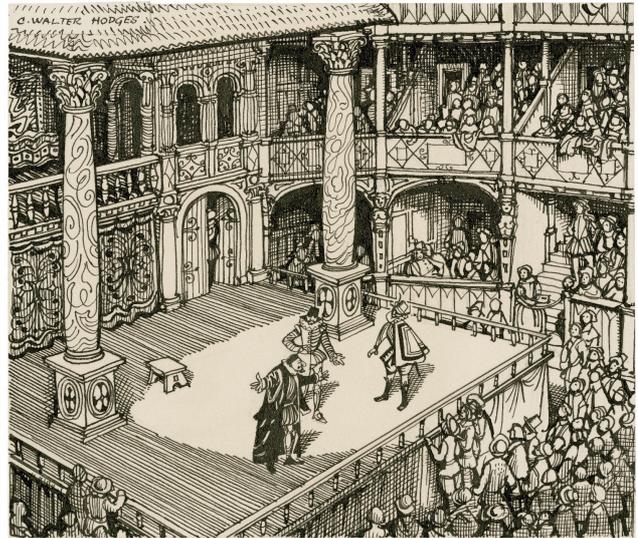


William Shakespeare

(Baptism. 26 April 1564 – Death : 23 April 1616)

He was an English poet, playwright and actor, widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world's greatest dramatist.



Why do we still study Shakespeare?

One reason people continue to read Shakespeare and other classics is that the struggles, desires, and conflicts that people faced in the past are the same ones that we face today.

The works of Shakespeare are considered some of the most expertly written and beautifully poetic in the history of literature. In addition to the quality of his work, Shakespeare is revered for his ability to portray themes of human experience in a timeless way that has continued to be relevant long after his death.

VOCABULARY

1. What are the overarching themes in Shakespeare's works?

Deception Tragedy
Ambition Love
Power Revenge
Lust

<https://www.mentimeter.com/features/word-cloud>

Brilliantly, Shakespeare was able to combine happy and sad themes in both tragedies and comedies.

“A comedy is just a tragedy gone wrong, and a tragedy is just a comedy gone wrong.” Peter Ustinov



The Merchant of Venice.

Part 1

Indicate the past tense of these verbs (* = irregular verb)

A merchant called **Antonio** **lived**..... (to live) in Venice. Everyone in Venice **liked**..... (to like) Antonio because he **was** (to be*) a good man.



The friend whom Antonio (to love) the most (to be*) **Bassanio**.

One day Bassanio (to tell *) Antonio that he (to want) to marry the beautiful and rich Portia.

He (to ask) Antonio to lend him three thousand ducats (the money of Venice at that time). Antonio (to answer) he (have*) no money at the moment because all his ships (to be*) at sea, but he (to propose) « Find someone who knows me and will lend money to me ».

Bassanio and Antonio (to go*) to a man called **Shylock**. Shylock (have*) a lot of money, but he (to love) it too much.

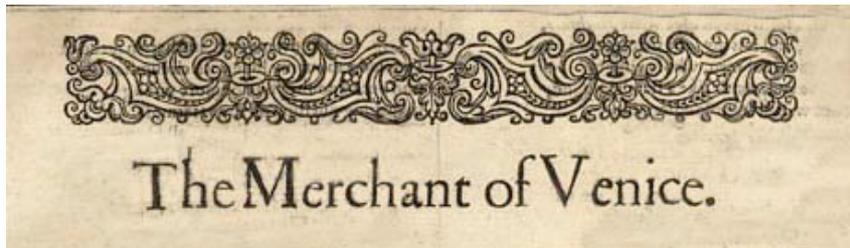


‘I want to be your friend,’ (to say*) Shylock to Antonio. ‘I shall forget what (to happen) in the past and lend you the money.’ Then he (to pretend) to laugh. ‘Let us play a game: if you do not pay back the money at the end of three months,’ he (to explain) , ‘you must promise to give me a pound (500 grams) of your flesh from any part of your body.’

Antonio (to laugh) too and (to accept) : he (to think* / not) that Shylock really (to mean*) what he (to say*). But Bassanio (to be*) afraid.

‘Don’t be afraid,’ (to say*) Antonio. ‘In two months my ships will return and bring me plenty of money.’

So Antonio (to borrow) the money from Shylock and (to give*) it to Bassanio.



The Merchant of Venice.

