

Marin Shakespeare Company's
2017 Discovery Guide

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST

Directed by Rob Clare



Braedyn Youngberg as Don Armado

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Introduction

William Shakespeare from Stratford-Upon-Avon, England, lived from 1564 to 1616. *Love's Labour's Lost* is believed to have been written sometime between 1595-1596. It is not based on any known major written source, but elements of the play can be found in the early 1590s. An English translation of *The French Academy* in 1586 presents a story of four gentlemen who pursue academic enlightenment by shutting themselves off from everyday life. Additionally, the various plays-within-the-play suggest an homage to the traditions of entertainment of the period. The play was written at the beginning of Shakespeare's career, and there is a certain sense of the author "showing off" his wit and ability to use language in different ways. There is much word-play and varying of types of writing – poetry, prose, rhyme, different metrical rhythms. *Love's Labour's Lost* is comprised of 65% poetry, and has a large amount of rhyme.

Notable Film and Television Versions/Adaptations

BBC Radio has aired two adaptations of the play: A December 1946 performance directed by Noel Illif contained music for a small chamber orchestra and a cast that included Paul Scofield; The 1979 production directed by David Spenser included music by Derek Oldfield, with a cast of talented actors, and a return of Paul Scofield in the role of Don Armado.

Kenneth Branagh's 2000 film adaptation was billed as "a new spin on the old song and dance" and was presented as a musical set in the 1930s.

The popular British tv show, *Doctor Who*, aired the episode "The Shakespeare Code" which refers to a fictional "Love's Labour's Won" in which the final scene becomes a portal for aliens to invade Earth.

New York City's Shakespeare in the Park programming by The Public Theater, produced a musical version in 2013 that was scored by *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* collaborators Michael Friedman and Alex Timbers.

A libretto written by W.H. Auden and Chester Kallman was presented in an opera of the same title, composed by Nicolas Nabokov, in 1973.

A 2016 independent film feature of the play was directed by Jake O'Hare and Jennifer Sturley and set in a modern-day boarding school.

The People of *Love's Labour's Lost*

The characters in the play mostly fall into one of three categories: The Lovers, The Scholars, and The Servants. Where do you see the following individuals and are there any that can be categorized by more than one group? Are there any who don't seem to belong to any of the three groups?

Ferdinand, King of Navarre –

A young king with an impulsive idea: his friends and court should spend three years studying without speaking to women.

Biron –

Friend to the king, this young lord enjoys telling jokes.

Longaville –

Another young lord and king's friend, he is talented at both sports and academics.

Dumain –

A well accomplished (in wit and looks) young lord who is friend to the king.

Princess of France –

The ill King of France's daughter. Since her father is ill, she has come to Navarre with a message to King Ferdinand.

Rosaline –

A witty lady and friend to the princess.

Katherine –

Lady and Heir of Alencon who is friend to the princess.

Maria –

Heir of Falconbridge, she is a lady and friend to the princess.

Boyet –

He is a lord from the French court and attends on the princess.

Don Adriano de Armado –

This Spanish lord enjoys saying the most complicated of phrasings because he enjoys the sound of his own voice.

Moth –

He is the very clever servant to Don Armado.

Costard –

Works on the king's estate as a farmhand.

Jacquenetta –

She is employed as a dairymaid to the king's estate.

Anthony Dull –

He serves as a policeman, loyal to the king with a well-earned last name.

Holofernes –

He is a school teacher who enjoys impressing others with his knowledge, especially by speaking in Latin, and who looks down on Dull.

Sir Nathaniel –

This friend of Holofernes is the local vicar.

The Setting of *Love's Labour's Lost*

Shakespeare set his play in France, but our production is set at Oxford University in England. We can imagine that the young men are students, Holofernes is one of their professors, and Costard and Jacquenetta work at the university. The director, Rob Clare, chose this setting because he is a graduate of Oxford, and he thought it would make sense for the story to take place there, and be very true to Shakespeare's intentions.

