

Lesson ideas and material

As You Like It (William Shakespeare)



Based on: Act 4 Scene 1*

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Plot summary of the act/scene

Rosalind, still disguised as Ganymede, engages in witty banter with Orlando and playfully tests his love by pretending to "cure" him of his affections through role-playing as Rosalind. The scene highlights themes of love and identity while showcasing Rosalind's cleverness and emotional depth.

Teaching aims

Students examine the significance of gender roles, cross-dressing, and power dynamics in the play. They gain insight into Rosalind's strategy of role-playing and manipulation, especially in her interactions with Orlando in light of the final reveal.

Description of materials

The following material consists of:

- worksheet 1 (Scene Script)
- worksheet 2 (Who's in charge?)

Other required material and equipment:

- YouTube clips of RSC production
 - Clip 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kyF2JWZ-OAc>
 - Clip 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWlze4vYVcg>
- sound clip 'Marriage March'
- image from RSC production (<https://www.rsc.org.uk/shakespeare-learning-zone/as-you-like-it/language/a-lesson-in-love>)



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*[As You Like It, CSS edition] Shakespeare, William: *As You Like It* (Cambridge School Shakespeare, edited by Linzy Brady). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Overview of lesson design:

Phase / Teaching activity / Impulse	Material
Activity 1 [plenary discussion] Teacher enters the class with the 'Wedding March' being played by a soundspeaker. <i>Good 'morrow, dear class!</i> Alluding to the popularity of the song, teacher asks what could possibly be the topic of today's session. Possible <i>teacher talk</i> : <i>Exactly: today, two of our play's main characters are getting married!</i> A picture of the 2005 RSC production is shown. <i>Which if our main characters could this possibly show? Match and discuss with your partner, and speculate on what could have happened before this image.</i>	<i>Wedding march sound; image from RSC production</i>
Activity 2 [plenary discussion] After recapping the characters' situation in the forest, students watch a scene from the RSC performance. Teacher asks about the clown's nose to highlight the theme of illusion and disguise, then shows the clip a second time. Students are then asked to give a one-sentence summary of the scene (e.g. Rosalind, dressed as a man, teasingly teaches Orlando how to be a proper lover.)	<i>Clip 1</i>
Activity 3 [plenary discussion, partner work] Three students read the scene (ll. 98–141) aloud as Rosalind, Celia, and Orlando. Then, students work in pairs on the task "Who's in charge?" Each pair reads the scene twice – once with Orlando, once with Rosalind in charge. Afterwards, the class discusses which version seemed more plausible and why.	Worksheet 1, Worksheet 2
Activity 4 [individual work, partner work] Students continue working on the worksheet, focusing on gender roles and the portrayal of marriage in the scene. After completing the tasks, they discuss their results with a partner.	Worksheet 1, Worksheet 2
Activity 5 [plenary discussion] 2–4 students read out their paragraph from Task 2. Teacher collects and summarizes the class's arguments for Task 3 on the board. Students reflect on the portrayal of Rosalind with the guiding question: <i>Considering the age of the play – did you expect such a portrayal of a female character?</i>	
Activity 6 [plenary discussion] The marriage scene of the RSC production is shown. Teacher leads a discussion: <i>How is Rosalind portrayed here? Does this match our findings from the lesson?</i> As a food for thought, teacher asks students whether the two characters are now truly wedded to each other? Or does this foreshadow something still to come?	<i>Clip 2</i>



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