Shakespeare on Tour

Teacher’s Handbook and Curriculum

The Comedy of Errors

by Rebecca J. Ennals, Artistic Director,
Rev. 2018 by Phil Lowery, Education Director
San Francisco Shakespeare Festival

San Francisco Shakespeare Festival

P.O. Box 460937, San Francisco, CA 94146
800-978-PLAY • 415-558-0888 • www.sfshakes.org
Shakespeare on Tour

Teacher’s Handbook and Curriculum

*The Comedy of Errors*

Copyright 2006, 2018 San Francisco Shakespeare Festival

Do not reproduce or distribute without permission.

Thanks to
Brian Herndon, Jocelyn Leiser Herndon, Daniel Holloway,
Toby Leavitt, Stephen Massott, and John Western.
# Contents

Preface ................................................................................................................................................................. 4
How to use this curriculum .................................................................................................................................. 5
Day 1: Introduction to the world of the play ........................................................................................................ 7
Day 2: Shakespeare's Language and Themes .................................................................................................... 15
Day 3: The history of Commedia dell'Arte ........................................................................................................ 19
Day 4: Verse and prose -- reading Shakespeare’s text ..................................................................................... 25
Day 5: The Exposition -- Aegeon’s Story ........................................................................................................... 31
Day 6: The Syracusians arrive .................................................................................................................................. 37
Day 7: Domestic troubles ...................................................................................................................................... 44
Day 8: The confusion continues ........................................................................................................................ 50
Day 9: An impatient man and a patient one ........................................................................................................ 57
Day 10: Two very different love stories .............................................................................................................. 64
Day 11: Financial Troubles ................................................................................................................................... 71
Day 12: Sorcery and Madness ............................................................................................................................ 81
Day 13: Adriana learns a lesson ........................................................................................................................ 89
Day 14: All are reunited .......................................................................................................................................... 96
Day 15: Reviewing three weeks with Shakespeare .......................................................................................... 102
Worksheet One: The Three Unities in “The Comedy of Errors” ......................................................................... 105
Worksheet One -- Teacher’s Key .......................................................................................................................... 106
Worksheet Two: The World of “The Comedy of Errors” .................................................................................... 107
Worksheet Four: Commedia dell’Arte Characters .............................................................................................. 110
Worksheet Five: Dromio is a pun-ny guy! ............................................................................................................ 113
Worksheet Five -- Teacher’s Key .......................................................................................................................... 116
Worksheet Six: Object Tracking Sheet ................................................................................................................ 119
Worksheet Six -- Teacher’s Key ........................................................................................................................... 120
Appendix A: California Common Core State Standards covered in this curriculum ........................................ 122
Preface

“They say every why hath a wherefore.”
(Dromio of Syracuse, Act Two, Scene 2, The Comedy of Errors)

The Comedy of Errors contains some of Shakespeare’s best verbal humor and physical comedy. Marital harmony and family reunification are central themes that all ages can understand, and at times the play seems ready to veer off into tragedy, but the confusion resulting from two sets of identical twins makes the play eternally memorable, and always hilarious.

One whole lesson is devoted to Commedia dell’Arte, the classical Italian theatrical style that strongly influences our staging. You could easily spend three weeks just on Commedia; this distillation is cursory at best. But a little background on the style will enhance your students’ enjoyment of the show, and also their understanding of the world in which Shakespeare was writing.

You’ll find a list of California Common Core State Standards (2013) for English Language Arts covered at the beginning of every lesson. Reading and listening to Shakespeare is one of the best ways we can think of to cover a large number of standards! Although it’s not specified in this curriculum, the activities at the end of most chapters will also satisfy many of the California Arts Standards for Theatre (CCCS Standards for Visual and Performing Arts, Theatre) adopted by the California Department of Education, August 2018.

A note about “grade-level appropriate text”: We at San Francisco Shakespeare Festival have been using Shakespeare’s actual text with grades 2 and up for 25 years in our summer camp and after-school programs. The key is not to expect students to read the whole play, but to give them short passages to read. The rest they will understand when they see it performed. Just as young children learn foreign languages more adeptly than adults, we find that early exposure to Shakespeare leads to extraordinary levels of comprehension. We generally advise against “translations” of the text, which help contribute to the incorrect assumption that Shakespeare did not write in modern English. Working with the text in small, manageable chunks in a performance-based way allows ownership and engagement in a way that reading a “translation” simply does not.

We based our tour script on the Cambridge edition of the play, but any of the very good annotated texts will do -- the Arden, the Riverside and the Oxford editions are also favorites. We do recommend using a complete annotated text, not downloading a text-only version from the internet.
How to use this curriculum

In an attempt to make this curriculum relevant to diverse age groups, we have included a large number of steps to each day’s lesson, but we don’t expect every group to complete them; some high school groups may make it through all of the steps, while younger groups may be better off skipping some of them. Consider the lessons and steps as a menu, and select the steps most appropriate for the age group you are teaching.

We’ve included several lessons that can work well across many different age groups. These lesson plans are tried and tested in our summer Shakespeare Camp program as well as in our Playshops and Tailor-Made Shakespeare residencies. For classes with time for more in-depth study, we have provided optional “homework” as well as additional Study Questions and Activities at the end of each lesson that may be used as classroom activities, or as ideas for written exams and final reports.

We recommend that teachers using this curriculum have access to a chalk or white board on which to write the Words of the Day at the beginning of every class, so you can refer back to them as you go along, and a good lexicon or glossary, such as David and Ben Crystal’s Shakespeare’s Words, for any words not defined in the annotated text.

Your feedback is always helpful to us, and we enjoy hearing from you. Have fun!

Rebecca J Ennals, Artistic Director
Phil Lowery, Education Director

Rebecca J. Ennals has been on the staff of the Shakespeare Festival since 2002 and Artistic Director since 2012. She has extensive directing, acting, and teaching experience, and holds an MFA in performance from U.C. Davis. She has taught and written curriculum at the elementary through college levels. As an actor and director, she has worked locally with Marin Theatre Company, PlayGround, Napa Valley Shakespeare Festival, Pear Theatre, Napa Valley Repertory Theatre, Peninsula Youth Theatre, Los Altos Youth Theatre and Shakespeare At Stinson. Ms. Ennals has directed eight productions for the Festival’s Shakespeare On Tour in-school touring program, six productions for the Civic Arts Stage Company program in Pleasanton, and four productions for Free Shakespeare in the Park. She also regularly writes the Festival’s Green Shows and conceived and executed the 2012 pop-up Shakespeare project "30 Days of Free Shakespeare in the Parklet." Her blog can be found at sfshakes.wordpress.com.

San Francisco Shakespeare Festival is one of the Bay Area’s leading providers of arts education for youth. Its flagship program, Free Shakespeare in the Park, travels to five Bay Area communities every summer, bringing Shakespeare’s plays to approximately 30,000 people, many of whom are seeing live theatre for the first time. Over 400 children and teens attend Bay
**Area Shakespeare Camps** every summer in locations from San Jose to San Francisco, Pacifica to Pleasanton. **Midnight Shakespeare**, the Festival’s after-school program for at-risk youth, works with children and teens in low-income areas of San Jose, Oakland, San Francisco, and the Peninsula. Finally, **Shakespeare on Tour** brings its acclaimed productions to classrooms all over the state, performing in front of thousands children every school year. For more information about San Francisco Shakespeare Festival and its programs, please visit [www.sfshakes.org](http://www.sfshakes.org).

---

**Suggested supplemental reading:**

Day 1: Introduction to the world of the play

Goal: To introduce the three unities and how they apply to the structure of *The Comedy of Errors*. To introduce the main characters and their relationships. To identify characteristics of farce vs. comedy.

Words of the Day:
unities of time, place, and action
complications
climax
denouement
character
source material
comedy
farce

Content Standards:
Grade 7-12: RL5: Form and structure contribute to meaning
Grade 8-10: RL9: Allusions to & transformation of other texts, outside sources

Materials: Worksheets 1, 2

Step 1: TEACHER may choose to introduce the unit with a brief biography of Shakespeare, including that he was born in the small town of Stratford, England in 1564, the son of a glovemaker, and traveled to London to eventually join the Lord Chamberlain’s Men, a company of actors, and become their principal playwright. In all, he wrote nearly 40 plays, numerous epic poems, and 154 sonnets before his death in 1616. Shakespeare is generally held to be the greatest Western playwright of all time, and his plays continue to be performed regularly around the world.

TEACHER introduces the play as follows:

Most scholars believe *The Comedy of Errors* was one of the very first plays Shakespeare wrote. He based it on a Roman comedy by Plautus, written in the 2nd century BC, called *Menaechmi*, which was also about twins who get mistaken for each other. Perhaps because Shakespeare was writing a play based on a Roman comedy, which was in turn based on a Greek play, he chose to use the three unities that originated in the classical Greek theatre, as described in Aristotle’s *Poetics*: the **unities of time, place, and action**. (SQ 1)
TEACHER writes the three unities on the board (WS 1 also allows students to follow along):

**TIME**

**PLACE**

**ACTION**

TEACHER asks STUDENTS to guess what the *unity of time* might mean. During what time period must the action of the play take place? (During one day, between sunrise and sunset.)

STUDENTS guess what the *unity of place* might mean. (All the action of the play must take place in a confined geographical area.)

Finally, STUDENTS guess what the *unity of action* might mean. They may guess that there is one plot with no sub-plots, which is an acceptable though simplified answer.

The TEACHER may wish to expand upon this idea, perhaps using Francis Fergusson’s remarks from his introduction to Aristotle’s *Poetics*:

“The plot of a play is the first form of the one action; what then are we to say of plays, like many of Shakespeare’s, in which several plots, often taken from different stories, are combined?...

Aristotle of course did not have Shakespeare’s plays, but he did have Homer, who also combined many stories, many plot sequences, both in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. And he recognized that Homer unified that more complex scheme by obeying the fundamental requirement of unity of action: (VIII.3): ‘...he made the *Odyssey*, and likewise the *Iliad*, to center round an action that in our sense of the word is one...’ The action of the *Iliad*... is ‘to deal with the anger of Achilles.’ The action of the *Odyssey* is ‘to get home again.’"

Therefore the unity of action does not necessarily mean one plot thread, but a thematic unity around one goal or objective. However, Fergusson does go on to say that Aristotle seems to prefer the single plot to the multiple, or epic, plots. We’ll decide whether we think *The Comedy of Errors* has a single or multiple plots.

**Step 2:** TEACHER divides students up into small groups of two or three. STUDENTS try to think of a movie or play that they have seen recently. Did it observe the three unities? After about 15 minutes, each group goes before the class to talk about their play or movie and why they think it did or did not observe the unities.
TEACHER then asks each group to identify the complications, or rising action, leading up to the climax of the play or movie. If desired, each group can draw this as an arc on the board, indicating along the way different plot points. They should then identify any denouement or falling action.

This exercise will probably prove too difficult for very young groups to do on their own. If you have already discussed Greek tragedies that adhere to the unities, such as Oedipus Rex, in your class, you could also choose to chart the action of that play as an example. Or you could chart the action of a book you read in class recently.

**Step 3:** TEACHER continues: Going back to The Comedy of Errors, let’s look at how Shakespeare used the unities in this play. (SQ 2)

Next to TIME on the board, TEACHER writes “Between sunrise and sunset.” The action of The Comedy of Errors takes place during one day.

Next to PLACE, TEACHER writes “In the city of Ephesus.” All of the action takes place around the city center of Ephesus.

Next to ACTION, TEACHER draws an arc, telling the class that they will fill in the plot points, and attempt to come up with a unifying theme or action for all of them.

**Step 4:** TEACHER writes all the characters’ names on the board per the bottom half of Worksheet 1. The characters are:

Duke Solinus
Aegeon
Antipholus of Syracuse
Dromio of Syracuse
Antipholus of Ephesus
Dromio of Ephesus
Adriana
Luciana
Angelo
(Balthazar)
First Merchant
Second Merchant
(Courtesan)
Luce
Dr. Pinch
Abbess
Jailer
Officer
(The characters in parentheses do not appear in the shortened Shakespeare on Tour version of the play.)

TEACHER continues: In order to discover the unifying action of the play, we need to look at another element of Aristotle’s Poetics – character. He said that the purpose of the characters was to further the action of the play.

Many of the characters in The Comedy of Errors are very similar to those in the source material, Plautus’ Menaechmi. Menaechmi also includes a set of twins who are separated at birth and mistaken for each other when one arrives in the other’s town (SQ 3).

TEACHER asks: What do you think Shakespeare did to make his play more complex?

STUDENTS guess, based on the list of characters, that he created another set of twins.

TEACHER continues: Shakespeare added a second set of twins to be the servants of the first set of twins, thus adding to the possibilities for confusion and mistaken identity. Can you guess which characters are the two sets of twins?

STUDENTS guess (this is an easy one), and also guess which are the masters and which are the servants. TEACHER draws connecting lines between each Antipholus and his servant Dromio.

Step 5: TEACHER passes out WS 2 (a map of Syracuse and Ephesus), and continues:

When Plautus wrote Menaechmi, the Roman empire extended from Italy to Greece and into Turkey and the Middle East. He has the action take place in the city of Epidamnum, which is actually very close to Syracuse.

Shakespeare moved the action of the play to Ephesus, much farther from Syracuse. Any guesses as to why he would have done that?

STUDENTS may have some ideas on this, but it’s a tough one.

TEACHER explains: Is anyone here familiar with the letters of Paul to the Ephesians in the Bible? Scholars often assume that since Christianity was introduced between the times of Plautus and Shakespeare, Shakespeare changed the name to a city his audience would be more familiar with.

It’s also true that Paul’s letters to the Ephesians have a lot to do with marriage and relationships, and this play says a lot about how to have a good marriage. Shakespeare chose to connect the location, or place, of his play to his theme, or action (SQ 4).
The character of the shrewish wife appears in Plautus’ play and is also very important to Shakespeare’s theme -- which character do you think that is? Who might she be married to?

STUDENTS guess Adriana. TEACHER links Antipholus of Ephesus to Adriana.

TEACHER continues: There’s another woman in the play who tries to tell her sister how to be a better wife. This character was invented by Shakespeare and is not in Plautus. What character do you think that is?

STUDENTS guess Luciana.

TEACHER continues: Somebody falls in love with Luciana. Who do you think that is?

STUDENTS guess Antipholus of Syracuse, and TEACHER links them, observing that if the women think both men are the same person, things could get complicated!

TEACHER continues: Shakespeare invented another character that isn’t in Plautus, and he’s related to the two Antipholuses. Who do you think he is?

STUDENTS guess the twins’ father, Aegeon.

TEACHER continues: In Plautus, it’s only the twins who are separated, but in Shakespeare, the whole family has lost each other. How do you think this makes Shakespeare’s story different from Plautus’?

STUDENTS suggest that it might have more plots, be more complicated, and maybe more emotional since there are more family members who miss each other (SQ 5).

TEACHER concludes: Those are the main family members in the story. We’ll discuss the other supporting characters as we get to them in the play.

Step 6: TEACHER introduces comedy as follows: Shakespeare wrote several different types of plays. Can anyone guess what these might be?

STUDENTS suggest types of plays. Possible answers would be comedies, tragedies, histories, romances, pastorals (most commonly the first three.)

TEACHER responds: What kind of play do you think this is?

STUDENTS obviously guess comedy, citing the title.
TEACHER tells students: Even though the play says right there in the title that it’s a comedy, scholars often say it’s a particular kind of comedy called a farce. Has anyone heard of a farce before?

STUDENTS may have heard of this, and reference other plays and movies. Movies like “Home Alone” and others involving extensive physical comedy without much dialogue or character development, silent films like Charlie Chaplin’s, plays like “Noises Off” and “Lend Me a Tenor,” and most action-based cartoons like old Bugs Bunny fall into this category.

TEACHER continues: Let’s list some of the things that make a farce a farce. Any ideas?

STUDENTS suggest things like:

- People being mistaken for each other, either because they look alike or they’re in disguise.
- Lots of silly or comic violence where no one really seems to get hurt badly.
- Lots of doors, and people running in and out of them.
- Characters who are unrealistic, more like stereotypes than real people.
- Silly situations that would never happen in real life and result in ridiculous outcomes.
- Physical humor instead of verbal humor.

TEACHER continues: What movies or plays have you seen that are more comedies than farces?

STUDENTS offer suggestions. might suggest other Shakespeare comedies, recent film comedies, perhaps television sitcoms, or more plot-based cartoons like “Finding Nemo” or “Shrek.” TEACHER list the suggestions that might qualify as comedies, but not farces.

TEACHER continues: Let’s now think of things that might be in a comedy that aren’t necessarily in a farce.

- Romantic relationships that develop during the play and often result in marriage at the end of the play.
- Witty jokes and verbal humor.
Realistic characters with whom we feel an emotional connection.

Sometimes sad and dramatic things happen as well as funny ones, even though it all turns out okay in the end.

Real-life problems that have to be solved for the characters to be happy.

TEACHER concludes: While many scholars think that *The Comedy of Errors* is a farce, some argue that it also contains some elements of Shakespeare’s later, more serious and realistic comedies. Let’s keep these lists in mind, and decide later whether we think the play is more of a farce or a comedy.

**Conclusion:** We know so far that the plot will be the story of two sets of twins who were separated when they were very young. One of each is from Syracuse, and one of each is from Ephesus. We also know that the parents are separated as well. Try to imagine what might happen in this story. Remember that it all happens in one day!

**Homework:** Write down a few sentences of what would happen in the plot if you were writing a play with these characters. Will the twins be reunited, and how will it happen?

_____________________________________________________________________

**Study Questions for further thought:**

SQ 1 (Advanced): Read Aristotle’s *Poetics*, and write a brief description of the qualities of an ideal tragedy. What does he have to say about comedy?

SQ 2 (Advanced): Shakespeare did not ordinarily observe all three unities; in fact, he never used them again until he wrote the play that is arguably the last play he ever wrote, *The Tempest*. Read or watch *The Tempest* and describe the unities of time, place, and action in the play. (Julie Taymor’s 2010 film adaptation is an excellent choice. Advisory: PG rating, intense imagery, some partial nudity.)

SQ 3: Do you know any twins, identical or fraternal? Are you a twin yourself? If you can, interview a pair of twins about what it’s like to be a twin. Alternatively, find an article about scientific research involving twins and bring it in to share with the class.

SQ 4: Find the passages in Paul’s letters to the Ephesians in the Bible that have to do with marriage. List some of the things he asks wives and husbands to do. Do you agree with him? Do we do many of these things in modern American culture? Should we or shouldn’t we?
SQ 5: Imagine that you’ve been separated from your sibling(s) and/or parents, and write a journal page about how you are going to try to find them.
Day 2: Shakespeare's Language and Themes

**Goal:** To introduce the students to major themes of *The Comedy of Errors* and discover how the language reveals these themes.

**Words of the Day:**
- theme
- context clues

**Content Standards:**
- **Grade 1-5:** RL2: Central Theme or idea
- **Grade 3-5:** RL3: Determine word meaning from context
- **Grade 6-8:** RL2: Central Theme or idea
- **Grade 9-12:** RL2: Central Theme or idea

**Theatre Standards:**
- **Grade 2:** 1b: Use voice and sound to tell a story
- **Grade 3:** 1a: Create roles, improvise a story

**Materials:** Worksheet 3

---

**Step 1:** Review homework.

TEACHER asks for volunteers to read aloud some ideas about where the story could go based on yesterday’s discussion.

Three or four STUDENTS read aloud from their homework assignments.

