate in any way when he speaks to her father and the suitors? c. Why or why not?
7. *Practical Joke*. What do you think is the purpose of playing the practical joke on Christopher Sly—is there one besides simply making a fool of him?
8. *Parents & children*. a. How is the relationship between Kate and Baptista different than the relationship between Bianca and Baptista? b. Do you think Baptista loves Kate less than he does Bianca? c. Why or why not? d. How, in turn, can you describe the relationship between Lucentio and his father Vincentio? e. Are there similarities in how children treat their parents in this play, and vice versa?
9. *Sisters*. Compare and contrast sisters Bianca and Kate as they first appear and then as their characters unfold throughout the play. a. How are they *foils* (opposites) of each other in appearance? b. Are they foils of each other in personality and temperament? c. Why or why not?
10. *Music*. When and how does music play a role in helping drive the plot forward?
11. *Disguises*. a. How many instances can you find of characters disguising themselves as another? Give some examples. b. For what reasons do they do so? c. Are their disguises successful? d. When are they discovered, or when do they reveal themselves?
12. *Schooling*. Find places in the play in which the idea of schooling, teaching, or tutoring arises. Consider each case in light of the following phrase: “To teach is to learn.” Do the teachers learn anything from their students?
13. *Wooing*. Brian Morris calls Petruchio’s wooing of Katherina very straightforward, whereas Lucentio’s wooing of Bianca is full of disguise and deception. Petruchio and Lucentio’s tactics in relation to Baptista seem to be so to some degree; Petruchio is free to woo Kate but Lucentio begins his suit to Bianca without permission. a. Do you agree with Morris? b. Why or why not?
14. *Poetry vs. Prose*. In the Induction, the lords and servants speak to Sly in blank verse and Sly responds in prose. a. When does Sly’s language change? b. Why do you think it shifts?
15. *Servants and Masters*. Compare/contrast the relationship between Grumio and Petruchio with Tranio and Lucentio by looking at their initial entrances together: Grumio and Petruchio, I.ii; Tranio and Lucentio, I.i. a. How do the masters treat the servants? b. How do the servants respond to their masters?
16. *Costume Design*. Many characters within the shrew plot assume a physical disguise. Imagine you are a costume designer planning how to create not only costumes for the characters but additional disguises (ie: masks, cloaks, switching hats, etc.). How would you dress and re-dress each of the following characters: Lucentio as Cambio the tutor, Tranio as his master Lucentio, Hortensio as the tutor Litio, and the Pedant as Lucentio’s father Vincentio. Consider the following:
- ✦ Do you need to still make it clear to the audience who the character is despite his disguise? Why or why not?
 - ✦ Is it a well-made disguise or not so well-made?
 - ✦ Do others believe in the disguise? Is there any point at which the disguise may fail?

17. *The Taming*. Look at the passages in which Petruchio reveals the methods he will use to tame Kate to the audience (II.i.168-181, IV.i.175-198). a. What does he plan to do? b. By the fourth act of the play, how is his plan working? c. Has Kate been tamed? d. In what ways?
18. *End of the Play*. a. Why do you think Sly never speaks again in the text of the play after the Induction is over? b. Give some reasons as to why you think the play caused the silence of Sly and his companions. c. If Sly were to speak again, what do you think he and/or his companions would say? Would he ever interrupt the play?
19. *Everything Important Happens Onstage*. a. When do you think Kate and Petruchio are first attracted to each other? b. Where do you think we, as the audience, can see a shift from confrontation to affection occur? c. Can you point to clues in the text of the play?
20. *The Wager on Obedience*. The bet the husbands make at the end of the play is seen by the characters as proof that Petruchio has finally tamed Kate. Look at the scene closely, re-examining all of Petruchio's lines to Kate and her responses while considering the assumptions that 1) they are in love, and 2) Petruchio wants to give Kate every possible opportunity to show up everyone who has denigrated her. a. Can you discover anything new about the scene by reading it with these motivations in mind? b. Is there another way to view the scene?
21. *Director's viewpoint*. While the basic text of a play does not change, each production of the play will be different. One reason for this is that the director of each production will choose to emphasize different questions or themes that arise in the play. This shade of difference, which binds all the elements of a particular production together, is sometimes referred to as the *director's viewpoint*—because the director focuses on telling the story of the play from their chosen angle. If you were a director planning to take on *The Taming of the Shrew*, how might you answer the following questions? Your answers may lead you to discover what you think are the most important questions that the story of *Shrew* contains, and which, therefore, you would want to make certain the audience experiences.
 - ✦ Complete this statement in one sentence (*hint: don't try to summarize the plot*): *The Taming of the Shrew* is the story of _____ . (*Example: The Taming of the Shrew is a story of how to fight fire with fire. The Taming of the Shrew is a story about learning to compromise.*)
 - ✦ If you were to have the audience remember one line from the production, what would it be? (*Example: Better once than never, for never too late. –Petruchio, V.i.138*)
 - ✦ What are some of the most important questions to debate in the play?