Directors often set classical plays in different eras than the writer intended. In this case, the setting is intended to allow costumes that will help tell the story clearly for a modern audience.

The Story of the Play

Ferdinand, King of Navarre, and his friends Longaville, Dumain and Biron have sworn an oath: for three years they will fast, study, and see no women. Constable Dull enters with a letter from Don Armado accusing Costard of inappropriate contact with lovely Jacquenetta. Ferdinand tells Costard the penalty is a year in prison, and Don Armado will be his keeper. Meanwhile, Armado confesses to his page Moth that he is in love with Jacquenetta – and when she enters, he tells her as well.

Accompanied by their chaperone Boyet, the Princess of France, with her ladies Katharine, Maria and Rosaline have arrived in Navarre as ambassadors from the King of France. Ferdinand will not admit the ladies to his court, because of his oath. As the Princess and Navarre discuss state business, which may be settled by the additional papers which have not yet arrived, the other ladies and gentlemen renew acquaintances. The ladies will have to wait outside the court. Despite this lack of courtesy, Boyet believes Navarre has fallen for the Princess. The other ladies seems to have made an impression on the other gentlemen as well.

Armado frees Costard from prison so that he may carry a letter to Jacquenetta. Biron, meeting him, hires him to carry a letter to Rosaline. When Costard sees Rosaline, he gives her the wrong letter. She goes off to hunt for sport.

Sir Nathaniel and Holofernes discuss, with academic precision of language, the deer the Princess has killed. Costard has given Jacquenetta a letter and she brings it to the learned men to read to her, discovering it is the wrong letter. As Biron bemoans his love-lorn state, he overhears his friends expressing love for the other ladies, and Jacquenetta, arriving with Biron's letter to Rosaline, confirms he is also in love. Since they are all in love, they forswear their previous oath. It's time to woo!

On behalf of the King, Don Armado organizes Nathaniel, Holofernes and Moth for a pageant of The Nine Worthies, to be performed for the visiting ladies. The ladies have received love tokens from their men, and decide to trick them by wearing each others' tokens while masked. The men arrive disguised as Russians, and dance (with the wrong women). The ladies mock them. The men discover they've been tricked. It's time for the performance of The Nine Worthies, which is broken off when Mercade arrives from the French court with news that the Princess' father has died. The young couples sort out their feelings as they plan their futures. Have love's labour's all been lost? Or will love triumph over all?

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST: Some THEMES for DISCUSSION

Rules that Govern

The King's Rules for Three Years:

- you will study and live in one place
- 'not to see a woman'
- 'one day in a week to touch no food'
- 'but one meal on every day'
- 'to sleep but three hours in the night'
- 'not to be seen to wink of all the day'
- 'no woman shall come within a mile of the court'

The Consequences of Disregarding the Rules”

- 'on pain of losing (your) tongue'
- 'eternal shame'
- 'a year's imprisonment'
- 'fast a week with bran and water'
- 'such public shame as the rest of the court shall possibly devise'

The structure of a Shakespeare comedy typically begins with a problem. Given the constraints of the list of rules and their unforgiving consequences should the rules be broken, what is being conveyed by the establishment of the rules? Do they seem fair? Logical? With merit? How easy is it for the individuals to break their promises to abide by the rules? Are the expectations different for different people? Why do you think the king has created these rules and consequences?

Love

The theme of love presents itself in a variety of ways throughout the play: love of others, love of learning, love of self, love of wit, love of position...the list goes on. What different types of love can you identify in the play and/or in life?

The Pursuit of Learning

- The king believes that the pursuit of education requires one to make sacrifices, and that insisting his friends dedicate their entire time and focus to the studying of material available in books will prove a worthy reward for temporary sacrifices.
- The character Holofernes seems to suggest that book-learning is the ONLY means to a worldly education.
- As evidenced by the eventual failures of the various men in the king's court to adhere to the single-focus of study, it may be inferred that Shakespeare was suggesting that there are things that cannot be learned without life experience. Do you agree? Can you give examples?