**Step 2:** Reviewing the unity of action, and introducing themes.

TEACHER asks: Can anyone tell me what the unity of action is, from yesterday’s lesson?

STUDENTS respond.

TEACHER continues: Did the ideas for the plot that were just presented have unity of action? Why or why not?

STUDENTS discuss their ideas, and whether or not they had unity of action.
TEACHER continues: We’re going to try to come up with one unifying **theme** for the play, which is another way of figuring out the unity of action. Themes can be stated as a complete sentence. Here’s one example of a theme:

TEACHER writes on the board “Love is complicated.”

TEACHER continues: This theme is true of just about every Shakespeare comedy! Can you think of any more examples of themes?

STUDENTS come up with some other complete sentences that represent themes (ACTIVITY 1).

**Step 3:** Themes activity.

TEACHER continues: I’m going to pass out some quotes from the play. Based on these quotes, think of some themes and write them down in complete sentences. Choose someone to be the spokesperson for your group.

TEACHER passes out copies of Worksheet 3. STUDENTS divide up into groups of 3-4 and discuss for about five-ten minutes.

**Step 4:** TEACHER gathers group together again, and asks: First of all, did you have trouble with any of the language in the quotes?

Shakespeare had an enormous vocabulary, and used many more words than we use in modern American English. Sometimes, you can figure out what these words mean just from the **context clues** (SQ 1, ACTIVITY 2).

TEACHER asks for a volunteer to read each quote aloud. As they do, the class identifies unfamiliar words, and tries to define them based on the context. Here are some obvious ones:

- **confounds:** confuses, loses
- **like right bereft:** similar theft of your rights
- **doth homage:** gives attention, in this context romantic attention
- **what lets it:** what else could it mean but
- **fond:** crazy, foolish
- **make a common:** make fun of, treat too lightly
- **unurged:** without being asked
- **well advised:** sane, in one’s right mind
- **compass of suspect:** the possibility of guilt, the potential that someone might think badly
- **compact of credit:** made up of trust, willing to believe
we in your motion turn: our lives revolve around you

Keep a Lexicon, Onion’s Glossary, Oxford Dictionary, and other reference books handy to read multiple definitions.

**Step 5:** STUDENTS read out ideas for their themes. Here are some themes they might come up with:

1. Wives should be patient with their husbands, and husbands should show their wives that they love them.
2. Jealousy is dangerous in marriage.
3. A person cannot feel complete without their family around them.
4. People are not always who they appear to be.
5. Patience is required when dealing with other people.
6. Servants should obey their masters, and masters should respect their servants.

TEACHER writes all the possible themes on the board. Which ones seem best supported by ALL the quotes? Can you come up with one main theme as a class that you all agree on? Some ideas:

1. Don’t take people for granted -- sometimes what you’re looking for is right in front of you.
2. If you’re patient, things will work out in their own time.
3. In all relationships, patience and respect are the best practices.

TEACHER reminds the class: In order to really follow the Unity of Action, now all the plot points we chart have to refer back to this major theme.

**Conclusion:** TEACHER asks students to return to Worksheet 1 and write the theme next to “Action.”

**Homework:** Think about the themes you came up with in class. Do you agree with these statements? Write a paragraph explaining why or why not.

______________________________________________________________________________________________

**Study Questions:**

SQ 1: Make up three words in your very own language and write a paragraph that uses all these words in context. Trade your paragraph with someone else and try to define each other’s words based on the context clues.
Activities:

ACTIVITY 1: Watch one of your favorite half-hour TV sitcoms or cartoons. Try to write down as many themes, in the form of a statement, as you can.

ACTIVITY 2: Act out a simple scenario with a partner using only gibberish. Have the class guess what you’re doing based on the context of your actions only, with no words to help.
Day 3: The history of Commedia dell’Arte

Goal: To learn about the traditional Italian theatre form that influenced Shakespeare’s comedies. To understand how artists are inspired by the world around them.

Words of the Day:
Commedia dell’Arte
improvisation
scenario
stock characters
mask
mountebank
carnivale
lazzi
status
Stock Characters:
zanni
Arlecchino
Brighella
Pantalone
Il Dottore
innamorati
Isabella
Il Capitano
Colombina
Pulcinella

Materials: Worksheet 4, masks if possible, character cards

Content Standards:
Grade 11-12: RL3: Archetypes

Step 1: Review homework.

STUDENT volunteers read aloud from their homework. Class discusses and reviews their chosen theme. They may wish to change it after the discussion.
TEACHER reminds the class that according to Aristotle, the action of the play is not possible without the characters, whose job it is to forward the action. Today we’re going to talk about the origins of some of the character types that Shakespeare used.

Step 2: Commedia dell’Arte

TEACHER explains: In the production of The Comedy of Errors that will be coming to the school, the staging is based on a classical form of theatre called, in Italian, Commedia dell’Arte. A popular Italian Renaissance comedy called Calandria was also based on Plautus’ Menaechmi, and characters from that play made their way into Commedia dell’Arte. Shakespeare may have known about the Italian version of the play, and Commedia was such a popular art form in Europe that he had probably been exposed to it.

Commedia dell’Arte is difficult to translate into English. What do you think the word Commedia means?

STUDENTS guess “comedy.”

TEACHER continues: That’s correct, but it has also means theatre in general. What do you think Arte means?

STUDENTS guess “art.”

TEACHER continues: Not exactly in the way that we think of art in English; it also means “artistry” or “craft.” Dell’ means “of,” so loosely translated, Commedia dell’Arte means “comic theatre of the artists or craftsmen.” This was to distinguish it from the other type of theatre of the time, which was performed by amateurs, not professional artists, and used scripts. Commedia dell’Arte came to mean, long after its birth in the 1500’s, improvised comedy, using stock characters in mask, performed on outdoor stages by professional artists.

Can anyone tell me the meaning of improvisation?

STUDENTS guess “something that you make up on the spot,” or something similar.

TEACHER continues: That’s right, and we still have comedians who improvise today. One of the key elements of Commedia is that there were no scripts. There were no playwrights, and no directors. The actors made up the plays as they went along, although they were always based on predetermined scenarios, and they used stock characters that always had the same characteristics. We’ll talk more about those in a moment.
This was all happening in Italy long before Shakespeare’s time and continued after his death into the 1700’s. It started at Carnivale, still celebrated in Italy, the time before Lent when people were free to eat, drink, and be merry before entering the pre-Easter season of fasting and praying. Mardi Gras celebrations in New Orleans are somewhat comparable. (SQ 1) Masked characters were part of the entertainment of the time.

The outdoor stages had another evolution; they came from the tables in the marketplace that vendors called mountebanks used to stand on while hawking their wares. The word “mountebank” comes from the Italian words meaning “to climb on a bench.” Mountebanks were known for being able to shout loudly over the crowd in a busy marketplace. They usually sold such dubious products as love potions, cure-all remedies, and the like and were not known for their honesty. However, their speeches evolved into theatrical performances, which the crowd gathered to see. Shakespeare was familiar with mountebanks; we’ll find the word used in The Comedy of Errors.

Let’s imagine that we are a company of Commedia actors in the Italian Renaissance. Despite our humble origins in the marketplaces and carnivals, we are now masterful performers with a repertoire of characters and scenarios.

When we arrive at a new town, we would probably have special permission to perform there. Other Commedia troupes would not be allowed in our territory. We would set up our simple platform, which would be high enough off the ground so that all the people traveling through the town center, mostly standing, could see us. We would have a backdrop like a curtain to hide our backstage area, painted with a scene appropriate to our performance, probably a street scene of some kind (ACTIVITY 1). On the back of this curtain, where the actors backstage could see it, would be a scenario, a written paper describing the plan for today’s performance. It would describe the order of events in the play, when each character should appear, and what has to happen in the scene for the plot to go forward. It would not give any dialogue, which we would be expected to make up or to already have in our heads as part of our repertoire. (ACTIVITY 2)

Between the important plot-driving scenes, it might also say that we were to perform lazzì. Lazzì are comic “bits” that do not forward the plot, but are enjoyable merely as comic interludes. These would generally be pieces of physical comedy, which we would have practiced and put into the performance between scenes.

In our company, each of us would have a specialty, a character unique to us but based on a traditional stock character. Most of these characters wore actual masks; whether they did or not they could also be called “masks.”
Step 3: The Stock Characters

TEACHER hands out index cards, on which the name of a character is written (it’s okay to use names multiple times). When TEACHER calls the name of each character, STUDENTS stand and try to perform the character as described.

TEACHER reads the descriptions from Worksheet 4, as students take turns performing the characters on their index cards. STUDENTS should try to use their whole bodies. Ideally, this activity should be done with the appropriate mask for each character, although rarely will resources allow this. (ACTIVITY 3)

Step 3: Status Game

TEACHER takes cards back and shuffles them, then puts one face down on each student’s desk.

TEACHER continues: One of the things it’s most important to remember about these characters is their status. Status is very important in Commedia and also in Shakespeare’s plays. When I described each character, I mentioned their status, but here is a quick review.

TEACHER lists characters on the board in order of their status as follows:

At the top:
Pantalone
Il Dottore

In the upper middle:
Innamorati
Isabella
Il Capitano

In the lower middle:
Pulcinella
Brighella
Colombina

At the bottom:
Zanni
Arlecchino

TEACHER asks students to hold their cards face up on their foreheads without looking at them themselves.
STUDENTS then move around the room silently, looking at each other’s cards. If they see a high status person, they bow, offer chairs, etc. If they see a low status person, they turn away, ignore them, etc. Try it first silently, then with words. TEACHER stresses that when using words, it’s important not to tell others what cards they have on their foreheads. Physical contact should be avoided, since it tends to lead to pushing and shoving!

As STUDENTS start to figure out who they are, they may wish to take on some of the traits of that character. After about five minutes, STUDENTS try to line themselves up in order of status, based on how others reacted to them.

TEACHER goes down the line and asks each person what card they think they have. After guessing, the student looks at their card to see how accurately they guessed.

TEACHER collects cards. STUDENTS take their seats and discuss the exercise briefly. How did they know their status? How did everyone’s body language change as they began to guess their status? How did you feel if you were low status? How did you feel if you were high status? How about if you were in the middle? (SQ 2)

**Conclusion:** TEACHER reviews: We’ve covered a lot of new vocabulary today, so let’s go over the words and see if we’re unclear on any of the definitions.

STUDENTS review the words.

TEACHER continues: Shakespeare was probably very familiar with Commedia dell’Arte and many of the stock characters -- this was part of Renaissance popular culture, and these characters were known all over Europe.

Shakespeare also worked with a company of actors, as the resident playwright. There would not have been a resident playwright in a Commedia company, since all of their plays were improvised. As theatre evolved during the Renaissance, written scripts became more common. However, plays were still not regarded as works of literature. Shakespeare never attempted to publish his plays himself. After his death, his friends collected his works for publication, the first time anything like that had been done.

**Homework:** Using Worksheet 1, guess which of the characters in *The Comedy of Errors* might be based on which characters in Commedia dell’Arte. Write the Commedia character’s name next to the name of the character.
Study Questions:

SQ 1 (Advanced): Research Venice’s Carnivale or New Orleans’ Mardi Gras. What are the Christian and pre-Christian origins of these festivals? What activities used to take place at them, and what activities take place now?

SQ 2: Is there a Commedia character or “Mask” that you relate to? Which one? Why do you feel like you could play him or her?

Activities:

ACTIVITY 1: Draw a picture of a possible Commedia backdrop.

ACTIVITY 2: Write a scenario for a Commedia dell’Arte play in three acts, using a very simple story.

ACTIVITY 3 (Advanced): Have a mask-maker come and take plaster casts of your faces, then show you how to create your own leather or papier-mache mask (this may take several class periods). Research what the masks would have looked like, and decorate the mask for your favorite Commedia character.
Day 4: Verse and prose -- reading Shakespeare’s text

Goal: To learn about the two types of dialogue Shakespeare’s characters speak and how to scan it.

Words of the Day:
verse
iambic pentameter
stress
slack
foot
iamb
soliloquy
trochee
féminine (weak) ending
scansion
elision
prose

Materials: Worksheet 3

Content Standards
Grade 2: RL4: Meaning through rhythm, rhyme and sound
Grade 4: RL5: Form and structure: prose, poems, drama

Step 1: Review the homework.

TEACHER asks STUDENTS to read aloud which Commedia characters they think The Comedy of Errors characters might be based on, encouraging them to describe which traits might be useful for the portrayal of those characters.

TEACHER continues: It will be interesting to see the production and see if any of our assumptions are correct!

As I mentioned yesterday, Shakespeare was part of the evolution from improvised professional theatre to plays scripted by playwrights. Today we’re going to go back to some of the quotes we looked at a couple of days ago and learn more about the language Shakespeare used in his plays.
Step 2: Verse.

STUDENTS take out copies of Worksheet 3.

TEACHER continues: Shakespeare wrote most of the poetry, or verse, in his plays in a particular structure called **iambic pentameter**. This is a Latin term -- let’s break it down. “Pentameter” means “a line of ten syllables.” Let’s count the syllables in the very first line of the first quote.

TEACHER writes the line on the board. STUDENTS clap out the syllables.

*He that commends me to mine own content*

TEACHER continues: There are ten syllables, right? So this line is a pentameter line. But what about iambic? That has to do with the way you **stress** the syllables in the line. Let’s all say the word “commends” together. Did you say both syllables the same, or was there one that seemed to have more emphasis? What if you try stressing the other syllable -- does it sound funny?

STUDENTS respond.

TEACHER continues: The whole line has both stressed and unstressed syllables and they alternate pretty evenly. Let’s read the whole line and figure out which syllables are stressed. We’ll put a stress mark over the stressed syllables. It looks like this: /. Then we’ll put a **slack** mark over the unstressed syllables. It looks like this: U.

STUDENTS read the line aloud and assign the stresses and slacks as follows:

*He that commends me to mine own content*

or possibly:

*He that commends me to mine own content*

TEACHER continues: The word “commends” starts with an unstressed syllable, then ends with a stressed syllable. The sound it similar to duh-DUM. Duh-DUM, duh-DUM, duh-DUM -- what else does that sound like?

STUDENTS respond that it sounds like a heartbeat.

TEACHER continues: We call that duh-DUM rhythm an **iamb**. So a line that has that rhythm is written in iambic pentameter. “Commends,” which has two syllables, is a
perfect iambic foot. There should be five iambic feet in this iambic pentameter line. Can you divide up the feet?

STUDENTS suggest the following division:

*He that / com•mends / me to / mine own / con•tent*

Now if we say this line in perfect iambic pentameter, we stress every other word. But one of the words we stress is not a very important word. “That” doesn’t seem like a very important word. What’s the other word in that foot? Doesn’t “he” seem like a much more important word? It’s a noun, and it’s also the beginning of a soliloquy.

Antipholus of Syracuse has just appeared on stage for the first time, and he’s alone on stage now speaking to the audience or giving a soliloquy. This is the first of several soliloquies he has in the play. If you were the actor playing this part, you might want to stress the first word of this speech. Luckily, this is perfectly okay! When we have a foot that starts with a stressed syllable and ends with an unstressed, we call it a trochee. It’s the opposite of an iamb. There are a few different kinds of feet in Shakespeare’s iambic pentameter, and they all have different names, but the most important thing to remember is that there should be five feet with five stress marks in every line. Shakespeare even breaks that rule sometimes, but always for a reason.

**Step 3: TEACHER puts the next three lines on the board.**

STUDENTS suggest where the stresses might go, and divide each line up into feet. The result should look like this:

*Com•mends / me to / the thing / I can/not get.

*I to / the world / am like / a drop / of wa/ter

That in / the o/cean seeks / a•no/ther drop.*

TEACHER draws the students’ attention to the word “water.” There seems to be an extra unstressed syllable at the end of the line! This is fairly common in Shakespeare’s verse -- it’s sometimes called a feminine ending, although in this less sexist day and age we can call it a “weak” ending. It’s not actually weak at all, but a very interesting choice. It might be Shakespeare’s way of saying that this line should run directly into the next line without a pause. Thematically, it might mean something else. What are these lines about?

STUDENTS suggest that he sounds lonely or unhappy and that he’s looking for his mother and brother.
TEACHER continues: Correct! If you think about the meaning of the line, Antipholus is feeling lonely and like a single drop of water in the ocean, kind of like that single extra syllable in the line.

Another famous line with a weak ending is “To be or not to be, that is the question.” Let’s try clapping out the rhythm of the line.

STUDENTS clap it out, and discover the extra “tion” at the end of the line.

TEACHER continues: Hamlet is also feeling lonely and uncertain during this speech. He doesn’t know whether he’d rather live or die. Sometimes the keys to a character’s emotions are right there in the verse -- that’s part of what makes Shakespeare so amazing.

Step 4: TEACHER asks STUDENTS to scan the rest of the speech on their own, explaining that scansion is the process of finding the stresses and dividing up the syllables in Shakespeare’s verse to see what it might reveal about the character and the situation.

STUDENTS can then scan the second quote, or skip ahead to the third, where another interesting phenomenon takes place.

```
This fool- /begg’d pa/tience in / thee will / be left.
```

The word “begged” has been altered to “begg’d” to indicate that it should all be pronounced as one syllable, not two as they often did in Shakespeare’s time. Shakespeare often did this to make his lines the right number of syllables. If you make this kind of contraction when writing verse, it’s called an elision. The editor may have added the apostrophe to help you out.

Going through the first six quotes, see how many regular iambs you can find and how many irregular feet. Note that lines of text can often be scanned in different ways, and it’s up the actor to choose what they prefer. (SQ 1, ACTIVITY 1)

Step 5: Prose.

TEACHER explains: Status was just as important to Shakespeare as it was to the Commedia artists, and one way we can identify the status of the speaker is by how they speak. Shakespeare usually wrote the higher-status characters’ lines in verse and the lower-status characters’ lines in prose. Sometimes a master might switch to prose when speaking to his servant -- that happens often in The Comedy of Errors.

Can anyone find the two lines in prose on our quote sheet?
Well, sir, learn to jest in good time. There’s a time for all things.

I have served him from the hour of my nativity to this instant, and have nothing at his hands for my service but blows.

TEACHER continues: These lines can’t be scanned in the same way that the verse can, but should be spoken just like everyday speech. The first line is spoken by Antipholus of Syracuse to his servant and the second is spoken by Dromio of Ephesus. The two Dromios almost always speak in prose.

TEACHER asks: Based on the lines in verse and prose in this scene, can anyone guess a quick way to tell which is which?

STUDENTS respond that lines in verse begin with a capital letter at the beginning of each line, even if it’s the middle of the sentence. Prose lines wrap around from one line to another, with capital letters only at the beginning of each sentence.

TEACHER responds: That’s right! That’s a quick and easy way to identify the two without doing any scansion.

Step 6: TEACHER continues: Is there anyone who would like to try and read out loud the quotes we’ve been working with today, keeping in mind our scansion?

STUDENTS take turns reading aloud from WS 3. The focus today should be on listening to rhythm of the verse, not on the meaning of the lines. TEACHER should help with word pronunciation. Take it slowly and have each student only read a few lines.

Conclusion: TEACHER reminds STUDENTS that tomorrow they will begin reading the play. TEACHER may want to review all the vocabulary words one more time.

Homework: Scan the remainder of the quotes on WS 3. Make note of any places where you have trouble. How many of the quotes include rhymes?