Part 2

Indicate the past tense of these verbs

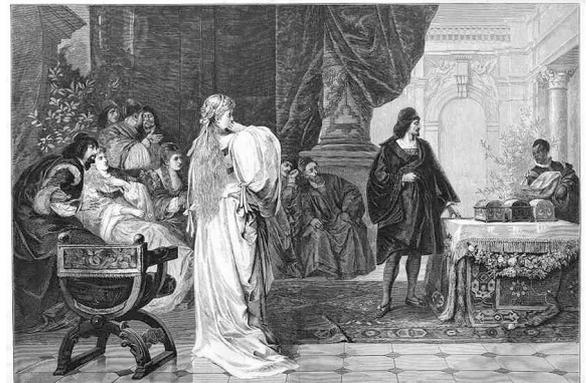
The three boxes

Before he **died**..... (die), Portia's father **thought** (to think)* of a way to find a good husband for his daughter. He (to leave*) three small boxes— one box made of gold, another made of silver, and the third made of lead. « The man who wants to marry **Portia** must choose the right box ».

On the gold box (to be*) the words: 'The man who chooses me shall get what many men wish for.'

On the silver box (to be*) the words: 'The man who chooses me shall get as much as he ought to get.'

And on the lead box (to be*) the words: 'The man who chooses me must give, and must be ready to lose everything he has.'



Bassanio (to arrive). He (to look) at the gold and silver boxes. He (to think*), 'Those things which seem beautiful from the outside are not always beautiful inside. The lead box does not promise to give me anything. It tells me that I should be ready to give all that I have to the woman whom I love. So I choose this.'

He (to be*) right. Portia (to take*) a ring off her finger and gave it to him.

As Portia and Bassanio (to stand*) talking about their love for each other,

Gratiano and Nerissa

..... (to come*) up to them.

Nerissa (to say*),
'We wish you joy in your marriage.
Gratiano and I are to be married, too.'



CHARACTER LIST (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE):

Complete the sentences with the correct word

beautiful love friends with borrows court daughter lends escapes

Antonio: Antonio is a wealthy but sad older merchant who claims never to have borrowed money but is willing to lend to, especially Bassanio, without benefit of interest.

Bassanio: A young man with expensive tastes and rich friends who money from Antonio in order to court the rich, intelligent, and beautiful Portia.

Gratiano: Bassanio's friend with a bawdy and clownish demeanor. Accompanies Bassanio to Belmont to court Portia and falls in with Portia's servant Nerissa.

Lorenzo: Bassanio's friend who falls in love with Shylock's Jessica.

Portia: Noblewoman who is as intelligent as she is rich and

Nerissa: Portia's handmaid who falls in love Gratiano, Bassanio's friend.

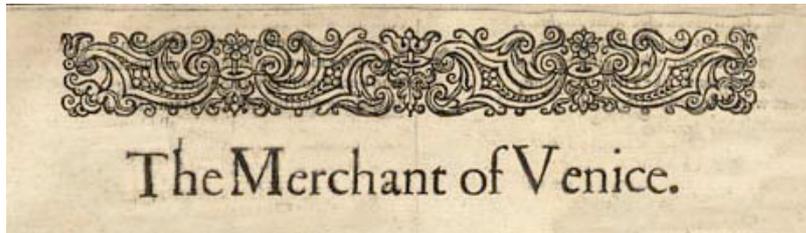
Shylock: The Jewish merchant of Venice who Antonio the money on his friend Bassanio's behalf. He serves as both the villain and the most tragic figure of the play.

Jessica: Shylock's daughter, who from her father's house in order to marry Lorenzo. She converts to Christianity in order to further assimilate into the Christian society of Venice.

The Duke of Venice: The reigning official of Venice who presides over the where Shylock intends to collect on his bond.

A Teacher's Guide to the Signet Classics Edition of William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*





The Merchant of Venice.

Part 3

Indicate the past tense of these verbs

Just as the four happy people were arranging to be married, three friends (to arrive) from Venice with a letter from Antonio. Bassanio (to open) the letter and (to begin*) to read it.

Portia (to look) at Bassanio's face. She was sure that something very bad had happened. She (to say*), 'I am half of you, and I must have half of anything which troubles you. Tell me what it is.'

Bassanio (to read*) the letter:

'Dear Bassanio, My ships are all lost. Now I have no money, so I cannot pay Shylock. I must give him a pound of my flesh. If I do that, it will certainly be the end of my life. Therefore please forget about the money that you borrowed from me. All I wish now is to see you before I die.'