AFTER ATTENDING THE PRODUCTION: FOR DISCUSSION

1. *Actors Playing Actors Playing Characters*. Many of the actors in this production played more than one role because of the fact that *The Taming of the Shrew* is a play within a play. Choose one of the actors who was playing both a player (actor) and a character in the shrew plot. a. How did he distinguish his “player” character from his “character” character using his body and voice? b. Was there any particular “style” of acting that appeared to you when the “player” characters put on the shrew play? c. How was their “1600s” acting style different than our contemporary acting style?
2. *Actors Playing Actors Playing Characters Part 2*. a. How did the players playing women change themselves physically and vocally to create their characters in the shrew plot? Point to specific examples. b. Did it ever appear as though an actor was inhabiting a stereotype of a woman? (Could that be part of a “1600s” acting style, or part of the comedy of the play?) c. Was there any point at which you forgot that the actors playing women were men? d. If you never forgot, was there any point at which it ceased to matter to you that they were women or men?
3. *Servants*. Discuss the personalities and roles of the servants Grumio, Tranio, and Biondello. a. What were their relationships with their masters like? b. Did any of them seem cleverer or wiser than their masters? (Marilyn French says that Tranio “makes a better Lucentio than the original” [79]). c. How did their efforts contribute to the success of their masters’ designs? d. Did their roles in the play-within-a-play ever reflect their roles as players in the troupe?

4. *Director's viewpoint.* Refer back to question #21 in the previous section. Now that you have seen Milwaukee Shakespeare's production, how do you think director Susan Finque might have answered these questions in directing the play? a. How close were your statements to what you believe she decided to focus on? b. How well do you think the design elements and the actors' choices supported her direction?
5. *Christopher Sly.* a. How did the director solve the question of Christopher Sly's silence (or absence) at the end of the play? b. How did the trick played on Sly affect him in the end? c. When and why did he interrupt? (Interruptions are taken directly from another version of the play.)
6. *To Hear a Play.* In Shakespeare's time, audiences used to say they were going to "hear" a play rather than "see" a play. One of the qualities people most admired was the ability to use language. Recall moments in the production which were most memorable to you and try to reconstruct how actors used the language in those moments: a. What do you think made the line or lines stand out? b. How did they "play" them? c. Do you think, based upon how they affected other characters/actors, that they achieved what they wanted in those moments?
7. *To Hear a Play #2.* a. Was there any event in the text of the play which became clearer to you upon seeing the production? b. Describe it. c. Was there any event that was played differently than how you had imagined it? d. How did you envision it occurring?
8. *Language: Repetition.* One of the language devices Shakespeare frequently uses is **repetition**—characters may repeat themselves or pick up a word or phrase another character has spoken to repeat. Look at the following examples—try to recall hearing them in the production—and either reconstruct or choose how an actor might deliver the repeated text in order to achieve something their characters want or to clarify their thoughts to the audience. Then look through your text and see if you can find other examples of repetition:

✦ II.i.185-190
Petruchio

You lie, in faith, for you are call'd plain Kate,
And bonny Kate, and sometimes Kate the curst;
But Kate, the prettiest Kate in Christendom,
Kate of Kate Hall, my super-dainty Kate,
For dainties are all Kates, and therefore, Kate,
Take this of me, Kate of my consolation...

✦ III.ii.153-155
Gremio
Tranio
Gremio

Why, he's a devil, a devil, a very fiend.
Why, she's a devil, a devil, the devil's dam.
Tut! She's a lamb, a dove, a fool to him.

9. *Language: Antithesis.* Another language device Shakespeare often employs is **antithesis**, the juxtaposition of opposites. One character might compare two opposites in order to make a point; or in a conversation between two people, one character might voice the antithesis of a statement or word the other used in order to contradict them, disagree with them, or win a point in a conflict. Try to find examples of antithesis and for what purpose you think it is used both in the language of one character and in dialogue between two or more. See the example below:

✦ II.i.330-332
Gremio
Tranio
Gremio

Youngling, thou canst not love so dear as I.
Greybeard, thy love doth freeze.
But thine doth fry.