Study Questions:

SQ 1: Write your own short poem in iambic pentameter. Scan it to make sure you have ten syllables per line and five stressed syllables.
Activities:

ACTIVITY 1: Find a poem with a regular, preferably rhymed, rhythm -- anything from Lord Byron to Dr. Seuss. Either print it out from the internet, or make a photocopy from a printed book, then scan it. How many syllables are in each line? How many stressed syllables?
Day 5: The Exposition -- Aegeon’s Story

**Goal:** To understand the role of the expository scene in a play. To identify the play’s major conflict.

**Words of the Day:**
annotated text
given circumstances
conflict
exposition
well-made play
interior monologue

**Materials:**
White board, pens, Worksheet 2
Copies of an annotated text of *The Comedy of Errors*

*Note:* We based our tour script on the Cambridge edition of the play, but any of the very good annotated texts will do -- the Arden, the Riverside and the Oxford editions are also favorites. We do recommend using a complete annotated text, not downloading a text-only version from the internet.

**Content Standards:**
Grade 1,3  W3:  Create (write) a narrative of events
Grade 1-5  RL6:  Understand point of view in the text
Grade 3-5:  L4c:  Use of reference materials
Grade 6-8:  L4c/d:  Use of reference materials
Grade 6-12 RL5:  Form and structure contribute to meaning and impact
Grade 6-12 RL6:  Analyze point of view in the text
Step 1: Review homework. STUDENTS describe any issues they had with scanning the remaining verse on WS 3. This particular quatrain may have inspired questions. Here’s one scan:

A•las, / poor wo/men, make /us but /be•lieve,
Be•ing / com•pact / of cre/dit, that / you love / us.

Though o/thers have / the arm, / show us / the sleeve.
We in / your mo/tion turn, / and you / may move / us.

Here’s another idea:

A•las, / poor wo/men, make /us but /be•lieve,
Be•ng com/pact of / cre•dit, / that you / love us.
Though o/thers have / the arm, / show us / the sleeve.
We’n your / mo•tion / turn, and / you may / move us.

Either way, it’s not a regular iambic pentameter, but something else. Either way, it involves trochees, elisions, and weak endings.

Step 2: TEACHER introduces Act One.

TEACHER hands out annotated texts and, depending on what version you are using, points out the features of the text -- does it give a synopsis of each scene? Does it tell you the location of each scene? (This was added by the editor, since these notes don’t appear in the original folio.) Where can you find definitions of unfamiliar words?

STUDENTS open the text to the first page of dialogue. TEACHER asks a volunteer to read the first two lines of dialogue:

Proceed, Solinus, to procure my fall,
And by the doom of death end woes and all.

TEACHER asks: What do you notice right away about these first two lines?

STUDENTS respond: They’re in verse, they rhyme, and something unhappy seems to be happening. TEACHER asks if they remember who Aegeon is. They respond that he is the father of the two Antipholus twins. Look up any unfamiliar words.
TEACHER proceeds around the room, with STUDENTS reading one or two lines each through the Duke’s speech. TEACHER asks: What do we know at the end of this speech?

- Aegeon is a merchant from Syracuse.
- The Duke wants to follow the laws.
- Due to an unfortunate political event between the Dukes of Syracuse and Ephesus, where the scene is taking place, no one in Syracuse is allowed to be seen in Ephesus and vice versa. (ACTIVITY 1)
  - The penalty for breaking this law is death.
  - The dead man’s goods will be then seized by the Duke.
  - However, there is an alternative -- the accused can pay a ransom of a thousand marks and go free.
- Aegeon clearly does not have a thousand marks; he barely has a hundred.
- Aegeon is condemned to death.

TEACHER tells students that the information Shakespeare gives us right at the beginning of the play is called the “given circumstances.” Based on this scene, we should be able to answer the following who/what/when/where/why/how questions:

- Who are these characters?
- What do they want to do?
- When is it (what time, what era)?
- Where are they?
- Why are they doing what they want to do?
- How are they going to do it?

STUDENTS attempt to answer these questions using the dialogue read so far.

TEACHER asks: Does the play seem like a comedy based on these two opening speeches? What major conflict, or central problem, can you identify?

STUDENTS answer that a seemingly innocent man is about to die unless someone can pay the thousand marks.

Step 3: The exposition.

STUDENTS continue reading, noting that Aegeon seems willing to die, causing the Duke to make a request to hear the tale of his woe.

TEACHER continues: Shakespeare is setting us up for the exposition, or the story of everything that has happened before the play starts. In a well-made play, another name
for a play that observes the three unities, this frequently happens right at the beginning of the opening scene. In classical Greek tragedies like *Oedipus Rex*, the first scene usually includes a very long expository speech. Aegeon’s speech, though broken up from time to time by interjections from the Duke, is very similar to one of these speeches. (SQ 1)

It can be difficult for an actor to make a long speech like this interesting. How do you think you would stage it to make it interesting?

STUDENTS suggest ideas: Have Aegeon act everything out, have other actors act it out while he speaks, make a movie of his “flashback” and play it on a screen behind him, etc. (ACTIVITY 2)

**Step 4:** Exposition exercise.

TEACHER continues: I have an idea for one way we can make the exposition very clear and interesting.

TEACHER invites volunteers to come up to the white board and read sections of the speech as follows and, as if they are giving a presentation at a meeting, diagram or illustrate what they are saying on the white board with markers. Volunteers can illustrate these sections:

“In Syracusa was I born... arrived where I was.”

“There had she not been long... brought up to attend my sons.”

“My wife, not meanly proud... delays for them and me.”

“And this it was... Corinth, as we thought.”

“At length the sun... by that went before.”

Read the next four lines without illustrating them.

“For ere the ships could meet... what to sorrow for.”

“Her part, poor soul... bend their course.”

Read the next six lines without illustrating them.

“My youngest boy... the loss of whom I loved.”

“Five summers... warrant me they live.”
Since the speech is so long, plenty of people will have a chance to try it, but you can divide up the sections further if you like.

**Step 5:** In your own words.

TEACHER asks for a volunteer who can tell Aegeon’s whole story in their own words. If no one comes forward, try asking them to tell it in sections, giving prompts as needed.

Ask another volunteer to pretend to be the Duke while the first student tells the story. Have this student react as if they were hearing it for the first time. Even though the Duke talks very little in the scene, what does the audience know by watching his face? What’s going on in his head is known as his **interior monologue**. (SQ 2)

Have students take out WS 2 and track Aegeon’s journey. Where did his family start? Where did they end up? If it helps, draw lines to indicate their different voyages.

**Conclusion:** Read the final three speeches of the scene.

TEACHER asks: How has the Duke’s attitude toward Aegeon changed? (He feels pity for him and wishes he could help him.) Even though he cannot change the law, what concession does he make for Aegeon? (He gives him the whole day to come up with the ransom money.)

**Homework:** Write a paragraph about the first scene and whether you found it to be funny. Why or why not? Then try to read Act One, Scene 2 on your own. Has the mood of the play changed?

**Study Questions:**

SQ 1 (Advanced): Look up a Greek play such as *Oedipus Rex*. Compare and contrast Aegeon’s monologue to the expository speech in one of these plays.

SQ 2: Write an interior monologue of the Duke’s thoughts while Aegeon is telling his story. An interior monologue is what is going through an actor’s head while they’re not speaking on stage.

**Activities:**

ACTIVITY 1: Write or improvise a short play dramatizing the political situation that leads to the rivalry between Syracuse and Ephesus, involving the merchants who died when they were
unable to pay the Syracusian Duke. How would you characterize the Syracusian Duke compared to Duke Solinus?

ACTIVITY 2: Draw a comic strip depicting the events in Aegeon’s expository monologue.
Day 6: The Syracusians arrive

**Goal:** To learn to divide up individual scenes into beats and identify characters’ objectives and personality traits. To identify dramatic irony in the play.

**Words of the day:**
beats
objective
super-objective
character traits
dramatic irony
cause and effect

**Materials:** None.

**Content Standards**
Grade 3-5  RL3: Character traits and action
Grade 4:    RL5: Cause and effect
Grade 8    RL6: Dramatic irony

**Theatre Standards:**
Grade 6-7  3c: Design for a scripted work
Grade 7-8  3b: Objectives and tactics

**Step 1:** Review homework. TEACHER asks STUDENTS how they felt about the first scene versus the second scene. Did they find the first scene to be comic at all? How about the second scene?

STUDENTS respond with their opinions. Commonly people find Aegeon’s situation to be so extreme and unrealistic that it is comical. However, played straight it can be very moving and tragic.

TEACHER asks: What elements of farce occurred in Act One, Scene 2?

STUDENTS respond that the scene includes comic violence and mistaken identity. It’s also silly that even though Antipholus of Syracuse is looking for his twin and Dromio’s twin, it never occurs to him that he might have found them!

TEACHER asks: In what ways is the scene more like a straight comedy?
STUDENTS respond that there are serious elements -- Antipholus’ life could be in danger, and he talks about his search for his lost family members.

**Step 2:** TEACHER goes over the action of the scene.

How many conversations occur in this scene?

STUDENTS identify three conversations: one between Merchant 1, Dromio of Syracuse, and Antipholus of Syracuse; one between Merchant 1 and Antipholus of Syracuse; and one between Antipholus of Syracuse and Dromio of Ephesus.

TEACHER asks: How many soliloquies?

STUDENTS respond that Antipholus of Syracuse has two soliloquies, where he is alone on stage and speaks to the audience directly.

TEACHER continues: So basically, there are five sections to this scene: three conversations and two soliloquies. A director or actor might call these sections the “**beats**” of the scene. The great Russian theatre director Constantin Stanislavski came up with this word to describe the smaller sections into which an actor might divide a scene. For each beat, the characters have a different goal or **objective**. (SQ 1)

TEACHER divides the class into five groups. Each group has to describe the action of one beat and each character’s objective for that beat. Here are suggestions for how things might go:

1. In the first beat, Merchant 1 tells Antipholus of Syracuse some information we in the audience already know -- that he might be arrested for being from Syracuse. Antipholus apparently has money and property and could pay the ransom, but the Merchant still suggests that to keep his goods, he should say that he is from Epidamnum. The Merchant’s objective seems to be to help Antipholus. Antipholus gives the money to Dromio and says to take it to their inn, the Centaur. He then says that he will do some sight-seeing for an hour, then return to the Inn for a nap, since he is tired. He tells Dromio to go. Antipholus’ objective seems to be to get to know Ephesus and then get some rest. Dromio makes a joke that he might really go (as in leave his master for good and steal the money), but he implies that he is much too trustworthy. His objective may be to make his master appreciate him or make his master laugh.

2. After Dromio leaves, Antipholus speaks fondly of his servant’s sense of humor and trustworthiness and then invites the Merchant to dinner at the Inn. (Dinner at the time would have been the midday meal.) His goal seems to be to make friends with the merchant. The Merchant refuses, saying he has business obligations, but that they
should meet up at 5, at the end of the working day, and spend the evening together. He seems to return Antipholus’ overture of friendship. The two part ways.

3. In his first soliloquy, Antipholus of Syracuse expresses his inability to be happy, since he is lost without his mother and brother. His objective is obviously to find them and thereby find himself. This objective is very important and could also be called Antipholus of Syracuse’s super-objective, or his main objective for the whole play.

4. Dromio of Ephesus enters, and Antipholus assumes that he is Dromio of Syracuse. He can’t imagine how Dromio managed to get back to him so fast. Dromio of Ephesus seems to have been sent to find his master. Antipholus thinks that Dromio is making inappropriate jokes while he’s already in an unhappy mood and beats Dromio. Dromio, surprised and confused, runs away. Antipholus wants Dromio to stop joking around, and Dromio wants Antipholus to come back to the house.

5. Antipholus of Syracuse no longer seems very happy to be in Ephesus -- he says he has heard there are cheaters, sorcerers, and other criminals here (here’s our word “mountebank” in context). He is also upset with Dromio for taking (he thinks) his money. His objective seems to be to find Dromio of Syracuse and get the money back.

Step 3: Character traits.

TEACHER writes the names of the characters we have met so far on the board: Aegeon, Duke Solinus, Antipholus of Syracuse, Merchant 1, Dromio of Syracuse, and Dromio of Ephesus. (It’s not really worth including the Jailer, who has very little to say or do.)

TEACHER continues: If you’re an actor, part of your job is to figure out what your character is like. Just like when figuring out the definition of a word, we can use context clues to give us an idea of the character traits of each person. Can you suggest some character traits for each person we’ve met so far, based on things you’ve read in the text? Look at things the characters say about themselves as well as things other characters say about them.

STUDENTS give ideas, supporting them with specific pieces of text. Some ideas might be:

Aegeon -- depressed, melancholy, poor, hopeless. (From Act One, Scene 1 lines, such as):

When your words are done,
my woes end likewise with the evening sun.

...  
A heavier task could not have been imposed
Than I to speak my griefs unspeakable.
Hopeless and helpless doth AEgeon wend,
But to procrastinate his lifeless end.

Duke Solinus -- strict, fair, empathetic, generous. (also from Act One, Scene 1):

Now, trust me, were it not against our laws,
Against my crown, my oath, my dignity,
Which princes, would they, may not disannul,
My soul would sue as advocate for thee.
But, though thou art adjudged to the death
And passed sentence may not be recall’d
But to our honour’s great disparagement,
Yet I will favour thee in what I can.

Et seq.

Antipholus of Syracuse -- tired, friendly, lonely, lost, confused, moody, fearful

Merchant 1 -- helpful, friendly, trustworthy, businesslike

Dromio of Syracuse -- trustworthy, funny

Dromio of Ephesus -- mistreated, impatient

TEACHER asks students how they feel about the different characters. Who is their favorite so far and why?

Step 4: Dramatic irony

TEACHER continues: This scene has a great example of a theatrical device called dramatic irony. Can anyone guess what that might mean?

STUDENTS guess. Even if they’re familiar with irony, this is a tough one.

TEACHER helps them out by asking: What did we learn in the first scene?

STUDENTS respond that we learned the story of Aegeon’s family and that he was sentenced to death.

TEACHER asks: And what’s the first thing the Merchant mentions in this scene?
STUDENTS respond that the Merchant talks about an unnamed person who has been sentenced to die for being from Syracuse, and that Antipholus of Syracuse should be careful.

TEACHER continues: We know, although Antipholus does not, that the person who is sentenced to die is Aegeon, and that the two of them are in the same city. Can we now guess what will happen?

STUDENTS guess that the two will be reunited.

TEACHER continues: Dramatic irony is when the audience knows something that the characters on stage don’t know. This play completely depends on dramatic irony for the comedy to work. Because we now know that one of each of the twins is in Ephesus, we can guess that they will be able to save Aegeon’s life, and we start to think of the play as more of a comedy. (SQ 2)

Is there another time in this scene where we know something that the characters don’t know?

STUDENTS suggest the arrival of Dromio of Ephesus.

TEACHER continues: That’s right. At first, we assume that it’s Dromio of Syracuse, but then when he starts to talk about his mistress, we realize that he must be Dromio of Ephesus, the missing twin. The comedy depends on the fact that Antipholus of Syracuse is much slower than we are and never guesses the truth. (ACTIVITIES 1 & 2)

Now we know that all of the twins and their father are in Ephesus, and we can assume there will ultimately be a happy ending.

**Step 5:** One thing after another.

If there’s time, TEACHER goes back to lines in the scene where Dromio of Ephesus gives his escalating list of cause-and-effect statements. (SQ 3)

TEACHER continues: Let’s look at one speech in this scene to observe Shakespeare’s comic use of cause and effect.

The capon burns, the pig falls from the spit.  
The clock hath strucken twelve upon the bell;  
My mistress made it one upon my cheek.  
She is so hot because the meat is cold.  
The meat is cold because you come not home.  
You come not home because you have no stomach.
You have no stomach, having broke your fast.  
But we that know what 'tis to fast and pray 
Are penitent for your default today.

TEACHER makes two columns on the board, one labeled “Cause” and the other “Effect.” STUDENTS can volunteer causes and effects or write them on the board themselves. The results should be something like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>capon burns, pig falls in fire, clock</td>
<td>mistress slapped Dromio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strikes twelve</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the meat is cold</td>
<td>she is hot (angry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you come not home</td>
<td>the meat is cold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you have no stomach</td>
<td>you come not home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you have already eaten (broken your fast)</td>
<td>you have no stomach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we know what it is to fast and pray</td>
<td>we are penitent (sorry) for your fault</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TEACHER points out that for the four middle lines of the speech, the cause of one line is used as the effect in the next and so on in order to explain how things ended up the way they did. Could you also reverse the order of the statements and tell the story in a different way? (SQ 2)

STUDENTS volunteer to try and read the speech in reverse.

Conclusion: TEACHER concludes by asking students to take out WS 1 and list the events of the play so far as part of the rising action, or complications, of the plot. What do they think will happen next?

Homework: Read Act Two, Scene 1. Decide if you sympathize more with Adriana or Luciana. Write a paragraph about which one you think is right.

Study Questions:

SQ 1: (Advanced) Research Constantin Stanislavski. When and where did he live? What was his contribution to the theatre?

SQ 2: Dramatic irony is also used in dramatic, non-humorous situations. Have you ever seen a horror movie or thriller where you know something the characters on screen don’t know? Think
of a movie, play, or TV show with a situation that includes dramatic irony and write a page explaining the situation and why it qualifies as dramatic irony.

SQ 3: Write your own speech using at least five cause-and-effect statements. The effect of the first line should become the cause in the second line and so on or vice versa (as in Dromio’s speech).

Activities:

ACTIVITY 1: Imagine that you were the director of this play and had the same actor playing both Dromios (as will be the case in the Shakespeare on Tour production). How will you show the audience that there are two different Dromios without making it too obvious to Antipholus of Syracuse? Would you dress both characters the same or differently? Draw an idea for costumes for both Dromios.

ACTIVITY 2: Now imagine that you have cast two different actors as the Dromios. How would you use make-up to have them look alike? Design a mask or make-up for your Dromios.
Day 7: Domestic troubles

Goal: To argue persuasively for two different characters’ points of view. To identify Shakespeare’s use of repetition, heterogenium, and rhyming couplets.

Words of the Day:
point of view
rhyming couplets
repetition
heterogenium

Materials: None

Content Standards
Grade 4-5  RL6: Argue for character’s point of view
Grade 6-7  RL5: Structure and its impact
Grade 2   RL4: Effects of rhyme and repetition
Grade 7   RL4: Effects of rhyme and repetition
Grade 2,5 RL5: Structure
Grade 4   RL5: Specific structural elements

Step 1: Review homework or read Act Two, Scene 1.

TEACHER asks students to divide up into two groups depending on whether they support Adriana or Luciana’s point of view about marriage. (If the groups are unevenly sized, invite some of the opposite team to argue a position they don’t necessarily agree with.) TEACHER explains that they will debate how men and women should behave in marriage based on each character’s point of view. (SQ 1)

TEACHER asks Team Adriana: What are the husband’s responsibilities in a marriage? Use examples from the text.

Some ideas might be:

1. Husbands should be on time for dinner.
2. Husbands should not have any more liberty than their wives.
3. Husbands should not expect servitude from their wives.
4. Husbands should be faithful to their wives.

5. Husbands are to blame if their wives are unhappy or unattractive.

6. Husbands should be careful of their reputations.

TEACHER asks Team Luciana: What are the husband’s responsibilities in a marriage?

1. Husbands should be free to come and go as they like.

2. Husbands should be allowed some freedom since their responsibilities are so great.

3. Husbands are the masters of their wives.

4. Husbands can expect their wives to forgive their infidelities.

TEACHER asks Team Adriana: What are the wife’s responsibilities in a marriage?