Questions for Discussion

Middle School

1. The King asks his friends to adhere to rules he has set out to follow himself. Why do you think it necessary for the king to have company in this 3-year plan? Can you relate to wanting your friends to join you in doing something?
2. How do people's expectations about others (men vs. women, authority vs. underlings, structure vs. freedom, love vs. study, etc.) affect the outcome of the play?
3. Why does the outcome of the play involve the women leaving and the lovers separating for one year? What is the desired lesson from such an ending?

High School

1. The king presents a list of very challenging rules. What effect did it have on you to watch a play knowing this was a comedy? Did you expect comedy to reveal itself in the rules being broken or being maintained?
2. The King, Longaville, Dumaine, and Berowne each has a different type of love letter to read. How do the contents and structure of each reveal something about the intended recipient? (Note any images used, rhymes or poetic language, the length of the letters, and the attitude toward the women to whom they are writing.)
3. In the play, there are consequences for failure and disobedience. Why did those consequences get established if the rules seemed impossible to maintain for the three-year period? What examples can you give from modern day life that offer realistic (or unrealistic) consequences to unrealized success?

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST ACTIVITY IDEAS

Before Reading the Play

STUDYING GENRE: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COMEDY Preliminary Discussion:

1. Shakespeare wrote in three main genres: Comedy, Tragedy, and History. What might be the characteristics of each, i.e., how will we recognize whether we are seeing a comedy, a tragedy or a history play?
2. Discuss with students the characteristics of comedy—elicit examples from other plays that the students may already know.
 - suspension of natural law
 - contrast between social order and the individual
 - comic premise (an idea that flips the accepted belief of things or way of life upside down)

Activity:

Guide students to creatively express images of comedic characters or situations in whatever way suits your students best: by creating “statue” frozen images with their own bodies (it can work well to pair students together to pose each other, as they will generally pose their partner much more expressively than they would pose themselves), through drawings, or by making collages of existing pop culture characters or other images that illicit humorous responses.

TELL ME A STORY.

Divide class into 10 smaller groups and distribute the scene descriptions located in Appendix A, one to each group. Students are to create a short scene based upon the description given them. After rehearsing the scenes, have the class present them to each other in the order of the sequence within the play.

- Which scenes explore Love? Labour? Loss?
- Do some characters have more than one focus?
- What is the message of the play?

APPENDIX A – Telling the story

Scene #1)

Biron, Dumain, and Longaville have promised, along with their friend the King of Navarre, that they will avoid the company of women to better focus on studying and learning. Even the servant, Costard, makes this vow, only to quickly break it by spending time with a servant named Jacquenetta. The punishment is a week's fasting and the visiting Don Armado is to watch over this sentence. The Constable takes Costard away.

Scene #2)

The King and his friends are greeted by the arrival of The Princess of France, along with her companions Rosaline, Maria, and Katherine. The men explain they cannot stay at court because of the oaths they took, but are welcome to remain outside the gates of the estate. The women agree, and it is apparent that the two groups are attracted to each other.

Scene #3)

Don Armado allows Costard a reprieve from punishment by having Costard deliver a letter to Jacquenetta expressing his love. On the way to delivering it, Biron asks Costard to bring a love letter of his to Rosaline. Costard mixes up the letters and gives Biron's writing to Jacquenetta.

Scene #4)

Jacquenetta interrupts Holofernes and Nathaniel in a debate making fun of the Constable to read the letter Costard delivered to her. While she believes it to be from Don Armado, the men realize Biron wrote it and that it signifies his rejection of the vows he promised to forego the company of women.

Scene #5)

While attempting to write more to Rosaline, Biron hides as the King arrives reading his own love letter written to the Princess. The King then hides as Longaville enters reading one he has written to Maria. When Dumain arrives reading one he has composed to Kate, the other men eventually reveal themselves and discover they have all broken their vows (except for Biron, who hid before the rest arrived).