10. *Design #1: Scenic design.* One of scenic designer Sergio Villegas' goals was to create the look of an English theatre backstage in the 1660s. a. How many different "playing spaces," or places where actors could perform, did his set create? b. How many did the director and actors use? (i.e. the staircase, the aisles, etc.) c. In addition, can you remember any part of the set or set dressing (decoration) which calls to mind another Shakespeare play?
11. *Design #2: Sound design.* a. How were sound and music used as a "soundtrack" for this production? b. Point to specific examples of moments in which you think sound and music were particularly effective in supporting the action of a scene or driving it forward. For instance, can you reconstruct how Lucentio as Cambio used music to woo Bianca?

12. *Design #3: Costume design.* a. How did the costume design help reinforce the personality, social position, or other quality of character? b. How were shapes, fabric, or color used? c. Did you spot any design that stood out to you in particular, and why?
13. *Design #4: Costume Design.* See question #16 in the section BEFORE ATTENDING THE PRODUCTION. a. How did the costume designer create disguises for the characters who concealed themselves? b. How do you think she answered the questions given in #16?
14. *Parents & children.* See question #8 in the section above. a. How did this production choose to flesh out the parent-child relationships described in the text? b. Were they close to what you imagined? c. Did you discover anything new or unanticipated in the way each child related to his or her parent, and vice versa?
15. *Hot Topics.* a. Based upon your viewing of this production, was Kate “tamed,” in your opinion? If so, how? b. Was anyone else “tamed”? c. Who do you think ends up with the most healthy relationship at the end of the play?
16. *Hot Topics.* In the century in which this encounter with Sly and production of *Shrew* might have occurred, all English actors were men. Remembering that the shrew plot is a play-within-a-play, and considering that accuracy in being or portraying female is less important than in capturing truth of character, a. How differently do you think actresses might have portrayed the female characters? b. On the flip side, are there any male roles you saw which, in turn, could have been played by women?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES & PROJECTS



Educators, watch this section for MPS-format sample lesson plans to come.

This section covers Wisconsin DPI Standards: A.8.2, B.8.2, B.8.3, B.8.4, B.8.5, B.8.7, C.8.7, D.8.1, D.8.2, D.8.4, E.8.1, E.8.3, E.8.4, E.8.5, E.8.6, E.8.7

1. **DESIGN:** Design of a play includes everything from lights to sound and music, costumes, sets, and props. Every design element of a show is created for two reasons at least: 1) to support the action of the play, and 2) to enrich the director’s viewpoint on the most important questions or themes in the play. What questions or themes do you find particularly important in *The Taming of the Shrew*? How would you “reflect” those questions in a design to be built for a show? In groups, discuss these questions. Then choose one design element per group member, and sketch or brainstorm examples of your own group’s design for a production of *Shrew*.
2. **COSTUME DESIGN:** Costume designers look for clues around which to base their designs partially from looking at what characters say about other characters or what they say about themselves. Look at any of the following scenes, and sketch costume designs for the characters described as you picture them based upon the text. Justify your choices from the script:
 - ✦ Biondello’s description of Petruchio’s arrival at the wedding (III.ii.41-69)
 - ✦ Grumio’s description of Kate and Petruchio’s incident on the road to his home (IV.i.61-75)
 - ✦ Kate and Petruchio’s afternoon with the Tailor and the Haberdasher (IV.iii.61-103)
3. **DESIGN AND MARKETING:** Part of producing a play is determining how to “market” the show—how to catch people’s attention in the media, by word of mouth, or by other means, and how to interest them in buying tickets to see the show. Before attending the production, design a poster for the play which you think will attract patrons. If you like, include a “tagline”—what you think the most important line of the play is to share and attract an audience to see the show. Include images from the play, pictures or silhouettes of important characters, or other aspects of design (including the “font” of the title). After attending the production, look at your design. Would you use your original design to attract ticket buyers this show? If not, how would you revise it? Did a different line or did different images stand out to you?
4. **LANGUAGE:** *The Taming of the Shrew* is written both in poetry and prose. As you may know, most often the language of poetry and/or rhyme is relegated to characters of a higher social status; the language of prose is most often used for characters of lower status. Find examples in the play in which this general “rule” is

broken—when characters of high status speak in prose and vice versa. In each instance, why do you think Shakespeare broke the rules? What does each example tell you about the relationships or purposes of characters in each scene? Take one scene in verse and rewrite it in contemporary prose. Is there any sense of status or authority to the words that is lost? What about meaning? Are the words as effective?