1. Wives should correct their husbands’ bad behavior.

2. Wives should not be subservient to their husbands.

3. Wives have every right to be jealous if they fear their husbands are unfaithful.

TEACHER asks Team Luciana: What are the wife’s responsibilities in a marriage?

1. Wives should be patient with their husbands.

2. Wives should obey their husbands.

3. Wives should forgive their husbands’ infidelities.

4. Wives should not be jealous of their husbands.

Write all the major points of the debate on the board. After everyone has made their points, take a vote. Does the class agree more with Adriana or Luciana? Take a vote on each point that was made -- do most people agree with some of each character’s arguments?

**Step 2: Rhyming couplets.**

TEACHER asks STUDENTS to go back to the text and find all the rhyming couplets, Rhyming couplets are sets of two lines, one after another, that share the same ending
rhyme. Read the ending rhyme of each line going around the room then go around the room again reading the whole lines.

TEACHER asks: What is the effect of the rhyming couplets?

STUDENTS suggest that some of the rhymes are funny, some are clever -- perhaps the use of rhyme helps to keep the scene light-hearted and comic although the subject matter is serious.

TEACHER asks: Are there some couplets that don’t seem to rhyme?

STUDENTS suggest pairs such as “fowls” and “controls”, “souls” and “fowls”, and “adversity” and “cry”.

TEACHER comments: Certainly these words don’t rhyme to us, but it’s likely that there has been a slight shift in pronunciation since Shakespeare’s time. (SQ 2, ACTIVITY 1)

Step 3: Beats of the scene.

TEACHER takes a few minutes to review the beats of the scene and make sure everyone understands what happens. What are the characters’ objectives? Can they list some character traits of the two new characters, Adriana and Luciana?

1. Adriana frets about Antipholus of Ephesus not coming home in time for dinner. Luciana encourages her to be patient. The two debate their different expectations about marriage. Adriana insists Luciana cannot understand, since she is not married.

2. Dromio of Ephesus enters. We just saw him with Antipholus of Syracuse, and it seems like he’s come straight from there. He describes his encounter and how Antipholus refused to acknowledge he even has a wife. Adriana beats Dromio and forces him to go back out and look for Antipholus.

3. Adriana is now convinced her husband is unfaithful to her and blames him for her unhappiness, declining looks, boring conversation, and unattractive clothes.

TEACHER asks: Now that we’ve talked about what happens in the scene, it also seems quite tragic. What makes the scene funny?

STUDENTS respond that Adriana is melodramatic, the verse rhymes, and that Dromio is very funny when he comes in.
TEACHER continues: In this play, it’s fairly clear that funny is in the eye of the beholder. What’s funny for the audience is actually very serious for the characters!

**Step 4: Repetition and heterogenium.**

TEACHER continues: One of the devices Shakespeare uses to keep things light and funny is repetition. Let’s look at Dromio’s lines in the middle section of the scene:

When I desired him to come home to dinner  
He asked me for a thousand marks in gold.  
"'Tis dinner-time," quoth I. "My gold," quoth he.  
"Will you come home?" quoth I. "'My gold," quoth he.  
"Where is the thousand marks I gave thee, villain?"  
"My mistress, sir --" quoth I. "Hang up thy mistress! I know not thy mistress. Out on thy mistress!"

Luciana: Quoth who?

Dromio: Quoth my master.  
"I know," quoth he, "no house, no wife, no mistress."

TEACHER asks a volunteer or two to read the lines out loud. TEACHER then asks them to read it again, and for another volunteer to count the number of times the word “gold” is used (5), another to count the number of times “mistress” is used (5), and another to count the number of times “quoth” is used (12). Is everyone clear on the meaning of “quoth”? Use context clues!

TEACHER continues: Because “quoth” is kind of an odd word, especially to a modern ear, the repetition of it really stands out. How did the repetition of the words “gold,” “mistress,” and “quoth” effect you as you listened to the lines?

STUDENTS respond that the more the words were repeated, the sillier they sounded. The word “gold,” which is normally an important word, became less important or possibly more important as it was repeated. “Quoth” becomes especially funny when another character also starts to use it. “Mistress” is used over and over in different ways, although each phrase is for the same purpose -- to reject the idea of the mistress completely. (SQ 3)

TEACHER continues: The repetition definitely makes the speech funny. But Shakespeare uses another comic technique, called **heterogenium**, which means to answer a question
with something completely irrelevant. What irrelevant phrase does Dromio say that Antipholus kept using?

STUDENTS respond: “My gold.” (SQ 4)

TEACHER concludes: By using this device in his description, how does Dromio make Antipholus sound?

STUDENTS suggest that he sounds obsessive, maybe crazy, but definitely not rational.

**Conclusion**: Let’s add the events of this scene to the chart of the action of the play. So far, does everything in the play seem to fall into the unity of action?

STUDENTS might suggest that although all the mistaken identity definitely does, the whole problem with Adriana’s marriage seems to be a sub-plot. Others might argue that the sub-plot also has to do with family relationships, so there is still Unity of Action.

**Homework**: Read Act Two, Scene 2. Identify the verse, the prose, and any rhyming couplets.

**Study Questions**:

SQ 1: Think of an issue about which you have a strong point of view -- political, religious, or personal. Now write a one-page paper arguing the opposite point of view. Does this help you to understand the opposition?

SQ 2: If you were acting in The Comedy of Errors, would you pronounce the three rhyming couplets that don’t rhyme in modern English differently, so they rhyme, or with modern pronunciation? Why?

SQ 3: Compare Dromio’s account of his conversation with Antipholus of Syracuse with the actual encounter in Act One, Scene 2. How accurate is his report? Does he exaggerate for effect? Does he make himself look better or Antipholus look worse? Write a few paragraphs comparing and contrasting the two versions of the scene.

SQ 4: Write your own sequence of dialogue using heterogenium. Has this ever happened to you in real life?

**Activities**:

know.html. (This animated explanation of the history and sounds of Shakespeare’s English is about six and a half minutes long, and includes many spoken examples, as well as a brief overview of some of the major changes in English pronunciation over the centuries.)
Day 8: The confusion continues

Goal: To identify a comic *lazzo* in a scene. To learn about the Renaissance belief in the four humors. To further students’ ability to identify verse, prose, rhyming couplets, and repetition, along with new devices.

Words of the Day:
antithesis
parallel construction
blank verse
lazzo (plural: lazzi)
pun
humors:
    choleric
    sanguine
    melancholic
    phlegmatic
metaphor
aside

Materials: Worksheet 5, percussion instrument if available

Content Standards
Grade 1-7
    RL6:  Point of view (asides)

Grade 3-5
    L5:  Literal vs. figurative language (metaphor)

Grade 4-5
    L5:  Literal vs. figurative language (adages & proverbs)

Grade 6-7
    RL6:  Point of view (asides)

Grade 7
    RL5:  Form or structure influence meaning

Grade 8
    L8:  Figures of speech, puns

Grade 8-10
    RL9:  Use or transformation of source material

Step 1: Review homework.

TEACHER asks volunteers to read aloud examples of the following: four lines in verse, a line in prose, a rhyming couplet, and four lines demonstrating repetition.

Lines in verse can be found in Antipholus of Syracuse's opening monologue, his first scene with Dromio of Syracuse, and Adriana’s long speech through the end of the scene.
Lines in prose can be found before Adriana’s entrance.

There’s one rhyming couplet in that section -- Dromio’s “Was there ever any man thus beaten out of season, /When in the why and the wherefore is neither rhyme nor reason?” Adriana’s speech ends with a rhyming couplet, Antipholus has one, are there are several throughout the rest of the scene. The scene ends with something we haven’t seen yet -- a rhyming triplet!

Repetition is used when Dromio thanks Antipholus for “this something that you gave me for nothing” and Antipholus counters that he will “give (him) nothing for something.” This particular type of repetition is an antithesis, where the word used at the beginning of a phrase is switched and used at the end.

Adriana uses repetition when she lists the ways Antipholus used to show his love to her. Each line begins “that never.” This demonstrates parallel construction, where multiple lines are constructed in a similar way.

TEACHER asks: Why do you think Shakespeare switches to prose partway through the first encounter between Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse?

STUDENTS respond that the prose begins with Dromio’s line, and he is a lower-class character. After being beaten, he seems to be taking control of the situation and trying to entertain Antipholus with jokes and humor.

TEACHER asks: Why would he use verse for Adriana’s long speech?

STUDENTS guess that she is upper-class, and it seems to be a very formal, well-argued speech, almost pre-planned in the way it is structured.

TEACHER asks: Why would he then start to use rhyming couplets in the following interaction?

STUDENTS suggest that after Adriana’s quite serious speech, things start to get sillier and more farcical again, until everyone is speaking in rhyme. Adriana tries to take control again and return to blank verse, or non-rhyming verse, but Antipholus rhymes off of the last line of her speech, and the rhymes continue to the end of the scene.

TEACHER asks: What is the effect of repetition in this scene?

STUDENTS respond that Antipholus and Dromio’s use of repetition is comical, while Adriana’s is more serious. She uses it to make a point about how much her marriage has changed.
Step 2: TEACHER reviews the action of the scene.

What happens in this scene? When was the last time we saw Dromio of Syracuse? Why does Antipholus of Syracuse beat him? Why is Adriana looking for Antipholus and why is she so upset? Has Dromio of Syracuse ever seen Adriana and Luciana? What’s going to happen at the end of the scene?

STUDENTS respond: During this scene, Dromio of Syracuse reappears from taking Antipholus’ money to the Centaur. The last time we saw him was in Act One, scene 2, when Antipholus sent him to do that errand. Ever since then, Antipholus, Adriana, and Luciana have been interacting with his twin, Dromio of Ephesus. Antipholus beats Dromio of Syracuse because he thinks he’s lying. Antipholus assumes Dromio of Syracuse is just joking around and says that this is not the time to do so. Adriana is looking for Antipholus of Ephesus, her husband, because she thinks Dromio of Ephesus saw him earlier, when in fact Dromio of Ephesus saw Antipholus of Syracuse. She is upset because Antipholus of Syracuse refused to come to dinner and denied that he had a wife, and she thought he was her husband and rejecting her. Dromio of Syracuse has never seen the two women before, and once again Antipholus of Syracuse thinks he’s lying because of Dromio of Ephesus’ message from Adriana earlier. At the end of the scene, Dromio and Antipholus of Syracuse, not knowing what else to do, agree to go back to the house with Adriana and Luciana for dinner.

TEACHER continues: This is very confusing, isn’t it? Do you think it will be less confusing when you actually see the play? How do you think you’ll be able to keep track of which Dromio Antipholus of Syracuse is talking to?

STUDENTS respond with ideas.

Step 3: A lazzo.

TEACHER continues: For the most part, everything in this scene has to do with the plot, right? Can you identify one section that has almost nothing to do with the plot, but is there for pure comic enjoyment?

STUDENTS guess Dromio of Syracuse’s discussion of hair and baldness, coming from Antipholus’ insistence that there is a time for all things. (SQ 1)

TEACHER continues: You could easily cut out this whole beat, and it wouldn’t really affect the plot. This is a good example of a lazzo, the singular form of laszi. Does anyone remember the definition of laszi from our discussion of Commedia dell’Arte?

STUDENTS recall that laszi are comic interludes that don’t further the plot, but demonstrate the actors’ comic abilities.
TEACHER passes out Worksheet 5, and continues: We’re going to go through this exchange and study some of the humorous devices Shakespeare used in the scene. In particular, we’re going to look for jokes involving words that have two definitions, also called **puns**.

STUDENTS and TEACHER work through the scene together, identifying puns and explicating the humor in the scene. It’s helpful to have a glossary handy to look up difficult words.

When everyone has completed the worksheet, volunteers can read the scene aloud, using the puns to comic effect. After each punch line, you may choose to have a volunteer use a percussion instrument to make a “rim shot,” as in a vaudeville routine.

**Step 4**: The four humors.

TEACHER continues: At the beginning of this exchange, Dromio accuses Antipholus of being **choleric**. Choler was one of the four **humors** that the Elizabethans believed governed different personality types. Choleric people were usually very angry, and eating overcooked meats was thought to make people more choleric. Their bodies supposedly had more yellow bile than other people.

The other three humors were **sanguine**, **melancholic**, and **phlegmatic**. Sanguine people were supposed to be confident and hopeful. Sanguinity resided in the blood, and those who had clean blood flowing in their veins were thought to have this humor. Sanguine people love pleasure and bounce back from sadness.

Melancholy people had too much black bile, which caused them to be miserable and depressed. They would be subject to gloominess and mood swings. Phlegmatic people, called so because they supposedly had more phlegm, were slow, cold, calm, and unemotional. They would be slow to anger and intellectual. (SQ 2)

Let’s think about the four people in this scene and try to match each of them with a humor.

TEACHER writes the characters’ names on the board, and STUDENTS match each with a humor. Perhaps it would look something like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antipholus of Syracuse</th>
<th>Choleric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dromio of Syracuse</td>
<td>Sanguine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adriana</td>
<td>Melancholic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Luciana                    Phlegmatic

(There may be other variations, but these seem the most obvious.)

Why is Antipholus choleric in this scene? (He gets angry easily and beats his servant.) Why is Dromio sanguine? (Despite being beaten, he recovers easily and generally seems to be an optimist.) Why is Adriana melancholic? (She believes the worst about every situation and seems to like being miserable.) Why is Luciana phlegmatic? (She is calm and rational and tries to reason with everyone.)

**Step 5: Understanding metaphor.**

TEACHER continues: We’ve looked at some of the comic devices Shakespeare uses in the lazzo with Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse. Now let’s look at a device Adriana uses in her speeches to Antipholus.

We’ve discussed the use of repetition in her long speech. Let’s look at her later speech, below. Here she uses an extended metaphor involving plants and gardening to describe her relationship with Antipholus. Who can define metaphor?

STUDENTS define it as a comparison between two things that are seemingly unrelated, not using “like” or “as.”

TEACHER asks a volunteer to read aloud the following lines:

*Come, I will fasten on this sleeve of thine.*
*Thou art an elm, my husband, I a vine,*
*Whose weakness, married to thy stronger state,*
*Makes me with thy strength to communicate.*
*If aught possess thee from me, it is dross,*
*Usurping ivy, briar, or idle moss,*
*Who, all for want of pruning, with intrusion*
*Infect thy sap, and live on thy confusion.*

TEACHER writes the following on the board:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elm</th>
<th>Vine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ivy, briar, moss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
pruning

sap

Who or what is associated with each type of plant or plant-related concept?

STUDENTS match the real-life people and concepts with the metaphors as follows:

Elm  Antipholus (the strong husband)
Vine  Adriana (the weaker wife)
Ivy, briar, moss  Things or people that might take Antipholus away from Adriana and weaken him.

pruning  Cutting off any distractions that might take Antipholus away from Adriana

sap  Lifeblood, soul

TEACHER asks a volunteer to try and put the lines in their own words without using any of the plant metaphors. This might sound something like:

Come with me, strong husband, and let me hold onto your arm for strength.
You help me to be strong in our marriage.
If anything ever takes you away from me, it’s trash that weakens you.
You can get rid of it by forcibly removing it, or else it will destroy you. (SQ 3)

TEACHER asks: What do you think of this speech? How does the use of metaphor affect the ideas she’s trying to communicate? Do you think that difficult ideas are sometimes easier to grasp if you use metaphor?

STUDENTS respond with ideas. (SQ 4)

**Step 6: Identifying asides.**

TEACHER continues: We’ve covered a lot today, but I want to point out one more device that Shakespeare uses at the end of this scene. Did you notice that there were times when characters spoke directly to the audience and no one else on stage seemed to hear them?

STUDENTS respond, pointing out Antipholus of Syracuse’s speeches and Dromio of Syracuse’s speech.
TEACHER continues: These speeches are kind of like soliloquies, but when there are other people on stage they’re called asides. When a character gives an aside, the audience assumes that no one else on stage hears those lines. The character would probably speak directly out to the audience or maybe upwards toward the heavens, as if he was talking to God. (SQ 5) Asides are often used to share secrets with the audience that the character doesn’t want the other characters to know.

**Conclusion:** STUDENTS add the actions of Act Two, Scene 2 to their story arcs on Worksheet 1. TEACHER points out that they have now finished Acts One and Two, and complications are still developing. We don’t seem to be very close to a climax yet!

**Homework:** Read Act Three, Scene 1. In this scene, we meet some new characters -- Antipholus of Ephesus, his friends Angelo and Balthazar, and the servant Luce. Assign each of them one of the humors. Find one example each of blank verse, rhyming couplets, metaphors, and puns. Are there any asides in this scene?

**Study Questions:**

SQ 1: Antipholus’ statement that “There’s a time for all things” comes from the book of Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament of the Bible. Read Ecclesiastes Book 3, verses 1-8. What do you think of this philosophy? How does it apply to The Comedy of Errors?

SQ 2: Which humor do you think best identifies you and why?

SQ 3: Write a speech for Adriana that communicates the same ideas as the plant metaphor speech, but uses a different metaphor.

SQ 4: There are several other metaphors in this scene. One in particular involves Dromio comparing himself to an ape, then an ass or donkey. List some characteristics for both animals. Why do you think Dromio feels like these animals? (Use context clues!)

SQ 5: Write a page of dialogue between two characters, during which each has an aside. What sort of information does each character share in their aside?
Day 9: An impatient man and a patient one

**Goal:** To apply yesterday’s vocabulary to Act Three, scene 1. To begin to think about staging a scene. To identify split, or shared, lines and how they affect a scene.

**Words of the Day:**
- simile
- blocking
- stage right
- stage left
- upstage
- downstage
- rake
- split lines
- cues

**Materials:** None.

**Content Standards**
- Grade 3-5  W1, 3: Write persuasive narrative in character
- Grade 4    L5:  Figurative language: similes
- Grade 6-8  W3:  Write persuasive narrative in character

**Theatre Standards**
- Grade 3-6  6   Collaborate to present a work
- Grade 3-8  1.c  Design set (visualize, propose, identify & explain solutions)
- Grade 4    1.a  Articulate visual details of imagined world
- Grade 4-8  2.b  Collaborate to develop a work for presentation

**Step 1:** Review homework.

TEACHER writes the names of the new characters on the board.

*Antipholus of Ephesus*

*Angelo*

*Balthazar*
TEACHER asks volunteers to write which humor they think best applies to each character and explain why to the class. There are no right answers here, but some examples might be:

**Antipholus of Ephesus**  
Choleric, because he seems so angry that he can’t get into his house

**Angelo**  
Hard to say; he only has two lines! But an actor playing him would have to decide on his attitude in the scene

**Balthazar**  
Melancholic, because Antipholus says he is sad, OR Phlegmatic, because he urges Antipholus to be patient and not so emotional

**Luce**  
Sanguine, because even in the midst of the argument she retains her sense of humor

TEACHER then asks for volunteers to give examples of puns, metaphors, rhyming couplets, and blank verse. Some examples might be:

**Blank verse:** Antipholus of Ephesus’ first speech. (SQ 1)

**Rhyming couplets:** Dromio of Ephesus, starting with, “Say what you will, sir.” Blank verse begins again with Balthazar’s big speech, which he then ends with a rhyming couplet.

**Metaphor:** Dromio compares his skin to parchment and Antipholus’ blows to ink.

**Metaphor:** Antipholus calls Dromio an ass, and Dromio agrees, saying that if he really were a donkey he would kick Antipholus.