Scene #6)

When Costard and Jacquenetta enter with Biron's love letter, Biron confesses he has broken his promise not to see a woman. To explain his reasons for doing so, he shares a speech about not being able to learn everything from books, and that one must also live life to understand things fully.

Scene #7)

Holofernes and Nathaniel are making fun of Don Armado's way of speaking, which is elaborate and wordy. Don Armado and his servant Moth join them. As Moth witnesses the men talking, he remarks on how ridiculous all of them speak. Don Armado reveals he has been asked by the King to present a play, and Holofernes suggests the Nine Worthies. They all go to practice.

Scene #8)

As the Princess and her friends are sharing what gifts the men have given them, Boyet, their servant, arrives to explain the men are coming, disguised as Russians. The women decide to wear masks and switch their gifts in order to confuse the men. When the “Russians” arrive, the women pretend to be each other and eventually reveal their disguises.

Scene #9)

The couples watch a play of the Nine Worthies, enjoying and laughing throughout, as it involves a story of nine important characters such as Pompei the Great and Hercules. Costard stops the performance with the news that Jacquenetta is pregnant with Don Armado’s child. This news is then overshadowed by the arrival of a messenger with news that the Princess’ father has died.

Scene #10)

As the Princess announces she and her ladies must leave, the men share their true feelings. The Princess agrees to marry the King if he promises to wait a year, and her friends get the same promises from their future husbands. The play ends with a song.

ACCESSING AND EMPLOYING POETIC LANGUAGE, PART I: Introduction to rhythmic structure

Teacher's Instructions

Students should know that Shakespeare invented over 1700 words that his audiences had never heard before. Further, he was writing in verse (poetry), which is deliberately more complicated than regular conversation. His plays were performed for people of all ages and education levels, and there were food sellers (like at ballgames) yelling all around during the shows—in other words, even when the plays were new, no audience member heard and understood every word. Coach students not to worry if they miss an idea here and there; just keep watching and you'll get all you need to understand.

Here's a primer:

- Shakespeare wrote mostly in iambic pentameter.
- An iamb is the same rhythm as your heart—Lub-DUB—because that is the first sound we ever hear in our lives.
- Pentameter means there are 5 (penta-) heartbeat rhythms per line: Lub-DUB, Lub-DUB, Lub-DUB, Lub-DUB, Lub-DUB
- Why five? Because that's as many heartbeats as you usually have per breath, and each line is about one breath long.

See? It's not a giant mystery—verse is just natural body rhythms.

Sometimes, especially when a character is feeling very emotional—sad, happy, in love, scared—their heart will beat faster or skip beat, and Shakespeare's line rhythm will change, too, off of that regular rhythm. That's a note for the actors that their character is out of sorts, and the change in rhythm actually helps the actor make that mood change.

Activity 1: Elicit from students the sound they first heard before birth—the heart beat—and why that might be the rhythm of choice for performative poetry. Perhaps relate to the rhythm of music, which helps create its mood. Then ask students to count how many iambs there are per one full breath (answers will probably range from 4 – 6. German classical verse tends to be quadrameters (4) and the French “Alexandrine” line is hexameter (6)).

Activity 2: Read a few lines from *Love's Labour's Lost* to note whether they follow the regular iambic rhythm or if they follow another rhythm. DO NOT try to make a line fit the rhythm—just read it in the natural emphasis of the words and note where it matches or diverges from the heartbeat rhythm.

Regular Lines

(Stressed syllables are in CAPS—minimally stressed “stressed” syllables in parentheses)

For WHEN would YOU, my LIEGE, or YOU, or YOU,
In LEADen CONtemPLAtion HAVE found OUT

You SHALL be WELcome, MADam, TO my COURT

But ARE you NOT aSHAMED? Nay ARE you NOT,
All THREE of YOU, to BE thus MUCH o'erSHOT?

Irregular Lines

(Irregular sections are **BOLDED**)

HEAR me, dear LAdy; I have SWORN an OATH.