5. **CHARACTER:** As a study of character, write a scene which occurs in the play but in Shakespeare's text takes place offstage, between scenes, or removed from the central action of the scene. Possible scenes: whatever prompts Kate to bind and beat her sister; Kate falling from her horse on the road to Verona; Hortensio's wooing and winning of the Widow; another ending—the players and the Hostess wrapping up their joke on Sly; etc.
6. **CHARACTER:** Imagine that you are one of the players in the company which plays a joke on Sly. Which actor are you, and which kinds of roles do you normally assume? Tell the story of the great prank you pulled on Sly to a fellow student, filling in the details about how he took it, what play the players performed, and what your part in it was. What do you think of the story your company chose to perform? Did everything go as planned?

EDUCATORS—LOOK HERE FOR FURTHER LESSON PLAN OPTIONS:

We would like to encourage you to explore an invaluable resource: **the Folger Shakespeare Library online**. Review other lesson plan ideas at the Folger Shakespeare Library's website (www.folger.edu). Specific lesson plans by Folger staff and educators from around the country appear in a subsection entitled *The Taming of the Shrew* on the page "Teaching Shakespeare." Some titles we have found on the site include the following, and many take 1-2 class periods to teach:

- ✓ *The Good and the Badde: Are Stereotypes a Perfect Fit?*
- ✓ UNIT: Using Music as a Way to Explore Shakespeare's Characters

(By the way, if you like the site, drop the Folger education department an e-mail to let them know!)

HIGH SCHOOL & BEYOND-LEVEL STUDIES

This section covers Wisconsin DPI Standards: A.12.2, B.12.7, C.12.2, C.12.3, D.12.2, E.12.4, E.12.5, E.12.7
If attending any of the Milwaukee Shakespeare performances in conjunction with this guide: A.12.1

BEFORE ATTENDING THE PRODUCTION: FOR DISCUSSION

1. *Hot Topics.* What makes a good relationship between lovers or spouses? Do the rules change once a couple is married or committed to each other for life? Do Kate and Petruchio have a good relationship by the play's end? What about Bianca and Lucentio? Hortensio and the Widow?
2. *Hot Topics.* There is an old cliché that "opposites attract." Does this cliché ring true in light of the characters of Kate and Petruchio? Why or why not? One of the inspirations for exploring the relationship between Petruchio and Kate in Milwaukee Shakespeare's production is the line "And where two raging fires meet together,/ They do consume the thing that feeds their fury" (II.i.132-133). Explain how that viewpoint, not necessarily referring to opposites but to like powers, applies to the relationship between Kate and Petruchio.
3. *Hot Topics.* Do you think this play reveals any truths about the general character of men and women? Stereotypes? Any truths in stereotype?
4. *The Shrew.* In earlier centuries, a shrew was equated with the devil or demons. Look for references to a "devilish spirit" and a "devil" in the script: to whom do these descriptions refer? Can anyone besides Kate be classified a shrew?
5. *The Shrew Part 2.* Bran Morris lists several definitions of a shrew in his introduction to the Arden edition of the play. How many of these definitions can you apply to Kate or other "shrewish" characters in the play? Give examples from the script.
 - ✦ Around the 13th century, a "wicked, evil-disposed, or malignant man"
 - ✦ Around the end of the 14th century, the Devil himself
 - ✦ Around the 16th century, "a woman given to railing or scolding"