**Pun:** Shall I set in my staff? -- sexual pun, spoken by Dromio of Ephesus to Luce, the maid.
Pun: Multiple meanings of the word “break”: “Break” means to destroy an object (the gate), to physically injure (“break your knave’s pate”), to confront (“break a word”), and to fart (break wind).

Pun: Double meanings of the word “crow”: Antipholus wants an iron crowbar, and Dromio thinks (or pretends to think) he means the bird crow.

Rhyming couplets: The last four lines of the scene return to rhyming couplets.

TEACHER asks: How did the use of these devices contribute to the overall atmosphere of this scene?

STUDENTS respond: Blank verse was used in the more serious moments, rhyming couplets when things get silly. Overall, the rhymes seem to create an atmosphere of action, chaos, forward momentum. Both Dromios use puns and metaphor to make serious situations comic and to challenge each other, particularly in the “break” sequence, when meanings pile on top of meanings in a game of one-upmanship.

TEACHER concludes: There’s also a simile in this scene, which is similar to a metaphor in that it compares two unlike things, but it does so using “like” or “as.” Can anyone find it?

STUDENTS find the line where Dromio describes a man as “mad as a buck.”

Step 2: What happens in this scene?

TEACHER goes over the beats of the scene: There are a lot of characters on stage in this scene, and it’s much easier to watch than to read. We’re going to stage this scene in a minute, but first let’s make sure we’re clear on the beats of the scene.

1. Antipholus of Ephesus, his servant Dromio of Ephesus, and his friends Angelo and Balthazar show up at the door of Antipholus of Ephesus’ house. Antipholus tells them that his wife will be angry that he’s late and asks Angelo, a jeweler, to help him make up an excuse involving a necklace he is making for her. Then he tells us about a scene we didn’t see on stage -- Dromio of Ephesus apparently told him about the encounter with Antipholus of Syracuse, thinking of course that he encountered his master. Dromio sticks to his story despite Antipholus’ insults.

2. Antipholus observes that Balthazar is sad and hopes that dinner will cheer him up. The two debate whether good company or good food is more important to a pleasant meal. (ACTIVITY 1)
3. Antipholus tells Dromio of Ephesus to make the servants unlock the door. Dromio of Ephesus calls for the servant girls. Dromio of Syracuse answers and refuses to let them in. Antipholus asks who has locked him out of his own house, and Dromio of Syracuse tells them that he is Dromio, shocking Dromio of Ephesus.

4. Luce appears (probably in an upper window) and asks what is happening. With Dromio of Syracuse’s encouragement, she also sassily refuses to let them in. (ACTIVITY 2)

5. Adriana appears, also above, and mocks Antipholus of Ephesus for calling her wife. (She, of course, thinks her husband is Antipholus of Syracuse, who is already inside.) The two women exit.

6. Angelo and Balthazar are concerned that they will not get in. Antipholus of Ephesus decides to break open the gate, which leads to more haranguing from Dromio of Syracuse, until Dromio of Ephesus is sent to get an iron crowbar.

7. Balthazar urges Antipholus of Ephesus to be patient and wary of his reputation and his wife’s. He suggests they stop making a scene in the street and go to dinner at the Tiger. Antipholus agrees, but suggests that they dine with a lady friend of his instead. He also sends Angelo to fetch the chain he has ordered for his wife, which in revenge he’ll give to their hostess.

**Step 3: Balthazar’s speech.**

TEACHER continues: Balthazar is an interesting character -- he only appears in this one scene. His entire purpose seems to be to keep Antipholus from breaking into his house. What are his reasons for stopping Antipholus?

STUDENTS suggest that Balthazar accuses Antipholus of hurting his own reputation and making people suspect his wife’s reputation, as well. Balthazar argues that she deserves better, and that she will explain her reasons for closing the doors later.

TEACHER asks: Balthazar is essentially arguing with Antipholus in a similar way that Luciana argued with Adriana in Act Two, Scene 1. What are some of the characteristics of a good husband, and also a good citizen, as described by Balthazar?

STUDENTS suggest qualities of a good husband, which TEACHER can write on the board. Some examples:

- patience

- respect for his wife, especially her virtue, age, and modesty
trust that his wife has reasons for her actions
discretion, i.e. not making a scene in the street during the day
good reputation
avoids slander, which can follow him even to the grave and also hurt future generations

TEACHER continues: Does Antipholus follow his advice? Do you think he has learned yet how to be a good husband?

STUDENTS respond that although he agrees to leave the house and not break down the gate, he suggests that they go to visit a woman of his acquaintance. He says that he has not been unfaithful with this woman, but clearly he’s going to see her as revenge against Adriana. He also plans to give the necklace Angelo was making for his wife to his lady friend.

TEACHER asks: At the end of this speech, what do you think Balthazar’s reaction might be? He doesn’t say anything. In fact, he disappears from the play completely.

STUDENTS respond with ideas: Balthazar might roll his eyes; or throw up his hands and leave; or maybe nod and agree to go along then make a face at the audience. (SQ 2)

Step 4: Theatre terms.

TEACHER continues: We’re going to try to put some of these ideas into practice now! Let’s pretend we’re a company of actors staging this scene. First of all, there are seven actors in this scene, so let’s divide up into groups of seven (or as close as possible).

Before we split off into our groups, let’s go over some basics of staging. This vocabulary is widely used in the theatre.

TEACHER writes on the board the following words:

Blocking
Stage left
Stage right
Upstage
Downstage

TEACHER continues: These are some really basic terms that will help you as you’re deciding how to stage this very complicated scene. Can anyone define these words?

STUDENTS offer suggestions.

**Stage left** and **right** should be easy, but remember that these directions are always from the actor’s perspective, so if you’re watching from the audience, everything is reversed. **Upstage** means the back of the stage, away from the audience, and **downstage** is the front of the stage, towards the audience. These directions come from a time when stages were on a slope, called a rake, with the back of the stage higher than the front, allowing the audience to better see the action.

The word for stage movement in general is **blocking**. If a director says they are going to block a scene, it means they are going to tell the actors where to enter, where to move and stand during the scene, and where to exit. Blocking can also include physical bits like stage combat, physical comedy, etc.

**Step 5: Staging the scene.**

STUDENTS break off into groups for 15-20 minutes to work out their staging for the scene. Alternatively, each group could work on a beat of the scene as divided above.

TEACHER reminds them that there can be multiple doors, windows, and levels on their imaginary scenery so that the actors can all be seen by the audience but not see each other. The characters inside the house should never be able to see the characters outside the house.

The groups re-convene and present their scenes for each other. Afterwards, discuss what it was like to stage each scene. What did they laugh at? Was it easier to keep track of people when reading the scene or watching it? How did the performers play up the puns and other verbal humor? Did they make physical choices that were visually funny?

**Step 6: Split lines.**

STUDENTS may point out that Luce is particularly funny. TEACHER asks them to look at Luce’s lines on the page. What do you notice?

STUDENTS respond that a lot of her lines are short, and she has half a line while someone else has the other half.
TEACHER continues: Luce’s verbal comedy comes from split, or shared, lines, where she finishes the rhyming line of someone else. The exchange she has with the two Dromios and Antipholus of Ephesus has them not only completing each other’s couplets, but completing each other’s lines.

Because each line of iambic pentameter should be spoken without any pause, as if it’s all being spoken by one person, the lines in this section come very quickly one after another. The more quickly they follow each other, the funnier the scene. The actors in this scene really have to “pick up their cues,” as they say in the theatre, or speak their lines immediately after the line before, or the cue line. (SQ 3)

Conclusion: TEACHER asks STUDENTS to take out Worksheet 1 and look at the list of characters. How many have we met so far? Which characters have we not met yet?

Homework: Go back and look at Worksheet 4. Match each character in the play to a Commedia dell’Arte character you think they best resemble.

Study Questions:

SQ 1: Compare Antipholus of Ephesus and Antipholus of Syracuse. Do they have distinct personalities so far, or are they very much alike? Why do you think so?

SQ 2: Write a letter from Balthazar to Antipholus of Ephesus giving him some guidelines for how to have a better marriage. What do you think he would suggest?

Activities:

ACTIVITY 1: Divide up into two teams, one representing Balthazar’s argument that good company is more important than good food and one representing Antipholus’ side, that good food is more important. Use their arguments from the scene as well as your own ideas.

ACTIVITY 2: Design an ideal set for this scene, finding places for all the characters where we can see them but they can’t see each other. Create a set drawing and/or a model.

ACTIVITY 3: Write some lines of dialogue where one character completes the other’s sentences. Try reading it aloud with a classmate.
Day 10: Two very different love stories

**Goal:** To review the Commedia dell’Arte characters in context of the play. To identify a new kind of verse. To further explore descriptive language and metaphor.

**Words of the Day:**
quatrain
terms of endearment
hyperbole

**Content Standards**
Grade 2  RL4: Effect of rhythm and other patterns (verse structure, scansion)
Grade 3  RL2: Recount myths
Grade 4  RL4: Allusions to mythology
Grade 4  RL9: Compare & contrast themes and patterns in stories and myths
Grade 9-12 L5: Figurative language: hyperbole, terms of endearment

---

**Step 1:** Review the homework.

TEACHER writes the names of the characters so far on the board and asks for volunteers to identify which Commedia Mask each one seems most similar to. There are no right answers, since each character could be played many different ways or could be a mix of types, but here are some ideas:

- Duke Solinus: Pantalone
- Aegaeon: Zanni
- Antipholus of Syracuse: Innamorato
- Antipholus of Ephesus: Pulcinella
- Dromio of Syracuse: Zanni, Arlecchino
- Dromio of Ephesus: Zanni, Arlecchino, Brighella
- Adriana: Innamorata, Isabella
- Luciana: Innamorata, Isabella
Why did each person choose what they did? Were there characters that defied categorization? Which ones seemed to be combinations of several Masks?

**Step 2:** Luciana and Antipholus of Syracuse.

TEACHER asks students to take turns reading through the first 28 lines of Act Three, Scene 2. What is the speech about?

STUDENTS suggest that it’s once again about how to be a good husband -- this time Luciana is instructing Antipholus of Syracuse, assuming that he is Antipholus of Ephesus.

TEACHER asks: What are some of the qualities of a good husband, from Luciana’s perspective? Are they similar to Balthazar’s?

STUDENTS suggest ideas from the speech, which may resemble the following:

kind

discreet, hiding infidelities

faithful; but if not, having the outward appearance of devotion

fair in speech, sweet in looks

comforting, gentle

flattering
Luciana suggests that even if a husband is unfaithful to his wife, he should shower her with affection and never let her know about it. What do you think of this idea? If your spouse was unfaithful, would you rather know or not know? (SQ 1)

**Step 3:** TEACHER asks: What is the verse structure of this speech? Can you scan the lines?

STUDENTS first identify the verse pattern -- alternating rhymes A, B, A, B, C, D, C, D and so on.

They then scan the speech, as follows:

And may / it be / that you / have quite / for-got

A hus-band’s of-fice? Shall, / An-ti-pho-lus,

E’en in / the spring / of love / thy love-springs rot?

Shall love / in build-ing grow / so ru-in-ous?

Is it in iambic pentameter? Identify any irregularities -- for example, in the third line, “even” has to be elided in order to create an iambic foot.

A set of four lines with alternating rhymes is usually called a **quatrain**. Where are the irregularities in the next quatrain?

If you / did wed / my sis-ter for / her wealth

Then for / her wealth’s / sake use / her with / more kind-ness;

Or if / you like / else-where, / do it / by stealth.

Muf-fle / your false / love with / some show / of blind-ness.

Although the first and third lines are regular, the second and fourth have extra syllables, also called weak endings. There are also a couple of feet that could be trochees.

Continue to scan the speech. What do you discover? The next quatrain is relatively regular and the fourth quatrain has extra syllables in lines 1 and 3. The fifth is regular and the sixth, which we’ve looked at before, has extra syllables in lines 2 and 4. The final quatrain is regular as long as you elide the last two syllables of “flattery.”
What is the effect of the uneven lines? Does this speech seem different from other speeches in the play? Why or why not? Do you think this has more to do with the rhymes or the irregular feet?

Continue to read through Antipholus of Syracuse’s speech, identifying irregular feet. He uses the same basic verse structure as she does. Why do you think Shakespeare would have him speak this way? Could it be to show that he has fallen in love with her? (SQ 2)

What compliments does Antipholus use to flatter Luciana? What terms of endearment?

STUDENTS list:

**Compliments**

He says she is more graceful and knowledgeable than the earth and more divine.
He asks her to teach him how to think and speak, since she is wiser than he.
He asks if she is a god and can recreate him.
He asks her to transform him and says he’ll yield to her power.
He tells her he likes her much more than Adriana.
He tells her he will dote on her if she woos for herself and stops talking about Adriana.
He calls her hair golden and says he’ll lie on her as a bed, and like a sailor succumbing to a mermaid, will drown happily.

**Terms of Endearment**

Sweet mistress
Dear creature
Sweet mermaid
Siren

What do you think of these compliments? If someone spoke to you that way, what would you do? (SQ 3)

TEACHER continues: What happens to the verse after Antipholus’ speech?

STUDENTS respond that it returns to rhyming couplets.

TEACHER continues: After the lush romantic poetry of Antipholus’ speech, we return to a more comic mood with rhyming couplets. Find the split lines in the rest of the scene.
Can you find some examples of antithesis and parallel construction in the scene?

At the end of this scene, what happens?
STUDENTS answer that Luciana exits to ask her sister if she can marry Antipholus, who she thinks is her sister’s husband!

TEACHER continues: Antipholus of Syracuse is clearly a very persuasive wooer, if he can convince phlegmatic, rational Luciana to marry him.

**Step 4:** Dromio and Nell.

TEACHER continues: Immediately after Luciana exits, Dromio of Syracuse enters. Let’s read the first few lines of this scene.

STUDENTS read up to “If she lives till doomsday she’ll burn a week longer than the whole world.”

TEACHER asks: Is this scene in prose or verse? Find examples of repetition at the beginning of the scene. Can you find any puns or metaphors?

STUDENTS respond that it is in prose. At the beginning of the scene, there are repetitive beginnings to phrases – “Am I,” “thou art,” and “I am.” There are double meanings in “besides myself” and “fat.” Dromio also compares this woman to a lamp, although this is less a metaphor than an example of **hyperbole**, or exaggeration for comic effect. Dromio says that she is so greasy that she could last through a winter in Poland (notoriously cold) or burn a week longer than the rest of the world on doomsday (when Christians believe the world will be consumed by fire).

Continue to read through “I could find out countries in her.” Find more examples of hyperbole, and put them in your own words. For example:

She sweats so much a man would have to wade through it up to his ankles.

She’s so dirty that even Noah’s flood couldn’t wash her clean.

She’s so fat that she is nearly seven feet wide from hip to hip.

She’s so fat that she’s as wide as she is tall. (**ACTIVITY 1**)  

STUDENTS read up to Angelo’s entrance together.

TEACHER asks: What happens at the end of the conversation between Dromio and Antipholus?
STUDENTS answer that Dromio says Nell identified physical marks on him, which scared him, so he ran away. Antipholus seems to be scared, too. He tells Dromio to find out if any ships are sailing tonight so that they can escape this strange town.

TEACHER asks: How has Dromio’s story about Nell affected Antipholus? Take a look at his first soliloquy.

STUDENTS respond that even though he seemed to be so in love and happy with Luciana at the beginning of the scene, now he has decided to forget about her and leave Ephesus.

**Step 5:** TEACHER asks STUDENTS to read the remainder of the scene out loud and answer these questions.

What type of verse do Angelo and Antipholus speak? (blank verse)

What scene is Angelo referring back to? (Act Three, Scene 1, when Antipholus of Ephesus asked him to go and get the chain.)

What is the Porpentine? (The restaurant where Antipholus of Ephesus and presumably Balthazar had dinner with the lady friend.)

Where does the scene switch to rhyming couplets again? (Antipholus rhymes the first line of his second soliloquy with Angelo’s exit line.)

What does this seem to say about Antipholus’ mood? (He seems to have cheered up a little, since he has been given precious jewelry without paying for it.) (ACTIVITY 1)

What will he do next? (He still plans to leave as soon as possible.)

**Conclusion:** Catch up on your story arc -- we’ve now read the first three acts of the play! Do you think Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse will leave on the next ship? What will happen with Adriana’s necklace, which Antipholus of Syracuse now has, although Antipholus of Ephesus was expecting to receive it?

**Homework:** Read Act Four, Scene 1. Choose a humor and a Commedia character for the two new characters, Merchant 2 and the Officer. Also re-think Angelo’s personality traits.

__________________________________________________________

**Study Questions:**
SQ 1: Have you ever suspected that someone was lying to you or deceiving you? Could you tell from their appearance? Would you rather know or not know that you are being lied to?

SQ 2: Write a love poem at least eight lines long using the ABAB, CDCD, etc. rhyme scheme.

SQ 3: Research sirens and mermaids and write a short paper about them. In Shakespeare’s time, what did some people believe about mermaids? How is mermaid mythology still part of today’s culture?

ACTIVITY 1: Draw a picture of the necklace Angelo made for Adriana.
Day 11: Financial Troubles

**Goal:** To learn to identify objectives, tactics, and obstacles. To scan unusual verse patterns and have some fun with Shakespearean insults!

**Words of the Day:**
tactic
obstacle
caricature
onomatopoeia

**Materials:** Objective game cards, Worksheet 6, Insult game cards

**Content Standards:**
Grade 1-2  RL4  Effect of sound patterns (onomatopoeia)
Grade 2  RL4  Effect of sound patterns (rhyming couplets)
Grade 7  RL4  Effect of sound patterns (rhyming couplets)
Grade 7-8  RL4  Impact of word choice on meaning and tone (onomatopoeia)

**Theatre Standards:**
Grade 7-8  4b:  Objectives, tactics & obstacles

---

**Step 1:** Review homework.

TEACHER asks volunteers to share humor and Commedia ideas for Merchant 2 and the Officer. Again, there are no right answers, but here are some ideas.

**Merchant 2**
Choleric, since he threatens to arrest Angelo, OR Sanguine, since he has been patient up until now.

Pantalone? Pulcinella?

**Officer**
Phlegmatic, since he seems to be in no rush to arrest anyone, OR Sanguine, since he could secretly be enjoying the chaos
**Il Capitano? Brigella?**

What do you think of Angelo now that you’ve read a little more about him?

**Angelo**  
Phlegmatic, since he seems slow to anger.  
Could be a comic contrast with choleric **Antipholus**

**Il Dottore? Brigella?**

**Step 2**: Objectives, tactics, and obstacles.

TEACHER continues: We’ve already talked about how each character in a scene has an objective, or goal, and a super-objective for the entire play. What are the characters and their objectives in this scene?

TEACHER writes each character’s name on the board with space for three columns next to it. Title the first column “Objectives.”

STUDENTS answer that Merchant 2 wants money from Angelo; Angelo needs Antipholus of Ephesus to pay him for the chain; Antipholus of Ephesus wants first a rope to punish his wife, then the chain; Dromio of Ephesus wants to get what his master wants; the Officer wants to make Antipholus obey the law; and Dromio of Syracuse wants to leave Ephesus, but also wants to obey his master.

TEACHER asks: Does everyone get what they want easily?

STUDENTS answer that no, it’s very hard for most of them to get what they want. In fact, a few of them are in direct conflict.

TEACHER titles the second column “Tactics” and continues: Tactics are what people do to get what they want. What does the Second Merchant do to try and get his money?