To, FAST, to STUDy, AND to SEE no W**oman**

Do these irregular lines add to our understanding of the writing?

In the example above, the different rhythm of the first line with the emphasis on “HEAR” is another way to get the listener’s attention. The different rhythm of the second line, with an eleventh beat, perhaps add a sense that the rhythm is “wrong” or out of place, just as we the audience might believe the message is somehow wrong or out of place.

Here is an example of iambic pentameter in a monologue that does not rhyme. Try making each line fit a standard 10-beat rhythm. What do you have to adjust to make the words fit? What does it tell you about the character’s situation or personality or state of mind when you cannot make the line finish cleanly in a beat of 10?

BIRON

And I, forsooth, in love! I, that have been love's whip;
A very beadle to a humorous sigh;
A critic, nay, a night-watch constable;
A domineering pedant o'er the boy!
This whimped, whining, purblind, wayward boy;
This senior-junior, giant-dwarf, Dan Cupid;
Regent of love-rhymes, lord of folded arms,
The anointed sovereign of sighs and groans,
Dread prince of plackets, king of codpieces,
Sole imperator and great general
Of trotting 'paritors:--O my little heart:--
And I to be a corporal of his field,
And wear his colours like a tumbler's hoop!
What, I! I love! I sue! I seek a wife!
A woman, that is like a German clock,
Still a-repairing, never going aright!
Nay, to be perjured, which is worst of all;
And, among three, to love the worst of all;
A whitely wanton with a velvet brow,
With two pitch-balls stuck in her face for eyes;
And I to sigh for her! to watch for her!
To pray for her! Go to; it is a plague
That Cupid will impose for my neglect
Of his almighty dreadful little might.

Well, I will love, write, sigh, pray, sue and groan:
Some men must love my lady and some Joan.

An exploration of rhyming sequences.

Below is an excerpt from Act II, Scene 1. Note the use of a very different kind of rhythm (11 beats in every line) in the scene. Note also the use of rhyme. First try reading the dialogue without emphasis on matching sounds. What do you notice when you read through the rhyming pattern and pause at each new piece of punctuation? Try reading the same sequence again, this time enjoying each rhyming sound. What does this focus do towards your understanding of the characters and the scene? Can you hear the difference in this rhythm from a typical iambic pentameter rhythm? Does it have a playful “Dr. Seuss” flavor to the language? What is suggested by such wordplay?

BOYET

If my observation, which very seldom lies,
By the heart's still rhetoric disclosed with eyes,
Deceive me not now, Navarre is infected.

PRINCESS

With what?

BOYET

With that which we lovers entitle affected.

PRINCESS

Your reason?

BOYET

Why, all his behaviors did make their retire
To the court of his eye, peeping thorough desire:
His tongue, all impatient to speak and not see,
Did stumble with haste in his eyesight to be;
All senses to that sense did make their repair,
To feel only looking on fairest of fair:
Methought all his senses were lock'd in his eye,
As jewels in crystal for some prince to buy;
Who, tendering their own worth from where they were glass'd,
Did point you to buy them, along as you pass'd:
His face's own margent did quote such amazes
That all eyes saw his eyes enchanted with gazes.
I'll give you Aquitaine and all that is his,
An you give him for my sake but one loving kiss.

Sharing rhymes.

Shakespeare used rhymes much in the same way contemporary rap music artists do. In addition to establishing a rhythm and choosing words to fit it, the rhymes become an even better opportunity to demonstrate one's word skills when responding to a character's line with a rhymed response. Note the following dialogue as an example of this form of word-play:

FERDINAND

How well he's read, to reason against reading!

DUMAIN

Proceeded well, to stop all good proceeding!

LONGAVILLE

He weeds the corn and still lets grow the weeding.

BIRON

The spring is near when green geese are a-breeding.

DUMAIN

How follows that?

BIRON

Fit in his place and time.

LONGAVILLE

In reason nothing.

BIRON

Something then in rhyme!

