

Task 1: Learning from nature

Duke Senior ends his first speech claiming that nature could teach all kinds of moral lessons about human life. Now he asks what lessons Jaques has drawn from the sight of a wounded stag, and the First Lord lists three of Jaques's conclusions that criticise society.

a. First, try to visualise what the situation might look like in a simple drawing.

the deer weeping into the stream



the wounded deer abandoned by the herd



the well-fed herd ignoring the wounded deer



b. Explain in your own words the three lessons as described by the First Lord in lines 46-57.

Jaques says the deer's tears falling into the stream are wasted, like people who give their riches to those who already have plenty. It shows how unfair and pointless this can be.

When the deer is left alone by its friends, Jaques learns that suffering often makes people lose their companions. Hard times can cause even close friends to leave.

The herd doesn't stop to help the injured deer, and Jaques compares this to greedy people who ignore those who are poor and struggling. He points out how selfish and uncaring this behavior is.

c. Look back at what Duke Senior said about deer hunting in lines 21-5. Suggest how he now reacts to hearing himself so strongly criticised.

Duke Senior would probably think carefully about what Jaques said, as he seems to be someone who values learning and reflection. Since he already feels bad about hunting the deer, he might agree with some of Jaques's criticism and feel a little guilty. At the same time, he might explain that hunting is necessary for their survival, even though he respects nature and doesn't like causing harm.

Task 2: Nature – the best teacher?

At the start of Act 2, Duke Senior claims that nature has a lot to teach humans about moral conduct.

- Do you agree that experiences in the Forest of Arden can teach more about good, evil, courage, honour and love than life in the 'civilised' city? Remember that Arden, as well as being an ideal world away from the corruptions of the court, is also a place of danger, hardship and personal struggles. Write at least one paragraph for each side of the argument. Remember to use examples and quotations from the script.

Argument	Key Ideas	Examples & Quotations from the Text	Analysis & Explanation
Yes, the Forest of Arden teaches more about morality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - nature as a moral teacher - freedom from corruption - personal growth through hardship - genuine relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Duke Senior: <i>"Sweet are the uses of adversity"</i> (2.1.12) - Orlando caring for Adam despite his struggles - Rosalind and Celia showing courage in exile - the shepherd Corin's wisdom about simple, honest life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Duke Senior sees hardship as an opportunity to build character. - The court's corruption (Duke Frederick's tyranny) contrasts with Arden's purity. - Orlando, who starts as a naive courtly youth, learns real honour through self-sacrifice and kindness. - In the forest, characters form genuine bonds, unlike the superficial relationships at court.
No, the court teaches more about morality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - understanding power and corruption - social order and justice systems - exposure to both virtue and vice - development of courtly love and manners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Duke Frederick's tyranny shows moral corruption. - Courtly traditions shape Orlando's love for Rosalind (e.g., writing poetry). - Jaques' cynicism: <i>"The world is but a stage"</i> (2.7.139). - The court exposes people to ambition, betrayal, and duty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The court provides lessons in real-world morality—how power can corrupt and how justice must be upheld. - Orlando's poetic expressions show how the court influences romantic ideals. - Jaques' famous speech reflects a broader philosophical understanding of morality. - Unlike the forest's simplicity, the court forces people to navigate complex moral decisions.

Task 1 adapted from; Task 2 taken from: Shakespeare, William, *As you like it* (Cambridge School Shakespeare), ed. Linzy Brady, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, p. 36 and p. 68.



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Reading comprehension quiz: Act 2 (Solution)

- Scene 1
1. What does the Duke suggest about life in the forest compared to life at court?
a) The court is more perilous than the forest.
b) The court is free from adversity.
c) The forest lacks any kind of challenge.
d) The forest is full of danger and discomfort.
 2. In the Duke's speech, what does he compare adversity to?
a) A storm in the forest.
b) An ugly toad with a precious jewel in its head.
c) A venomous snake.
d) A cruel king.
 3. How does Amiens describe the Duke's attitude toward hardship?
a) He feels sorry for himself.
b) He avoids thinking about hardship.
c) He turns misfortune into something positive.
d) He blames others for his situation.
 4. What is Jaques's reaction to the injured deer?
a) He ignores the deer.
b) He weeps and creates moral lessons from its suffering.
c) He hunts the deer to end its misery.
d) He laughs at the deer's plight.
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- Scene 2
5. How does Duke Frederick react when he learns that Celia is missing?
a) He remains calm and patient.
b) He suspects Orlando and becomes angry.
c) He sends gifts to persuade her to return.
d) He ignores the situation.
- Scene 3
6. Why does Orlando flee to the Forest of Arden?
a) To escape his brother's threats.
b) To find his brother Oliver.
c) To search for Duke Senior.
d) To join a group of rebels.

As you like it – Act II

- Scene 4 7. Who do Rosalind and Celia meet in the forest?
- a) Jaques and Duke Senior.
 - b) Silvius and Corin.**
 - c) Orlando and Adam.
 - d) Touchstone and Oliver.
- Scene 5 8. How does Corin respond to Silvius's love troubles?
- a) He mocks him.
 - b) He offers kind and practical advice.**
 - c) He encourages him to give up.
 - d) He leaves him alone.
- Scene 6 9. What problem do Orlando and Adam face in the forest?
- a) They are being hunted by Duke Frederick.
 - b) They meet hostile villagers.
 - c) They are attacked by wild animals.
 - d) They are lost and starving.**
- Scene 7 10. How does Duke Senior react to Orlando's request for food?
- a) He refuses and tests Orlando.
 - b) He ignores Orlando.
 - c) He welcomes Orlando kindly.**
 - d) He demands payment.