The kind Portia (to tell*) Bassanio to go at once to his friend. But she (to want) Bassanio to marry her before he (to go*) .

Portia (to decide) to go to Venice herself.

She (to have*) a good friend who (to be*) a famous judge. She (to ask) him to lend her all his judge's clothes and notes.

Then she (to put*) on the clothes and (to pretend) to be a judge.



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VOCABULARY

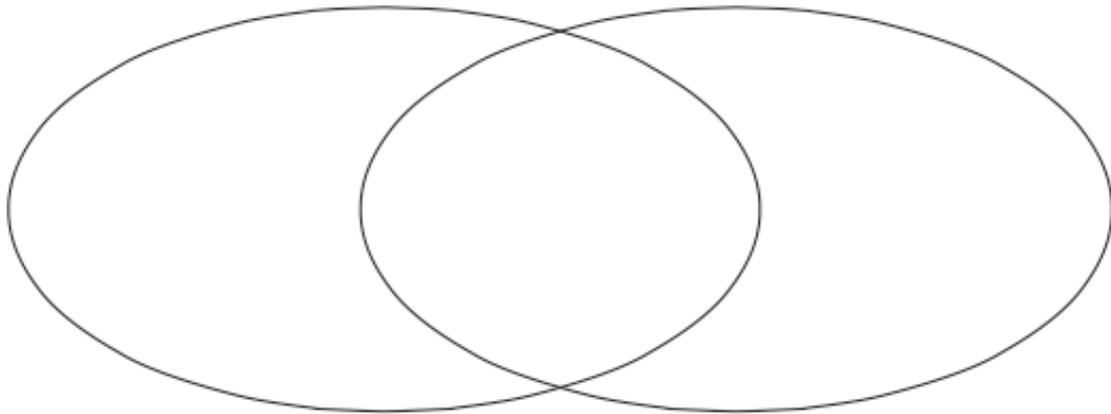
Vocabulary: verbs and nouns

1. face danger
2. do your best
3. keep the promise
4. pay attention
5. take revenge

Think of personal situations which apply to the verbs above (e.g. do my best when I play football)

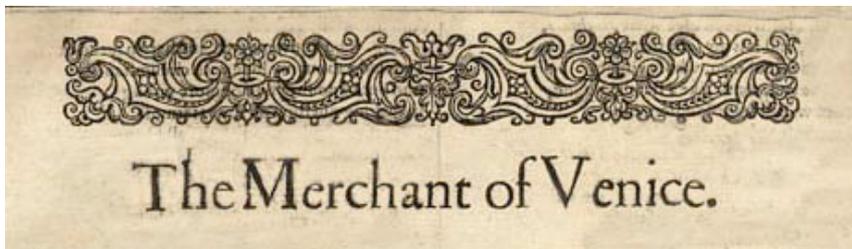
Compare Antonio and Shylock using the words below. There may be some words that don't fit either of them.

Happy sad greedy ambitious generous lonely friendly loyal mean



Who's who? Match the names with the right description.

1 Antonio	a in love with Jessica
2 Shylock	b a Jewish money-lender
3 Bassanio	c Shylock's daughter
4 Portia	d Portia's servant
5 Jessica	e Antonio's friend
6 Nerissa	f the Lady of Belmont
7 Gratiano	g a merchant of Venice
8 Lorenzo	h a friend of Antonio and Bassanio



Part 4

Indicate the past tense of these verbs

Shylock (to be*) very angry with Antonio. One of Antonio's friends had run away with Shylock's beautiful daughter, **Jessica**. When the angry Shylock (to hear*) that Antonio's ships (to be*) lost at sea, he (to be*) very pleased. He (to know*) that now he (can*) kill Antonio.

Antonio (to ask) Shylock to give him another chance to pay. But Shylock (to listen /not) to him. Antonio (to be*) in danger.

The court

The trial (to begin*). **The Duke of Venice** (to say*) to Shylock, 'Have mercy on Antonio ». But Shylock (to refuse). He (to want /not) the money Bassiano (to propose) him.

'I have promised to take my pound of flesh,' Shylock (to answer).

Portia in court

Shylock (to begin*) to get ready to cut his pound of flesh from Antonio. Portia (to enter) the large room, dressed like a male judge. She (to appear) so fine in her judge's clothes that Bassanio (to know* / not) that it (to be*) Portia.

'Then,' (to say*) Portia, 'Shylock must be merciful: he must have mercy on Antonio... Mercy falls like the gentle rain from the sky upon the earth. It blesses him who gives it, and him who receives it. Do you still ask for this pound of flesh?'