FERDINAND

Well, sit you out: go home, Biron: adieu.

BIRON

No, my good lord; I have sworn to stay with you.

Give me the paper; let me read the same;

And to the strict'st decrees I'll write my name.

FERDINAND

How well this yielding rescues thee from shame!

Activity:

Have students partner up and establish a simple beat (this can be reinforced by making clapping or snapping sounds to maintain a steady rhythm).

Have one person say a phrase while speaking it to the established beat. Their scene partner must then respond with an equally long phrase, making the final word they say rhyme with the last word their scene partner said. See how students can challenge themselves to maintain this rhythm going back and forth between the pair, adding new thoughts that rhyme as they go.

You can even have a “rap competition” and create a “Battle of the Bards”!

ACCESSING AND EMPLOYING POETIC LANGUAGE, PART II: Employing Language to Discover Character

Teacher's Instructions

Students should know that actors performing in Shakespeare's plays received only their own character's lines, not the whole script, so they created their character using only those lines, no other information. How much can you tell about a character by the words they choose, and particularly by what they choose to say about themselves? This lesson will provide an opportunity to define and delineate Character Arcs—the journeys on which characters go over the course of the play, which represents the ways they change or remain the same from beginning to end.

Activity: Character Arc Statue Garden

1. Prepare and lay out the lines in Appendix B randomly at different points in the room (Note: if you have more than one classroom performing this exercise, you may want to print the lines on index cards or even laminate them, as students are prone to rolling them up, folding them, etc. If printing on regular paper, print one set for each classroom)
2. Allow students to wander the room, reading all the lines for a minute or two, instructing them to read as many as they can.
3. Ask students to choose a line that speaks to them in some way—it's okay if they are not sure what the line means. Not all lines will be chosen, and that is okay.
4. Instruct students to find a partner and tell them you will all be creating a sculpture garden of these lines, and that they will have to tell the story of their line using nothing but a strong, silent and still physical image. Give pairs 2 minutes each to pose their partners as a statue for which their own line would be a good caption. (Use the two minutes to travel the room privately asking who wants assistance interpreting the meaning of their line.)
5. If you have abundant time, allow students to read their line while their partner performs the statue image. (This step may be omitted.)
6. Tell students that, now that they have seen the strong image they wanted, they will be performing their own statue images, not the ones created for them, ie they will get to represent their own chosen line.
7. Instruct actors to note the letter and number combination on their line and line up on two sides of the room, B1-16 on one side, and on the other side of the room, D1-9. Reveal that these lines represent the character arcs of Biron and Don Armado, two very different men encountering love.
8. Have students "perform" their statue and read their line in numerical order—first all the Biron lines and then all the Don Armado lines, to demonstrate the characters' arcs.

Discussion

Which character changed the most? Why? Did Don Armado change at all? Why or why not?

APPENDIX B—Character Arc Lines for Statue Garden Exercise, p 2 of 2

O, these are barren tasks, too hard to keep,
Not to see ladies, study, fast, not sleep! (B1)

I only swore to study with your grace
And stay here in your court for three years' space. (B2)

Give me the paper; let me read the same;
And to the strict'st decrees I'll write my name. (B3)

But I believe, although I seem so loath,
I am the last that will last keep his oath. (B4)

These oaths and laws will prove an idle scorn. (B5)

Your wit's too hot, it speeds too fast, 'twill tire. (B6)

Lady, I will commend you to mine own heart. (B7)

What, !! I love! I sue! I seek a wife! (B8)

I will not love: if I do, hang me; i' faith, I will not. O, but her eye,-- (B9)

Once more I'll mark how love can vary wit. (B10)

For where is any author in the world
Teaches such beauty as a woman's eye? (B11)

Vouchsafe to show the sunshine of your face,
That we, like savages, may worship it. (B12)

O, I am yours, and all that I possess! (B13)

We have the plague, and caught it of your eyes. (B14)

A twelvemonth! well; befall what will befall,
I'll jest a twelvemonth in an hospital. (B15)