STUDENTS respond that he reminds Angelo of how patient he’s been, then threatens to have him arrested if he doesn’t get the money immediately.

TEACHER asks: What does Angelo do to try and avoid being arrested?

STUDENTS answer that he invites the Merchant to go with him to get the money from Antipholus. When Antipholus appears, he asks him for the money.

TEACHER writes the word “Obstacles” over the third column and continues: This is where Angelo runs into some trouble. Why can’t he achieve his objective?
STUDENTS answer that Antipholus says that he doesn’t have the money with him.

TEACHER asks: We call this his obstacle. Now what is the Merchant’s obstacle?

STUDENTS respond that if Angelo doesn’t get the money from Antipholus, he can’t pay the Merchant.

TEACHER continues: When Antipholus of Ephesus enters, he has two objectives. What does he do to accomplish the first one?

STUDENTS answer that he sends Dromio of Ephesus to get a rope so he can beat his wife and servants.

TEACHER continues: And how does he try to accomplish the second one?

STUDENTS answer that he scolds Angelo for not coming to dinner with the chain.

TEACHER asks: And what’s his obstacle?

STUDENTS respond that Angelo thinks he’s already given him the chain, when actually he gave it to Antipholus of Syracuse.

TEACHER asks for volunteers to read aloud Act Four, Sc 1 from the exit of Dromio of Ephesus up to the entrance of Dromio of Syracuse. This is the escalating argument that occurs when the Merchant, Angelo, Antipholus, and even the Officer all try to achieve their objectives. They all try different tactics, but they also serve as each other’s obstacles!

What happens when you read the scene aloud? Do you feel the tension among the characters rising? Try starting the scene at a volume and intensity level of “1,” on a scale of 1 to 10, and rising to a “10.” What is the effect? Does this contribute to the comedy?

TEACHER notes that at the beginning of the scene, the characters speak in longer speeches, but as the scene goes on, they speak in shorter phrases. Does this happen to you in a real argument?

**Step 3: Objective game**

STUDENTS divide up into pairs. TEACHER hands out cards listing objectives, one to each student. Each pair should have conflicting objectives.
STUDENTS improvise a scene between themselves where each person tries various tactics to achieve their objective. STUDENTS write down the tactics they used, at least three each.

After improvising together for fifteen minutes, STUDENTS can share their scenes with each other or just read out their objectives and what tactics they used to try and achieve them. Did anyone achieve their objective? Did you reach compromises or did one person win over another? What obstacles did you encounter? (SQ 1)

STUDENTS compare their experience improvising the scene with reading Act Four, Scene 1 aloud. Did the same rise in energy and volume occur?

**Step 4:** Tracking the rope, the chain, and the money.

TEACHER continues: Angelo gave the chain to Antipholus of Syracuse, so we can assume he has it. Let’s start to keep track of where some of these objects are so that we don’t get confused.

TEACHER passes out Worksheet 6. On one side of the page are listed the objects that trade hands during Acts Three and Four of the play: the chain, the money for the chain, the rope, and the ring, which will come up in Act Four, Scene 3.

Working alone or in small groups, STUDENTS figure out in which scene the chain first appeared. They then put who had it first and who has it next, which is as far as they can answer.

TEACHER may wish to put the answers so far on the board per the Teacher’s Key.

**Step 5:** Rhyme in Act Four, Scene 2.

TEACHER continues: You may not have noticed while you were reading it, but were there any rhyming couplets in Act Four, Scene 1?

STUDENTS note that there is only one rhyming couplet, at the very end of the scene.

TEACHER continues: Shakespeare often has a rhyming couplet at the end of a scene, even if the rest of the scene is in blank verse or prose. Why do you think he did that?

STUDENTS suggest that it puts a period on the end of the scene or something similar.

STUDENTS divide up into groups to read Act Four, Scene 2 and identify the rhyme schemes. After 10-15 minutes, re-group and discuss. What did they find?
STUDENTS report that the first four lines have an ABAB rhyme scheme. Then it switches to rhyming couplets, then goes back to an ABAB scheme.

At Dromio’s entrance, it goes back to rhyming couplets, although they are not regular; there seem to be some extra lines, and some of his lines don’t seem to rhyme at all.

TEACHER asks: Why do you think Shakespeare was less concerned with perfect rhyming couplets here?

STUDENTS guess that perhaps because Dromio of Syracuse is tired from running, as he says, he can’t come up with rhymes for everything! The changes in rhythm also give the scene a somewhat chaotic feel.

STUDENTS also note that four lines of Dromio’s rhyme, so it’s actually a rhyming quatrain. Dromio speaks this right before he exits, which could be quite funny.

Adriana ends the scene with another ABAB quatrain, again changing the mood of the scene.

**Step 5: Shakespeare’s insults.**

TEACHER continues: You may have noticed while reading the scene that Adriana has quite a wonderful list of nasty things to call Antipholus. She later says that she doesn’t actually mean them. (SQ 2)

Let’s sketch Antipholus as she describes him in these lines. Look up words you don’t understand. Try to make it as much of a caricature as you can. A caricature is a cartoon of someone that exaggerates their features, often their worst features, for comic effect. You often see them in political cartoons. (ACTIVITY 1)

TEACHER draws a basic figure, and students suggest exaggerated features based on the text -- he should be deformed, crooked, old, sere (dried-up or wrinkled), etc.

Who else in the scene gets described in unflattering terms?

STUDENTS answer that Dromio describes the Officer.

TEACHER continues: In Act Three, Scene 1, Dromio of Syracuse also shouts a series of insults at Dromio of Ephesus: “Mome, malthorse, capon, coxcomb, idiot, patch!” (ACTIVITY 2)

**Step 6: Insult game.**
TEACHER passes out an index card to each student, on which is listed an insult from one of the three passages mentioned above.

STUDENTS pair up and stand across the room from each other, shouting the insults in turn.

TEACHER asks: How can you best use your insult? Can you extend the vowels and emphasize the consonants? Do any of the insults use onomatopoeia, that is, they sound like what they mean? Why do you think Shakespeare picked these words?

STUDENTS respond with ideas.

(Note: This game is best played with a group of students who respect and get along with each other. Very young children may take the insults too personally, and be wary of pairing up students who don’t have a strong rapport.)

**Conclusion:** TEACHER continues: How would you describe the general mood of the last two scenes? Do you think they were more like farce or more like comedy?

STUDENTS respond: The mood of the scenes is becoming more chaotic. There are more short lines and fewer long speeches, and the rhyme schemes are uneven. It seems like we are getting closer to the climax of the action. The action may seem more farcical because of the chaos, or more comedic due to the high emotional stakes and the fact that a love story has been introduced.

TEACHER concludes: Look at Worksheet 6 again. We’ve now seen the money for the chain. Who has it now?

**Homework:** Read Act Four, Scene 3. Find at least one example of each of the following: repetition, pun, rhyming couplet, soliloquy. Using the humors and Commedia Masks, characterize the Courtesan.

**Study Questions:**

SQ 1: Think of an objective you’ve tried to achieve in the last 24 hours. It could be very simple or very complicated. What tactics did you use to achieve it? What obstacles did you encounter?

SQ 2: Have you ever insulted a person that you actually really like? Why did you do it? Write about the situation.

**Activities:**
ACTIVITY 1: Collect at least five caricatures of different people from political cartoons, etc. List the features that are exaggerated in each caricature.

ACTIVITY 2: Draw your own caricatures of the Officer and Dromio of Syracuse based on the insults used to describe them. Look up any unfamiliar words.
Objective Cards: Photocopy and cut up, or come up with your own!
Each partner should have one of a pair.

PARENT wants CHILD to clean their room.

CHILD wants to go outside and play.
FRIEND 1 wants FRIEND 2 to tell a secret.

FRIEND 2 wants to keep a secret from FRIEND 1.
EMPLOYEE wants BOSS to give EMPLOYEE a raise.

BOSS wants EMPLOYEE to come in earlier in the mornings.
Day 12: Sorcery and Madness

Goal: To identify various rhetorical and poetic devices. To place the events of the play in historical context. To further understand the connection between Commedia dell’Arte and Shakespeare’s plays.

Words of the Day:
courtesan
situational irony
quack

Materials: None.

Content Standards:
Grade 8   RL6:  Situational irony
Grade 9-10   RL6:  Cross-cultural point-of-view research
Grade 3-5   W1:  Write opinion piece on assigned topic
Grade 4   RL9:  Cross-cultural research: Compare & contrast themes

Step 1: Review homework.

TEACHER asks for volunteers to share their examples of repetition, puns, rhyming couplets, and soliloquies from Act Four, Scene 3. Some ideas might be:

Repetition/Parallel Construction:

“Some tender money to me, some invite me,
Some other give me thanks for kindnesses.
Some offer me commodities to buy.”

(repetition of the word “some” at the beginning of each phrase)

Repetitions of “Adam” and “he that” (prose section, so line numbers may vary), as Dromio lists the qualities of the Officer.

Puns:

Case: 1. a legal situation, 2. a suit of clothes.
Suits: 1. a prison garment, 2. a lawsuit.


Ring: 1. Jewel for the finger, 2. Female sexual organ.

**Rhyming couplet:**

There are only two and one is actually a rhyming triplet: just before Antipholus and Dromio’s exit, and the last two lines.

**Soliloquies:**

There are two -- Antipholus of Syracuse’s at the beginning of the scene and the Courtesan’s at the end.

TEACHER asks: How would you characterize the Courtesan? In the Renaissance, a **courtesan** was a woman who was paid to provide companionship to men. There was often a sexual component, but sometimes the woman simply provided conversation and other entertainment away from the home sphere. Courtesans were often very well educated and accomplished women, not to be confused with prostitutes. (SQ 1)

STUDENTS suggest that she seems fairly unperturbed by Antipholus and Dromio’s strange behavior, so she could be sanguine. Her profession also implies that she lives for pleasure. As a Commedia character, she would probably be Colombina, but possibly Isabella. She seems to be financially savvy, smart, and independent.

**Step 2: What happens in this scene?**

TEACHER goes over the beats of the scene.

1. Antipholus of Syracuse, in a soliloquy, informs the audience that people continue to act as if they know and like him. He ascribes this all to sorcery.

2. Dromio of Syracuse enters with the money for the chain, which he collected from Adriana in Act Four, Scene 2. He is confused because Antipholus seems to have escaped the Officer, when in fact the Officer is with Antipholus of Ephesus. A number of punning descriptions of the Officer follow. Antipholus asks if any ships are putting out tonight, and Dromio is confused -- he thought he already told Antipholus of Syracuse that information, but of course he told Antipholus of Ephesus. He gives Antipholus the money, and Antipholus prays for deliverance from this strange world.
3. As if on cue, the Courtesan enters and asks if Antipholus has the chain he promised her. Antipholus, in a state of frenzy over his conviction that they are being enchanted by black magic, calls her a devil. Dromio and Antipholus try to ward off the demon. The Courtesan continues to pursue her objective of acquiring the chain, or else getting the ring back that she apparently gave Antipholus of Ephesus in exchange. Antipholus and Dromio run away from her in fear.

4. Nonplussed, the Courtesan concludes that Antipholus must be crazy, since she gave him a ring at dinner and he promised her a chain in return. She then relates that Antipholus told her about being locked out of his house and assumes this was because he is mad. She decides to visit Adriana and ask for the ring back.

STUDENTS take out Worksheet 6 and add entries for the money and the ring. What do you think will happen next?

**Step 4:** Evil angels and the devil herself.

TEACHER continues: At this point in the play, what has changed about Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse’s behavior?

STUDENTS respond that they seem afraid of everyone on Ephesus and that everything they say seems to have to do with sorcery and witchcraft. (SQ 2)

TEACHER continues: Let’s talk through some of the mentions of sorcery in this scene. First, let’s look at Antipholus’ soliloquy. What references does he make to the supernatural? (ACTIVITY 1)

STUDENTS respond that he assumes that all the people who say they know him are just tricking him and that they are Lapland sorcerers.

TEACHER continues: Lapland was notorious at the time for witchcraft and sorcery. Next, Dromio refers to the Officer as an evil angel, which can only make Antipholus more paranoid. Since he doesn’t know what Dromio is talking about, he delivers a prayer at the end of this beat. What does he ask for?

STUDENTS respond that he asks for divine deliverance.

TEACHER continues: Antipholus is starting to fear that they are both losing their minds and asks to be saved. Who appears right at that moment?

STUDENTS answer: The Courtesan.
TEACHER: Is she divine deliverance?

STUDENTS respond that no, she immediately reveals herself as the woman with whom Antipholus of Ephesus had dinner.

TEACHER: Let’s try to picture what the Courtesan might be wearing. Remember that Courtesans often appeared in court and spent lots of money on clothes and fine jewelry. Do you think she looks more like a devil or an angel?

STUDENTS respond with ideas. (ACTIVITY 2)

TEACHER: It would be very ironic, and a fun visual joke, if the Courtesan appeared very beautiful and angelic, because then Antipholus says, “Satan, avoid!” This would be an example of situational irony, when people or characters react the opposite way than you expect. Even more ironically, in a way, the Courtesan is actually part of their deliverance, because the more people trying to figure out the confusion, the more likely it is that the two sets of twins will eventually find each other! How do Antipholus and Dromio react to the Courtesan’s request for the chain, which is obviously visible on Antipholus’ costume?

STUDENTS respond that they ask her not to tempt them and try to “conjure” her to disappear.

TEACHER continues: You imagine that they might hold up the sign of the cross. A well-known proverb said that “He that will eat with the devil must have a long spoon,” and Dromio uses that proverb here when the Courtesan invites them to dinner. Dromio also refers to the common belief that demons visited people to ask them for ingredients for witches’ spells. What does the Courtesan keep asking for?

STUDENTS respond: The chain.

TEACHER: Dromio assumes that she plans to use the chain to frighten them, like a cursed soul in the chains of hell. There’s a pun here on chain, meaning necklace, and the kind of chain that you’d see in a dungeon. When the Courtesan won’t disappear, what happens?

STUDENTS respond that Dromio and Antipholus run away.

TEACHER asks: What do you think of this scene? Is it funny? Why or why not? Let’s find out what happens next!

Step 5: A complicated scene
Taking turns, STUDENTS read aloud from Act Four, Scene 4 – the first 30 or so lines.

TEACHER asks: Which Antipholus and Dromio are we with now? What has happened in the interim? Who has the rope now? What happens to Dromio in the scene?

STUDENTS respond that we are with Antipholus and Dromio of Ephesus. Dromio of Ephesus has gone to get a rope, as he was asked to do in Act Four, Scene 1. Antipholus is telling the Officer that it should be no problem to pay off the debt and that he won’t try to escape. Dromio appears with the rope, but not with the money, since Dromio of Syracuse was the one who got the money. Antipholus, frustrated, beats him, probably with the same rope. The Officer tries to come between them, and Dromio complains that this is his lot in life, to be beaten constantly. (SQ 3)

TEACHER continues: At this point, another new character enters with Adriana, Luciana, and the Courtesan -- Dr. Pinch. What do you think has happened?

STUDENTS guess that the Courtesan went back to Adriana’s house and told her that her husband was crazy.

TEACHER continues: Yes, and Adriana has asked Dr. Pinch for help. Remember when we discussed Commedia dell’Arte and talked about mountebanks who sold cures and pretended to be real doctors? Dr. Pinch is this type of doctor, also known as a quack. His Commedia Mask is fairly obvious -- can you guess what it might be?

STUDENTS guess Il Dottore.

**Step 6: Playing Dr. Pinch.**

STUDENTS divide up into small groups of 7 people and read the next part of the scene together. Come up with a way to present the scene. Use Worksheet 4 for hints on how to act out Dr. Pinch. Alternatively, each group can present a small section of the scene.

After 15-20 minutes, rejoin and perform the scene. Compare and contrast the different performances of Dr. Pinch. The character has very few lines, but is one of the play’s most memorable. (ACTIVITY 3)

TEACHER asks: Prior to this scene, Antipholus of Syracuse has assumed that everyone in Ephesus, except him and Dromio, is a witch. In contrast, everyone around them has decided that Antipholus and Dromio of Ephesus are mad. More situational irony! What did the Elizabethans think was wrong with you when you were mad?

STUDENTS respond: They assumed you were possessed by demons. (SQ 4)
TEACHER asks: What did they do to you, according to this scene?

STUDENTS respond that they apparently tied you up and locked you inside, so you couldn’t hurt anyone.

Conclusion: STUDENTS read aloud to the end of the scene. TEACHER asks: Who reappears at the end of this scene? What has changed about them since the end of Act Four, Scene 3?

STUDENTS respond that Dromio and Antipholus of Syracuse reappear. They have drawn their swords and frighten away Adriana and the others. Antipholus is still ready to leave town immediately, but Dromio is starting to think he might like to convert to witchcraft and stay here!

Homework: We’re at the end of Act Four! List the events that have happened on Worksheet 1. There’s only one scene left, so the climax has to happen soon. Write a short description of what you think will happen, without reading ahead!

Study Questions:

SQ 1 (Advanced): Research courtesans in the Renaissance world. What role did these women play in society? What was their status and what rights did they have that other women did not have? Alternatively, you could research geishas in classical Japan.

SQ 2 (Advanced): Research beliefs in heaven, hell, witches, and angels in Renaissance times. Write a report on one of these beliefs. How have beliefs changed? How have they stayed the same?

SQ 3: What do you think about the violence in this play? Compare it to modern comedies -- does it seem more or less violent?


Activities:

ACTIVITY 1: Improvise the scene Antipholus of Syracuse describes in his soliloquy. How does Antipholus react when people call him by name?

ACTIVITY 2: Draw a picture of the Courtesan in the style of your choice -- Renaissance, ancient Roman, whatever suits your fancy.
ACTIVITY 3: Design a mask for Dr. Pinch. If you can, make the mask!
Worksheet Six -- Teacher’s Key continued

Object Tracking Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECT</th>
<th>When it first appears or is mentioned</th>
<th>Who has it first</th>
<th>Who has it next</th>
<th>Who has it next</th>
<th>Who has it last</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chain</td>
<td>Act III, scene ii</td>
<td>Angelo</td>
<td>Antipholus S.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money for the chain</td>
<td>Act IV, scene i</td>
<td>Adriana (in her desk)</td>
<td>Dromio S.</td>
<td>Antipholus S.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rope</td>
<td>Act IV, scene i</td>
<td>Dromio E.</td>
<td>Antipholus E.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ring</td>
<td>Act IV, scene iii</td>
<td>Courtesan</td>
<td>Antipholus E.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Day 13: Adriana learns a lesson

Goal: To study the use of rhetoric in the play, and how it applies to the essay form. To consider multiple points of view. To learn the different between exposition and synopsis.

Words of the Day:
reverse psychology
rhetoric
thesis statement
summary statement
headsman
synopsis

Materials: None.

Content Standards:
Grade 11-12  RL6:  Indirect point-of-view and hidden meanings (satire, sarcasm, irony, understatement)

Theatre Standards:
Grade 7   4a   Consider staging choices

Step 1: Review homework.

TEACHER asks volunteers to write the events of Act Four on the story arc on the board.

TEACHER divides students into small groups of 6 or 7. Groups write a scenario based on their ideas for the end of the play, as if they were a company of Commedia dell’Arte actors in Renaissance Italy.

After about 10-15 minutes of preparation, each group posts their scenario where all the actors can see it and improvises the final scene of the play.

After all the scenes have been performed, discuss. How were they similar? How were they different? Did they all have happy endings? What were the challenges of improvising a complex scene like this? How did the scenario help?