- ✦ From a 1966 book on mammals of Western Europe: an active solitary surface dweller which suffers from lack of food in a few hours; one which fights mostly through loud squeaking matches; one which shows aggressive behavior at all times except when making love
6. *Between Husband and Wife*. After Petruchio's first meeting with Kate, he declares to her father and Bianca's suitors, "If she and I be pleased, what's that to you? 'Tis bargain'd 'twixt us twain, being alone, / That she shall still be curst in company" (II.i.296-298). How does the private agreement Petruchio mentions in this scene play itself out in the last scene?
 7. *Practical Joke*. What do you think is the purpose of playing the practical joke on Sly—is there one besides simply making a fool of him?
 8. *Parents & children*. How is the relationship between Kate and Baptista different than the relationship between Bianca and Baptista? Do you think Baptista loves Kate less than he does Bianca? Why or why not? How, in turn, can you describe the relationship between Lucentio and his father Vincentio? Are there commonalities in how children treat their parents, and vice versa?
 9. *Sisters*. Compare and contrast sisters Bianca and Kate as they first appear and then as their characters unfold throughout the play. How are they *foils* (opposites) of each other in appearance? Are they foils of each other in substance? Why or why not?
 10. *Music*. When and how does music play a role in helping drive the plot forward?
 11. *Disguises*. How many instances can you find of characters disguising themselves as another? For what reasons do they do so? Are their disguises successful? When are they discovered, or when do they reveal themselves?
 12. *Schooling*. How often and in what cases does the idea of schooling, teaching, or tutoring arise in *The Taming of the Shrew*? Consider each case in light of the following phrase: "To teach is to learn."
 13. *Wooing*. Brian Morris points to Petruchio's wooing of Katherine as very straightforward, whereas Lucentio's wooing of Bianca is full of disguise and deception. Their tactics in relation to Baptista seem to be so to some degree; Petruchio is free to woo Kate but Lucentio begins his suit to Bianca without permission. Do you agree with Morris, and why or why not?
 14. *Poetry vs. Prose*. In the Induction, the lords and servants speak to Sly in blank verse and Sly responds in prose. When does Sly's language change, and why do you think it shifts?
 15. *Servants and Masters*. Compare/contrast the relationship between Grumio and Petruchio with Tranio and Lucentio by looking at their initial entrances together: Grumio and Petruchio, I.ii; Tranio and Lucentio, I.i.
 16. *Costume Design*. Many characters within the shrew plot assume a physical disguise. Imagine you are a costume designer planning how to create not only costumes for the characters but additional disguises. How would you dress and re-dress each of the following characters: Lucentio as Cambio the tutor, Tranio as his master Lucentio, Hortensio as the tutor Licio, and the Pedant as Lucentio's father Vincentio. Consider the following:
 - ✦ Do you need to still make it clear to the audience who the character is despite his disguise? Why or why not?
 - ✦ Is it a well-made disguise or not so well-made?
 - ✦ Do others believe in the disguise? Is there any point at which the disguise may fail?
 17. *The Taming*. Look at the passages in which Petruchio reveals the methods he will use to tame Kate to the audience (II.i.168-181, IV.i.175-198). By the fourth act of the play, how is his plan working?
 18. *End of the Play*. Speculate upon the reasons why Sly never speaks again in the text of the play after the Induction is over. How might a production of the play handle his and his companions' silence? If Sly were to interrupt (as another version of the text allows him), when do you think he would, and why?

19. *Everything Important Happens Onstage*. With this unofficial assumption, where do you think the audience can see Kate and Petruchio first attracted to each other? Where do you think the audience can see a shift from confrontation to affection occur? Can you point to clues in the text of the play?
20. *The Wager on Obedience*. The bet the husbands make at the end of the play is seen by the characters as proof that Petruchio has finally tamed Kate. Look at the scene closely, re-examining all of Petruchio's lines to Kate and her responses while considering the assumptions that 1) they are in love, and 2) Petruchio wants to give Kate every possible opportunity to show up everyone who has denigrated her. Can you discover anything new about the scene by reading it with these motivations in mind? Is there another way to view the scene?
21. *Director's viewpoint*. While the basic text of a play does not change, each production of the play will be different. One reason for this is that the director of each production will choose to emphasize different questions or themes that arise in the play. This shade of difference, which binds all the elements of a particular production together, is sometimes referred to as the *director's viewpoint*—because the director focuses on telling the story of the play from their chosen angle. If you were a director planning to take on *The Taming of the Shrew*, how might you answer the following questions? Your answers may lead you to discover what you think are the most important questions that the story of *Shrew* contains, and which, therefore, you would want to make certain the audience experiences.
 - ✦ Complete this statement in one sentence (*hint: don't try to summarize the plot*): *The Taming of the Shrew* is the story of _____ . (*Example: The Taming of the Shrew is a story of how to fight fire with fire.*)
 - ✦ If you were to have the audience remember one line from the production, what would it be? (*Example: Better once than never, for never too late. –Petruchio, V.i.138*)
 - ✦ What are some of the most important questions to debate in the play?

