

The Merchant of Venice

Photocopiable

Before reading

- 1 Read the list on page x and imagine the relationships between four characters. What will happen to them.

While reading

Act 1

- 2 Write Portia's advertisement asking for an ideal husband. Write down the qualities he must have.
- 3 Compare Antonio's and Shylock's businesses. Now complete these sentences with their names. Some fit one or both of them, but one does not fit either.
- ... is poor.
 - ... is rich.
 - ... has ships.
 - ... gives loans.
 - ... borrows money.
 - ... charges interest.
 - ... never charges interest.
 - ... wants a guarantee.
 - ... damages other moneylenders' profits.
 - ... makes a lot of profit.
 - ... prefers helping a friend to making a profit.
- 4 Write Antonio's thoughts after he agrees to give a guarantee for the loan of a pound of his own flesh. How does he feel? And what are his feelings for his friend Bassanio?

Act 2

- 5 In pairs, complete two days in Launcelot's diary.
- when Shylock was his master and
 - now that he is Bassanio's servant.
- How does he feel? Share your ideas with the rest of the class.
- 6 Complete. What are Jessica and Lorenzo thinking?



- 7 What are their feelings? Choose the right word and complete the sentences.

Shylock loves/hates Antonio because

Antonio loves/hates Bassanio because

Bassanio loves/hates Antonio because

- 8 Imagine that Morocco and Arragon are talking to their best friends after they have chosen the wrong box. How do they feel? Act out the scene with another student.

- 9 Put these events in the right order. Number them 1–12.

- Launcelot and Gobbo go to Bassanio's house. ☐
- Launcelot is not sure whether to leave Shylock's service. ☐
- Shylock orders Jessica to lock all doors and stay away from the windows. ☐
- Shylock goes to the supper. ☐
- Jessica escapes dressed as a boy. ☐
- Lorenzo and his friends plan Jessica's escape. ☐
- Launcelot starts working for Bassanio. ☐
- Launcelot finds his father. ☐
- Jessica is sorry that Launcelot is leaving her father. ☐
- Lorenzo's friends wait for Lorenzo. ☐
- Bassanio and Gratiano leave for Belmont. ☐
- Shylock shouts about his daughter, his jewels and his ducats in the streets of Venice. ☐

Act 3

- 10 Write Bassanio's answer to Antonio's letter.

- 11 Complete the words with the letters that are missing in the following sentences and decide who each character is talking to:

- Salerio: There is more difference between your **f_es_** and hers than there is between **i_k** and **_n_w**. (talking to _____)
- If you cut us, do we not **b_e_d**? If you **p_is_n** us, do we not die? And if you harm us, shall we not take **r_v_ng_**? (talking to _____)
- Bassanio: This letter is the **b_d_** of my friend, and every word is bleeding with his **b_o_d**. (talking to _____)

The Merchant of Venice

Photocopiable

- d Shylock: You called me a dog for no reason.
So if I'm a dog, be careful of my t_e_h!
(talking to _____)

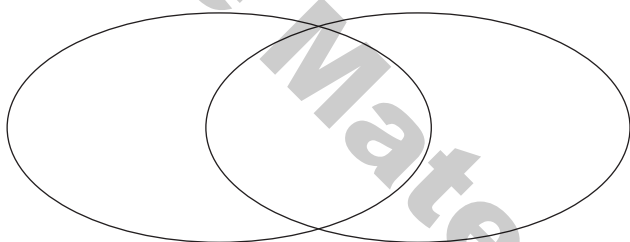
Act 4

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

happy sad greedy ambitious
generous lonely friendly loyal
mean single married

Antonio

Shylock



- 13 Complete. What are Shylock and Portia thinking?



- 14 Imagine a conversation between Portia and Shylock after they leave the court, and act it out with another student.

Act 5

- 15 How do you think Bassanio and Gratiano felt while going back to Belmont? Choose from the words in the box.

anxious afraid happy sorry amused
surprised angry

Re-read act 5 and explain why you think so to another student. Do you both agree?