Step 2: Suspense builds.
Although some groups may have remembered to bring the Duke and Aegeon back on for their final scene, it’s likely that none of them will have remembered to bring in the Abbess.

TEACHER asks students to read the first 30 lines aloud. Here, we are reunited with Angelo and Merchant 2. Can anyone remember what their objectives are?

STUDENTS respond that the Merchant needs the money Angelo owes him and in order to pay the Merchant Angelo needs money from Antipholus. Since Antipholus never gave him the money, he was arrested.

TEACHER asks: Which Antipholus was arrested, Syracuse or Ephesus?

STUDENTS respond that Antipholus of Ephesus was arrested.

TEACHER continues: And now Antipholus of Syracuse appears wearing the chain that Antipholus of Ephesus told Angelo he didn’t have, back in Act Four, Scene 1! How do Angelo and the Merchant react?

STUDENTS respond that Angelo accuses Antipholus of lying, and the Merchant challenges him to a duel.

TEACHER asks: Then what happens?

STUDENTS respond that Adriana comes in with Luciana and the Courtesan, and Dromio and Antipholus of Syracuse run into a priory, or abbey.

TEACHER asks: What kind of verse is this scene written in so far? Why do you think Shakespeare chose not to use rhyming couplets here?

STUDENTS respond that it’s in blank verse. Perhaps Shakespeare was trying to build suspense and didn’t want to create a comic effect.

TEACHER asks: How many people are onstage at this point?

STUDENTS respond that there are at least 7 people on stage. TEACHER writes on the board the names of all the characters on stage:

Merchant 2

Angelo

Antipholus of Syracuse (goes into the priory)
Dromio of Syracuse (goes into the priory)

Adriana

Luciana

Courtesan

Step 3: The Abbess’ trick.

TEACHER continues: At this point, Shakespeare introduces yet another new character, the Abbess.

STUDENTS read aloud the next part of the scene. TEACHER asks: What trick does the Abbess play on Adriana?

STUDENTS say that the Abbess tricks Adriana into admitting that she scolds her husband constantly for being unfaithful.

TEACHER continues: The Abbess uses a little reverse psychology on Adriana. She accuses her of not reprimanding her husband strongly enough for straying from his duties and forces Adriana to protest that she constantly scolds him and never lets him have a moment’s peace! (SQ 1)

The Abbess’ speech is a beautifully constructed piece of rhetoric, full of cause and effect statements and parallel construction. It's almost like an essay proving a thesis statement.

TEACHER writes the speech on the board as follows and asks for volunteers to find the thesis statement, three reasons why Antipholus is mad, and summary statement at the end. How would you divide this speech into a five paragraph essay? (SQ 2)

And thereof came it that the man was mad. The venom clamours of a jealous woman poisons more deadly than a mad dog’s tooth. (thesis statement)

It seems his sleeps were hindered by thy railing, and thereof comes it that his head is light.

Thou sayst his meat was sauced with thy upbraidings; unquiet meals make ill digestions. Thereof the raging fire of fever bred; and what’s a fever but a fit of madness?
Thou sayst his sports were hindered by thy brawls; sweet recreation barred, what
doth ensue but moody and dull melancholy, kinsman to grim and comfortless despair,
and at her heels a huge infectious troop of pale distemperatures and foes to life?
(three reasons why Antipholus is mad)

In food, in sport, in life-preserving rest to be disturbed would mad or man or beast.
The consequence is, then, thy jealous fits hath scared thy husband from the use of
wits. (summary statement)

How does Shakespeare use rhyme to emphasize the summary statement? How does the
Abbess use Adriana’s own statements from earlier in the scene to prove her points?

Step 4: Look at Luciana’s speech immediately after the Abbess’, and Adriana’s response. What
are their points of view?

STUDENTS respond that Luciana obviously thinks that Adriana is being accused of
something that isn’t true, and that the Abbess has tricked her. This is somewhat
surprising considering that Luciana accused Adriana of similar behavior in Act Two,
Scene 1! Adriana, however, admits that the Abbess is probably right.

TEACHER continues: Which of the four humors is mentioned in this scene?

STUDENTS answer: Melancholy.

TEACHER continues: Interestingly, Adriana says that her husband has been melancholy
for a week. How long has the mistaken identity been going on?

STUDENTS respond: Less than a day.

TEACHER concludes: Therefore the trouble in Adriana and Antipholus’ marriage seems
to have been a problem long before he was being mistaken for someone else. Antipholus
may not be mad, but there’s still a problem in their marriage. What do you think they
both did wrong in the situation?

STUDENTS respond that Antipholus should have paid more attention to his wife and
not gone to visit the Courtesan. Adriana should have stopped scolding her husband
based on her suspicions about another women, because by doing so she may have
driven him to do the thing he was being accused of. (ACTIVITY 1)

TEACHER asks: What do you think of Adriana’s admission of guilt? Do you think she’ll
change her behavior toward her husband?

STUDENTS respond with opinions.
TEACHER asks: What happens at the end of this beat?

STUDENTS respond that the Abbess refuses to send Antipholus out to Adriana and says she is going to try to cure his madness. The Abbess tells Adriana to leave and exits into the priory.

**Step 5:** STUDENTS read the next section aloud.

TEACHER asks: What time is it? What is about to happen? What is Adriana’s plan?

STUDENTS respond that it is 5 o’clock, nearly sundown, and Aegeon is about to be executed (remember him?). Adriana plans to ask the Duke to force the Abbess to send her husband out to her.

TEACHER asks: How many people are now on stage? How many are in the priory? (SQ 3)

STUDENTS respond and add to the list:

*Merchant 2*

*Angelo*

*Adriana*

*Luciana*

*Courtesan*

*Duke*

*Aegeon*

*Headsman*

*(Other Attendants)*

*In the priory:*

*Antipholus of Syracuse*
Dromio of Syracuse

Abbess

TEACHER asks: Can anyone guess what “headsman” means?

STUDENTS respond that he is the executioner, or the man who will chop off Aegeon’s head!

**Step 6: Staging the synopsis.**

TEACHER continues: At the beginning of the play, Aegeon had a long speech describing everything that happened before the play began. Does anyone remember what that speech was called?

STUDENTS respond: The exposition.

TEACHER continues. Adriana has a speech that is similar to that speech, but instead of telling us about things we don’t know about, it tells us about everything that happened in the play up to this point -- things we do know about. This speech is called a **synopsis**. She describes everything that’s happened so far from her point of view. *(SQ 4)* Why do you think Shakespeare put a synopsis at this point in the play?

STUDENTS suggest that he might want to remind the audience of everything that’s happened so far.

TEACHER asks for 7-8 volunteers. While one person reads the speech, the others act it out. Alternatively, the class could divide up into groups, and each could perform a version of the speech.

**Conclusion:** STUDENTS read the Duke’s speech following the synopsis aloud. What does the Duke think of Antipholus of Ephesus? How is he planning to help?

Compare what’s happened so far with the improvisations you did at the beginning of the class. How close did you come to guessing what would happen?

**Homework:** Read Act Five, Scene 1 up to just before the Abbess’ re-entrance. Find the synopsis in this section. Choose one of the following activities:

1. Write a scene showing what happens between Dr. Pinch, Antipholus of Ephesus, and Dromio of Ephesus offstage.

2. Draw a comic strip of this offstage scene.
3. Make a short film with some classmates illustrating this scene. Be safe! Don’t use real fire or real scissors.

Study Questions:

SQ 1: Do you think the Abbess’ trick is fair? Why or why not?

SQ 2: Write an essay proving that someone you know is melancholy, choleric, sanguine, or phlegmatic. Use three examples to prove your point.

SQ 3: There are only five actors in the Shakespeare on Tour performance you’re about to see. How do you think they will stage a scene with so many characters?

SQ 4: Write a synopsis of the play so far from one of the other character’s points of view. Be creative!

Activities:

ACTIVITY 1: Imagine that Adriana and Antipholus of Ephesus are on “Divorce Court.” The Abbess is serving as Antipholus’ lawyer and Luciana is serving as Adriana’s lawyer. Have four people play these roles while the rest serve as the jury. The jury should decide who’s at fault in the divorce. Who wins? Is there a chance for reconciliation?
Day 14: All are reunited

Goal: To imagine offstage action and the moment before. To understand how all the story’s elements combine in the final climax. To identify the falling action, or denouement, of the story.

Words of the Day:
media
the moment before
suspension of disbelief
resolution

Materials: None.

Content Standards:
Grade 5 RL7: How multimedia elements contribute to text
Grade 6-12 RL7: How specific media inform/transform text

Step 1: Review homework.

TEACHER invites volunteers to share their ideas from the homework. If anyone has written a scene, have students act it out. Watch any films students made and pass around comic strips.

TEACHER continues: Plays, films, and comic strips are all examples of different types of media, or communication techniques, which can be used to communicate stories visually. Which one do you prefer? Why?

STUDENTS respond with opinions. (SQ 1, ACTIVITY 1)

Step 2: Justice.

TEACHER continues: Much of the part of the scene you read for homework involves what is almost a court trial, with Antipholus of Ephesus asking for justice against his wife Adriana. Let’s go over the beats of the scene.

1. A messenger enters from Adriana’s house, describing how Antipholus and Dromio of Ephesus tortured Dr. Pinch. Adriana says he is lying, since Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse are inside the priory.
2. Antipholus and Dromio of Ephesus arrive in a rage. The Duke protects Adriana from Antipholus. We just looked at some visualizations of what happened off stage -- this helps us to know how they look when they enter. Actors call the imaginary things that happen to them just before they enter a scene “the moment before.”

3. Antipholus of Ephesus demands justice from the Duke, citing his past military service. Aegeon, in an aside, recognizes his son.

4. Antipholus begins his case against his wife, saying that she locked him out of his house. Adriana denies it, and Luciana comes to her defense. Angelo defends Antipholus’ story.

5. Antipholus summarizes his version of the events in a synopsis. He also claims not to be drunk or insane.

6. Angelo gives his version of events, with the Duke questioning him, claiming that they were locked out of the house, but that Antipholus does have the chain. Merchant 2 backs up Angelo’s story and says that he saw Antipholus wearing the chain. The Merchant drew his sword upon Antipholus before he retreated into the abbey.

7. Antipholus of Ephesus says that he never went into the abbey, had a sword drawn against him, or saw the chain.

8. The Duke concludes that they are all insane, having “drunk of Circe’s cup.” Circe was a sorceress who turned men into animals. The Duke logically concludes that if Antipholus had gone into the Abbey, he would still be there, and if he was mad, he would not be able to speak so rationally.

9. The Duke seeks testimony from Dromio of Ephesus and the Courtesan, who say that Antipholus dines at the Courtesan’s, where he acquired her ring. Antipholus admits that this is true. The Courtesan also says, however, that she saw Antipholus go into the abbey.

10. The Duke once more decides that they are all mad and send a servant to get the Abbess.

11. Aegeon, who has been watching all this, asks permission to speak. He tries to get Antipholus and Dromio to remember him, but of course they do not. He mourns the fact that he is so changed by grief that his own son doesn’t remember him.

12. Antipholus of Ephesus still fails to recognize him and insists that he has never known his father nor been to Syracuse. The Duke confirms his story and tells Aegeon his old age and imminent execution are making him mad.
TEACHER concludes: Our characters find themselves in quite a position! According to the Duke, they are all insane. It seems that things really can’t get any worse -- Adriana and Antipholus are furious with each other, Angelo and the Merchant don’t have their money, the Courtesan doesn’t have her ring, and Aegeon is still going to die.

**Step 3:** Antipholus of Ephesus’ synopsis.

TEACHER continues: Before we find out what happens next, let’s take a look at Antipholus of Ephesus’ synopsis. It’s quite different from Adriana’s. Let’s do what we did with Adriana’s and have one person read it while the rest of the group acts it out.

STUDENTS act out the synopsis.

TEACHER asks: Is Antipholus telling the truth? Do we, the audience, know that everything he says is true?

STUDENTS respond that yes, he is telling the truth.

TEACHER continues: However, each character on stage with him only believes part of what he says is true. Is there anyone who believes everything he says is true?

STUDENTS respond that no one really does.

TEACHER continues: Everyone else witnessed some of the things he reports, but not all of them. What did Angelo witness?

STUDENTS respond: Being locked out of the house.

TEACHER continues: What did Adriana and Luciana witness?

STUDENTS respond: Dr. Pinch diagnosing him.

TEACHER asks: What did Dromio of Ephesus witness?

STUDENTS respond: Almost everything, except that he doesn’t think he was ever sent home for the money for the chain.

**Step 4:** The climax at last! And a surprise.

TEACHER continues: Let’s read on and find out what happens!

STUDENTS read the next section of dialogue aloud.
TEACHER points out that in eight short lines the twins are reunited with each other, Aegeon is reunited with the son and the servant he hasn’t seen in seven years, and all the confusion is explained. (SQ 2)

This is an extraordinary moment and the climax we’ve been waiting for. However, Shakespeare has a surprise for us, one that never appeared in the source material, Plautus’ *Menaechmi*.

STUDENTS read aloud the Abbess’ speech.

TEACHER continues: In one of the hugest coincidences in all literature, it turns out that the Abbess is Aegeon’s long-lost wife Aemilia! What do you think of this surprise? Did any of you expect this?

STUDENTS respond. Some of them might find it ridiculous and unbelievable.

TEACHER responds: It is hard to believe. Sometimes in the theatre, playwrights ask us to *suspend our disbelief*, or pretend that something is realistic when it seems outrageous. Can you think of other times in the play when you’ve have to suspend your disbelief?

STUDENTS respond with ideas. They may point out that it’s not very believable that Antipholus of Syracuse wouldn’t have guessed that his twin was in Ephesus, when he’s been trying for seven years to find him!

TEACHER responds: Without the suspension of disbelief in this story, do you think the ending would be as entertaining or as satisfying? (SQ 3)

STUDENTS respond with opinions.

**Step 5**: The denouement.

TEACHER continues: After nearly five acts of complications, we’ve seen our climax, and now we have a short denouement, or **resolution**, when all the conflicts are finally resolved. Let’s take out our Worksheet 6 to make sure that everything is restored to its rightful owner.

STUDENTS read up to the exit of all but the Dromios.

TEACHER asks: Do you think that now, Antipholus of Ephesus and Adriana will forgive each other? What will happen between Luciana and Antipholus of Syracuse?
STUDENTS respond with opinions -- Antipholus of Ephesus strongly claims his wife, and Antipholus of Syracuse reminds Luciana of their love scene together.

TEACHER points out: In this exchange, all the various objects are restored to their rightful owners. The Duke also makes a rare exception to his own rule. Antipholus of Ephesus offers to pay the ransom for his father, but the Duke frees him without the money.

Let’s finish filling out Worksheet 6.

STUDENTS do so, per final Teacher’s Key.

STUDENTS read the end of the play.

TEACHER asks: What happens here?

STUDENTS respond that the Abbess invites everyone into the abbey to share their stories of all the years gone by, leaving the two sets of twins alone on stage.

TEACHER continues: As we’ll see, Shakespeare can’t resist a final moment of mistaken identity.

STUDENTS read the rest of the scene.

TEACHER concludes: What do the two Dromios talk about now that they’ve finally met?

STUDENTS answer: Nell, the housemaid! Dromio of Syracuse is relieved he doesn’t have to marry her. They also debate which one was born first and is therefore the elder son with higher status. Since they don’t know, they go into dinner side by side, hand in hand.

Conclusion: TEACHER engages students in discussion: How do you feel now that you know the ending? Did it end the way you expected it to?

Homework: Write an essay about one of the following topics, supporting your thesis statement with at least three examples from the text:

1. Is the play a comedy or a farce?

2. Does the play observe the unity of action?
3. Remember the theme for the play you decided on as a class, based on the quotes in Worksheet 3. Do you agree with that theme now? If not, come up with a new theme and reasons to support it.

Study Questions:

SQ 1 (Advanced): Can you think of a story that has been told in three different types of media -- a play, a film, and a comic strip? (Ideas: Dracula, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, The Three Musketeers). Watch or read at least two different interpretations in different media, preferably all three. (The library is a good source for graphic novel versions of classic stories.) Which type of media came first? Which do you like best?

SQ 2: Imagine if you were directing a production with only one actor playing each pair of twins. How would you stage this scene?

SQ 3: Think of a story or a movie during which outrageous coincidences occur and the audience is asked to suspend its disbelief. Describe it. Did you “buy in” to the story or did the author lose you at that moment?

Activities:

Day 15: Reviewing three weeks with Shakespeare

Goal: To review the action of the play and the lessons of the last three weeks. To prepare to see a live production of the play and make judgments about the production based on supported opinions.

Words of the Day:
criticism
review

Materials: None.

Content Standards:
Grade 3-5  W1: Write opinion piece (review)
Grade 6-12  RL7: How specific media inform/transform text

Step 1: Review homework.

STUDENTS take turns presenting their thesis statements and defending them, using the examples in their essays.

As a class, STUDENTS vote on whether the play is a comedy or a farce, whether it adheres to the unity of action, and whether their original unifying theme is still a good one or if they prefer something else.

Discuss the results. How did the action of the play compare to your expectations on Day 1? Did you like it? Why or why not?

Step 2: Favorite scenes and favorite characters.

TEACHER asks students to name their favorite scenes. Why did you like them?

STUDENTS respond with opinions.

TEACHER asks each student to pick a favorite character. Why do you like him or her? Do you think this character is like you or different from you?
STUDENTS respond with opinions.

**Step 3:** Get ready to watch the play!

Ideally, at this point students will be able to see the Shakespeare on Tour performance of *The Comedy of Errors*.

Before watching the show, TEACHER tells students that this will be an edited version of the play -- less than an hour. The whole play would take a little over two hours to perform.

STUDENTS should watch for the following:

1. The Shakespeare on Tour production uses only five actors. Which actors doubled up in which roles? What effect did this have on the production?

2. Which scenes were removed or heavily cut? Did you miss certain scenes or do you think the most important parts were left in?

3. What did you think of the director’s concept -- where and when the production was set, the choices made in the final scene, the costumes, scenery, and music?

4. What did you think of the actors’ performances? Was it easy to understand the text?

5. Overall, how did you feel during the play? Did you find it funny throughout or were there parts that were more serious? Did it make you think or arouse any emotions?

6. Would the play have been harder to understand without the last three weeks’ lessons? Why or why not?

After watching the play, return to the classroom and discuss these questions. (SQ 1, SQ 2) You may also have a chance to ask the actors some questions after the show.

(ACTIVITY 1) Supported opinions about a live performance, like those about a book or movie, are called **criticism**. The people who write criticism for a living are called critics. Have you seen critics on TV or read **reviews** in the paper?

**Conclusion:** TEACHER introduces discussion: Was Shakespeare harder or easier than you expected? Will you read or watch more Shakespeare plays now?
Homework: What character(s) would you most like to play if you were doing a production of *The Comedy of Errors*? Write a few paragraphs describing the way you’d play the role. Would you use any of the humors or Commedia dell’Arte Masks to help you play the role?

Study Questions:

SQ 1: Find a theatrical or film review in your local paper and read it. Then see the play or movie yourself. Do you agree with the critic? Why or why not?

SQ 2: Write a critical review of the play using your answers to the questions in Step 3. Would you recommend the play to others?