Our wooing doth not end like an old play;
Jack hath not Jill: these ladies' courtesy
Might well have made our sport a comedy. (B16)

Boy, I will hereupon confess I am in love: and as it is base for a soldier to love, so am I in love
with a base wench. (D1)

my spirit grows heavy in love. (D2)

I do betray myself with blushing. (D3)

I will tell thee wonders. (D4)

I love thee. (D5)

Assist me, some extemporal god of rhyme, for I am sure I shall turn sonnet. Devise, wit; write, pen; for I am for whole volumes in folio. (D6)

Anointed, I implore so much expense of thy royal sweet breath as will utter a brace of words. (D7)

For mine own part, I breathe free breath. I have seen the day of wrong through the little hole of discretion, and I will right myself like a soldier. (D8)

I am a votary; I have vowed to Jaquenetta to hold the plough for her sweet love three years. (D9)

After Seeing the Play

ACCESSING AND EMPLOYING POETIC LANGUAGE, PART III: Learning More about Character through Language and Relationship

Part I: Word choice, rhythm, momentum, and sound as character indicators

Preliminary discussion

Poets like Shakespeare choose their words carefully—looking for words of maximum impact, not just in complex meaning, but also based on the rhythm they create, and the momentum of the words in combination, and even the sounds they make. For example, in Shakespeare’s day the word “war” rhymed with “car” and when drawn out (“WARRRRRR!!”) really sounded like a battle cry. Curse words and insults, too, rely on their consonant sounds as well as their meanings to make their impact, and the love-fueled *Labour’s* features some world-class odes, at least aimed at the many wonders and challenges such feelings inspire. But all the language has impact, both on the actor and the audience. Let’s look at the Biron’s monologue to the soon-to-depart Rosaline.

Activity

1. Give students Appendix C—a monologue of Biron’s from late in the play.
2. Go over it quickly to make sure they know the meaning of the speech.
3. Ask students to read the speech aloud several times, with a different emphasis each time, but looking for meaning in rhythm and momentum:
 - a. Walking the Walk: Read the speech while walking through the room. Change direction at the end of each line (not sentence). Repeat, changing at the end of punctuation (i.e., at periods, exclamation marks and question marks, but not commas, colons, or semicolons). What does the structure of the piece tell you about Biron’s emotional state?
 - b. An Inner Conflict: find a partner, and read one line at a time, switching readers at the end of each line, even if the thought seems to continue. Then change readers each time you reach any punctuation at all. What does this add to your understanding of how a soliloquy works? Of whether he really wants to feel these feelings?
4. Ask them to notice the momentum of the piece—where does it seem to be moving quickly? Where slowly? What do the sounds, the momentum and the choppiness of thought tell us about Biron’s readiness to admit this love?
5. Working alone again, whisper the whole speech as if trying not to wake a sleeping loved one. What extra detail do you find?

Discussion

How can you emphasize, shape or use the sounds in them to make them sound even more violent? More loving? Can you roar them? Growl them? Hiss them? Spit them? Shriek them?

Appendix C

BIRON

Thus pour the stars down plagues for perjury.
Can any face of brass hold longer out?
Here stand I, lady, dart thy skill at me;
Bruise me with scorn, confound me with a flout;
Thrust thy sharp wit quite through my ignorance;
Cut me to pieces with thy keen conceit;
And I will wish thee never more to dance,
Nor never more in Russian habit wait.
O, never will I trust to speeches penn'd,
Nor to the motion of a schoolboy's tongue,
Nor never come in vizer to my friend,
Nor woo in rhyme, like a blind harper's song!
Taffeta phrases, silken terms precise,
Three-piled hyperboles, spruce affectation,
Figures pedantical; these summer-flies
Have blown me full of maggot ostentation:
I do forswear them; and I here protest,
By this white glove;--how white the hand, God knows!--
Henceforth my wooing mind shall be express'd
In russet yeas and honest kersey noes:
And, to begin, wench,--so God help me, la!--
My love to thee is sound, sans crack or flaw.