AFTER ATTENDING THE PRODUCTION: FOR DISCUSSION

1. *Actors Playing Actors Playing Characters*. Many of the actors in this production played more than one role because of the fact that *The Taming of the Shrew* is a play within a play. Choose one of the actors who was playing both a player (actor) and a character in the shrew plot. How did he distinguish his “player” character from his “character” character using his body and voice? Was there any particular “style” of acting that appeared to you when the “player” characters put on the shrew play? How was their “1600s” acting style different than our contemporary acting style?
2. *Actors Playing Actors Playing Characters Part 2*. How did the players playing women change themselves physically and vocally to create their characters in the shrew plot? Point to specific examples. Did it ever appear as though an actor was inhabiting a stereotype of a woman? (Could that be part of a “1600s” acting style, or part of the comedy of the play?) Was there any point at which you forgot that the actors playing women were men? If you never forgot, was there any point at which it ceased to matter to you that they were women or men?
3. *Servants*. Discuss the personalities and roles of the servants Grumio, Tranio, and Biondello. What were their relationships with their masters like? Did any of them seem cleverer or wiser than their masters? (Marilyn French says that Tranio “makes a better Lucentio than the original” [79]). How did their efforts contribute to the success of their masters’ designs? Did their roles in the play-within-a-play ever reflect their roles as players in the troupe?
4. *Director's viewpoint*. Refer back to question #21 in the previous section. Now that you have seen Milwaukee Shakespeare's production, how do you think director Susan Finque might have answered these questions in directing the play? How close were your statements to what you believe she decided to focus on? How well do you think the design elements and the actors' choices supported her direction?
5. *Christopher Sly*. How did the director solve the question of Christopher Sly's silence (or absence) at the end of the play? How did the trick played on Sly affect him in the end?
6. *To Hear a Play*. In Shakespeare's time, audiences used to say they were going to “hear” a play rather than “see” a play. One of the qualities people most admired was the ability to use language. Recall moments in the production which were most memorable to you and try to reconstruct how actors used the language in those

moments: what do you think made the line or lines stand out? How did they “play” them? Do you think, based upon how they affected other characters/actors, that they achieved what they wanted in those moments?

7. *To Hear a Play #2*. Was there any event in the text of the play which became clearer to you upon seeing the production? Describe it. Was there any event that was played differently than how you had imagined it? How did you envision it occurring?
8. *Language: Repetition*. One of the language devices Shakespeare frequently uses is **repetition**—characters may repeat themselves or pick up a word or phrase another character has spoken to repeat. Look at the following examples—try to recall hearing them in the production—and either reconstruct or choose how an actor might deliver the repeated text in order to achieve something their characters want or to clarify their thoughts to the audience. Then look through your text and see if you can find other examples of repetition:

✦ II.i.185-190

Petruchio

You lie, in faith, for you are call'd plain Kate,
And bonny Kate, and sometimes Kate the curst;
But Kate, the prettiest Kate in Christendom,
Kate of Kate Hall, my super-dainty Kate,
For dainties are all Kates, and therefore, Kate,
Take this of me, Kate of my consolation...

✦ III.ii.153-155

Gremio

Tranio

Gremio

Why, he's a devil, a devil, a very fiend.
Why, she's a devil, a devil, the devil's dam.
Tut! She's a lamb, a dove, a fool to him.

9. *Language: Antithesis*. Another language device Shakespeare often employs is **antithesis**, the juxtaposition of opposites. One character might compare two opposites in order to make a point; or in a conversation between two people, one character might voice the antithesis of a statement or word the other used in order to contradict them, disagree with them, or win a point in a conflict. Try to find examples of antithesis and for what purpose you think it is used both in the language of one character and in dialogue between two or more. See the example below:

✦ II.i.330-332

Gremio

Tranio

Gremio

Youngling, thou canst not love so dear as I.
Greybeard, thy love doth freeze.

But thine doth *fry*.

10. *Design #1: Scenic design*. One of scenic designer Sergio Villegas' goals was to create the look of an English theatre backstage in the 1660s. How many different “playing spaces,” or places where actors could perform, did his set create? How many did the director and actors use? (i.e. the staircase, the aisles, etc.) In addition, can you remember any part of the set or set dressing (decoration) which calls to mind another Shakespeare play?
11. *Design #2: Sound design*. How were sound and music used as a “soundtrack” for this production? Point to specific examples of moments in which you think sound and music were particularly effective in supporting the action of a scene or driving it forward. For instance, can you reconstruct how Lucentio as Cambio used music to woo Bianca?
12. *Design #3: Costume design*. How did the costume design help reinforce the personality, social position, or other quality of character? How were shapes, fabric, or color used? Did you spot any design that stood out to you in particular, and why?
13. *Design #4: Costume Design*. See question #16 in the section BEFORE ATTENDING THE PRODUCTION. How did the costume designer create disguises for the characters who concealed themselves? How do you think she answered the questions given in #16?
14. *Parents & children*. See question #8 in the section above. How did this production choose to flesh out the filial relationships described in the text? Were they close to what you imagined? Did you discover anything new or unanticipated in the way each child related to his or her parent, and vice versa?

