

WS 2: Drunken (k)nights (solutions)

Task 3: You are the playwright now! Work in groups of four. Write a script for a modern production of the drunken encounter between Sir Toby and Sir Andrew (lines 66-114). The following table below gives you some ideas on how to adapt Shakespeare's English to Modern English.

Shakespearean English	Modern English
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lack'st a cup of canary.- excellent head of hair- like flax on a distaff- There's life in't, man.- Is it a world to hide virtues in?- Let me see thee caper.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- You need some wine.- beautiful hair- straight hair- There is still hope.- You don't have to hide your talents.- Show me your dance moves.

The following questions might help you to get started:

- How can the play be adapted to a modern-day setting?
- Where does the performance take place?
- How can the drunkenness of Sir Toby and Sir Andrew be portrayed?
- Are any props required to enhance the performance?

Keep in mind Sir Toby and Sir Andrew are important characters to bring about comic relief¹ in *Twelfth Night*, so you might think about how you could improve the funniness of the scene even further.

Task 4: Now it is your time to perform! Tape a recording of you and your partners acting out your script. The results will be showcased in class afterwards.

¹ comic episodes in a dramatic or literary work that offset more serious sections.



Drunken (k)nights (script and performance) (task 3 + 4):

Adaptation: School/teen drama; adult drama; dropping titles to adapt to the modern day: Sir Andrew and Sir Toby dropping their Sir titles, Olivia drops the countess and becomes Toby's sister; Orsino becoming the mayor instead of the duke.

Setting: Bus stop; schoolyard; classroom; tennis court etc.

Portrayal of the knights: Several levels of drunkenness could be performed, either a progressive increase or a stagnant portrayal of intoxication. During the scene Toby and Andrew could repeatedly take sips from their cups. Moreover, Toby and Andrew could have playful physical contact during the conversation indicating their friendship.

Props: Depending on the adaptation and setting chosen, the performers need some kind of bottle to portray the beer/wine/medication.

Although this activity should be performed, a script instruction for potential performers is provided:

Toby: (*pitiful, hands Andrew a cup of wine*) Oh brother, you need some wine: when did I see you the last time so sad?

Andrew: (*remorseful/heartbroken, takes the cup from Toby*) Never in your life, I think unless the wine made me sad. Sometimes I think that I am not as smart as I like to believe I am a lover of junk food maybe that's harming my mind.

Toby: (*indifferent*) No question.

Andrew: (*melancholic*) I thought about getting rid of this nasty drinking habit. I'll drive home tomorrow, Sir Toby.

Toby: (*surprised*) Warum, my dear friend?

Andrew: (*befuddled*) What do you mean 'warum'? I wished I had spent more time learning languages rather than spending my time on partying and golfing. O had I just studied more!

Toby: (*trying to change the topic to lighten Andrew's mood*) However, my dear friend, you have beautiful hair.

Andrew: (*uncertain*) Do you really think so?



Toby: (*cheerful*) Of course, your hair is not curly.

Andrew: (*becoming more confident*) But it looks good, doesn't it?

Toby: (*jolly*) It looks splendid! It is wonderful straight hair; I would like to see someone spin it off.

Andrew: (*gets melancholic again*) Yeah, but I'll go home tomorrow, Toby. Your sister, Olivia, does not want to be with me. The mayor himself tries to date her.

Toby: (*persuasive*) She does not want anything of the mayor, she simply would not want to marry somebody above her class, wealth, or age. She swore it. There is still hope!

Andrew: (*cheerful/optimistic/melancholic*) Ok, I'll stay a month longer. I'm one of the weirdest guys in the world. I like partying and playing golf all the same.

Toby: (*serene/cheerful*) Do you like sweets, my friend?

Andrew: (*optimistic/melancholic*) Of course, just like everyone in Illyria.

Toby: (*serene/cheerful*) What is your favourite dance, friend?

Andrew: (*optimistic/melancholic*) I think I can breakdance quite nicely.

Toby: (*playful*) And I might break my legs to this dance!

Andrew: (*optimistic/melancholic*) And I think I do the dance moves as good as most people in Illyria.

Toby: (*staggering/persuasive/cheerful*) Why do you hide these talents? Why do you have these gifts if you don't want to share them? These talents must be shown to the world! You should dance wherever you go, for I can only trip and stumble. You must already have been born with these outstanding dancing skills!

Andrew: (*growing more confident*) You might be right. Should we dance?

Toby: (*cheerful*) What shall we do else? Let me see you dance! Faster! Faster! Perfect!

(*Both are exiting the scene in cheerful laughter and dance.*)