Part II: Creating the Story with a Scene Partner

Preliminary Discussion

Actors can make many character discoveries by themselves, but theater is a team sport, so we cannot complete our character development without working with partners. Here we take a pivotal scene and examine it as actors do in rehearsal.

Activity:

Plays Five Ways—work with a pivotal scene to help students practice parsing verse and notice clues that Shakespeare has left for performers in that text.

1. Ask students to create two lines at far opposite sides of the room and looking at each other such that each student has a partner facing him/her across the room.
2. Assign one side of the room to be Biron and the other Rosaline.
3. Give students Appendix D—Biron and Rosaline’s first encounter in the play.
4. Run through a quick summary of the scene to make sure students understand it.
5. Guide students to read the scene several times with a different detail moving each time as follows:
 - a. Walk towards scene partner each time you repeat a word either of you have said before (you can skip connector words like if, and, the... etc.). Take very small steps. What do you notice?
 - b. Now start very close together and step apart on each repetition. How does this change the dynamic?
 - c. On each line, either step forward (confront), side-step (avoid), or step back (run away) from your scene partner. Each pair will make different choices, and that is great.
6. Now ask students to adjust their lines so they are about 6 feet from each other—whatever distance feels comfortable for the group, and do the scene a few more times in place as follows:
 - a. Hit the paper you’re holding every time you get to any punctuation
 - b. Repeat one key word from partner’s previous speech before saying one’s own lines
7. Other variations include dinging a bell (the kind at customer service desks) each time you feel your character scores a point on the other, making a non-judgmental statement about your scene partner before each speech.

Discussion

What did you discover about spacing/distance on stage? About making points? About listening to your scene partner? How does this help bring additional complexity to your understanding of these two characters?

Appendix D

BIRON

Lady, I will commend you to mine own heart.

ROSALINE

Pray you, do; I would be glad to see it.

BIRON

I would you heard it groan.

ROSALINE

Is the fool sick?

BIRON

Sick at the heart.

ROSALINE

Alack, let it blood.

BIRON

Would that do it good?

ROSALINE

My physic says 'ay.'

BIRON

Will you prick't with your eye?

ROSALINE

No point, with my knife.

BIRON

Now, God save thy life!

ROSALINE

And yours from long living!

BIRON

I cannot stay thanksgiving.

[Retiring]

DIGGING DEEPER INTO CHARACTER AND SETTING

Activity 1: Write a journal entry for Biron or Rosaline on the night before they are reunited after a year apart. How does your character feel? How does s/he imagine others' responses to the reunion? What truths will they reveal in a diary that they would never reveal in public, even to a confidant? Have students read them aloud.

Activity 2: Hotseat! Interview another student who poses as a character in the play, for example, question Don Armado on why he romanced Jacquenetta, whether it turned out how he expected it, and what he would do differently if he were to do it again; or the King on how he feels about his unwitting role in the plot involving his friends' love lives, about his initial expectations about the vows to study and how and why he thinks their purpose became such a challenging promise to keep. Keep in mind that people do lie in interviews and note that it is acceptable to interview someone who has a different perspective now that they have lived through some events.

Activity 3: Missing Soliloquy! At the end of the play, the men and women determine to separate for a period of time, but what if they hadn't? Write a final soliloquy for one of the characters—whether it be a diary entry, a confession received due to torture or plain regret, or a final appeal to judge, jury, or audience (or even to the Princess' father's ghost). Have students rehearse and perform their soliloquies.

General Shakespeare Sources for Teachers

For more scenes and lines, we recommend:

The Norton Edition of *Shakespeare's Collected Works*

Alexander Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*

and the online site <http://shakespeare.mit.edu>, which holds the entire searchable texts of all the plays

Sources for this Guide

In addition to those cited within the text, we used:

<http://www.shakespeareswords.com/>

<https://www.rsc.org.uk/loves-labours-lost/education>