15. *Hot Topics*. Based upon your viewing of this production, was Kate “tamed,” in your opinion? If so, how? Was anyone else “tamed”? Who do you think ends up with the most healthy relationship at the end of the play?
16. *Hot Topics*. In the century in which this encounter with Sly and production of *Shrew* might have occurred, all English actors were men. Remembering that the shrew plot is a play-within-a-play, and considering that accuracy in being or portraying female is less important than in capturing truth of character, how differently do you think actresses might have portrayed the female characters? On the flip side, are there any male roles you saw which, in turn, could have been played by women?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES & PROJECTS



Educators, watch this section for MPS-format sample lesson plans to come.

This section covers Wisconsin DPI Standards: A.12.2, B.12.2, B.12.3, B.12.4, B.12.6, B.12.7, C.12.2, C.12.3, D.12.1, D.12.2, D.12.3, D.12.4, E.12.1, E.12.3, E.12.4, E.12.5, E.12.6, E.12.7, E.12.8, E.12.9, E.12.10

1. **DESIGN**: Design of a play includes everything from lights to sound and music, costumes, sets, and props. Every design element of a show is created for two reasons at least: 1) to support the action of the play, and 2) to enrich the director’s viewpoint on the most important questions or themes in the play. What questions or themes do you find particularly important in *The Taming of the Shrew*? How would you “reflect” those questions in a design to be built for a show? In groups, discuss these questions. Then choose one design element per group member, and sketch or brainstorm examples of your own group’s design for a production of *Shrew*.
2. **COSTUME DESIGN**: Costume designers look for clues around which to base their designs partially from looking at what characters say about other characters or what they say about themselves. Look at any of the following scenes, and sketch costume designs for the characters described as you picture them based upon the text. Justify your choices from the script:
 - ✦ Biondello’s description of Petruchio’s arrival at the wedding (III.ii.41-69)
 - ✦ Grumio’s description of Kate and Petruchio’s incident on the road to his home (IV.i.61-75)
 - ✦ Kate and Petruchio’s afternoon with the Tailor and the Haberdasher (IV.iii.61-103)
3. **DESIGN AND MARKETING**: Part of producing a play is determining how to “market” the show—how to catch people’s attention in the media, by word of mouth, or by other means, and how to interest them in buying tickets to see the show. Before attending the production, design a poster for the play which you think will attract patrons. If you like, include a “tagline”—what you think the most important line of the play is to share and attract an audience to see the show. Include images from the play, pictures or silhouettes of important characters, or other aspects of design (including the “font” of the title). After attending the production, look at your design. Would you use your original design to attract ticket buyers this show? If not, how would you revise it? Did a different line or did different images stand out to you?
4. **LANGUAGE**: *The Taming of the Shrew* is written both in poetry and prose. As you may know, most often the language of poetry and/or rhyme is relegated to characters of a higher social status; the language of prose is most often used for characters of lower status. Find examples in the play in which this general “rule” is broken—when characters of high status speak in prose and vice versa. In each instance, why do you think Shakespeare broke the rules? What does each example tell you about the relationships or purposes of characters in each scene? Take one scene in verse and rewrite it in contemporary prose. Is there any sense of status or authority to the words that is lost? What about meaning? Are the words as effective?
5. **CHARACTER**: As a study of character, write a scene which occurs in the play but in Shakespeare’s text takes place offstage, between scenes, or removed from the central action of the scene. Possible scenes: whatever prompts Kate to bind and beat her sister; Kate falling from her horse on the road to Verona; Hortensio’s wooing and winning of the Widow; another ending—the players and the Hostess wrapping up their joke on Sly; etc.
6. **CHARACTER**: Imagine that you are one of the players in the company which plays a joke on Sly. Which actor are you, and which kinds of roles do you normally assume? Tell the story of the great prank you pulled on Sly to a fellow student, filling in the details about how he took it, what play the players performed, and what your part in it was. What do you think of the story your company chose to perform? Did everything go as planned?

EDUCATORS—LOOK HERE FOR FURTHER LESSON PLAN OPTIONS:

We would like to encourage you to explore an invaluable resource: **the Folger Shakespeare Library online**. Review other lesson plan ideas at the Folger Shakespeare Library's website (www.folger.edu). Specific lesson plans by Folger staff and educators from around the country appear in a subsection entitled *The Taming of the Shrew* on the page "Teaching Shakespeare." Some titles we have found on the site include the following, and many take 1-2 class periods to teach:

- ✓ *The Good and the Badde: Are Stereotypes a Perfect Fit?*
- ✓ UNIT: Using Music as a Way to Explore Shakespeare's Characters

(By the way, if you like the site, drop the Folger education department an e-mail to let them know!)