- 16 How do you think they felt when Portia and Nerissa told them the truth? Discuss this with another student.
- 17 Jessica returns to Venice because she is worried about her father. Imagine the conversation between Jessica and Shylock and act it out with another student.

After reading

- 18 This play is a comedy. Did you expect this ending? What changes would you make? Write a new ending making everybody happy at the end.
- 19 Watch the film of *The Merchant of Venice* and answer the following questions:
- Did you like the actors that played the different characters in the play? Why/why not?
 - Did you imagine Venice and Belmont as they are shown in the movie? In what way were they different?
 - Most directors leave some scenes out. Do you agree with the choice of scenes that the director has made? Why/why not?
- Discuss your answers with another student.
- 20 Write a review of the film version of *The Merchant of Venice* you watched.
- 21 Imagine you work at a theatre. How would you advertise *The Merchant of Venice*? What words and pictures would you use?

The Merchant of Venice

Photocopiable

Act 1

1 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

2 Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- a Antonio is sad because he is worried about his ships. ☐
- b Antonio already knows Portia's name. ☐
- c Bassanio has spent all his money. ☐
- d Portia has told Bassanio that she likes him. ☐
- e Antonio has enough money to help Bassanio. ☐
- f Portia remembers Bassanio. ☐
- g Shylock and Antonio make a profit on their loans. ☐
- h Bassanio wants Antonio to sign the agreement. ☐

Act 2

3 Choose the right answer.

- a Launcelot's father doesn't recognise his son because ...
 - 1 he can't see.
 - 2 he is very old.
 - 3 his son was ill.
- b Gratiano will accompany Bassanio to Belmont if ...
 - 1 he lends him some money.
 - 2 he behaves better.
 - 3 he marries Portia's friend.
- c Jessica is sorry that Launcelot is leaving because ...
 - 1 he was good with Shylock.
 - 2 he made her life happier.
 - 3 he worked really hard.
- d When Jessica escapes with Lorenzo she feels ashamed because ...
 - 1 she is dressed as a boy.
 - 2 she is stealing from her father.
 - 3 she is leaving her father.
- e If one of Portia's suitors fails, he must promise ...
 - 1 he will not ask for his money back.
 - 2 he will leave in silence.
 - 3 he will never ask another woman to marry him.

Act 3

4 What did they say? Match what the characters say with the answers.

- a Salerio: You wouldn't take his flesh, would you? How would you profit from that?
- b Tubal: But Antonio has certainly lost everything.
- c Bassanio: If your love for me can't make you come, don't let this letter change your mind.
- d Portia: Please do not refuse me this request.
- e Launcelot: Unfortunately, you've been sent along the road to hell by your father and your mother.
 - 1 Shylock: Yes, that is true. That is very true. And if he cannot repay his loan on time, I will have his heart.
- 2 Jessica: I'll be saved by my husband. He's made me a Christian.
- 3 Portia: Oh, love, leave your business here and go without delay.
- 4 Lorenzo: With all my heart I shall obey your commands.
- 5 Shylock: If it feeds nothing else, it will feed my revenge.

Act 4

5 Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- a Bassanio offers Shylock the three thousand ducats that he has lent Antonio. ☐
- b The doctor that has been sent to the Venetian court is called Bellario. ☐
- c The agreement does not say that Antonio has to bleed to death. ☐
- d Shylock asks the Duke for his life. ☐
- e Antonio tells Bassanio that he should give the ring to the doctor. ☐

Act 5

6 Why

- a ... do Nerissa and Gratiano have an argument?
- b ... does Bassanio say that it would be better to cut his left hand off?
- c ... does Portia say that she allowed the doctor to share her bed?
- d ... does Portia show Bassanio and Gratiano a letter from Doctor Bellario in Padua?
- e ... would Bassanio allow the doctor to sleep with his wife when he is away?