

Lesson Ideas and Materials: *Twelfth Night* (William Shakespeare)



Based on: Act 1*

Created by: Pascal Valley

Plot Summary of the Act/Scene:

The play begins in Illyria, a fictional land ruled by duke Orsino. The duke is madly in love with the countess Olivia. However, she swore to stay in mourning for seven years due to her brothers' death. Meanwhile, Lady Viola, surviving a shipwreck, is stranded at the coast of Illyria. She decides to dress up as a man and in disguise she becomes Orsino's courtier. Soon she becomes his favorite and is sent to Olivia to woo her on his behalf. She accepts the task but reveals to the audience that she would rather have Orsino for herself than setting him up with Olivia.

At Olivia's court, her uncle Sir Toby is supporting Sir Andrew, a silly knight who also hopes to marry Olivia. Her maid Maria judges them for drinking while also mocking the slow-witted Sir Andrew. At the same time, Feste, Olivia's fool, is joking around. Viola's/Cesario's wooing is rejected by Olivia. After she leaves the scene, Olivia sends after her with a supposed lost ring. This gesture reveals Olivia's feelings for Viola/Cesario.

Overview of Lesson Design:

Phase/Teaching Activity/Impulse	Material
<p>Introduction [plenary discussion]:</p> <p>The students discuss their first impressions of the comedic aspects of the play. Teacher input: "Shakespeare's plays are usually divided into the three genres: comedy, tragedy and history play. The plays <i>Twelfth Night</i>, <i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i>, <i>Much Ado about Nothing</i> and <i>As You Like It</i> are among the most popular Shakespearean comedies performed in theatres all over the world. Please look back on your first reading of Act 1 and consider whether you can point out lines/dialogues or characters that could be seen as amusing, witty or funny."</p>	<p>Shakespeare's <i>Twelfth Night</i> (CSS edition*): up to Act 1 Scene 3 or Act 1 Scene 5</p>
<p>Activity 1 [individual and group work]:</p> <p>The teacher hands out WS 1 and explains task 1. After the students finished task 1 on their own, the teacher asks the students how they would portray Sir Andrew and what his most prominent features would be.</p> <p>After the teacher has explained task 2, the students gather in groups of four and the teacher provides the students with hints and tips for their performance.</p>	<p>WS 1: <i>A jolly bunch</i></p> <p>Shakespeare's <i>Twelfth Night</i> (CSS edition*): Act 1 Scene 3</p>



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*[*Twelfth Night*, CSS edition] Shakespeare, William: *Twelfth Night* (Cambridge School Shakespeare, edited by Anthony Partington and Richard Spencer). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Phase/Teaching Activity/Impulse	Material
<p>Activity 2 [group work]:</p> <p>The students are asked to form groups of four. Their task is to rewrite Act 1 Scene 3 in Modern English and then read aloud/perform their version of the dialogue (and optionally record it, e.g. with their smartphone or another recording device).</p> <p>The students' (recorded) performances are then presented in class and the fellow students ask questions about their interpretation of the scene or give feedback on the "funniness" of the performance as a good comedy.</p>	<p>WS 2: <i>Drunken (k)night</i>s</p> <p>Shakespeare's <i>Twelfth Night</i> (CSS edition*): Act 1 Scene 3</p> <p>smartphone/ recording device</p>
<p>Target competence(s): Reading, speaking, text- and media literacy Zielkompetenz(en): <i>Funktionale kommunikative Kompetenz (Leseverstehen, (darstellendes) Sprechen), Text- und Medienkompetenz</i></p>	



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