RESOURCES

READING ABOUT WILL SHAKESPEARE

Boyce, Charles. *Shakespeare A to Z*. New York, 1990

Cohen, Robert. *Acting In Shakespeare*. Mayfield Publishing Company, Mountain View, California, 1991.

Frey, Charles H. "O Sacred, Shadowy, Cold and Constant Queen": Shakespeare's Imperiled and Chastening Daughters of Romance," in *Experiencing Shakespeare: Essays on Text, Classroom and Performance*. Columbia, Missouri, 1988.

Frye, Northrop. *Northrop Frye on Shakespeare*. New Haven, 1986.

***Gibson, Rex, ed. *Cambridge School Shakespeare*. (This is an excellent series which takes teacher and student page by page through the script, offering ideas on discussion and activities.) Available in the United States through Cambridge University Press, 40 W. 10th St., New York, NY 10011. Telephone: 212-924-3900.

Gilmour, Maurice. *Shakespeare for All in Primary Schools*. British Library, 1997.

Gilbert, Miriam. "Teaching Shakespeare Through Performance," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 35 (1984), 601-608.

Goddard, Harold C. *The Meaning of Shakespeare*. Chicago, 1951.

Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare*. New York, 2004.

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McDonald, Russ. "The Flaw in the Flaw," in *Shakespeare Set Free*. Peggy O'Brien, ed. New York, 1993

O'Brien, Peggy, *Shakespeare Set Free*. New York, 1993.

Papp, Joseph, and Elizabeth Kirkland. *Shakespeare Alive!* New York: Bantam Books and the New York Shakespeare Festival, 1988.

Robinson, Randal. *Unlocking Shakespeare's Language: Help for the Teacher and Student*. Urbana, IL: NCTE and ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, 1989.

Shakespeare and the Classroom, H.R Coursen, ed. (A new periodical that serves as a valuable resource for teachers of Shakespeare about current efforts in the field.) Subscriptions \$4.00. Contact: Dr. Eva McManus, Ohio Northern University, Ada, OH 45810

Scott, Mark W. *Shakespearean Criticism*. Detroit, 1987.

Tillyard, E.M.W. *The Elizabethan World Picture*. New York.

Van Doren, Mark. *Shakespeare*, New York, 1939.

SURFING FOR WILL SHAKESPEARE

1. Shakespeare's Globe Theatre
<http://www.shakespeares-globe.org>
Features photos of the new Globe Theatre in London.
2. Teaching Shakespeare
www.folger.edu
Offers assignments, news, and teaching resources for Shakespeare—the official site of the Folger Shakespeare Library.
3. Shakespeare Magazine
<http://shakespearemag.com>
Excellent teaching tool. Features articles by scholars and educators.
4. www.renaissance.dm.net - Life in Elizabethan England: a Compendium of Common Knowledge. Provides a basic picture of daily life, from social status to religion to dress to language.
5. www.allshakespeare.com - Enotes on everything Shakespeare.
6. Surf through the theatrical offerings of our country's great Shakespeare Festivals, such as **The Shakespeare Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, American Players Theatre, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre on Navy Pier, Utah Shakespearean Festival, Illinois Shakespeare Festival**, and, of course, **Milwaukee Shakespeare**.
www.milwaukeeshakespeare.com

HAVE RESOURCES TO SHARE?

ATTENDED OR STUDIED THE PRODUCTION?

The Education Department wants to hear about your classroom's study and experience of The Taming of the Shrew! Selected contributions will be posted on the Education and Outreach page of Milwaukee Shakespeare's website in the future or featured in Milwaukee Shakespeare's newsletter Shakespeak. E-mail Education Administrator Marcy Kearns at mkearns@milwaukeeshakespeare.com or write to her at 225 E. St. Paul Ave., Ste. 205, Milwaukee, WI 53202.

FOUND A NEW RESOURCE?

The Education Department at Milwaukee Shakespeare welcomes further discoveries in Shakespeare scholarship. If as an educator or student of Shakespeare, you have found resources not included in our bibliography, feel free to e-mail our Education Administrator at mkearns@milwaukeeshakespeare.com with resources, online links, or contacts which you have found helpful in the study of William Shakespeare's work and milieu.