'I ask for what is mine by law!' (to answer) Shylock.

Bassanio (to say*), 'I offer ten times the amount of money that Antonio (to borrow) . Please change the law a little so that we may save Antonio.'

'We cannot change a law,' (to answer) Portia. 'If one law is (to change), then other men will later want to change other laws.'

'Yes,' she (to say*). 'By law Shylock may have a pound of flesh to be cut off by him nearest to Antonio's heart. Then, Antonio, be ready; and Shylock, take your knife.'

‘Oh learned judge! Oh wise young man!’ (to cry) Shylock.

‘ (to bring* /you / question) anything to weigh the flesh?’ Portia
..... (to ask) Shylock.

‘Yes,’ (to answer) Shylock. ‘I have everything ready here.’

‘And is there a doctor, Shylock, to stop Antonio’s blood?’ Portia (to ask).

‘That was not in our promise,’ Shylock (to say*).

‘Take your pound of flesh,’ (to say*) Portia. ‘The law allows it and the court gives it to you.’ As Shylock (to begin*) to move towards Antonio, Portia
..... (to speak*) again.

‘Wait!’ she (to say*). ‘There is something else. Antonio has promised to give you a pound of his flesh. But he has not promised to give you any of his blood. If you let one drop of his blood fall, you will lose all your land and all your money.’

‘Is that the law?’ (to ask) Shylock.

‘You shall see the law,’ (to reply) Portia. ‘You (to want) judgment; so you shall get judgment more than you (to want).’

‘I will take the money,’ (to say*) Shylock. ‘Give me three times more than Antonio (borrow) from me.’

‘Here it is,’ Bassanio (to cry) out, full of joy.

But Portia (to stop) him. ‘Wait!’ she (to say*). ‘All Shylock (to want) (to be*) his pound of flesh. That is all he can have now: no more, no less, just one pound and not one drop of blood.’ Shylock (to turn) to leave the court.

‘Wait, Shylock,’ she (to say*). ‘The law of Venice says that if anyone tries to kill one of the people of Venice, everything that he owns shall be taken away from him. One half of his money and goods shall be given to the city of Venice and the other half shall be given to the person he has tried to kill. Your life is now at the mercy of the Duke, so fall on your knees and beg for mercy.’

‘Take my life too!’ (to cry) Shylock. ‘My money and goods are as dear to me as life itself.’ When you take those away from me, you take also my life.’

‘I shall be happy to give up my part of Shylock’s money,’ (to say*) Antonio.

‘Shylock must promise to leave the money on his death to his daughter and her husband.’

Shylock (to promise). ‘Let me go home,’ he sadly..... (to say*).

Exit test - Choose the correct answer A, B, C or D.

1. Why did Bassanio need money?
 - A To invest in some new clothes.
 - B To pay his creditors.
 - C To try to win a competition.
 - D To give a big party.

2. How much did Antonio ask Shylock to lend him?
 - A Six thousand ducats for four months.
 - B Four thousand ducats for six months.
 - C Six thousand ducats for three months.
 - D Three thousand ducats for three months.

3. What was written on the gold casket?
 - A The person who chose it would get what he deserved.
 - B The person who chose it would get what many men wanted.
 - C The person who chose it would have to give away everything he had.
 - D The person who chose it would have to risk his life for love.

4. Why didn't Shylock like Antonio?
 - A Antonio had often insulted him.
 - B Antonio was rich and successful.
 - C Antonio didn't approve of moneylenders.
 - D Antonio had powerful friends on the Rialto.

5. What was inside the lead casket?
 - A A ring.
 - B A portrait.
 - C Money.
 - D A letter.

6. What did the Duke of Venice do to try and help Antonio?
 - A Change the law.
 - B Make another law.
 - C Write to a famous judge.
 - D Offer Shylock money.

7. What happens if Shylock takes more than a pound of Antonio's flesh?
- A The state of Venice takes his property away.
 - B The state of Venice puts him in prison.
 - C He has to leave Venice.
 - D He is sentenced to death.
8. What did Portia ask for in return for saving Antonio's life?
- A Bassanio's gloves.
 - B Six thousand ducats.
 - C Nothing.
 - D A piece of jewellery.
9. Which of the female characters disguised themselves as boys in the story?
- A All of them.
 - B None of them.
 - C Portia and Nerissa.
 - D Portia and Jessica.