Activities:

ACTIVITY 1: Write a letter to your favorite actor in the Shakespeare on Tour production telling him or her why you enjoyed their performance. You can actually send your letter if you like -- the actors are always happy to read them! Send it to Shakespeare on Tour at P.O.Box 460937, San Francisco, CA 94146.
Worksheet One: The Three Unities in “The Comedy of Errors”

TIME

PLACE

ACTION

The Characters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antipholus of Ephesus</td>
<td>Dromio of Ephesus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luciana</td>
<td>Abbess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aegeon</td>
<td>Adriana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dromio of Syracuse</td>
<td>Antipholus of Syracuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Merchant</td>
<td>Angelo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Merchant</td>
<td>Duke Solinus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Pinch</td>
<td>Balthazar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luce</td>
<td>Courtesan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer</td>
<td>Jailer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Three Unities in “The Comedy of Errors”

TIME -- Between sunrise and sunset.

PLACE -- In the city of Ephesus.

ACTION

Climax

Rising Action (Complications)

Falling Action (Denouement)

The Characters

Antipholus of Ephesus

Dromio of Ephesus

Luciana

Abbess

Aegeon

Adriana

Dromio of Syracuse

Antipholus of Syracuse

1st Merchant

Angelo

2nd Merchant

Duke Solinus

Dr. Pinch

Balthazar

Luce

Courtesan

Officer

Jailor
Worksheet Two: The World of “The Comedy of Errors”
Worksheet Three: Quotes from “The Comedy of Errors”

He that commends me to mine own content
Commends me to the thing I cannot get.
I to the world am like a drop of water
That in the ocean seeks another drop,
Who, falling there to find his fellow forth,
Unseen, inquisitive, confounds himself.
So I, to find a mother and a brother,
In quest of them unhappy, lose myself. (I.ii)

A man is master of his liberty;
Time is their master, and when they see time
They’ll go or come. If so, be patient, sister. (II.i)

So thou, that hast no unkind mate to grieve thee,
With urging helpless patience would relieve me.
But if thou live to see like right bereft,
This fool-begg’d patience in thee will be left. (II.i)

I know his eye doth homage otherwhere;
Or else what lets it but he would be here? (II.i)

How many fond fools serve mad jealousy! (II.i)

Because that I familiarly sometimes
Do use you for my fool, and chat with you,
Your sauciness will jest upon my love,
And make a common of my serious hours. (II.ii)

Well, sir, learn to jest in good time. There’s a time for all things. (II.ii)

The time was once when thou unurg’d wouldst vow
That never words were music to thine ear,
That never object pleasing in thine eye,
That never touch well welcome to they hand,
That never meat sweet-savour’d to thy taste,
Unless I spake, or look’d, or touch’d, or carv’d to thee. (II.ii)

Am I in earth, in heaven, or in hell?
Sleeping or waking? mad or well advis’d?
Known unto these, and to myself disguis’d?
I’ll say as they say, and persever so,
And in this mist at all adventures go. (II.ii)

Have patience, sir. O, let it not be so.
Herein you war against your reputation,
And draw within the compass of suspect
Th’inviolated honor of your wife. (III.i)

Since mine own doors refuse to entertain me,
I’ll knock elsewhere to see if they’ll disdain me. (III.i)

Alas, poor women, make us but believe,
Being compact of credit, that you love us.
Though others have the arm, show us the sleeve.
We in your motion turn, and you may move us. (III.ii)

If everyone knows us, and we know none,
‘Tis time, I think, to trudge, pack, and be gone. (III.ii)

Thither I must, though against my will;
For servants must their masters’ minds fulfill. (IV.i)

There’s not a man I meet but doth salute me
As if I were their well-acquainted friend,
And every one doth call me by my name. (IV.iii)

I have served him from the hour of my nativity to this instant, and have nothing at his hands for my service but blows. (IV.iv)

We came into the world like brother and brother,
And now let’s go hand in hand, not one before another. (V.i)
Worksheet Four: Commedia dell’Arte
Characters

adapted from Commedia dell’Arte: An Actor’s Handbook by John Rudlin

Zanni
(pronounced ZAH-nee)

Can be both a single comic servant character and the generic term for other types of comic servants such as Arlecchino and Brighella. The lowest status character in the play. Dressed in a white, baggy costume with a half-mask. “The longer Zanni’s nose is, the stupider he is.” Has a low center of gravity, arched back, knees bent and apart and feet splayed. One knee stays bent, the other leg is extended with pointed toe. Walks from this position by alternately extending legs, putting weight on that foot, and then switching. Moves with urgency. Always hungry and looking for food.

Arlecchino
(pronounced Ar-leh-KEE-no)

A type of Zanni. Probably evolved from the Italian for “little devil.” Usually Pantalone, Il Dottore, or Il Capitano’s servant. Costume is patched with multiple colors, usually form-fitting. Black mask, often the whole face is painted black and a black scarf is wrapped around the head. Quick physically, slow mentally -- uses the Zanni walk, but more balletic. Carries a slapstick which he uses to beat people.

Brighella
(pronounced Bri-GAY-lah)

Higher status than other Zanni. White costume with green braid trim. Mask has hooked nose and a curling mustache. Similar physicality to other Zanni, but with the stomach pushed forward. Cat-like movements. Often a con artist, he guides the action of the play. Clever, cynical, and not to be trusted.

Pantalone
(pronounced Pan-tuh-LOH-nay)

The character with the highest status, he controls all the money and is usually a miser. He is often the employer of the zanni and father to the innamorati. He is lean and scrawny, sometimes short. Usually dressed in red, tight trousers and a short jacket. Has a long mustache, hooked nose, and pointed beard. His back curves forward to protect the money bags at his belt.
He walks with small steps, slowly, but his hands move quickly. He is greedy, cruel to his servants, and always in love with someone much younger who does not return his affections.

**Il Dottore**  
(pronounced il Doh-TOH-ray)

He is a large man in a black academic coat and wide-brimmed black hat. His mask covers his forehead and nose only. The nose is bulbous and the cheeks and nose red with drinking. Pretends to be very wise on a number of subjects but is actually a fool. Enjoys food.

**Innamorati**  
(pronounced In-am-oh-RAH-tee)

The lovers are young people who are more in love with the idea of love than with each other. They do not wear masks, but do wear plenty of make-up. They walk like ballet dancers, trying to contact the earth as little as possible, very wobbly and using their arms for balance. Men and women scarcely touch, and when they do it has an enormous impact. They often pretend to fight with each other just so they can make up. They are usually vain, spoiled, and impatient.

**Isabella**  
(pronounced Iz-uh-BELL-ah)

An intelligent, refined innamorata who is less flighty, more down-to-earth. She is quite stubborn and good at getting her own way. Takes more initiative than the other innamorati, but is still over-dramatic and loves having people in love with her.

**Il Capitano**  
(pronounced il Kap-ee-TAH-no)

A blowhard and a coward who pretends to be a brave soldier. Wears a military costume and always has a sword. His mask has a long nose. Walks with a straight back, big strides, stepping from heel to toe with chest leading. When frightened he runs in place, unable to move forward.

**Colombina**  
(pronounced Kah-lum-BEE-nah)

The female counterpart to Zanni, usually the Innamorata's maid. Strong and attractive in appearance, unmasked. Wears a mob cap and apron over a dress that falls just below the knee, with a low neckline. Moves like a zanni, with a flick of the extended foot at the end of the step. Hands on hips. Smarter than Arlecchino, but in love with him and wishes to improve him. Sexually knowledgable. Relates well to the audience since she is usually the only rational person on the stage.
Pulcinella
(pronounced Pul-chee-NELL-uh)

Hump-backed and pot-bellied, he evolved into Punch of the British Punch-and-Judy shows. Frequently married and henpecked by his wife. Middle of the road in status. Mask is wrinkled, with a wart on the forehead and a beaked nose. Walks with small, jerky steps. He is violent and prone to arguments. Has an enormous ego.
Worksheet Five: Dromio is a pun-ny guy!

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE: But say, sir, is it dinner-time?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE: No, sir. I think the meat wants that I have.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: In good time, sir, what’s that?

DROMIO S.: Basting.

What are the two meanings of “basting”? ____________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Well, sir, then ‘twill be dry.

DROMIO S.: If it be sir, I pray you eat none of it.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Your reason?

DROMIO S.: Lest it make you choleric, and purchase me another dry basting.

What are the two meanings of “dry”? ____________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Well, sir, learn to jest in good time. There’s a time for all things.

DROMIO S.: I durst have denied that before you were so choleric.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: By what rule, sir?

DROMIO S.: Marry, sir, by a rule as plain as the plain bald pate of Father Time himself.

What are the two meanings of “plain”? ____________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Let’s hear it.

DROMIO S.: There’s no time for a man to recover his hair that grows bald by nature.
ANTIPHOLUS S.: May he not do it by **fine and recovery**?

DROMIO S.: Yes, to pay a **fine** for a periwig, and **recover** the lost hair of another man.

What are the two meanings of “fine and recovery”? ____________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Why is Time such a niggard of hair, being, as it is, so plentiful an excrement?

DROMIO S.: Because it is a blessing that he bestows on beasts, and what he hath scanted men in hair he hath given them in wit.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Why, but there’s many a man hath more hair than wit.

DROMIO S.: Not a man of those but he hath the wit to lose his hair.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Why, thou didst conclude hairy men plain dealers, without wit.

Who does Dromio seem to think is more witty, a hairy man or a bald one?________

__________________________________________________________________________

DROMIO S.: The plainer dealer, the sooner lost; yet he loseth it in a kind of jollity.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: For what reason?

DROMIO S.: For two, and **sound** ones too.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Nay, not **sound**, I pray you.

What are the two meanings of “sound”?______________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

DROMIO S.: **Sure** ones, then.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Nay, not **sure** in a thing **falsing**.

What are the two meanings of “sure” and “falsing”? ____________________________
DROMIO S.: Certain ones, then.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Name them.

DROMIO S.: The one, to save the money that he spends in tiring; the other, that at dinner they should not drop in his porridge.

What are Dromio’s two reasons that a man might want to lose his hair, in your own words? __________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

ANTIPHOLUS S.: You would all this time have proved there is no time for all things.

DROMIO S.: Marry, and did, sir; namely e’en no time to recover hair lost by nature.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: But your reason was not substantial, why there is no time to recover.

DROMIO S.: Thus I mend it: Time himself is bald, and therefore to the world’s end will have bald followers.

What are the two meanings of “time”? ____________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

ANTIPHOLUS S.: I knew ‘twould be a bald conclusion.

What are the two meanings of “bald”? ____________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

Do you think Dromio is right, that there is no time to recover lost hair? ____________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________
Dromio is a pun-ny guy!

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE: But say, sir, is it dinner-time?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE: No, sir. I think the meat wants that I have.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: In good time, sir, what’s that?

DROMIO S.: Basting.

What are the two meanings of “basting”? 1. Covering meat with sauce or fat during cooking to keep it moist. 2. A beating.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Well, sir, then ’twill be dry.

DROMIO S.: If it be sir, I pray you eat none of it.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Your reason?

DROMIO S.: Lest it make you choleric, and purchase me another dry basting.

What are the two meanings of “dry”? 1. Lacking moisture (like the meat if it’s not basted.) 2. Humorless, unfriendly.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Well, sir, learn to jest in good time. There’s a time for all things.

DROMIO S.: I durst have denied that before you were so choleric.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: By what rule, sir?

DROMIO S.: Marry, sir, by a rule as plain as the plain bald pate of Father Time himself.

What are the two meanings of “plain”? 1. Simple or obvious. 2. Unadorned, bare.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Let’s hear it.

DROMIO S.: There’s no time for a man to recover his hair that grows bald by nature.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: May he not do it by fine and recovery?
DROMIO S.: Yes, to pay a **fine** for a periwig, and **recover** the lost hair of another man.

What are the two meanings of “fine and recovery”? 1. **Legal terms for the transfer of property.** 2. **Payment for a wig**, then acquisition of another man’s hair.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Why is Time such a niggard of hair, being, as it is, so plentiful an excrement?

DROMIO S.: Because it is a blessing that he bestows on beasts, and what he hath scanted men in hair he hath given them in wit.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Why, but there’s many a man hath more hair than wit.

DROMIO S.: Not a man of those but he hath the wit to lose his hair.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Why, thou didst conclude hairy men plain dealers, without wit.

Who does Dromio seem to think is more witty, a hairy man or a bald one? He says that men with wit, or brains, have the brains to lose their hair, therefore implying that bald men are more intelligent. Men with hair are “plain dealers,” or simple people. (There’s also a sexual pun here -- men with brains are able to attract women and therefore may contract syphilis, which causes balding. Men who have hair therefore don’t have syphilis and must be more plain, or honest, in their dealings with women.)

DROMIO S.: The plainer dealer, the sooner lost; yet he loseth it in a kind of jollity.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: For what reason?

DROMIO S.: For two, and **sound** ones too.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Nay, not **sound**, I pray you.

What are the two meanings of “sound”? 1. **Valid.** 2. **Healthy (playing on the syphilis joke earlier).** Dromio says that the “plain dealer” or honest, simple man may have more luck with women, and Antipholus therefore thinks he might not be healthy.

DROMIO S.: **Sure** ones, then.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Nay, not **sure** in a thing **falsing**.

What are the two meanings of “sure” and “falsing”? 1. **Sure could mean true, and falsing false or invalid.** 2. **Sure could mean honest and faithful, and falsing could mean deceitful, once again playing on sexual infidelity.**
DROMIO S.: Certain ones, then.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: Name them.

DROMIO S.: The one, to save the money that he spends in tiring; the other, that at dinner they should not drop in his porridge.

What are Dromio’s two reasons that a man might want to lose his hair, in your own words? 1. He won’t have to go to the hairdresser. 2. He won’t have to worry about hair in his food.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: You would all this time have proved there is no time for all things.

DROMIO S.: Marry, and did, sir; namely e’en no time to recover hair lost by nature.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: But your reason was not substantial, why there is no time to recover.

DROMIO S.: Thus I mend it: Time himself is bald, and therefore to the world’s end will have bald followers.

What are the two meanings of “time”? 1. The moment to moment passing of life. 2. Father Time, or the mythical old bald man who controls time.

ANTIPHOLUS S.: I knew ‘twould be a bald conclusion.

What are the two meanings of “bald”? 1. Without hair. 2. Silly or unsophisticated.

Do you think Dromio is right, that there is no time to recover lost hair? Answers will vary -- Students may say that once it’s lost, it’s lost, so there’s no way you can get it back no matter how much time passes. If you’ve looked at the passage in Ecclesiastes, students may argue that that’s not really how the expression should be used. The idea that there is a time for all things refers to more general, intangible phases of life.
Worksheet Six: Object Tracking Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECT</th>
<th>When it first appears or is mentioned</th>
<th>Who has it first</th>
<th>Who has it next</th>
<th>Who has it next</th>
<th>Who has it last</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money for the chain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rope</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Worksheet Six -- Teacher’s Key

#### Object Tracking Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECT</th>
<th>When it first appears or is mentioned</th>
<th>Who has it first</th>
<th>Who has it next</th>
<th>Who has it next</th>
<th>Who has it last</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chain</td>
<td>Act III, scene ii</td>
<td>Angelo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Antipholus S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money for the chain</td>
<td>Act IV, scene i</td>
<td>Adriana (in her desk)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dromio S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rope</td>
<td>Act IV, scene i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Object Tracking Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECT</th>
<th>When it first appears or is mentioned</th>
<th>Who has it first</th>
<th>Who has it next</th>
<th>Who has it next</th>
<th>Who has it last</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chain</td>
<td>Act III, scene ii</td>
<td>Angelo</td>
<td>Antipholus S.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unclear, possibly Antipholus E. or Adriana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money for the chain</td>
<td>Act IV, scene i</td>
<td>Adriana (in her desk)</td>
<td>Dromio S.</td>
<td>Antipholus S.</td>
<td>Antipholus E. (presumably pays Angelo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rope</td>
<td>Act IV, scene i</td>
<td>Dromio E.</td>
<td>Antipholus E.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not mentioned in final scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ring</td>
<td>Act IV, scene iii</td>
<td>Courtesan</td>
<td>Antipholus E.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Courtesan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A: California Common Core State Standards covered in this curriculum

Of course, no three-week curriculum can cover all the content standards for Language and Performing Arts, but reading and listening to Shakespeare is one of the best ways to cover a large number of them! This curriculum touches on the following aspect of the California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy, as adopted by the California Board of Education in August 2010 and modified in March 2013.

The list of standards shown here is not comprehensive; most of the standards listed herein are for the “Reading Standards for Literature” band of the CCCSS. The Study Questions, if used, will cover a number of the Writing standards not listed here, and the interactive exercises and discussions may satisfy some of the “Speaking and Listening” standards.

In addition, we have begun to add a few references to the California Arts Standards for Theatre, adopted by the California Department of Education in August 2018.

A note about “grade-level appropriate text”: Few people would argue that Shakespeare is grade-appropriate text for Kindergarteners and 1st Graders. However, San Francisco Shakespeare Festival has been using Shakespeare’s actual text with grades 2 and up for over twenty five years in our summer camp and after-school programs. The key is not to expect them to read the whole play, but give them short passages to read. The rest they will understand when they see it performed. Just as young children learn foreign languages more adeptly than adults, we find that early exposure to Shakespeare leads to extraordinary levels of comprehension.

I. Language Arts

1st Grade:

Key Ideas and details
RL2 Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.

Craft and Structure
RL4 Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.
RL6 Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text.

Writing: Text Types and Purposes
W3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.
2nd Grade:

Key Ideas and details
RL2 Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.

Craft and Structure
RL4 Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.
RL5 Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.
RL6 Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.

3rd Grade:

Language
L4c Use glossaries or beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.
L5 Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

Key Ideas and details
RL2 Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.
RL3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

Craft and Structure
RL5 Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.
RL6 Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

Writing: Text Types and Purposes
W1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.
W3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

4th Grade:

Language
L4c Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.
L5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. (incl. simile, metaphor, idioms, adages, proverbs, etc.)

Reading for Information
RI5 Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.
Key Ideas and details
RL2  Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
RL3  Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions).

Craft and Structure
RL4  Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).
RL5  Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.
RL6  Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.

Writing: Text Types and Purposes
W1  Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
W3  Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

5th Grade:

Language
L4c  Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.
L5  Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. (inc. simile, metaphor, idioms, adages, proverbs, etc.)

Key Ideas and details
RL2  Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.
RL3  Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).

Craft and Structure
RL5  Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.
RL6  Describe how a narrator’s or speaker’s point of view influences how events are described.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:
RL7  Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).
RL9  Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.
Writing: Text Types and Purposes

W1  Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

W3  Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

6th Grade:
Language

L4c  Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.

Key Ideas and details

RL2  Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

Craft and Structure

RL5  Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.

RL6  Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

RL7  Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.

Writing: Text Types and Purposes

W3  Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

7th Grade:
Language

L4c  Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.

Key Ideas and details

RL2  Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

Craft and Structure

RL4  Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

RL5  Analyze how a drama’s or poem’s form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.
RL6  Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

**Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:**

RL7  Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).

**8th Grade:**

**Language**

L4c  Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.

L5  Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

**Key Ideas and details**

RL2  Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

**Craft and Structure**

RL4  Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

RL5  Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

RL6  Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

**Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:**

RL7  Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.

RL9  Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.

**Writing: Text Types and Purposes**

W3  Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

**9th-10th Grade:**

**Language**

L5  Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

**Key Ideas and details**
RL2  Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

Craft and Structure
RL5  Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

RL6  Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:
RL7  Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.

RL9  Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).

11th-12th Grade:
Language
L5  Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

Key Ideas and details
RL2  Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL3  Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters/archetypes are introduced and developed).

Craft and Structure
RL5  Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

RL6  Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:
RL7  Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text.